

**Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund
2017 Request for Proposals (RFP)**

Project Title:

ENRTF ID: 092-C

Bird City - Education for Lasting Conservation

Category: C. Environmental Education

Total Project Budget: \$ 280,000

Proposed Project Time Period for the Funding Requested: 3 years, July 2017 – June 2020

Summary:

Through Bird City Minnesota, Audubon Minnesota will engage up to 60 communities, at least 400 staff and elected officials and 400,000 citizens to improve habitat and protect birds by 2020.

Name: Joanna Eckles

Sponsoring Organization: Audubon Minnesota

Address: 1 Water St W
St. Paul MN 55107

Telephone Number: (651) 739-9332

Email jeckles@audubon.org

Web Address http://mn.audubon.org/

Location

Region: Statewide

County Name: Statewide

City / Township:

Alternate Text for Visual:

Habitat improvement, bird protection and citizen engagement results using Bird City as a vehicle for education, leveraging the power of local communities for conservation and long-term action.

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



PROJECT TITLE: Bird City – Education for lasting conservation

I. PROJECT STATEMENT

Through Bird City Minnesota, Audubon Minnesota (AMN) will engage up to 60 communities over the next 3 years to improve habitat and protect birds. Modeled after Bird City Wisconsin (96 cities since 2010) and Tree City USA, Bird City Minnesota provides local governments with a proven conservation roadmap, leveraging their resources to achieve conservation results and greater community and individual awareness.

AMN is now piloting Bird City with 3 communities – Saint Paul, Hastings and Northfield. With their input AMN is refining and finalizing program criteria and educational resources to support all participating communities, guiding them in a long-term commitment to maintain and restore a healthy, biodiverse natural environment.

A 3-year investment in Bird City will take the pilot program statewide ultimately reaching 40-60 communities by 2020. Leveraging the power of local governments, Bird City will reach at least 400 staff / elected officials and 400,000 citizens involving them in hundreds of projects to:

1. Increase habitat through restoration, adding native plants and removing invasive species
2. Reduce threats by reducing window collisions, light pollution and toxins / pesticide use
3. Engage citizens through restorations, training, bird / nest monitoring and school / public birding events

A community applies to be a Bird City with the backing of the Mayor, city council and staff and assistance of partners. The community is recognized when they complete 8 bird-friendly actions in 3 categories (above). They are motivated by prominent public recognition and community passion. They renew their participation annually and add more and deeper actions and partnerships. As a result:

- All bird habitat types and all Minnesota birds, whether resident or migratory species, could benefit
- Highly effective, locally led partnerships are formed, creating a long-lasting conservation ethic

Birds are an ideal focus for environmental education and conservation. They are beautiful and easily accessible, no matter where you are in the state. At a time when wildlife habitat is being severely degraded and people are increasingly disconnected with nature, working with Minnesota’s citizens, from small towns to big cities, to conserve birds and their habitats is the best way to change this negative trend.

II. PROJECT ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES

Activity 1: Engage and enroll 40-60 communities statewide in Bird City Minnesota **Budget:** \$131,760

Identify and engage community leaders (council, business, tourism, community groups) throughout the state to participate in Bird City Minnesota. Develop materials, resources and tools to guide communities to improve habitat and reduce threats and to disseminate to their citizens, allowing the program statewide reach.

Outcomes	Completion Date
1. A prioritized list of potential Bird City Minnesota communities based on a variety of factors and including contacts and potential local partners.	October 2017
2. A website /online system for Bird City communities to apply and renew their participation, access information, materials and resources, learn from other Bird City communities and track their results over time.	March 2018
3. At least 40 Bird City Minnesota communities enrolled in the program, fulfilling a minimum of 8 actions each in 3 categories (habitat improvement, protection from threats and citizen engagement). Travel to Bird Cities to honor and provide training.	June 2020



Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF)

2017 Main Proposal

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Activity 2: Implement projects to improve habitat, protect birds and involve citizens

Budget: \$148,240

To increase knowledge and skills of the public and students and to cultivate an on-going commitment to sustaining their bird-friendly community we will guide, train and educate residents and local officials in habitat restoration, threat reduction, citizen involvement, and birding tourism within their communities.

Outcomes	Completion Date
1. ~50 trained educators bringing bird education to Bird City communities through the existing <i>Flying Wild</i> curriculum	June 2020
2. ~200 local officials trained to tap into wildlife tourism opportunities and benefits locally	June 2020
3. ~80 threat reduction projects (ex. Reducing pesticide use, fixing dangerous windows, encouraging cats indoors) involving ~8000 people in BC communities	June 2020
4. ~120 habitat improvement projects (ex. Restoration, demonstration gardens, conversion of turf grass along boulevards / parks, adopt pollinator/bird friendly policy)	June 2020
5. ~80 citizen engagement projects (ex. Nest monitoring, restoring habitat, youth birding club, accessible birding trails, multi-lingual birding resources)	June 2020
6. ~100 birding events in ~40 communities over 3 years reaching at least 10,000 people	June 2020

III. PROJECT STRATEGY

A. Project Team/Partners

(Receiving funding) Audubon Minnesota (Joanna Eckles) will lead the project. A program coordinator (new) will develop resources and travel statewide to promote and assist communities. Minnesota DNR (Carrol Henderson) will collaborate to assist with implementation of tourism workshops and (Jan Welsh) will collaborate to assist with implementation of *Flying Wild* workshops for leaders / educators in participating communities.

(Contributing funds/resources) The Red Wing Audubon chapter (Board & members) will work with the City of Redwing as a potential pilot city; 11 other Audubon chapters (Board & members) throughout the state, Conservation Minnesota (Community Conservation Coordinators) and Explore Minnesota Tourism (Christine Lawton, Colleen Tollefson) will help promote Bird City Minnesota throughout the state.

B. Project Impact and Long-Term Strategy

Bird City Minnesota is part of a larger plan. It fulfills the goals of the US Fish & Wildlife Service’s Urban Bird Treaty program (21 cities including Minneapolis and St. Paul) and explicitly implements the statewide *Guide for Urban Bird Conservation*, written by Audubon Minnesota in cooperation with many partners.

Bird City Minnesota comprehensively addresses a breadth of conservation concerns by providing communities large and small with a powerful combination of tools, resources and subsequent recognition. Actively engaging the power and connections of local government and community partners acts as a dramatic multiplier. Bird City connects thousands of citizens, making their communities healthier for people, birds and other wildlife and inspiring other communities to join the program, generating lasting conservation results for years to come.

C. Timeline Requirements

ENRTF funding for 3 years will be timed perfectly to allow us to expand the pilot Bird City program statewide, resulting in significant and long-term benefits to Minnesota’s habitats, birds and people.

2017 Detailed Project Budget

Project Title: Bird City - Education for lasting conservation

IV. TOTAL ENRTF REQUEST BUDGET for 3 years

<u>BUDGET ITEM</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
Personnel: NOTE: Audubon staff are paid based on grant funding	
1 Audubon Minnesota Project Manager (.25 FTE for 3 years, 75% salary, 25% fringe)	\$ 53,700
1 Audubon Minnesota Program Coordinator (1 FTE for 3 years, 75% salary, 25% fringe)	\$ 156,900
1 Audubon Minnesota Administrative Support (.03 FTE for 3 years, 75% salary, 25% fringe)	\$ 5,500
1 Audubon Minnesota Communications Support (.05 FTE for 3 years, 75% salary, 25% fringe)	\$ 10,400
Professional/Technical/Service Contracts:	
Website consultant - to create online platform for communities to apply, renew and access information, materials and resources. An RFP will be issued.	\$ 15,000
Minnesota DNR - 10 Birding Tourism Workshops at \$1200 each	\$ 12,000
Minnesota DNR - Flying Wild curriculum materials for 50 educators in Bird City Communities (~\$26 per educator)	\$ 1,300
Equipment/Tools/Supplies:	
Bird City recognition materials (our estimated cost of \$220 per community for 2 highway signs, one flag and one plaque x 60 communities)	\$ 13,200
Travel:	
Lodging and travel based on Commission Plan: Estimate - In-state travel to promote and visit Bird Cities (~11,000 miles annually) with 80 visits to potential and participating communities (1/2 within 50 mi, 1/4 within 150 mi and the remaining 1/4 within 300 mi)	\$ 12,000
Additional Budget Items:	
	\$ -
TOTAL ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND \$ REQUEST =	\$ 280,000

V. OTHER FUNDS

<u>SOURCE OF FUNDS</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>	<u>Status</u>
Other Non-State \$ To Be Applied To Project During Project Period:		
St. Paul Foundation - Katherine B. Anderson Fund (January - Dec 2017)	\$ 15,000	<i>Pending</i>
McKnight Mississippi River Grant (January 2017-December 2018)	\$ 7,000	<i>Pending</i>
Aveda Clean Water Fund (January 2017-December 2018)	\$ 7,000	<i>Pending</i>
Other State \$ To Be Applied To Project During Project Period:	n/a	
In-kind Services To Be Applied To Project During Project Period:		
Audubon Administrative and Overhead costs at 24.82%	\$ 69,496	<i>Secured</i>
Minnesota DNR non-game wildlife program in-kind services	\$ 7,500	<i>Secured</i>
Saint Paul Natural Resources in-kind services	\$ 3,300	<i>Secured</i>
Hastings Environmental Protectors in-kind services	\$ 4,000	<i>Secured</i>
Carpenter Nature Center in-kind services	\$ 4,000	<i>Secured</i>
Funding History:	n/a	
Remaining \$ From Current ENRTF Appropriation:	n/a	

Bird City – Education for lasting conservation

WHAT? Through Bird City, Audubon Minnesota guides civic and government leaders to increase habitat, reduce threats to birds and engage people in conservation

WHY?

- Wildlife habitat is being severely degraded
- People are increasingly disconnected with nature
- Birds are an ideal focus for conservation and education
- Our best access to people creating change is through their local communities

GOALS and OUTCOMES:



40-60 Minnesota communities statewide by 2020



Leveraging the power of local government by guiding and supporting at least **400 staff** and **400,000 citizens** to:



Improve habitat for birds and other wildlife by:

- Adding native plants to city parks and at home
- Removing invasive species in prairies, woods and wetlands
- Adopting bird and pollinator friendly policies



Reduce threats to birds by:

- Reducing window collisions and light pollution
- Keeping cats indoors
- Reducing and revising chemical / pesticide use



Engage citizens by:

- Getting them involved in restoration and bird monitoring
- Creating accessible trails, youth birding clubs and multi-lingual birding resources
- Celebrating birds together at one or more public events annually

LONG-TERM, through the Bird City program, Audubon Minnesota and our partners will:

- Maintain and restore a healthy, biodiverse natural environment
- Create highly effective, locally led partnerships focused on conservation and community engagement
- Contribute to nurturing a long-lasting, action-based conservation ethic

Audubon



BIRD CITY
MINNESOTA



MAKING communities healthier for people, birds and other wildlife

PROJECT TITLE: Bird City – Education for lasting conservation

Audubon Minnesota: Organizational Description

Audubon Minnesota is the state office of the National Audubon Society. Established in 1979, we share Audubon’s 115-year heritage of working to protect our environment. While we are part of the national organization, we establish our own statewide programs and pursue our own funding for Minnesota efforts. The Audubon Minnesota mission is to conserve and restore Minnesota’s natural ecosystems, focusing on birds and their habitats, for the benefit of humanity and the earth’s biological diversity. Today there are nearly 17,000 Audubon members in Minnesota, organized into 14 geographically-based chapters from Agassiz Audubon Chapter in Thief River Falls to the Coulee Region Audubon Chapter in La Crescent.

Manager Qualifications

Project Manager – Joanna Eckles, Bird-friendly Communities Manager – Audubon Minnesota.

Joanna has a B.S. in Wildlife Science from Cornell University and an M.S. in Conservation Biology from the University of Minnesota. She has worked in bird conservation for over 25 years at Audubon Minnesota, The World Parrot Trust and the Minnesota Zoo. Joanna has coordinated Audubon’s Project BirdSafe to reduce bird-window collisions since 2008 and has been developing the Bird City program over the past year. As project director Joanna will be responsible for budget and project oversight, ensure full partner participation, and be the direct supervisor of project employees and volunteers.