

**Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund
2019 Request for Proposals (RFP)**

Project Title:

ENRTF ID: 140-CH

Youth Conservation and Stewardship Training Lab

Category: H. Proposals seeking \$200,000 or less in funding

Sub-Category: C. Environmental Education

Total Project Budget: \$ 198,478

Proposed Project Time Period for the Funding Requested: June 30, 2021 (2 yrs)

Summary:

This project engages underserved youth in the development of interactive learning stations, based on themes of water, urban restoration and pollinators, encouraging all park visitors to engage in citizen science.

Name: David Woods

Sponsoring Organization: Urban Roots

Title: Program manager

Department: _____

Address: 463 Maria Ave, Suite 207

St. Paul MN 55106

Telephone Number: (651) 228-7073

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Web Address http://urbanrootsmn.org/

Location

Region: Metro

County Name: Ramsey

City / Township: Saint Paul

Alternate Text for Visual:

map and location of Willowbrook Reserve showcasing locations of learning stations, Urban Roots youth engaged in hands on habitat restoration learning

<input type="checkbox"/>	Funding Priorities	<input type="checkbox"/>	Multiple Benefits	<input type="checkbox"/>	Outcomes	<input type="checkbox"/>	Knowledge Base
<input type="checkbox"/>	Extent of Impact	<input type="checkbox"/>	Innovation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Scientific/Tech Basis	<input type="checkbox"/>	Urgency
<input type="checkbox"/>	Capacity Readiness	<input type="checkbox"/>	Leverage	<input type="checkbox"/>		TOTAL	<input type="checkbox"/> %
<input type="checkbox"/> If under \$200,000, waive presentation?							



PROJECT TITLE: Youth Conservation and Stewardship Training Lab

I. PROJECT STATEMENT

Since 2014, Urban Roots youth conservation interns have been experimenting with a variety of habitat restoration methods in a natural area in the neighborhood where they live located in St Paul’s East Side neighborhood, where 64% of residents are of color (54% St. Paul), and 57% of its public school students qualify for free or reduced lunches. These budding conservationists are provided a work opportunity at a critical juncture – starting at age 15 or 16 and for most, their first job. In collaboration with natural resource professionals from local, state and non-profit organizations, Urban Roots crews are employing the best methods available to non-professionals engaged in restoration. Much of this work is now unseen, unknown and poorly understood by their peers and fellow citizens. This project continues the training program and brings their knowledge to surrounding schools and the community at large – a model that can be replicated in other small and large communities where connections between youth and nature experiences are becoming more tenuous.

Over the course of two summers, this project continues the restoration work at Willowbrook Reserve, a DNR property with spring fed creeks and wetlands that once supported a fish hatchery operation. In addition to invasive species management and native planting projects throughout the site, the youth and advisors will set up Learning Stations. The Learning Stations will include a sign providing background information on featured themes (Water, Urban Habitat Restoration and Pollinators) and contain a link that connects visitors to a website offering additional information on the station, video footage of Urban Roots interns demonstrating the activity, and an area to input and view collected citizen science data. The station would include instructions for a citizen science activity, a designated area to serve as a test restoration plot, as well as materials needed for the activity housed in a lockbox. Urban Roots youth interns will work closely with the DNR, a contractor and artist to design and create the Learning Stations.

Currently this site lacks any signage or interpretation and is only frequented by bicyclists and occasional dog-walkers using the regional trail that runs through the site. This project showcases current youth leaders of color doing work in their community green space while creating multiple entry points for local students and adult community members to become engaged in the park. Over time the public can view and help document the transformation of a degraded floodplain forest and emergent wetland into an activated place for people and a diversity of plant and animal communities.

II. PROJECT ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES

Activity 1: Youth Internships and Learning Station Development

Funding will be used to support youth internships and the development of learning stations to be installed at Willowbrook Reserve. 45 youth interns will work with DNR staff and contractors to create 4 learning stations.

ENRTF BUDGET: \$ 195,347.80

Outcome	Completion Date
1. Urban Roots will hire and train a cohort of 30 high school youth to work in their Conservation Program, employing approx. 45 new and returning youth over the 2 years.	<i>Fall 2020</i>
2. A videographer will be hired to work with youth interns to create videos of youth doing habitat restoration work and describing the work and why they do it. Footage will be used in web-based links found at each station.	<i>Fall 2020</i>
3. Four interactive learning stations based on 3 themes will be designed and installed in Willowbrook Reserve	<i>Fall 2020</i>
4. Urban Roots youth interns will work with an artist to create a sculpture learning station that highlights water, using trash collected on site, entering through storm water.	<i>Fall 2020</i>



**Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF)
2019 Main Proposal Template**

5. Urban Roots will develop and maintain a website that is linked to the learning stations to showcase additional information, video footage, and create a space to input and view collected citizen science data related to the learning stations	<i>Fall 2020</i>
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Activity 2: Partnership building and Learning Station Training

Funding will be used to provide training to St Paul Public School Teachers to incorporate Willowbrook Learning Stations into science curriculum. Funding for 10 bus trips to the site will be provided to support schools in visiting the park.

ENRTF BUDGET: \$ 3,130

Outcome	Completion Date
1. Partnership between St Paul Public Schools, Urban Roots, and MN DNR will be developed to integrate citizen science monitoring projects on-site into middle and high school science education, providing site orientation for future engagement to teachers.	<i>Summer 2021</i>
2. Transportation will be provided for classes to visit the park and use the learning stations.	<i>Summer 2021</i>

III. PROJECT PARTNERS:

A. Partners receiving ENRTF funding

Friends of the Mississippi River staff will work with Urban Roots to help develop scientifically accurate and relevant information for learning stations. Friends of the Mississippi developed a restoration management plan that has guided restoration work that has occurred on the site and has organized school group participation in citizen science work. Saint Paul Public Schools will receive funds to help cover transportation costs for classes to visit the site and to funds to cover a training to familiarize teachers with the site to encourage them to incorporate it into their curriculum.

B. Partners NOT receiving ENRTF funding

MN DNR will work with Urban Roots to ensure the project aligns with the master plan for the site. Ramsey Washington Metro Watershed District will work with Urban Roots help develop scientifically accurate and relevant information for learning stations.

IV. LONG-TERM- IMPLEMENTATION AND FUNDING:

This project will provide paid internship opportunities for economically disadvantaged youth of color, engaging them in habitat restoration in their community. By highlighting the leadership and work already being done by youth, we have the potential to inspire and engage more youth in citizen science and care for their local green spaces, serving as a community engagement model for other communities. Urban Roots will take the lead in hosting the digital content on their website and will take charge of updating and maintaining it after project completion. Urban Roots is committed to continued funding of the youth internship program and this project will greatly enhance the programing and afford new opportunities for partnerships and funding. This project would also be a strong step towards improving user experience and visitor attendance, in-line with both the DNR and the City of St. Paul’s future plans for the area, including implementation of the Great River Passage Master Plan.

V. TIME LINE REQUIREMENTS:

If funded, work on developing environmental station content would begin summer of 2019, with completion of stations and partnership building occurring in summer 2021.

2019 Proposal Budget Spreadsheet

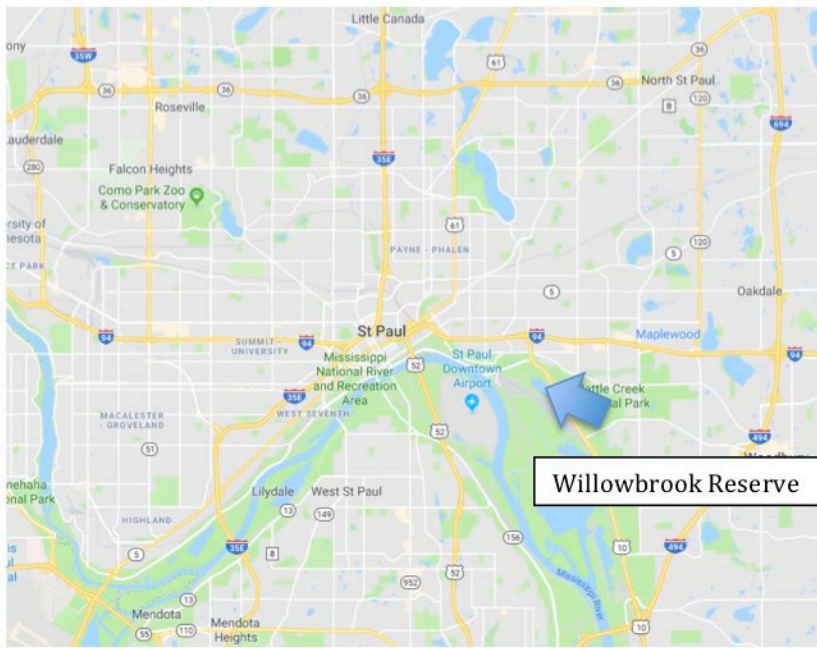
Project Title: Youth Conservation and Stewardship Training Lab

IV. TOTAL ENRTF REQUEST BUDGET 2 years

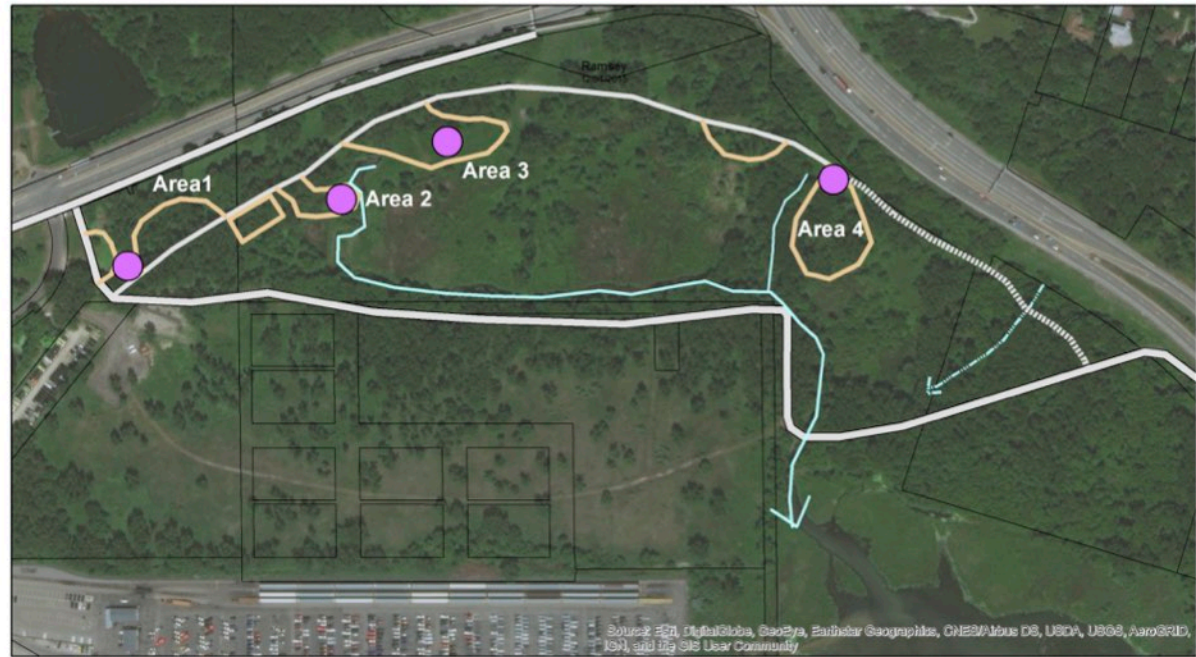
BUDGET ITEM (See "Guidance on Allowable Expenses")	AMOUNT
Personnel:	\$ -
David Woods, Project Manager, 35% FTE (80% salary, 20% benefits) for 2 years, oversee work between youth interns and contractor to develop learning stations, work with project partners to develop station content, work with St Paul Public School staff to develop partnership around the park	\$ 45,683.88
May Vang, Program Coordinator, 15% FTE (90% salary, 10% benefits) for 2 years, oversee work between youth interns, contractors, and project partners to develop learning stations	\$ 13,383.92
30 Youth interns, 10% FTE (93% salary, 7% benefits) for 2 years, work with contractor and project partners to develop learning stations, continue habitat restoration work in park	\$ 53,280
Professional/Technical/Service Contracts:	\$ -
A RFP will be issued for a contractor to work with youth and project partners to develop learning station concepts, components, and installation	\$ 45,000.00
A RFP will be issued for a videographer to work with youth to film their work in habitat restoration and instructions for activities at learning stations. Footage will be on webpage linked from learning stations	\$ 15,000.00
A RFP will be issued for a web developer to help create digital content for learning stations, housed at Urban Roots' current website	\$ 5,000.00
A RFP will be issued for an artist to work with youth and contractor in developing learning station concepts, components, and installation	\$ 15,000.00
Alex Roth, Friends of the Mississippi River, ecologist will work with youth to develop content for learning stations and help establish research plots	\$ 3,000.00
Equipment/Tools/Supplies:	\$ -
Acquisition (Fee Title or Permanent Easements):	\$ -
Travel:	\$ -
Additional Budget Items:	\$ -
Training time for St Paul Public School Teachers to learn how to incorporate site into their classroom (10 teachers for 3hrs at \$21/per hr./per teacher)	\$ 630
Bus/van Transportation- transportation to enable Saint Paul Public School students to visit and utilize Willowbrook Reserve (10 trips at \$250/trip)	\$ 2,500
TOTAL ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND \$ REQUEST =	\$ 198,478

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:	\$ -	
Xcel Energy Foundation	\$ 7,500	Pending
Otto Bremer Foundation	\$ 3,125	Pending
St Paul Foundation	\$ 3,750	Pending
F.R. Bigelow Foundation	\$ 3,750	Pending
Laura Jane Musser Fund	\$ 12,500	Pending
NFWF Five Star and Urban Waters Restoration Program	\$ 30,300	Pending
Other State \$ To Be Applied To Project During Project Period:	N/A	
In-kind Services To Be Applied To Project During Project Period:		
MNDNR Central Regional Planner, .04 FTE 2 yrs	\$ 7,270	Secured
RWMWD Watershed Education Specialist	\$ 3,000	Secured
Past and Current ENRTF Appropriation:	N/A	
Other Funding History:	N/A	



Urban Roots youth engaged in hands on habitat restoration learning





Proposed Learning Station Areas

Interactive Stations

- Area 1: Universally accessible (<5%) Basic concepts, Restoration, rain garden, site history
- Area 2: Foot path <10% Observation stations, urban water
- Area 3: Tamarack black ash wetland, restoration
- Area 4: Most challenging (<12% grade), Seepage swamp, Oak woodland,

Observation Walking Tour (Paved Trail)

Foot path (single file) 
Gravel or Paved Trail (10' wide) 

Date: 4/5/2018



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05/06/2018



ENRT ID: 140 GH

Project Manager Qualifications and Organization Description

David Woods, Conservation Program Manager for nearly 5 years. Before that he worked with the Conservation Corps of New Hampshire and Minnesota for a year each. He oversees the conservation program, designs and develops new projects, leads youth intern crews, builds partnerships, and guides youth in educating the community about their local parks. David will serve as the project manager, overseeing work with youth interns and working with a contractor, artist, MN DNR staff, and other partners to see completion of the project.

Urban Roots

Since 1996, Urban Roots has engaged hundreds of economically-disadvantaged, multicultural St. Paul teens in thousands of hours of paid habitat and parks restoration training and work, including ongoing removal of invasive plants, native species plantings, trail improvement and maintenance, and designing and installing both rain and pollinator gardens. In 2004, Urban Roots partnered with the City of St. Paul and the Lower Phalen Creek Project to begin the arduous task of restoring the Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary, starting with removal of 50 tons of surface trash and debris and determinedly removing buckthorn that had choked the area. Thirteen years later, we are not only the lead stewards, but also the main experts, of the area. In 2014, we started working with the MN DNR at the Willowbrook Fish Hatchery Reserve, and over the past two years, the youth designed and presented a management plan for the public entrance to this area. In the past 3 years, the youth interns and staff have gained experience identifying and removing various species of invasive plants throughout the parks they work in. They have participated in multiple citizen science projects monitoring emerald ash borers, stream water quality, and bumble bees/pollinators. The youth have been trained in guiding tours and have given 10 – 15 public tours of the worksites/parks each year, greatly increasing their public speaking ability, interpretive skills and self-confidence. The youth know how to collect, sort, and plant numerous types of native prairie seeds. Youth have installed and maintained over 15 rain gardens and 10 pollinator gardens, as well as establishing 2 active bee hives.