



Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

2024 Request for Proposal

General Information

Proposal ID: 2024-176

Proposal Title: Wakan Tipi/Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary

Project Manager Information

Name: Betsy Altheimer

Organization: Lower Phalen Creek Project

Office Telephone: (651) 370-2106

Email: baltheimer@lowerphalencreek.org

Project Basic Information

Project Summary: Wakan Tipi/Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary

Funds Requested: \$369,000

Proposed Project Completion: June 30, 2026

LCCMR Funding Category: Environmental Education (C)

Project Location

What is the best scale for describing where your work will take place?

Region(s): Metro

What is the best scale to describe the area impacted by your work?

Statewide

When will the work impact occur?

During the Project and In the Future

Narrative

Describe the opportunity or problem your proposal seeks to address. Include any relevant background information.

Lower Phalen Creek Project (LPCP) seeks implementation support for our restoration and conservation work at Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary as we actualize the 5-year restoration plan spanning 2021 -2025.

What is your proposed solution to the problem or opportunity discussed above? Introduce us to the work you are seeking funding to do. You will be asked to expand on this proposed solution in Activities & Milestones.

Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary is Lower Phalen Creek Project's showcase Urban Conservation project. Over eight years, LPCP led the efforts to reclaim this once toxic and polluted dump site along the river, and restore it to a vibrant, 27-acre nature sanctuary that provides critical habitat for dozens of species of local wildlife while providing a publicly accessible nature sanctuary, all in the heart of the urban core.

Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary is owned by the City of Saint Paul and managed through a unique public/private partnership. LPCP partnered with the City's Department of Natural Resources, Friends of the Mississippi River, Mississippi Park Connection, and Urban Roots on a 5-year restoration spanning 2022 -2025. The result of this work is a detailed description of each habitat area in the sanctuary and a schedule of work to be done to keep the sanctuary vibrant and thriving. It also includes a survey of Dakota Culturally Important Plants.

LPCP now has increased capacity to take on co-management of the site. We are formalizing a co-management agreement with the City of Saint Paul in 2023. LCCMR funds will be used for staff, equipment, and stipends for youth stewards to implement this work.

What are the specific project outcomes as they relate to the public purpose of protection, conservation, preservation, and enhancement of the state's natural resources?

LPCP is a Native-Led, East Side environmental conservation nonprofit. Founded in 1997 by community activists, our project area stretches from Lake Phalen to the Mississippi River and throughout the East Side River District. Our mission is to engage people to honor and care for our natural places and the sacred sites and cultural value within them. LPCP brought in millions of dollars of investment and hundreds of volunteers to create 6 vibrant ecosystems in Bruce Vento Nature Center in 2015. The organization then turned its efforts to developing a cultural and environmental interpretive center to educate the public on the

Activities and Milestones

Activity 1: Purchase Equipment

Activity Budget: \$75,000

Activity Description:

LPCP will purchase storage unit to house equipment on site at Bruce Vento Nature Center. We will also purchase a mower, utility vehicle with plow, wagon, and additional attachments and required warranty.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Purchase Storage Container	January 31, 2024
Purchase John Deere UTX and mower	January 31, 2024

Activity 2: LPCP Staff manage conservation and restoration work with youth stewards in 2024 and 2025

Activity Budget: \$204,000

Activity Description:

LPCP Staff will put out a call for youth stewards of Bruce Vento Nature Center in 2024 and 2025. Each year we will work with 12 youth to help with restoration and conservation of the site.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
LPCP Staff issue call for youth stewards	April 30, 2024
Youth Stewards hired for 2024	May 31, 2024
LPCP issue call for Youth Stewards	April 30, 2025
Youth stewards hired for 2025	May 31, 2025

Activity 3: Initiate Maintenance Contract

Activity Budget: \$90,000

Activity Description:

LPCP will take over the maintenance contract from the City of Saint Paul. The current amount of this contract is \$90,000 with the vendor that the city uses.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
LPCP review current contract for maintenance	January 31, 2024
LPCP hires maintenance contract for 2024 & 2025	April 30, 2024

Project Partners and Collaborators

Name	Organization	Role	Receiving Funds
Parks and Recreation Department	City of Saint Paul	Site Control/Land Owner	No
Alex Roth	Friends of the Mississippi River	Advisor/Previous Grantee	No

Long-Term Implementation and Funding

Describe how the results will be implemented and how any ongoing effort will be funded. If not already addressed as part of the project, how will findings, results, and products developed be implemented after project completion? If additional work is needed, how will this work be funded?

In 2019, LPCP became a Native-led organization, with Indigenous community members representing more than half the staff and board. That this monumental shift took place with the support and continued involvement of many of the original neighborhood activists and conservation stakeholders (a generally white, semi-affluent community) is a testament to the strong relationships LPCP has had and continues to have that fuel our work. This intentional shift has allowed LPCP to strengthen its relationships with and cultural connections to the East Side's diverse communities. LPCP garners wide recognition as a model for Native-led public private land management practices.

Project Manager and Organization Qualifications

Project Manager Name: Betsy Altheimer

Job Title: Development Consultant

Provide description of the project manager's qualifications to manage the proposed project.

Betsy Altheimer is managing the grant application process. LPCP Staff Maggie Lorenz and Gabbie Menomin will lead the project.

Organization: Lower Phalen Creek Project

Organization Description:

Lower Phalen Creek Project is a Native-Led, East Side environmental conservation nonprofit. Founded in 1997 by community activists, our project area stretches from Lake Phalen to the Mississippi River and throughout the East Side River District. Our work is powered by a dedicated board, staff, and community of volunteers.

Budget Summary

Category / Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Purpose	Gen. Ineligible	% Benefits	# FTE	Classified Staff?	\$ Amount
Personnel								
Restoration Manager		Restoration manager is a FTE position leading all restoration and conservation work at BVNS. Request is for 50% of salary burden labor amount (includes benefits in total).			0%	1		\$65,000
Environmental Justice Educator & Stewardship Coordinator		FTE role tasked with engaging youth stewards, public volunteers, and partners in stewardship and conservation work at Wakan Tipi/Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary. Request is for 100% of salary burden labor amount includes benefits.			0%	2		\$115,000
Youth Stewards		Responsible for conservation and stewardship at Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary. 12 youth per year at \$1000 stipend per youth.			0%	2		\$24,000
							Sub Total	\$204,000
Contracts and Services								
Maintenance Contract	Professional or Technical Service Contract	Estimated costs for healing garden maintenance				0		\$90,000
							Sub Total	\$90,000
Equipment, Tools, and Supplies								
	Equipment	John Deere Utility Vehicle and attachments, zero turn mower, warranty.	For ongoing restoration and conservation needs at Bruce Vento Nature Center. Base UTV is \$29K. Attachments include sprayer, plow,					\$55,000
	Equipment	Storage container for Equipment	Secure onsite storage for John Deere UTX and mower					\$20,000
							Sub Total	\$75,000
Capital Expenditures								

							Sub Total	-
Acquisitions and Stewardship								
							Sub Total	-
Travel In Minnesota								
							Sub Total	-
Travel Outside Minnesota								
							Sub Total	-
Printing and Publication								
							Sub Total	-
Other Expenses								
							Sub Total	-
							Grand Total	\$369,000

Classified Staff or Generally Ineligible Expenses

Category/Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Justification Ineligible Expense or Classified Staff Request
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Non ENRTF Funds

Category	Specific Source	Use	Status	Amount
State				
Cash	Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Funds	50% salary for Restoration Manager for two years	Secured	\$65,000
			State Sub Total	\$65,000
Non-State				
			Non State Sub Total	-
			Funds Total	\$65,000

Acquisition and Restoration

Parcel List

Name	County	Site Significance	Activity	Acres	Miles	Estimated Cost	Type of Landowner	Easement or Title Holder	Status of Work
Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary	Ramsey			27	-	-	Public	City of Saint Paul	Purchased
Totals				27	0	-			

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 restoration activities completed with these funds will occur on land permanently protected by public ownership by the City of Saint Paul.

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.

LPCP is currently working from a 2020-2025 Natural Resources Management Plan created in partnership with the Friends of the Mississippi River. All work is kept on file at LPCP and tracked by our Restoration Manager.

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.

LPCP will follow the Board of Soil and Water Resources "Native Vegetation Establishment and Enhancement Guidelines" to ensure the ecological integrity and pollinator enhancement of the site at BNVS.

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.

Lower Phalen Creek Project is a native-led 501c3. We receive support for all of our programs through the generosity of individual donors, corporate and private foundations, in addition to government support.

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

LPCP prioritizes Native-led youth stewards, conservation volunteers who have worked with our organization for decades. We will, however, give consideration to the Conservation Corps of Minnesota as we develop our restoration work plans.

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.

Evaluations will be completed on parcels where activities were implemented after 2025 as we close out our current Natural Resources Management plan and again in 2028. Evaluations will assess progress towards our original plan and will help identify goals for the subsequent plan.

Attachments

Required Attachments

Map

File: [7f734e99-080.pdf](#)

Alternate Text for Map

Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary Map...

Financial Capacity

File: [32c2e8cd-d5c.pdf](#)

Board Resolution or Letter

Title	File
Board Resolution Letter	2f44b18f-461.pdf

Administrative Use

Does your project include restoration or acquisition of land rights?

Yes: Restoration,

Does your project have potential for royalties, copyrights, patents, or sale of products and assets?

No

Do you understand and acknowledge IP and revenue-return and sharing requirements in 116P.10?

N/A

Do you wish to request reinvestment of any revenues into your project instead of returning revenue to the ENRTF?

N/A

Does your project include original, hypothesis-driven research?

No

Does the organization have a fiscal agent for this project?

No

Does your project include the design, construction, or renovation of a building, trail, campground, or other capital asset costing \$10,000 or more?

No

Do you propose using an appropriation from the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund to conduct a project that provides children's services, as defined in Minnesota Statutes section 299C.61 Subd.7?

Yes

Do you certify that background checks are performed for background check crimes, as defined in Minnesota Statutes, section 299C.61, Subd. 2, on all employees, contractors, and volunteers who have or may have access to a child to whom children's services are provided by your organization?

Yes

