

Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund  
2014 Request for Proposals (RFP)

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**Project Title:**

Red River "Living with a River" Interpretive Trail

**Category:** C. Environmental Education

**Total Project Budget:** \$ 190,185

**Proposed Project Time Period for the Funding Requested:** 2 Years, July 2014 - June 2016

**Other Non-State Funds:** \$ 0

**Summary:**

Interpretive trail along Red River will provide environmental education to City of Moorhead and Red River Valley through interpretive trail signs, audio tour, and riparian education outreach materials.

**Name:** Robert Backman

**Sponsoring Organization:** River Keepers

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Fargo ND 58103

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**Web Address:** www.riverkeepers.org

**Location**

**Region:** Northwest

**County Name:** Clay

**City / Township:** Moorhead

**MP:** 0613-2-212-proposa

**Budget:** 0613-2-212-bud

**Qual:** 0613-2-212-qualifi

**Map:** 0613-2-212-map-Li

**Resolution:** 0613-2-21

**List:**

	_____	Funding Priorities	_____	Multiple Benefits	_____	Outcomes	_____	Knowledge
	Base							
	_____	Extent of Impact	_____	Innovation	_____	Scientific/Tech Basis	_____	Urgency
	_____	Capacity Readiness	_____	Leverage	_____	Employment	_____	TOTAL



**Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF)**

**2014 Main Proposal**

**Project Title:** *“Living with a River” Interpretive Trail*

**PROJECT TITLE: “Living with a River” Interpretive Trail**

**I. PROJECT STATEMENT**

River Keepers is seeking to reestablish a riparian interpretive trail in Moorhead, Minnesota along the Red River of the North. A recent flood protection project required the removal of our “Living Lab” riparian restoration and demonstration project that included a 160 sign interpretive trail along the Red River. This proposed trail will compliment a permanent display that is being developed in the adjacent Hjemkomst Center. With environmental education about water resources and riparian management needed now more than ever in the Red River Valley, River Keepers is partnering with the Clay county historical society and the Moorhead parks and recreation department to provide two adjoining Moorhead parks with twenty-five flood proof interpretive signs, an audio tour, and hands on environmental education materials for local schools, the community, and visitors.

The Proposed interpretive trail name “Living with a River” has taken on this as its theme in hopes to give people a better understanding of rivers and how they function for wise and informed management by the landowners, government entities, and the community. “Living with a River” interpretive trail will serve as an outdoor classroom throughout Viking Ship and Memorial Parks in Moorhead. This site currently has a paved trail established that would serve as the interpretive trail path through these parks. This trail is currently used by walkers, bikers, roller bladders, and tourists as a part of their visit to the adjacent Hjemkomst center. River Keepers has operated for twelve years the only tour boat on the Red River in the United States which docks adjacent to the proposed trail. S.S. Ruby boat tour narration will be altered to include components of the “Living with a River” interpretative trail. This outdoor classroom site could provide environmental education on some of Minnesota’s most critical environmental issues such as water quality, energy and water consumption, healthy and diverse natural ecosystems, and sustainable living to the 1,500 students that participate in the Red River Water Festival annually on this site.

**II. DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT ACTIVITIES**

**Activity 1:** *“Living with a River” interpretive trail cell phone audio tour and mobile web* **Budget: \$ 5,000**

Audio tour will provide ecological points of interest, biological species information, and Red River Valley history for individuals with hearing disabilities, language barriers, and individuals afar. Audio tour will engage 5-basic human senses intimately connecting listeners to the Red River. Visually, the mobile web application will provide descriptive ecological understanding, visuals, google maps, and educational internet links for participating schools. ‘Quest’ application will allow visitors to use Red River landmarks for self-guided tour.

<b>Outcome:</b>	<b>Completion Date</b>
1. Annually ~55,000 people comprised of recreational trail users, schools, visitors and community groups will be provided with audio interpretation by local and state natural resource experts.	2/1/2015
2. Moorhead public schools, Concordia College, Moorhead State University and approximately ~36,000 area students will receive access to this mobile application free of charge.	2/1/2015
3. Reach for ‘Quest’ application includes Moorhead and Red River Valley youth, ~88,000.	2/1/2015
4. Tour dashboard monitoring system will allow River Keepers to make adjustments to display sites for most effective riparian education.	2/1/2015

**Activity 2:** *Installation of Twenty-Five “Living with a River” Interpretive Trail Signs, Outdoor 3D River Model and Kiosk through out Viking Ship and Memorial Parks* **Budget: \$ 89,000**

Interpretive signs pointing out hidden treasures can bring historic landmarks and natural wonders to life and allow the trail user to take home more than a picture but an appreciation of the Red River. Three-dimensional outdoor river model with covered kiosk will provide visitors with detailed geological and watershed information and tie “Living with a River” theme to everyday life.

<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Completion Date</b>
1. 3-Dimensional hands on river model will empower social interaction in school classes and community organizations to identify with the riparian ecosystem as it relates to their lives.	10/1/2015



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2. Flood proof, Anodized aluminum signs are low maintenance and resilient with 40-50 year life span. These durable signs will provide trail visitors with riparian information for decades.	10/1/2015
3. Geo-cache sites provide tourists and community with participatory educational adventure opportunities that allow imaginative wonder for all ages to enjoy the rivers natural signatures.	10/1/2015

**Activity 3:** *“Living with a River” Local Educational Campaign*

**Budget:** \$ 27,000

Educational campaign initiative is centered on sustaining the growth of students through the mediums of enlightening conservation videos and environmentally informative booklets, magazines, and publications that elaborate the tie between quality of water and quality of life.

<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Completion Date</b>
1. 47 Red River Valley public schools will have access to educational videos, resulting in a renewed enthusiasm for outdoor activities, such as, fishing, canoeing, and outdoor interpretation.	9/1/2015
2. Students will be able to answer three learning objectives by the end of the videos: Does polluting limit river water activities such as fishing and boating? Is it safe to consume fish caught from the river? Is swimming in the river safe?	9/1/2015

**Activity 4:** *“Living with a River” Community Involvement Campaign.*

**Budget:** \$ 69,185

Engaging the community through “Living with a River” educational workshops, Leopold Education Project curriculum, and college student involvement will increase safety of Red River, promote recreational resources, educate youth and adults about its watershed, provide connection to downtown development, and advocate for sustainable use. Project presentations to principals, teachers, the chamber of commerce, visitor’s centers, youth groups, Fargo and Moorhead city commissioners, clay county historical society, and community groups will highlight local, state, and federal efforts of watershed management to enact a new understanding of how to live with a river sustainably.

<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Completion Date</b>
1. ~180,000 Red River Valley citizens will come to have a renewed vision of the Red River.	12/1/2016
2. Implementation of Leopold Education Project curriculum to seven Moorhead Public Schools will give local educators tools to apply conservation efforts to everyday studies.	12/1/2016
3. River Keepers will hire undergraduate student interns to install interpretive signs and equip each student extensive riparian education training to assist in outreach efforts.	12/1/2016

**II. PROJECT STRATEGY**

**A. Project Team/Partners**

Project team will include River Keepers Executive Director Bob Backman, Project Coordinator Christine Laney, River Keepers staff members along with advisory committee members from Moorhead Parks and Recreation (Holly Heitkamp), Historical and Cultural Society of Clay County (Mark Peihl) and (Markus Kruger) and local and state professionals selected for an advisory committee. River Keepers staff will be project leaders and develop material collaboratively with advisory committee members and other experts.

**B. Timeline Requirements**

The interpretive trail project will have a completion date of September 2015. With extensive promotion and education campaign starting in May of 2014 and running till May of 2016.

**C. Long-Term Strategy and Future Funding Needs**

“Living with a River” interpretive trail is designed to be a timeless and self sustaining trail. Signs, displays, and kiosks will be designed to withstand flood waters and be vandal resistant. The local view of this project will be monitored and improved by River Keepers staff, Clay County historical society, Fargo-Moorhead teachers, administrators and members of the advisory committee. The project sustainability is assured through project content, low maintenance materials, and detail oriented planning.

## 2014 Detailed Project Budget

Project Title: "Living with a River" Interpretive Trail

### IV. TOTAL ENRTF REQUEST BUDGET 2 years

<u>BUDGET ITEM</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
<b>Personnel:</b> Backman and Laney are full-time employees of River Keepers. Benefits are calculated at .3136	
River Keepers Executive Director Bob Backman with 500 hours at \$41.50 per unit	\$20,750
River Keepers Project Coordinator Christine Laney with 500 hours at \$28.63 per unit	\$14,315
"Living with a River" Interpretive Trail Project Manager 2080 hours at \$14.00 per unit	\$29,120
Local undergraduate student interns (4) \$500 each- sign installation team members	\$2,000
<b>Contracts:</b> Audio and mobile device tours	\$5,000
25 Interpretive signs, 3D river model, and kiosk	\$89,000
<b>Equipment/Tools/Supplies:</b> Environmental education materials that support all aspect of "Living with a River" campaign	\$30,000
<b>TOTAL ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND \$ REQUEST =</b>	<b>\$190,185</b>

### V. OTHER FUNDS

<u>SOURCE OF FUNDS</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>	<u>Status</u>
<b>Other Non-State \$ Being Applied to Project During Project Period:</b> Not Applicable	NA	<i>Indicate: Secured or Pending</i>
<b>Other State \$ Being Applied to Project During Project Period:</b> Not Applicable	NA	<i>Indicate: Secured or Pending</i>
<b>In-kind Services During Project Period:</b> Not Applicable	NA	<i>Indicate: Secured or Pending</i>
<b>Remaining \$ from Current ENRTF Appropriation (if applicable):</b> Not Applicable	NA	<i>Indicate: Unspent? Not Legally Obligated? Other?</i>
<b>Funding History:</b> Not Applicable	NA	



River Keepers Executive Director Bob Backman and Project Coordinator Christine Laney have a combined thirty-five years of experience in riparian management, project development and management with River Keepers. Their efforts range from educating Red River Valley communities about water quality and natural resource management to international riparian education presentations. River Keepers has received awards from the U.S. EPA and various local, state, and federal agencies for their conservation education efforts and widely recognized projects.

Some of the projects they have developed include:

**The Red River Youth Water Festival.** This 4 day hands-on water education event for 4<sup>th</sup> graders is held annually at the Hjemkomst Center which is adjacent to the proposed Living with a River Interpretive Trail. Now in its 12th year this is the one of the largest water festivals in the United States and is attended annually by over 1500 students.

**The Red River Water trail.** Working with the Minnesota DNR they developed and wrote the master plan for this 394 mile long trail, one of the newest in Minnesota. They also developed the 3 maps for the trail.

**The Living Lab.** The Lab is a riparian restoration demonstration site located on 1500 feet of riverfront. The site has been used for educational classes, service learning projects and numerous tours. In addition it contains 16 experimental plots. Over 100 directional and interpretive signs were written and designed locally for the site. In developing the Lab a collaborative of over 15 agencies and organizations act as an advisory group. The Lab has served as a model for facilities built in other states.

**The Millennium Tour.** Over 200 individuals participated in parts of this 550 mile long international 28 day canoe trip. It included community resolutions, educational and media events, all with the purpose of showcasing the Red and its potentials.

**Sister Rivers.** This is an international relationship with a “Sister River”, the Dniester River, located in eastern Europe. The relationship includes sharing social, cultural and scientific presentations and information as well as visits to each other’s watersheds. A component of the program also includes the development of water education at museums in both the United States and Moldova. Plans are currently being developed for a simultaneous event in the two countries that includes the release of small canoes that are tracked via the internet as part of a larger “all water is connected” program.

**Dam Safety.** River Keepers has been the strong consistent advocate for retrofitting the dams on the Red River to reduce human death and facilitate fish passage.

Mr. Backman and Ms. Laney have extensive experience and success in project creation, development and management. They have managed large and small projects with funding from local state and national agencies and foundations