

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

Project Title:

ENRTF ID: 160-F

Restoring 83-acres of Prairie, Savanna & Forest Habitat

Category: F. Methods to Protect, Restore, and Enhance Land, Water, and Habitat

Total Project Budget: \$ 213,450

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

Summary:

Friends of the Mississippi River is proposing to increase and improve 83 acres of habitat at 7 sites along the Mississippi and Vermillion river corridors.

Name: Tom Lewanski

Sponsoring Organization: Friends of the Mississippi River

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Location

Region: Metro

County Name: Dakota, Hennepin, Washington

City / Township: Minneapolis, City of Rosemount, City of Inver Grove Heights, City of Cottage Grove, Vermil

Alternate Text for Visual:

Map illustrates the location of the 7 proposed restoration sites.

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



Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF)

2017 Main Proposal

Project Title: Metro Conservation Corridors Phase 10 – FMR-Restoring prairie, savanna & forest habitat along the Mississippi and Vermillion Rivers.

PROJECT TITLE: Metro Conservation Corridors Phase 10 - FMR-Restoring prairie, savanna & forest habitat along the Mississippi and Vermillion Rivers.

I. PROJECT STATEMENT

Friends of the Mississippi River is proposing to increase and improve 83 acres of habitat at 7 sites along the Mississippi and Vermillion river corridors. Habitat fragmentation and degradation from non-native species, diseases and other causes threaten Minnesota’s rich natural heritage. This situation will be exacerbated as the state’s climate continues to change. A system of interconnected natural areas can help to ameliorate these impacts by providing both habitat and the ability for native species to move on the landscape in response to these changes. This is the goal of the Metro Conservation Corridors partnership and of this proposal. The projects on our list are all along the Mississippi and Vermillion Rivers, natural corridors that link the existing nodes of high biodiversity.

The overarching goal for this project is to restore and enhance prairie, savanna and forest habitat along these river corridors. While these projects will improve habitat for a variety of species, FMR will specifically focus on increasing habitat for our diminishing pollinators. We will seed and install a diversity of host and nectar plants. The restoration activities, presented in existing natural resource management plans, include exotic invasive plant removal, soil preparation, spraying, seeding, mowing, plant installation and burning. To help reduce costs and to increase the educational outcomes, FMR will organize volunteer stewardship events to accomplish some of the restoration activities at some of these sites. These restoration activities will have multiple benefits. An important outcome will be to improve or increase habitat for native pollinators by increasing host and nectar plants. Seed mixes will exceed the MN-BWSR guidelines, with many additional pollinator plant blooms in all seasons. Restoration activities at these sites will provide water quality benefits by installing deep-rooted prairie/savanna plants that help reduce erosion and sediment & chemicals from entering the rivers. Being within the Metro area, these sites provide examples of diverse native habitat for area residents to enjoy and learn about. A final goal of this project is to work with MeCC partners to develop a more uniform restoration monitoring and evaluation protocol that also allows the data to be shared.

II. PROJECT ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES

Activity 1: Restore 83 acres of forest, savanna & prairie at 7 sites.

Budget: \$206,300

Outcome	Completion Date
1. Install 18 acres of prairie	June 30, 2020
2. Enhance 1 acre of prairie	June 30, 2020
3. Enhance 57 acres of oak savanna	June 30, 2020
4. Enhance 7 acres of forest	June 30, 2020

Description: FMR will hire contractors and organize stewardship volunteers to conduct restoration and enhancement activities on 57-acres of oak savanna, 19-acres of prairie and 7-acres of forest at 7 sites in Dakota, Washington and Hennepin Counties. These activities will include prescribed burns, woody and exotic plant removal, seeding, and mowing. FMR staff will work with contractors in the field to clarify activities, timeframes, & expected performance standards and will monitor the work throughout the project’s timeframe. Staff will evaluate impacts of restoration activities. FMR staff may conduct breeding bird surveys at some of the sites.

Activity 2: Development of evaluation protocol and data sharing system

Budget: \$7,150

Outcome	Completion Date
1. Develop restoration monitoring protocol and methodology	June 30, 2020



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Description: In order to better monitor and track the progress and success of our ecological restorations, FMR will work with MeCC partners to institute a restoration monitoring protocol. FMR's Ecologists are crucial to the development of this protocol. We will make use of software that will allow the data to be shared. Using recently acquired hardware (Apple tablets), FMR ecologists will use the protocols to evaluate current restoration projects and to conduct initial vegetation surveys and site assessments at new sites. This technology and the associated protocols will streamline data collection and fieldwork, and will make tracking our restorations efficient and shareable, improving interagency collaboration and overall restoration success.

III. PROJECT STRATEGY

A. Project Team/Partners

Project Team: The FMR team includes Tom Iewanski, Karen Schik, Alex Roth and Barb Heintz.

Project Partners Receiving Funds:

1. Friends of the Mississippi River (\$26,400) Manage restoration projects and grant, project evaluation
2. Plant/seed retailers TBD (\$35,000) Provide native plants and seeds for restoration projects
3. Habitat restoration contractors TBD (\$143,900) Conduct habitat restoration activities

Project Partners Not Receiving Funds:

1. Minneapolis Park Board. Consultation regarding restoration on Park Board land.
2. Dakota County. Consultation regarding restoration on County land.
3. City of Inver Grove Heights. Consultation regarding restoration on city land and providing in-kind restoration activities.
4. City of Cottage Grove. Consultation regarding restoration on city land.
5. Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. Consultation regarding restoration on state land.

B. Project Impact and Long-Term Strategy

This proposal is the tenth phase in the Metro Conservation Corridors partnership, formed to address land conservation needs in the 11 county metro area. The partnership may submit additional proposals in the future to continue land conservation efforts. As for the specific project sites presented in this proposal, there are some that will achieve a management stage and therefore will become the responsibility of the landowner in future. For others, we may expand restoration to adjoining areas. FMR has been strategically focused on specific areas within the designated conservation corridors for over a decade. This has allowed us to stay engaged with projects, landowners, partners and communities, helping to ensure continuous improvement and expansion of the habitat values at these sites, while protecting the public investment that has been made. Our project areas have grown by orders of magnitude to protect and restore large tracts of land, ultimately creating contiguous greenway corridors. Each of the projects submitted in this proposal will have long-term benefits to the State of Minnesota's environment. This project will quicken the pace of restoring and enhancing critical habitat in the Metro area and the migration corridors species need to move on the landscape in response to a changing environment. With the landowners' commitments to maintain these sites, once they achieve a management phase, we are confident that these natural assets will provide important ecological services well into the future. FMR is committed to conducting fundraising from both public and private sources, for the ongoing restoration and enhancement activities required at these sites.

C. Timeline Requirements

FMR is planning to complete the activities presented in this proposal by June 30, 2020. However, unforeseen natural conditions such as extremely late spring, wet conditions or flooding could prevent some of these activities from being completed in this time frame.

2017 Detailed Project Budget

Project Title: *Metro Conservation Corridors Phase 10 –FMR- Restoring prairie, savanna & forest habitat along the Mississippi and Vermillion Rivers.*

IV. TOTAL ENRTF REQUEST BUDGET 3 years

BUDGET ITEM	AMOUNT
Personnel:	\$ 28,500
Conservation Director: Overall project management, assist with evaluation of restoration projects, partner communications, landowner relations.(\$4,380) .017 FTE each year for the three-year project. 88% salary, 12% benefits.	
Ecologist (2): Plan/organize restoration activities, develop and put out RFPs, hire and oversee vendors, guide restoration activities, evaluate restoration activities. Participate in evaluation protocol & methodology development with partners.(\$22,400) .10 FTE each year for the three-year project. 88% Salary, 12% Benefits.	
Bookkeeper: Pay invoices received. Assist in developing report & reimbursement documentation, track and document staff expenses. (\$1720) .01FTE each year for the three-year project. 88% Salary, 12% Benefits.	
Professional/Technical/Service Contracts: Vendors to provide restoration services such as prescribed burns, soil prep., seeding, woody and exotic plant removal, herbicide application, etc. (RFPs will be distributed and vendor contracts will be awarded on a competitive and performance basis.)	\$ 143,900
Data plan for two tablets covering the 3 years of the grant.	\$3,600
Equipment/Tools/Supplies: Restoration Supplies: (\$26,000 <i>Plants for 5 sites</i>), (\$8,800 <i>prairie seed for 1 site</i>), (\$1,200 <i>tree guards, mulch, etc.</i>)	\$ 36,000
Travel: Staff travel from office to project sites.	\$ 1,450
TOTAL ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND \$ REQUEST =	\$ 213,450

V. OTHER FUNDS

SOURCE OF FUNDS	AMOUNT	Status
Other Non-State \$ To Be Applied To Project During Project Period: FMR has applied for federal funding to cover the costs for organizing 7 volunteer stewardship events over the course of this grant to install and care for plants at 5 sites.	\$ 8,100	<i>Pending</i>
2 tablets for field evaluation & monitoring data collection.	\$1,500	<i>secured</i>
Other State \$ To Be Applied To Project During Project Period:	NA	NA
In-kind Services To Be Applied To Project During Project Period: The City of Inver Grove Heights will prepare planting holes for tree and water plants over a two year period.	\$ 4,000	<i>Pending</i>
Funding History: Indicate funding secured but to be expended prior to July 1, 2016. 2009 ENRTF appropriation. MeCC 5. Restoration within Metro Corridors. 6/16/2009 – 6/30/11 \$90,000 2011 ENRTF appropriation. MeCC 6. Restoration within Metro Corridors. 7/1/2011 - 6/30/13 - \$200,000 2013 ENRTF appropriation. MeCC 7. Restoration within Metro Corridors. 7/1/2013 – 6/30/16 - \$304,000 OHF appropriation-Metro Big Rivers II - Restoration in the Metro Area. 7/1/11 – 6/30/16 - \$150,000 OHF appropriation-Metro Big Rivers III - Restoration in the Metro Area. 7/1/12 – 6/30/17 - \$375,000 Outdoor Heritage Fund-Conservation Partners Legacy Grant Program 1/10/2011 – 6/30/14 - \$94,374 2014 ENRTF appropriation. Restoration within the Metro Area. 6/4/14 – 6/30/17 - \$200,000 OHF appropriation-Metro Big Rivers IV - Restoration in the Metro Area. 7/1/13 – 6/30/16 - \$160,000 OHF appropriation -Metro Big Rivers V - Restoration in the Metro Area. 7/12/14 – 6/30/17 -	\$ 2,333,374	
Remaining \$ From Current ENRTF Appropriation: \$35,592 (as of December 31, 2015) remaining from M.L. 2013 Chp. 52, Sec. 2, Subd. 04d2.1/3.4 - Metro Conservation Corridors (MeCC) Phase VII- Friends of the Mississippi River. Protect, Restore and Enhance Significant Watershed Habitat	\$ 35,592	<i>Legally Obligated</i>
Remaining \$ From Current ENRTF Appropriation: \$276,000 (as of December 31, 2015) remaining from M.L. 2015, Chp. 76, Sec. 2, Subd. 08e - Metro Conservation Corridors Phase VIII – Prairie, Forest, and Savanna Restoration in Greater Metropolitan Area.	\$ 276,000	<i>committed but unspent</i>

**Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund
2017 Proposed Acquisition/Restoration List**

Project Title: Metro Conservation Corridors Phase 10–FMR- Restoring prairie, savanna & forest habitat along the Mississippi and Vermillion Rivers.

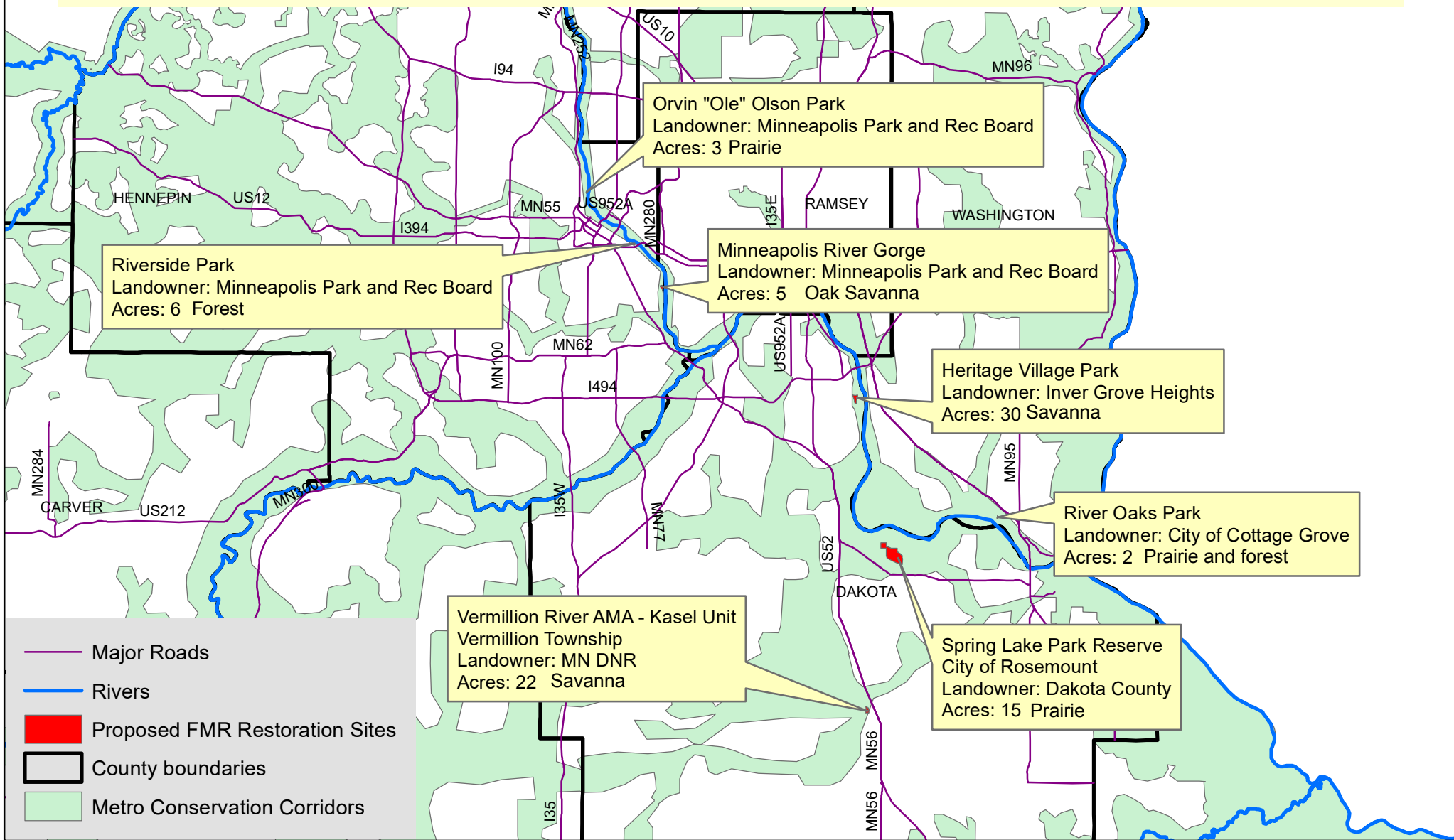
Project Manager Name: Tom Lewanski

Organization: Friends of the Mississippi River

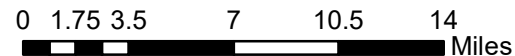
ENRTF \$ Request: \$213,450

#	Acquisition or Restoration Parcel Name	Geographic Coordinates Format: [Deg.]° [Min.]' [Sec.]" [Hemis.]		Estimated Cost	County	Ecological Significance	Activity Description	# of Acres	# of Shoreline Miles	Type of Landowner	Proposed Fee Title or Easement Holder (if applicable)
		Latitude	Longitude								
1	River Oaks Park	44°46'57.7"N	92°53'00.6"W	9,200	Washington	Oak Savanna, Prairie, Mississippi River Bluffland	Weed control and planting of native shrubs and seeding forbs	2		Public	NA
2	Riverside Park	44°58'01.4"N	93°13'54.8"W	17,700	Hennepin	Forest habitat along Mississippi River. Important bird habitat	Forest restoration	6		Public	NA
3	Minneapolis Gorge -	44°56'15.1"N	93°12'15.2"W	18000	Hennepin	Oak Savanna, Mississippi River Bluffland, Important bird habitat	Savanna restoration	5		Public	NA
4	Minneapolis Riverfront - Ole Olson	45°00'08.8"N	93°16'33.5"W	21,800	Hennepin	Mississippi River riparian area, pollinator habitat, water quality	Prairie restoration	3	0.3	Public	NA
6	Vermillion River AMA-Kasel unit	44°39'01.5"N	93°00'26.6"W	95,200	Dakota County	Vermillion River Riparian Area, Oak savanna, important bird & pollinator habitat	Oak savanna restoration	22	0.3	Public	NA
7	Heritage Park - Inver Grove Heights	44°51'44.0"N	93°01'06.5"W	20,200	Dakota County	Mississippi River riparian area, bird & pollinator habitat, water quality	Floodplain forest and upland savanna restoration	33	0.16	Public	NA
8	Spring Lake Park Reserve	44°45'19.6"N	92°59'11.4"W	24,200	Dakota County	Pollinator and bird habitat along Mississippi River	Prairie restoration	15		Public	NA
9											
10											
NOTES:											

Project Title: Metro Conservation Corridors (MeCC) Phase 10 FMR - Restoring prairie, savanna and forest habitat along the Mississippi and Vermillion Rivers



1:405,000



05/07/2016

ENRTF ID: 160-



PROJECT TITLE: Metro Conservation Corridors (MeCC) Phase VIII-Ecological Landscapes.
Friends of the Mississippi River.

Project Manager Qualifications:

Tom Lewanski, Conservation Director

Tom holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Outdoor Education, and Masters & Doctorate degrees in Public Administration. Tom has over 30 years of experience working in the environmental/conservation field. Since 1998 he has served as FMR's Conservation Director. In that capacity Tom has led the organization's efforts to protect and restore land in the Mississippi River watershed, resulting in the establishment of three new Scientific and Natural Areas in Dakota County and the protection and restoration of hundreds of acres of natural areas. A skilled naturalist, he taught environmental education at the Carpenter Nature Center for ten years. Tom is the lead staff person responsible for FMR's land conservation work.

Organization Description:

Friends of the Mississippi River (FMR) is a leading citizen organization working to protect and enhance the Mississippi River and its watershed in the Twin Cities area. We believe the tremendous ecological, cultural, scenic and recreational values of the river must be carefully tended to ensure that they continue to be shared equally by all citizens and that they endure for future generations. We accomplish these goals through three inter-related programs.

- Land Conservation: We work with public and private landowners to protect, restore and manage important natural areas along the river and its key tributaries.
- Watershed Protection: Working with citizens and local governments, we strive to draw attention to the health of local rivers, lakes and wetlands and bring citizen opinion to bear on decisions that improve water quality.
- River Corridor Stewardship: The Mississippi River cannot protect itself. We engage citizens in a variety of educational, recreational, and volunteer stewardship activities that give them the desire and the understanding to advocate on behalf of the river's public values at City Hall or the State Capitol.

