

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

Project Title:

ENRTF ID: 098-C

Implementing Identified Climate Adaptation Priorities in Rural Minnesota

Category: C. Environmental Education

Total Project Budget: \$ 319,735

Proposed Project Time Period for the Funding Requested: 2 years, July 2017 – June 2019

Summary:

We will implement previously-identified climate adaptation projects in Morris, Grand Rapids and Winona, and create tools for more rural communities in Minnesota to develop and implement community-driven climate adaptation plans.

Name: Anna Claussen

Sponsoring Organization: Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy

Address: 2105 First Ave S
Minneapolis MN 55404

Telephone Number: (612) 870-3423

Email: tritter@iatp.org

Web Address: www.iatp.org

Location

Region: Statewide

County Name: Statewide

City / Township:

Alternate Text for Visual:

This visual describes the previously identified climate adaptation priorities in Morris, Grand Rapids, and Winona. Local action teams will choose which projects they will implement from these priorities.

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



PROJECT TITLE: Implementing Identified Climate Adaptation Priorities in Rural Minnesota

I. PROJECT STATEMENT

This grant would support work in Morris, Grand Rapids and Winona, MN to implement climate change adaptation priorities previously identified through in-depth, deliberative Rural Climate Dialogues (RCDs) that convened over the past two years. This grant would also support broadened rural organizing around climate change across Minnesota through the creation of a rural organizing handbook and digital resources to enable more RCDs and related follow-up climate adaptation projects to occur in rural Minnesota.

Rural-led climate change adaptation is critical because rural areas are disproportionately affected by climate change. Many climate solutions are dependent upon rural people and resources, including renewable energy deployment, changes to land use patterns, and improved management of water resources. However, rural Minnesota is often overlooked in climate conversations, with climate action frequently reflecting urban and suburban perspectives. Through the RCDs, we’ve developed an effective climate engagement strategy for rural communities where community members are empowered to undertake climate adaptation efforts locally.

Over the last two years, we’ve hosted RCDs in Morris, Grand Rapids and Winona, MN. Each event lasted three days and convened a demographically representative group of 15-18 community members to hear from local experts and create a statement of challenges, opportunities and action steps on climate adaptation. Proposed actions included energy-saving measures in homes and public spaces in Morris; using green design to improve stormwater management in Grand Rapids; and improving watershed management in Winona. All three communities prioritized holding public education events on local climate change impacts. RCD participants reflected diverse political affiliations, ages, education ranges and beliefs about climate change. Implementing the community-identified climate actions will allow us to continue bridging these common rural divides.

This grant would fund local organizers in each community to implement the previously identified actions in partnership with local action teams, IATP, and the Jefferson Center (previously identified actions are available in the attached visual, and full details from each Dialogue are accessible at ruralclimatenetwork.org/content/rural-climate-dialogues). We would also compile an organizing handbook and digital resources outlining how to effectively convene RCDs in other communities, including how to effectively organize follow-up activities. This project would not only improve climate resilience; it would authentically engage diverse cross-sections of each community, building a broader action-based conservation ethic across rural Minnesota.

II. PROJECT ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES

Activity 1: *Create local action teams to implement climate adaption projects* **Budget: \$83,500**

IATP, Jefferson Center, and local leaders will form action teams to direct follow up activities in each community. Each action team will be made up of 5-15 community members. Part time community organizers will be hired in Grand Rapids and Winona (funding has already been secured for a community organizer in Morris).

Outcome	Completion Date
1. Hire one community organizer in Grand Rapids/Itasca County	September 2017
2. Hire one community organizer in Winona/Winona County	September 2017
3. Convene two launch meetings in each of the three communities to organize local action teams and build community support for the RCD follow up projects.	December 2017

Activity 2: *Implementing climate adaptation projects in Morris, Grand Rapids, Winona* **Budget: \$187,517**

IATP, Jefferson Center, community organizers and local action teams will select and carry out projects in each community from the RCD recommendations. Selected RCD-identified recommendations are detailed in the attached visual. Resources to implement projects will be allocated equally at \$30,000 per community.

Outcome	Completion Date
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Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF)

2017 Main Proposal

Project Title: *Implementing Identified Climate Adaptation Priorities in Rural Minnesota*

<i>1. Implement 1-3 projects based on RCD recommendations in Morris/Stevens County</i>	<i>July 2019</i>
<i>2. Implement 1-3 projects based on RCD recommendations in Grand Rapids/Itasca County</i>	<i>July 2019</i>
<i>3. Implement 1-3 projects based on RCD recommendations in Winona/Winona County</i>	<i>July 2019</i>

Activity 3: Compile a handbook & digital resources to organize RCDs in more communities Budget: \$48,718

We will develop an organizing handbook and digital resources that detail how to carry out RCD pre-work, the RCD event itself, and successful follow-up activities in other rural communities across Minnesota. This handbook will be used for future rural climate organizing throughout Minnesota.

Outcome	Completion Date
<i>1. Compile a handbook of the RCD process to facilitate more RCDs throughout the state</i>	<i>March 2019</i>
<i>2. Improve digital resources to convey RCD results and assist future community organizers</i>	<i>March 2019</i>
<i>2. Share results with communities and organizations in Minnesota and nationally</i>	<i>July 2019</i>

III. PROJECT STRATEGY

A. Project Team/Partners

Staff at IATP (Anna Claussen, Director of Rural Strategies; and Tara Ritter, Program Associate for Climate and Rural Communities) will lead community organizing efforts, project selection and implementation activities, and the creation of the organizing handbook and related resources. The Jefferson Center (Andrew Rockway, Program Director; and Camille Morse-Nicholson, Program Associate) will facilitate community action team meetings and assist in project implementation activities. The aforementioned IATP and Jefferson Center staff members would receive money from this request. Local partners—who would not receive money from this request—include the University of Minnesota-Morris, the City of Morris, Morris Area High School, the City of Grand Rapids, Grand Rapids High School, Itasca Water Legacy Partnership, the City of Winona, Winona County, Winona State University’s Outdoor Education Center, Winona Senior High School, Sustain Winona, farm member organizations, and others. These project partners will participate in project implementation efforts.

B. Project Impact and Long-Term Strategy

The proposed projects in each community will have a statewide impact by demonstrating successful, place-based, locally-led climate initiatives in rural communities. The projects will provide innovative examples that can inform more extensive statewide programs, policies and partnerships to address climate change and extreme weather in a way that bridges political affiliations and beliefs about climate change.

In addition, each project will have a measurable impact on the environment. Depending on the specific RCD-recommended projects chosen in each community, impacts will range from improved stormwater infrastructure to county-wide energy efficiency improvements to more sustainable agriculture and forestry practices.

This funding would allow us to galvanize local leadership on climate change in rural communities, which would sustain future community action on climate change by creating coalitions of engaged citizens of diverse viewpoints and backgrounds. The organizing handbook would be used throughout Minnesota to host more RCDs and propel similarly effective community-based climate solutions statewide.

C. Timeline Requirements

We will implement all proposed activities by July 2019. Hiring community organizers in Grand Rapids and Winona will be completed by September 2017. Initial action team meetings in each community will be completed by December 2017. Identifying and implementing projects in each community selected from RCD recommendations will be completed by July 2019. Creating an organizing handbook and digital resources will be completed by March 2019 and statewide resource dissemination will be completed by July 2019.

2017 Detailed Project Budget

Project Title: Implementing Identified Climate Adaptation Priorities in Rural Minnesota

IV. TOTAL ENRTF REQUEST BUDGET: 2 year

BUDGET ITEM (See "Guidance on Allowable Expenses", p. 13)	AMOUNT
Personnel:	
Anna Claussen, Project Manager - (25% FTE; 80% salary and 20% benefits for 2 years)	\$ 39,375
Tara Ritter, Project Associate - (50% FTE; 80% salary and 20% benefits for 2 years)	\$ 57,500
Professional/Technical/Service Contracts:	
Jefferson Center: Coordinating and facilitating community action meetings; assisting in project implementation activities. (50 hours/month at \$75/hour for 2 years)	\$ 90,000
Grand Rapids Community Organizer: To coordinate in community building and project implementation activities (\$15/hr * average 20hrs/wk * 50wks)	\$ 15,000
Winona Community Organizer: To coordinate in community building and project implementation activities (\$15/hr * average 20hrs/wk * 50wks)	\$ 15,000
Equipment/Tools/Supplies:	
Materials for 6 community action meetings (printing, notepads, food)	\$ 1,500
Acquisition (Fee Title or Permanent Easements): N/A	
Travel:	
In-state mileage reimbursement for project staff's travel to project communities. Average of 300 miles/trip and 5 trips to each of the 3 communities = 4500 miles at 54 cents/mile	\$ 2,430
Lodging for project staff during travel to project communities. 15 trips (5 trips to each of 3 communities), 1 night lodging for 2 staff people per trip. GSA lodging rate of	\$ 2,670
Meals for project staff during travel to project communities. 15 trips (5 trips to each of 3 communities) for 2 days each for 2 staff people. GSA meals rate of \$51/day in rural	\$ 3,060
Additional Budget Items:	
Space rental for 6 community action meetings (2 meetings in 3 communities at	\$ 1,200
Publication/printing for Rural Organizing Handbook and digital resources	\$ 2,000
Climate adaptation project implementation expenses (3 communities at \$30,000 per community). Projects will be selected from a pre-determined list of options generated at previously-convened Rural Climate Dialogues in each community. (See narrative and visual for list of possibilities; selection will be community driven.)	\$ 90,000
TOTAL ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND \$ REQUEST =	\$ 319,735

V. OTHER FUNDS

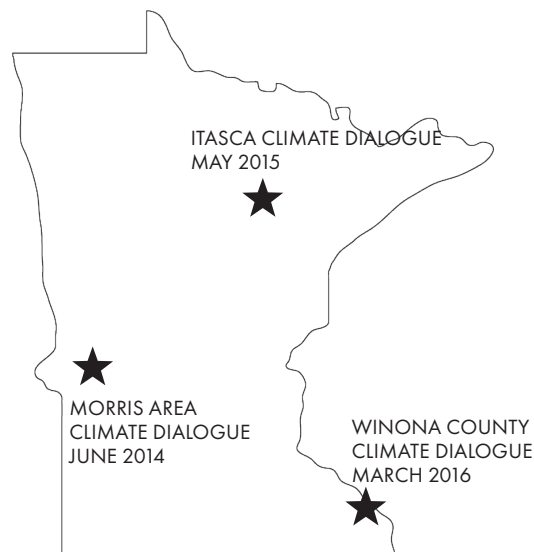
SOURCE OF FUNDS	AMOUNT	Status
Other Non-State \$ To Be Applied To Project During Project Period: N/A	-	-
Other State \$ To Be Applied To Project During Project Period: N/A	-	-
In-kind Services To Be Applied To Project During Project Period: N/A	-	-
Funding History:		
McKnight Foundation - Community deliberation as part of Rural Climate Dialogues	\$ 150,000	secured / completed
Clif Bar Family - Community deliberation as part of Rural Climate Dialogues	\$ 4,000	secured / completed
Farm Aid - Community deliberation as part of Rural Climate Dialogues	\$ 2,500	secured / completed
Rockefeller Foundation - Community deliberation as part of Rural Climate Dialogues	\$ 10,000	secured / completed
Minnesota Pollution Control Agency - Year 2 funding for education and awareness organizing efforts in Morris, MN. (\$8,220)	\$ 8,220	secured / completed
McKnight Foundation - Convening of partners from all 3 communities to share lessons, resources, and discuss pilot project ideas. Scheduled for September 2016 (\$20,000)	\$ 20,000	secured / in process
Remaining \$ From Current ENRTF Appropriation: N/A	-	-

Implementing Identified Climate Adaptation Priorities in Rural Minnesota

We are applying for funding to implement community-identified actions to address climate change in three rural communities. Our aim is to implement 1 to 3 actions in each community in conjunction with local partners. A selection of actions identified through community planning processes as part of the *Rural Climate Dialogues* are listed below. These communities will help model local climate adaptation efforts for rural communities in Minnesota and beyond.

MORRIS / STEVENS COUNTY

- » Assess homes for potential structural and energy-saving improvements.
- » Encourage better construction in new homes, quality retrofitting of old homes, and investment in energy efficient appliances and alternative energy sources.
- » Use water channeling and drainage to control flooding, erosion, and, where possible, capture water for other uses.
- » Encourage and implement diversity in crops and crop rotation.
- » Implement discussion of climate change into K-12 education.
- » Hold town meetings where government officials, agricultural producers, utility providers, human services, and the public can generate and discuss new ideas so voters and consumers can make more informed decisions.



GRAND RAPIDS / ITASCA COUNTY

- » Protect wildlife habitat and water quality by planting flowers and native plants, reducing the use of pesticides, raising bees, pursuing green infrastructure on public and private property, and more.
- » Increase energy efficiency by insulating our homes, using efficient bulbs and appliances, traveling by bike, improving the fuel efficiency of our vehicles, traveling less, and more.
- » Expand public participation in public decision making related to our infrastructure systems.

WINONA / WINONA COUNTY

- » Consider home, business, or public space strategies to promote water retention instead of quick runoff, such as semi-permeable parking and walkway surfaces, rain gardens, native plantings, and protecting storm sewers from pollutants and debris.
- » Limit development in floodplains, overuse of water supplies, and other activities to mitigate issues from extreme weather.
- » Plant pollinator habitat, native plants and prairie grasses, and rain gardens, considering applicable local statutes.
- » Consider utilizing the Property-Assessed Clean Energy Financing (PACE) option for financing clean energy projects.
- » Participate in the Minnesota GreenStep Cities program.

Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy

Project Director

As the Director of Rural Strategies at IATP, Anna Claussen focuses on the creation and retention of natural and social wealth within rural communities in order to improve the quality of life for all residents. Her interests include the impact of extreme weather and climate change on rural communities and the opportunities for an emerging bio-based economy that can produce clean food, energy and materials. A landscape architect by training, Anna bridges years of practice in urban planning with a life deeply rooted on a Minnesota family farm. Previously, Anna has focused on creating resilient communities through the creation of alternative land-use plans, regional greenway studies, city comprehensive plans, and park and trail system plans for communities across Minnesota and the Upper Midwest. She advises a number of organizations working on rural resiliency issues, including as co-chair of the Minnesota Green Chemistry Forum, steering committee member of the National Rural Assembly and recent alumni of the Minnesota Agriculture and Rural Leadership program (MARL). Anna has a bachelor's degree in geography and studio arts from Gustavus Adolphus College and a master's degree in landscape architecture from the College of Design at the University of Minnesota.

Organizational Description

Founded in 1986, IATP is a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organization whose mission is to work locally and globally at the intersection of policy and practice to ensure fair and sustainable food, farm and trade systems. We work to build bridges between different constituencies with the goal of developing local, state, national and international policies that will promote environmental and human health; ensure socially and ecologically sustainable development; value human rights; increase the capacity of civil society to participate in policymaking; and strengthen local and regional economies.

Over the past two years, IATP has partnered with the Jefferson Center to develop the Rural Climate Dialogues, an effort to leverage policy recommendations and direct action ideas developed through multi-day democratic deliberation, high school student deliberation, community organizing, and urban-rural partnerships to address the effects of climate change in rural communities. To foster high quality engagement, we use the time-tested Citizens Jury method. This approach, which brings together a microcosm of the community to study an issue in-depth and generate a shared community response, has consistently provided a productive, educational, and inclusive way to address challenges. The juries receive expert information and resources to produce their own recommendations on how the community can maintain and strengthen resilience and prosperity in the face of climate challenges. The Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy and the Jefferson Center, along with local partners, work to engage panelists and community members inspired by the conversation to work on these issues as local leaders. This approach unites rural knowledge and enthusiasm with technical expertise and advocacy support to promote climate solutions tailored to local conditions and supported by the broader public. The Rural Climate Dialogues develop and amplify an informed voice of the people so that regional, state, and national policymakers can take their needs into account when developing climate policy.