

**Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund  
2016 Request for Proposals (RFP)**

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**Project Title:**

**ENRTF ID: 112-C**

Master Water Steward Program Expansion

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**Category:** C. Environmental Education

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**Total Project Budget:** \$ 116,000

**Proposed Project Time Period for the Funding Requested:** 2.5 years, July 2016 to October 2018

**Summary:**

This program trains community volunteers to work with neighbors to install water management projects. We have certified 90 stewards and are receiving requests to expand outside the metro area.

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**Sponsoring Organization:** Freshwater Society

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**Location**

**Region:** Statewide

**County Name:** Statewide

**City / Township:**

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**Alternate Text for Visual:**

Table including number of projects completed and amount of water infiltrated back into the ground as a result.

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



**PROJECT TITLE: Master Water Steward Program Expansion**

**I. PROJECT STATEMENT**

This program is designed to identify, educate, certify and support volunteer community leaders, called “Master Water Stewards,” who engage their communities and take action to restore and preserve water resources. The project extends environmental leadership opportunities to the neighborhood level and inspires a new set of confident community leaders to carry the clean water message to their community. The program is in the final year of a highly successful three-year pilot. Demand for the program from Watershed Districts and other Local Government Units outside the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District pilot area has grown quickly and dramatically.

As part of ramping up to go metro wide in 2016, we have altered the core curriculum to include substantial on-line learning modules. The expansion outside the metro will require additional alterations to adapt to additional land uses and practices such as rural section roads, wellhead protection and alternative utility placements.

**II. PROJECT ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES**

**Activity 1: Program Systems**

**Budget: \$ 16,000**

*Develop program systems for the expansion of the Master Water Stewards program.*

<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Completion Date</b>
1. <i>Develop an Advisory Board to guide program expansion</i>	<i>Aug 2016</i>
2. <i>Development of local partnerships</i>	<i>Sept 2016</i>
3. <i>Needs assessment for local partners (Watershed districts, watershed Mgmt. Organizations, Cities and Counties.)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Staff and resource requirements</i></li> <li>• <i>Cost share requirements and resources</i></li> <li>• <i>“train the Trainer” packages</i></li> </ul>	<i>Feb 2017</i>
4. <i>Professional development for local partners who will work with Stewards</i>	<i>Aug 2018</i>
5. <i>Alignment policies, forms, procedures and reporting with MIDS &amp; watershed calculators. (ensuring long-term Sustainability)</i>	<i>Aug 2017</i>
6. <i>Conferences in 2017 &amp; 2018</i>	<i>Oct 2018</i>

**Activity 2: Education Systems**

**Budget: \$34,000**

*Develop the Education Systems for the expansion of the Master Water Stewards program*

<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Completion Date</b>
1. <i>Develop &amp; upkeep of the online curriculum for MWS academy</i>	<i>Ongoing</i>
2. <i>Developing continuing education courses and opportunities that align to state and local priorities. (Chloride management, groundwater protection, pollution prevention, illicit discharges, pollinator habitat restoration)</i>	<i>June 2017</i>
3. <i>Developing specializations within the MWS program (K12 Education, working with communities of interest)</i>	<i>June 2017</i>

**Activity 3: Volunteer Systems**

**Budget: \$66,000**

*Develop resources for volunteer systems for the expansion of the Master Water Stewards program.*

<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Completion Date</b>
1. <i>Professional development for local staff on how to manage volunteers</i>	<i>Oct 2017</i>
2. <i>Tracking systems for volunteer hours</i>	<i>Oct 2016</i>
3. <i>Developing target volunteer opportunities with local partners that focus on priority</i>	<i>March 2018</i>



<i>waters</i>	
<i>4. Recruiting and managing volunteers for collaborative projects</i>	<i>Ongoing</i>
<i>5. Reporting the results of pollution prevention projects to participating Watershed Districts, Water Management Organizations, Counties and Cities.</i>	<i>Oct 2017</i>

**III. PROJECT STRATEGY**

**A. Project Team/Partners**

Freshwater Society will collaborate with the instructors of our current in-class curriculum: Metro Blooms/Blue Thumb, University of Minnesota Extension, Wenck Associates, Waterdrop Design, Hennepin County Environmental Services, MN DNR, University of St. Thomas, and Freshwater Society. Web consultants, designers and programmers will be used to develop the education systems and volunteer tracking online. Part of the funding from the Environmental and Natural Resources Trust Fund will be put towards this. Those consultants have not yet been finalized.

**B. Project Impact and Long-Term Strategy**

Currently, the 2015 Stewards are participating in 50 hours of hands-on training on pollution prevention. The training includes 13 learning sessions, designed to give them the knowledge, skills and confidence they need to take a leadership role in neighborhood-level stormwater management. As part of their certification, they are required to work with their neighbors and complete a Capstone Project that includes installing a rainscaping project and conducting behavior change/citizen action campaigns. The first years’ stewards’ management projects drain a total area of 10,296 square feet of impermeable surface, and will reduce run off by 5,397 gallons per one-inch rainfall or 145,649 gallons a year. Calculations were done using the Minimal Impact Design Standards (MIDS) calculator created by and for the state of Minnesota.

With each cohort of trainees the reach of the program expands exponentially. Project work by stewards in the first two cohorts has continued to occur and increase each year beyond their capstone projects. We intend to align all volunteer management practices with accepted best practices in this sector, including safety, liability, background checks. We will align reporting procedures to include the Minimal Impact Design Standards (MIDS) calculator and watershed specific calculators where they align. The MPCA has indicated that reporting out via this system will help municipalities to meet several minimum control measures on their Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plans.

We work with watershed districts, counties, cities, and SWCDs to establish available cost-share funds so volunteers can be assured of being able to construct projects when landowners express interest. As more LGUs establish these small funds, the ability for the program to sustain itself will only increase.

**C. Timeline Requirements**

The project will run from fall of 2016 to the recruiting of the second outstate cohort of stewards in fall of 2018.

## 2016 Detailed Project Budget

**Project Title: Master Water Stewards Expansion**

### IV. TOTAL ENRTF REQUEST BUDGET 1 years

<b>BUDGET ITEM</b> <i>(See "Guidance on Allowable Expenses", p. 13)</i>	<b>AMOUNT</b>
<b>Personnel:</b>	
Peggy Knapp, Program Director (80% salary, 20% benefits) 33% FTE year 1 and 11% FTE year 2	\$ 42,000
Deirdre Coleman, Program Coordinator (80% salary, 20% benefits) 15% FTE year 1 and 6% FTE year	\$ 13,000
<b>Professional/Technical/Service Contracts:</b>	
Programmer- web tracking	\$ 25,000
Website content manager	\$ 22,000
Designer	\$ 4,000
Web hosting	\$ 5,000
<b>Equipment/Tools/Supplies:</b>	
Program materials	\$ 5,000
<b>TOTAL ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND \$ REQUEST =</b>	<b>\$ 116,000</b>

### V. OTHER FUNDS

<b>SOURCE OF FUNDS</b>	<b>AMOUNT</b>	<b>Status</b>
<b>Other Non-State \$ To Be Applied To Project During Project Period:</b>	N/A	
<b>Other State \$ To Be Applied To Project During Project Period:</b>	N/A	
<b>In-kind Services To Be Applied To Project During Project Period:</b>	N/A	
<b>Funding History:</b>	N/A	
<b>Remaining \$ From Current ENRTF Appropriation:</b>	N/A	

Master Water Stewards by the Numbers

<b><u>2013</u></b>	<b><u>2014</u></b>	<b><u>Totals</u></b>
8 rain gardens	11 rain gardens	19 rain gardens
4 rain barrels	1 rain barrel	5 rain barrels
1 permeable driveway		1 permeable driveway
1 cistern	1 cistern	2 cisterns
	1 dry creek bed	1 dry creek bed
	2 downspout redirections	
132,066 gallons of water infiltrated annually	755,260 gallons of water infiltrated annually.	887326 gallons of water infiltrated annually



Gray Freshwater Center  
2500 Shadywood Road | Excelsior, MN 55331

*Freshwater Society is a non-profit organization dedicated to educating and inspiring people to value, conserve and protect all freshwater resources.*

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**#6 Project Manager Qualification & Organization Description**

**Peggy Knapp, Project Lead and Director of Programs**

Knapp is the Director of Programs at the Freshwater Society, where she oversees civic engagement initiatives. Prior to her work with Freshwater, Dr. Knapp was an assistant professor at Hamline University’s School of Education, and the Center for Global Environmental Education. She has an extensive background in course development and teaching in online learning environments, focused on effective strategies for science and environmental education, project-based learning, and a systems-based approach to environmental literacy. In her earlier work, Knapp was a reporter, producer and writer with CNN’s award-winning *Earth Matters*, and field reporter on PBS’ nationally acclaimed science education program, *Newton’s Apple*. Knapp holds a doctorate in education from Hamline University. Peggy created the pilot program at the Freshwater Society and is the lead for the Master Water Stewards program. She is also creating the MWS academy online curriculum course.

**Deirdre Coleman, Program Coordinator**

Deirdre has a B.S. in Biology, Society and the Environment From the University of Minnesota. As a Program Coordinator she works on a number of Freshwater’s programs and mainly the Master Water Steward Program. She is in charge of communicating with Stewards, coordinating MWS events and posting on social media outlets.

**Organizational Description**

The Freshwater Society has been a leading nonprofit organization dedicated to conserving restoring, and protecting freshwater resources and their surrounding watersheds since 1968. Minnesota is the Land of 10,000 Lakes, and we care about the lakes and rivers around us. Freshwater Society works through innovative programs and partnerships to motivate citizens, businesses, and environmental organizations statewide to inspire people to value, conserve and protect all freshwater resources.



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