

**Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund
2018 Request for Proposals (RFP)**

Project Title:

ENRTF ID: 120-C

Expanding Nature Knowledge and Experience in North Minneapolis

Category: C. Environmental Education

Total Project Budget: \$ 865,000

Proposed Project Time Period for the Funding Requested: 2 years, July 2018 to June 2020

Summary:

Compelling, new, interactive exhibits at North Mississippi Regional Park will spark curiosity, increase knowledge, change behavior, and inspire a diverse audience of 326,000 annual visitors to explore the outdoors.

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Sponsoring Organization: Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board

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Location

Region: Southeast

County Name: Hennepin

City / Township: Minneapolis

Alternate Text for Visual:

Kroening Center floor plan, example images of indoor exhibits, teens exploring nature outside

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



PROJECT TITLE: Expanding Nature Knowledge and Experience in North Minneapolis

I. PROJECT STATEMENT:

Nature needs us. But what if you were scared of Nature? Didn't know much about it, or what you could do once you were in it? The Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board proposes to create compelling, new, interactive exhibits at North Mississippi Regional Park to spark curiosity about Nature, increase knowledge about Nature, entice visitors to explore the outdoors, and become better stewards of the environment.

The exhibits at North Mississippi Regional Park's Carl Kroening Interpretive Center are old and worn, and one-third of them have been removed due to safety concerns. The old exhibits focus on human relationships to the river. However, the last 15 years of on-site public programs prove this is not what the majority of people are interested in. People want to learn more about the natural resources found in the park - the land, the water, animals, birds and insects - and connect with Nature in a hands-on, immersive way.

North Mississippi Regional Park's 67 acres feature a mile of river shoreline, Shingle Creek, and 20 acres of restored prairie; it serves 326,000 annual visitors; and is adjacent to a defined Area of Concentrated Poverty with more than 50% people of color. New exhibits will provide a means to better serve the park's visitors, and respond to interests of diverse user groups. Interactive exhibits will focus on these major themes:

- Water: the Mississippi River & Shingle Creek, what impacts its health, who lives there
- Native plants and pollinators: wild bees and honey bees, butterflies and moths
- Wildlife and their adaptations to city living: coyotes, crows, and beavers
- Flight: dragonflies, monarch migration, flight mechanisms, the Mississippi flyway
- Citizen science: phenology, sharing data, opportunities to take action

Portions of the exhibits will change with the seasons, and will also promote ways people can take action to benefit land and water. Supporting components of the exhibits will allow park visitors to apply new knowledge in the park, engaging them in citizen science work while using hip waders, dip nets, turbidity tubes, binoculars, and beekeeper suits. The exhibits will encourage visitors to get outside and explore the park, and make better decisions to positively impact the natural world.

II. PROJECT ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES

Activity 1: Create interactive nature exhibits for north Minneapolis and north suburban residents Budget: \$1,077,000

The new exhibits will have an overarching theme of Nature in the City, and focus on Water, Native Plants & Pollinators, Wildlife, Flight, and Citizen Science. The exhibits will feature current research, compelling interpretation and visuals, and interactive components utilizing hands-on elements, technology, and equipment. The exhibits will be designed to encourage and help park visitors explore the larger park and engage directly with Nature.

Outcome	Completion Date
1. <i>The exhibit on Water enables visitors to see what's beneath the surface of the Mississippi River and Shingle Creek, from macro invertebrates, carp and walleye, to invisible invasive species and pollutants. Visitors learn about the impacts of erosion and stormwater runoff on the health of the waterbodies, and the creatures that rely on the river and creek.</i>	Fall 2019
2. <i>The exhibit on Native Plants and Pollinators allows visitors to get super close-up with plant and pollinator interactions, reveals the hidden world of elusive moths, compare the</i>	Fall 2019



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<i>lives and homes of wild bees with honey bees, and learn the differences between wasps and bees.</i>	
<i>3. The exhibit on Wildlife empowers visitors to learn about, and identify wildlife in the city and the adaptations they've made to survive, from crows massive winter gatherings for safety and mate selection; to the traveling and eating habits of raccoons and coyotes; and the astonishing impact of earth and tree moving beavers.</i>	<i>Fall 2019</i>
<i>4. The exhibit on Flight facilitates visitor investigation of insect flight mechanics, monarch migration, the Mississippi Flyway, and reveals the hidden world of dragonfly nymphs and their lives as acrobatic winged predators.</i>	<i>Fall 2019</i>
<i>5. Citizen science is woven throughout all the exhibits and visitors are inspired to participate and contribute their own observations</i>	<i>Fall 2019</i>
<i>6. Exhibits increase capacity for K-12 programming that supports understanding of interactions between land and water</i>	<i>Winter 2020</i>
<i>7. Scientific and field work equipment supports and engages youth and community audiences in citizen science programs in the park</i>	<i>Spring 2020</i>

III. PROJECT STRATEGY

A. Project Team/Partners

The project will be led by the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB), the primary ENRTF funding recipient. The project will involve the Mississippi Watershed Management Organization, City of Minneapolis, exhibit project consultant, and technical expertise. Please note that ENRTF funds will not be used for any MPRB staff costs.

Project Partners Receiving Funds:

Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board will lead project management, planning, and oversight. MPRB will use ENRTF funds for the exhibit development consultant, supporting exhibit equipment, and technical subject experts to provide current research information and review exhibit content for scientific accuracy.

Project Partners Not Receiving Funds:

City of Minneapolis, Mississippi Watershed Management Organization

B. Project Impact and Long-Term Strategy

In 2016, the MPRB's long term partner at North Mississippi Regional Park reallocated their staff and resources to other sites. Beginning in 2017, the MPRB approved new funding of \$130,000 (slated to increase to \$190,000 in 2018) to support on-site staff and programs. Our long term strategy is to continue to fund programming staff at North Mississippi Park and utilize the new exhibits as inspiration for enhanced public programs, improved visitor self-directed exploration, and richer programs for schools and summer camps. The impacts of the project will be tangible for many years to come: park visitors will gain new Nature knowledge that impacts their decision making and changes their behavior; new user groups feel comfortable in Nature and spend more time engaged in outdoor experiences; and the number and diversity of citizen scientists increases.

C. Timeline Requirements

If funded, concept and design of exhibits would begin in Fall 2018, with completion in Spring 2020.

2018 Detailed Project Budget

Project Title: Expanding Nature Knowledge and Experience in North Minneapolis

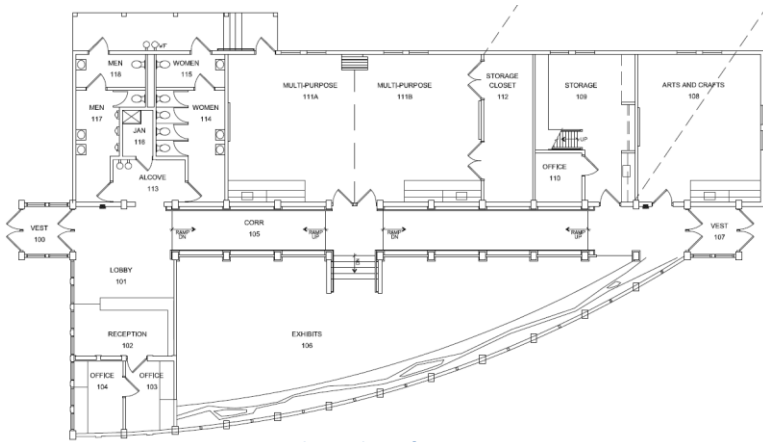
IV. TOTAL ENRTF REQUEST BUDGET two year project

BUDGET ITEM	AMOUNT
Professional/Technical/Service Contracts:	\$ -
An RFP will be issued for an exhibition development consultant to develop exhibition concepts, layout, exhibit components, graphics, lighting, production and installation	\$850,000
Equipment/Tools/Supplies:	
Equipment for outdoor scientific exploration and learning, final mix determined by exhibits and input from teen advisory panel (examples: hip waders, dip nets, and turbidity tubes, beekeeper suits, butterfly nets)	\$15,000
Additional Budget Items: <i>In this column, list any additional budget items that do not fit above categories. List by item(s) or item type(s) and explain how number was determined One row per type/category.</i>	\$ -
TOTAL ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND \$ REQUEST =	\$ 865,000

V. OTHER FUNDS *(This entire section must be filled out. Do not delete rows. Indicate "N/A" if row is not applicable.)*

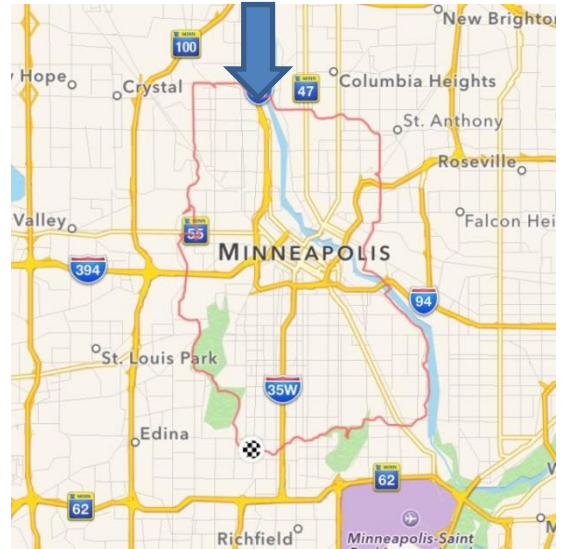
SOURCE OF FUNDS	AMOUNT	Status
Other Non-State \$ To Be Applied To Project During Project Period:		
City of Minneapolis Public Works - Surface Water & Sewers	\$50,000	<i>Secured</i>
Mississippi Watershed Management Organization	\$100,000	<i>Pending</i>
Other State \$ To Be Applied To Project During Project Period: None		
In-kind Services To Be Applied To Project During Project Period:		
Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board, Environmental Education Supervisor	\$31,000	<i>Secured</i>
Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board, North Mississippi Program Staff	\$18,000	<i>Secured</i>
Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board, Mississippi River Green Team (20 youth, 2 site supervisors)	\$8,000	<i>Secured</i>
City of Minneapolis Public Works - Surface Water & Sewers, Water Resources Regulatory Coordinator	\$5,000	<i>Secured</i>
Current ENRTF Appropriation: Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board, Invasive Carp Applied Research in Lake Nokomis Subwatershed. Applied 2016. Slated for completion 8/2019.	\$189,936	<i>project underway</i>
Other Funding History:	N/A	

**New exhibits at the Carl Kroening Interpretive Center
in North Mississippi Regional Park**



Floor plan of Kroening Interpretive Center

Park Location



**Be inspired inside
to go exploring
outside!**



07/29/2017



ENRTF ID: 120-C

Project Manager Qualifications and Organization Description

MaryLynn Pulscher, Environmental Education Supervisor, Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board

MaryLynn has more than 25 years of experience with the Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board, and for the last 15 years has managed the Environmental Education unit. She is responsible for the planning, development, implementation and evaluation of environmental education programs and sites including the Eloise Butler Wildflower Garden & Bird Sanctuary, JD Rivers' Children's Garden, and North Mississippi Park. She regularly develops partnerships, coordinates collaborative projects, and implements new programs and projects with neighborhood groups, non-profits, and other government entities. MaryLynn will serve as the project manager.

Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board

The mission of the Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board is to permanently preserve, protect, maintain, improve, and enhance its natural resources, parkland, and recreational opportunities for current and future generations. With 197 park properties totaling nearly 6,744 acres of land and water, the Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board provides places and recreation opportunities for all people to gather, celebrate, contemplate, and engage in activities that promote health, well-being, community, and the environment. Each year, approximately 18 million visits are made to the nationally acclaimed Minneapolis park system. Its urban forests, natural areas and waters endure and captivate. Its Grand Rounds Parkway system, neighborhood parks, recreation centers and diversified programming have made the Minneapolis park system an important component of what makes Minneapolis a great place to live, play and work.