

**Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund
2020 Request for Proposals (RFP)**

Project Title:

ENRTF ID: 259-FH

Restoring Turf to Native Pollinator Gardens Across Metro

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

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

Total Project Budget: \$ 197,000

Proposed Project Time Period for the Funding Requested: June 30, 2022 (2 yrs)

Summary:

Turf to Pollinator Gardens will transition ecologically-degrading turf to native gardens throughout the Regional Park System to provide critical pollinator habitat, long-term stewardship, and help connect diverse populations with nature.

Name: Holly Jenkins

Sponsoring Organization: Wilderness in the City

Job Title: Project Manager

Department: _____

Address: P.O. Box 211453

Eqan MN 55121

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Email info@wildernessinthecity.org

Web Address: wildernessinthecity.org

Location:

Region: Metro

County Name: Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, Scott, Washington

City / Township: Bloomington, Minneapolis, St. Paul

Alternate Text for Visual:

Turf to Pollinator Gardens shows a volunteer garden planting event in Lebanon Hills Regional Park. 125 volunteers of all ages, planted 4, 212 plants over .3 acres (13,500 sf).

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



PROJECT TITLE:

Restoring Turf to Native Pollinator Gardens Across Metro

I. PROJECT STATEMENT

Ten-.25-acre or larger resilient gardens throughout the metropolitan regional parks system will be planned, planted, and maintained involving stewardship volunteers, including underserved populations:

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Remove underused ecologically-degrading turf | 4. Serve to educate and inspire visitors |
| 2. Create high-quality native gardens | 5. Establish stewardship volunteer communities |
| 3. Provide urgent and critical pollinator habitat | 6. Engage underserved park visitor population |

To attain the highest quality conservation and ecological goals, Wilderness in the City will contract with native landscape professionals and Conservation Corps MN when feasible. To assure broad public access, we will partner with ten regional park implementing agencies across the metropolitan region. Together we will:

- Identify turf lawns to be replanted as pollinator gardens and assess each garden site to appeal to specific wildlife, birds, bees and insects, or edible plants.
- Design the gardens for education on native plantings, to showcase a variety of pollinator garden styles, to accommodate educational programming, and to inspire visitors to plant their own gardens.
- Ensure community awareness and involvement and create opportunities to engage diverse and under-served populations. This is integral to both physically building the gardens and to creating strong regional natural resource stewardship communities.
- Coordinate, organize, and schedule the project, culminating in a community garden planting event, and establish a garden stewardship community to provide long-term maintenance
- Explore the use of technology (such as videos and cameras) to measure and document plant growth, pollinator impacts, wildlife interactions, and human educational opportunities.

II. PROJECT ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES

Activity 1 Title: Site-Planning for Ten .25-Acre (minimum) Gardens

Description:

- Starting in Dakota County, we will work with ten regional park agencies on garden site selection and, in consultation with native landscape professionals, determine native plant selection, areas for wildlife and bird concentration, bee-lawn alternative turfs, and/or edible plants: Park agencies: Anoka Co, Carver Co, Dakota Co, Scott Co, Washington Co, City of Bloomington, Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, City of Saint Paul and Ramsey Co, and Three Rivers Park District.
- Work with native landscape professionals to prepare sites including hydrology review, soil, geology, topography and other relevant factors that will provide the best chance for long-term success and durability of the restoration project.

ENRTF BUDGET: \$50,000

(2020: \$5,000 Dakota County garden, 2021: \$20,000/4 gardens, 2022: \$25,000/5 gardens)

Activity 2 Title: Site Preparation Coordination for Ten Gardens

Description: Through RFP, contract for professional services, including with Conservation Corp MN, for site prep including turf killing, soil tilling, erosion control, seeding, and prep site for volunteer planting event.

ENRTF BUDGET: \$30,000

(2020: \$3,000 Dakota County garden, 2021: \$12,000/4 gardens, 2022: \$15,000/5 gardens)



**Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF)
2020 Main Proposal Template**

Activity 3 Title: *Community Event & Public Engagement for Ten Gardens*

Description:

- Each project will culminate in a stewardship community volunteer event, including planting thousands of native grasses and forbs which will be purchased for the event.
- Public awareness and involvement will be facilitated through multiple lines of communication.
- Outreach to local community leaders will facilitate engaging diverse and underserved populations.
- To help ensure ongoing community involvement, our database will track project participation and build a network of ongoing maintenance and park conservation support.

ENRTF Budget: \$67,000

(2020: \$6,700 Dakota County garden, 2021: \$26,800/4 gardens, 2022: \$33,500/5 gardens)

Outcome	Completion Date
1. Engage with Dakota County and determine location for <i>Turf to Pollinator Garden</i> , implement volunteer database development, site preparation RFPs issued.	July 1, 2020
2. Dakota County garden volunteer database implemented, public engagement and underserved community outreach plan in place	Aug 1, 2020
3. Dakota County .25-acre (minimum) <i>Turf to Pollinator Garden</i> planting event	Oct 1, 2020
4. Dakota County garden volunteer network established, volunteer hours tracked, on-going maintenance plan in place.	Dec 1, 2020
5. Four gardens planned, site preparation organized and scheduled, and public engagement and underserved community outreach plan in place.	May 1, 2021
6. Four .25-acre (minimum) <i>Turf to Pollinator Gardens</i> planted in four regional parks (.25 acres x 4 regional parks = 1 acre total).	Oct 1, 2021
7. Volunteer database created, stewardship volunteer community established, community stewardship volunteer network established, volunteer hours tracked, on-going maintenance plan in place for five gardens.	Dec 1, 2021
8. Five gardens planned, site preparation organized and scheduled, and public engagement plan in place.	May 1, 2022
9. Five .25 acres (minimum) <i>Turf to Pollinator Gardens</i> planted in five regional parks (.25 acres x 5 regional parks = 1.25 acres total).	Oct 1, 2022
10. Community stewardship volunteer network established, volunteer hours tracked, on-going maintenance plan in place for second five gardens.	Dec 1, 2022

III. PROJECT PARTNERS AND COLLABORATORS:

Artisan Environments, Webknowledgey, Benjamin Olson Photography

IV. LONG-TERM IMPLEMENTATION AND FUNDING:

Integral to each *Turf to Pollinator Garden* is outreach to create long-term stewardship volunteer communities established with a volunteer database and communication channels (social media, email blasts, etc.) to be handed over to the park agencies, if desired, to be integrated with their volunteer base. Collectively, these knowledgeable, caring gardeners, together with ongoing regional park natural resource management staff will facilitate long-term garden maintenance with minimal future costs to the park.

Additional grant funding will be sought to:

1. Record and measure garden growth and impact on pollinator populations through time-lapse photography documentation with wildlife and environmental photographer Benjamin Olson.
2. Monitor and measure impacts on endangered, threatened, and special concern species such as the rusty-patch bumblebee.
3. Expand educational programming and opportunities.
4. Continue to engage and expand community outreach targeted at equitable use of parks.

Attachment A: Project Budget Spreadsheet
 Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund
 M.L. 2020 Budget Spreadsheet



Legal Citation:

Project Manager: Holly Jenkins

Project Title: Turf to Pollinator Garden

Organization: Wilderness in the City

Project Budget: \$197,000

Project Length and Completion Date: 2 years / Dec 2022

Today's Date: April 15, 2019

ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND BUDGET		Budget	Amount Spent	Balance
BUDGET ITEM				
Personnel (Wages and Benefits)		\$ 50,000.00	\$ -	\$ 50,000
Project Manager / Volunteer Coordinator (100% Salary)				
Professional/Technical/Service Contracts		\$ 80,000.00		
\$5k/design + \$3k/service = \$8k/garden		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Equipment/Tools/Supplies		\$ 60,000.00		
\$5k/plant plugs + \$1k/interactive displays = \$6k/garden		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Capital Expenditures Over \$5,000				
		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Fee Title Acquisition				
		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Easement Acquisition				
		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Professional Services for Acquisition				
		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Printing		\$ 1,000.00		
		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Travel expenses in Minnesota				
		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Other		\$ 6,000.00		
Website upgrade for volunteer database/community engagement			\$ -	\$ -
COLUMN TOTAL		\$ 197,000.00	\$ -	\$ 50,000
SOURCE AND USE OF OTHER FUNDS CONTRIBUTED TO THE PROJECT				
	Status (secured or pending)	Budget	Spent	Balance
Non-State:		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
State:		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
In kind: 200 Volunteer Hours X \$20/hour x 10 gardens = \$40,000; Webknowledgegy In-kind Donation \$1,350		\$ 41,350.00	\$ -	\$ 41,350
Other ENRTF APPROPRIATIONS AWARDED IN THE LAST SIX YEARS				
	Amount legally obligated but not yet spent	Budget	Spent	Balance
		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -



Restoring Turf to Native Pollinator Gardens Across Metro

Ten .25-acre (minimum) gardens

Proposal by Wilderness in the City

Project example images: Lebanon Hills Regional Park (LHRP) 2018 Turf to Garden Project.



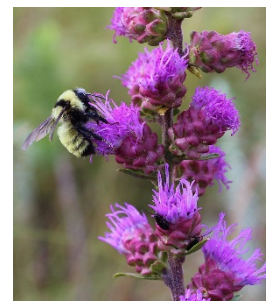
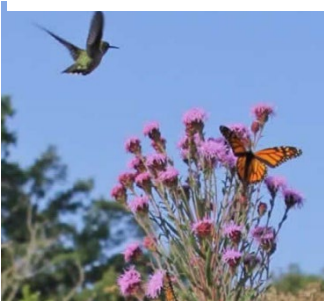
LHRP Visitor Center - underused ecologically-degrading turf lawn.



LHRP Pollinator Garden Volunteer Planting Event
125 Volunteers • .3 acres (13,500sf) • 4,212 plants



Not shown: 20 x 20 gravel pad, benches, and signage for educational programming.



Examples of fully-grown educational Minnesota native pollinator gardens.

Attachment D. Additional Work Plan Information for Acquisition, Easements, and Restoration

Restoration

1. Provide a statement confirming that all restoration activities completed with these funds will occur on land permanently protected by a conservation easement or public ownership.

All ten of the native gardens will occur on public land through the Metropolitan Regional Parks System

2. Summarize the components and expected outcomes of restoration and management plans for the parcels to be restored by your organization, how these plans are kept on file by your organization, and overall strategies for long-term plan implementation.

Each of the project areas will individually be evaluated to assure restoration plans consider the given soil, geology, topography and other relevant factors. Through this evaluation, native plant professionals will develop a site plan consistent with highest quality conservation and long-term resiliency. Plans will be kept electronically and in print by Wilderness in the City, and available to implementing agencies for their records. Overall strategy for long-term implementation will be ongoing through community volunteer efforts in partnership with regional park implementing agencies and Wilderness in the City.

3. Describe how restoration efforts will utilize and follow the Board of Soil and Water Resources "Native Vegetation Establishment and Enhancement Guidelines" in order to ensure ecological integrity and pollinator enhancement.

Every native garden project will readily follow the Board of Soil and Water Resources Guidelines (dated January 2019), including the Pollinator Toolbox, toward achieving the goal for highest quality ecological integrity and pollinator enhancement. Additionally, the gardens will serve to educate people about the BWSR guidelines when creating their own urban native gardens.

4. Describe how the long-term maintenance and management needs of the parcel being restored with these funds will be met and financed into the future.

Most ongoing maintenance will be provided by community volunteers, including garden clubs. If additional financial investment is required, funding would be requested through the regional parks system as part of their annual maintenance expense.

5. Describe how consideration will be given to contracting with Conservation Corps of Minnesota for any restoration activities.

Contracting with Conservation Corps will be considered for all ten projects, especially for site prep stage.

6. Provide a statement indicating that evaluations will be completed on parcels where activities were implemented both 1) initially after activity completion and 2) three years later as a follow-up. Evaluations should analyze improvements to the parcel and whether goals have been met, identify any problems with the implementation, and identify any findings that can be used to improve implementation of future restoration efforts at the site or elsewhere.

Site evaluation will be completed at each garden initially after completion, and least three years later, as follow up. The evaluations will include an estimate of visitors to the site and educational programs held at each, as well as information based on the restoration plans and will identify any problems that need to be addressed. These evaluations will help to determine best steps to further expand the native gardens.

Wilderness in the City

Regional Park Turf to Pollinator Garden Project

Project Manager Qualifications

Holly Jenkins has been identified as the project manager. Ms. Jenkins earned an MBA in Finance from the U of M's Carlson School of Management. She worked for many years at Piper Jaffray before turning her attention to the outdoor recreation industry and environmental advocacy.

In 2013, Ms. Jenkins founded a nonprofit, Wilderness in the City, and through this role has exhibited strong communication skills, enthusiasm for a mission, competence, and integrity. Ms. Jenkins has a proven ability to build commitment within a team and inspires a shared vision. It's that vision that is at the core of the *Turf to Pollinator Garden* project to restore and preserve high quality natural areas in an otherwise built environment. In turn, this vision provides opportunities to build communities of stewards, which has already started to establish in Dakota County precisely because of her leadership.

Organization Description

Wilderness in the City' mission is dedicated to preserving and enhancing natural urban areas for future generations through natural resource stewardship, community outreach, and advocacy. We envision a legacy of parklands with healthy ecosystems for year-around nature-based recreation and educational opportunities, and enhanced wildlife habitats in an otherwise developed urban setting. We support natural spaces, close to home and accessible to all, that offer respite from the built world around us.

Since 2013, our grass-roots organization has supported Lebanon Hills Regional Park, followed closely by advocacy for natural resource stewardship across the Regional Parks System. Annually we partner with Dakota County on monthly environmental stewardship projects in Lebanon Hills, which provided over 3000 volunteer hours last year. In fall 2018 we closely followed and volunteered help with the county's .3 acre, 13,500sf turf to pollinator garden, the model for our proposed grant project.

