

**Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund
2014 Request for Proposals (RFP)**

Project Title:

ENRTF ID: 077-C

Building Bridges to a Diverse Natural Resources Community

Category: C. Environmental Education

Total Project Budget: \$ 1,100,000

Proposed Project Time Period for the Funding Requested: July 2014 to July 2017

Summary:

Increase participation of under-represented communities in outdoor recreation and in the natural resource professions by means of targeted urban outreach and stronger linkages between DNR programs and academic offerings.

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Sponsoring Organization: MN DNR

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Location

Region: Statewide

County Name: Statewide

City / Township:

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



I. PROJECT STATEMENT

Project Goals: Engage the urban community around natural resources education and recreation skills, to build an engaged, active, and environmentally literate citizenry that reflects the diverse faces of Minnesota. Provide under-represented (UR) youth with the support necessary to bridge their outdoor experiences with the steps necessary to enter into careers as the next generation of natural resource professionals.

- Use the DNR School Forest program model for new urban outdoor classrooms and urban land management plans.
- Develop DNR Central Region outdoor classroom and investigate feasibility of an urban outdoor skills and education center in St Paul to provide close-to-home environmental experiences for youth and adults.
- Develop CLIMB (Critical-Learning Integrative Metro Bridge), a young adult professional recruitment and retention program, to prepare UR students for natural resources careers. Use Conservation Corps Minnesota model.

Why this project needs to be done: Minnesota’s natural resource professional workforce is much less diverse than its citizenry. This challenge will be addressed by creating a comprehensive approach, utilizing strong interest in urban outdoor classrooms to combat Nature Deficit Disorder and creating a program that provides UR urban youth with a bridge between existing DNR’s environmental engagement programs and the University of Minnesota natural resource academic programs. First, this approach will accelerate the diversification of the natural resource community in Minnesota by providing UR urban youth and their families with urban natural spaces to become familiar and comfortable with outdoor recreation. Second, more UR youth will be recruited to university programs in natural resources where upon graduation will accelerate the diversification of the natural resource workforce in Minnesota.

How this project will achieve goals: Funding will be used to:

- Investigate feasibility of and create an urban outdoor skills and education center (preschool-adult)
- Create an urban School Forest program in high-use areas under intense resource management pressure that meets needs of diverse learners and creates outdoor stewards, supported by 1.25 FTEs (grades K-12)
- 20 UR youth will do stewardship projects and 6 CLIMB leaders will conduct DNR research (high school & college)
- Enroll 40 UR high school students in a new UMN Post-Secondary Educational Options (PSEO) program, in natural resources and environmental science. Supported by UMN 2 mo. Faculty and 4 TAs (high school & college)

II. DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT RESULTS

Activity 1: Critical science - Develop well-managed urban outdoor classrooms that provide unique and engaging learning environments for urban youth. **Budget:**\$388,166 staff, materials

Outcomes	Completion Date
1. Develop new format for urban School Forest management plans, create 20 new management plans for small urban parcels, 30 existing School Forests demonstrate sustainable management guidelines including invasive species Best Management Practices.	March 2015 June 2017
2. A CLIMB crew will assist in executing actions steps of urban School Forest management plans as part of career development. Science projects will be developed and lead by crew leaders. Select CLIMB youth will complete more summer work through the Step-Up Achieve program.	May 2017
3. Establish 15 new urban School Forests, with community support, local site committees, site prep, development, management plans, and education. Activity reaches 5,000 new students, 200 teachers.	June 2017

Activity 2: Learning - Help teachers and volunteers create the next generation of environmentally literate outdoor stewards by expanding UR youth outdoor education activities. **Budget:**\$195,200 staff, workshops

Outcomes	Completion Date
1. Develop and deliver 15 highly specialized trainings designed to raise teacher confidence in using urban School Forests for outdoor education. CLIMB leaders will participate in trainings to build leadership skills. Training content builds on 2010 ENRTF project feedback.	May 2017
2. Develop new urban School Forest support tools to meet needs identified by 2010 ENRTF survey, including webinars on: land management for small and high-use sites; outdoor teaching strategies	June 2017



Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF)

2014 Main Proposal

Project Title: Building Bridges to a Diverse Natural Resources Community

in the city; and partnership building. Impact: 45,000 students, 2,500 teachers, 140 sites, 7,500 acres.	
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Activity 3: Integrative – Provide close-to-home opportunities to connect UR youth with nature and science-based learning and explore feasibility of a new urban outdoor skills center. **Budget:**\$419,134 site prep, study

Outcomes	Completion Date
1. Develop an outdoor classroom/amphitheater and fishing pond on Central Region campus to host DNR recreation and educational programs (MinnAqua, Project WET, PLT).	September 2016
2. CLIMB crew will assist with development of outdoor classroom and create science-based learning and skill building activities. Select CLIMB youth will participate in specialized, natural resources focused Step-Up Achieve program – a month work study program.	September 2016
3. Create partnerships with: 2 schools; 2 recreation centers and 1 youth organization to bring audiences to Central Campus for science-based learning and outdoor recreation skill building.	May 2017
4. Designate DNR Central Region outdoor classroom as a shared urban DNR School Forest.	
5. Create a civic engagement process to identify the needs of youth and community partners and a feasibility design concept study for an urban outdoor skills building and education center.	May 2017

Activity 4: Metro Bridge: Create a diversified DNR workforce by bridging metro UR youth to UMN natural resources and environmental science coursework. **Budget:**\$84,000 staff

Outcomes	Completion Date
1. With partner assistance 20 UR high school students will be recruited to enroll in the UMN natural resources and environmental science Post-Secondary Educational Options (PSEO).	June 2017
2. The UMN will reserve seats in two introductory courses per semester and provide pre-college advising and mentorship for CLIMB Students.	May 2017
3. Faculty coordinator and Asst. will work UR high school staff to guide CLIMB students through admissions process including consideration for the Presidents Emerging Scholars Program.	June 2017
4. Faculty Coordinator will work with admitted UMN students as part of special 1 st year mentoring and advising program. Succeeding 2 nd year CLIMB UMN students will receive DNR internships.	June 2017
5. Create career development of CLIMB crew leaders through mentorships and conducting DNR research and DNR internships or introductory job experiences.	June 2017

PROJECT STRATEGY

Project Team/partners:

DNR School Forest program, CLIMB (Critical-science Learning Integrative Metro Bridge), Central Region HQ

Conservation Corp Minnesota

University of Minnesota - College of Food, Agriculture, and Natural Sciences

125 school districts (staff and students) will participate in School Forest activities & trainings.

Timeline: Year 1: Project activities include: urban School Forest site management plans, new teacher trainings and supports; new urban School Forests; civic engagement to identify UR recreation and education needs; development of CLIMB youth recruitment and retention and natural resource PSEO programs.

Year 2 and 3: Project implementation includes: School Forest trainings/supports; new urban School Forests; CLIMB crew projects, participation in PSEO, CLIMB internships/job opportunities; feasibility study for urban outdoor skill building, programs at Central Region outdoor classroom; new program structures are functional, provide long term replicable use.

Long-Term Strategy: This project will establish a focused approach to integrate diversity into the natural resource community and DNR workforce. This three-year comprehensive approach creates access to urban green spaces, including School Forests, for the UR community to make a connection with natural resources. It also provides a pathway that takes UR youth from outdoor experience to higher education to professional employment. Their success will provide other youth with the familiar faces they need to see to imagine themselves as the next generation of natural resource professionals. DNR and UMN will continue to expand this program to meet the goal to have the DNR workforce reflect the diverse faces of Minnesota.

2014 Detailed Project Budget

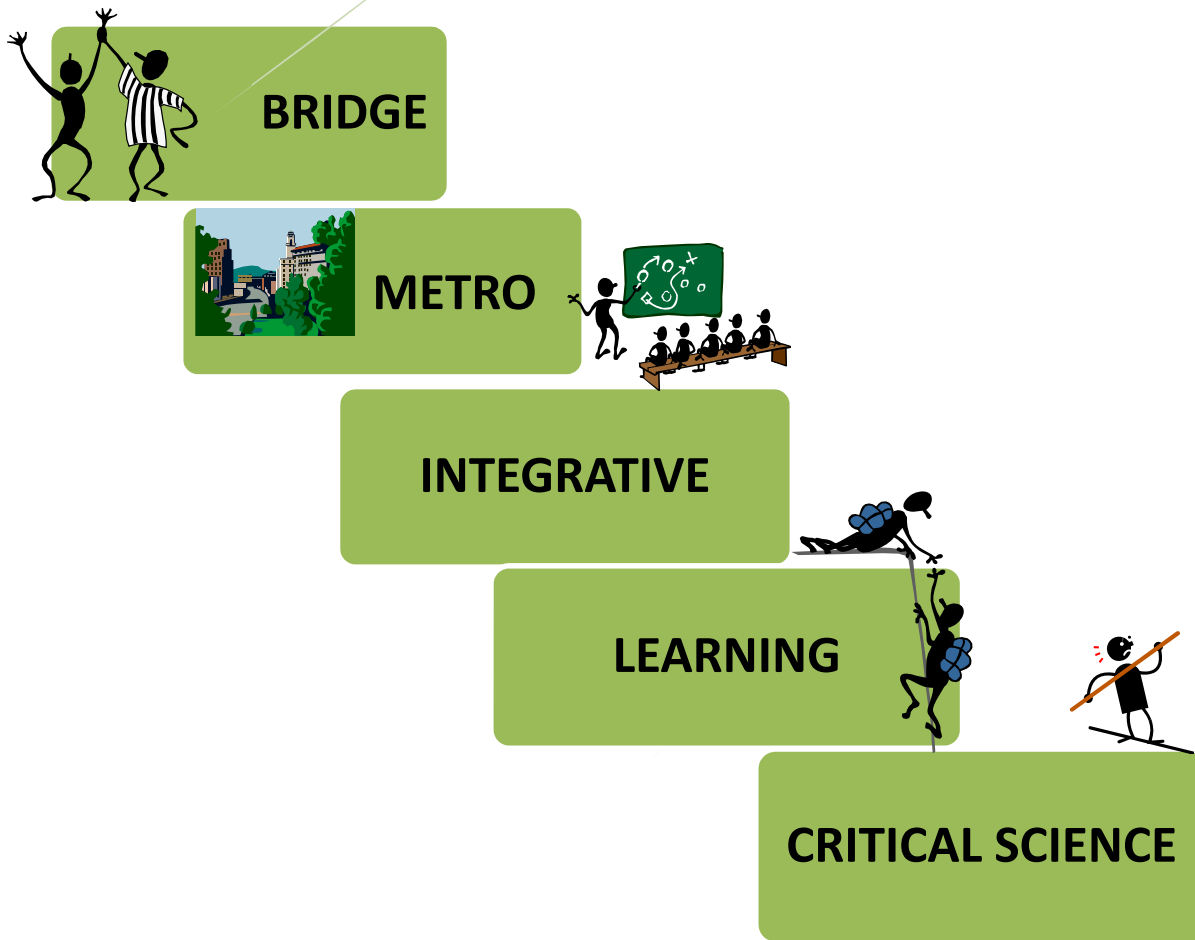
Project Title: *Building Bridges to a Diverse Natural Resources Community*

IV. TOTAL ENRTF REQUEST BUDGET 3 years

BUDGET ITEM	AMOUNT
Personnel:	\$ -
DNR Urban School Forest Program Coordinator .75FTE, 3 years	\$ 180,000
DNR Metro School Forest Forester .5FTE, 3 years	\$ 126,000
<i>*indirect/governance removed in above DNR estimates</i>	
UMN Faculty Coordinator 2 years	\$ 20,000
UMN Graduate Teaching Assistant 2 years	\$ 64,000
Contracts:	\$ -
CLIMB Crew Leaders (Contract w/ CCM) - \$35,000 x 3 leaders x 2 years	\$ 210,000
CLIMB Summer Crew Leaders (Contract w/ CCM) - \$2692.31/ 4 weeks x 6 leaders x 2 years	\$ 32,308
CLIMB Summer Crew Leader Training -Project Learning Tree, Wet, Wild \$100 x 6 leaders x 2yrs	\$ 1,200
CLIMB Crews (Contract w/ CCM)- 3 crews, \$920/crew/day x 20 days x 2 yrs	\$ 110,400
Consultant to conduct Civic Engagement, fesibility study for Skills Building Center	\$ 150,000
Contractor - Develop Central Region outdoor classroom/amphitheater/fishing pond	\$ 156,950
Step Up Achieve	\$ 4,642
Equipment/Tools/Supplies:	\$ -
Urban School Forest Trainings: curriculum materials, supplies (300 teachers)	\$ 15,000
25 School Yard Investigation Kits	\$ 10,000
2 Metro/Urban School Forest Summits (40 teachers)	\$ 4,000
Tools & materials for implementation of Urban Management Plan action steps at 20 sites	\$ 5,000
Acquisition (Fee Title or Permanent Easements):	\$ -
None	
Travel:	\$ -
Visits to Metro School Forests, Trainings, Support Meetings	\$ 10,000
Additional Budget Items:	\$ -
Mailing: School Yard Investigation Kits, support materials	\$ 500
TOTAL ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND \$ REQUEST =	\$ 1,100,000

V. OTHER FUNDS

SOURCE OF FUNDS	AMOUNT	Status
Other Non-State \$ Being Applied to Project During Project Period:	\$ -	
US Forest Service-Urban Connections Program	\$ 5,000	Secured
Forever St Paul Challenge	\$ 1,000,000	Pending
Other State \$ Being Applied to Project During Project Period:	\$ -	
None		
In-kind Services During Project Period:		
DNR Forestry Education Coordinator .2FTE, 3 years, general fund	\$ 51,000	Secured
DNR School Forest Travel, general fund	\$ 10,000	Secured
DNR PLT Coordinator .05FTE, general fund	\$ 12,750	Secured
DNR School Forest Supplies & Materials, general fund	\$ 10,000	Secured
DNR School Forest: school district, community, business, parent support (\$50/hour X 120/hrs/site X	90,000	Pending
DNR Management Resources project management - .06 FTE, 2 yrs	6,110	Secured
DNR R3 Regional Planner project management, outreach - .2 FTE, 3 yrs	40198	Secured
UMN PSEO Coordination UMN Graduate Teaching Assistant 2 years	\$64,000	Secured
Remaining \$ from Current ENRTF Appropriation (if applicable):	\$ -	
2010 ENRTF 180-F Expanding and Strengthening Outdoor Classrooms at Minnesota Schools	\$ 2,000	Unspent, estimate
Funding History:		
2010 ENRTF 180-F, survey work Urban School Forest Needs, base for 2014 proposal	\$ 10,000	



PROJECT TITLE: Building Bridges to a Diverse Natural Resource Community

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Project Manager Qualifications

Michele Hanson is the Regional Planner for the MN Department of Natural Resources' Operations Services Division for the Central region. She is responsible for coordinating regional planning processes and projects to ensure the Region's actions are focused on the achieving our long-term conservation goals and the department's mission.

Michele began her DNR career in 2001 a community assistance coordinator for the Metro Trout Stream Watershed Protection Initiative. She also held DNR positions a Parks Planner and the Wild and Scenic River Planner. She has a Bachelor of Environmental Design (1995) and Master of Landscape Architecture (1996) from the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities.

Organization Description

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources' overall mission is to work with citizens to conserve and manage the state's natural resources, to provide outdoor recreation opportunities, and to provide for commercial uses of natural resources in a way that creates a sustainable quality of life.

The Departments strategic plan, Conservation That Works, provides 4 Conservation Goals to guide our work. Central Region has the most diverse and largest portion of Minnesota's population. We focus our much of our work on finding ways to engage families and youth from the region's diverse cultures. It is important that we are offering outdoor education and recreation activities that resonate each of the cultures so that they have opportunities to make a connection with the state's natural resources. An engaged, active, and environmentally literate citizenry will provide the long term support needed to continue effective resource management. It is also important to develop programs that support the development of the next generation of natural resource professionals whose faces reflect the diverse faces of Minnesota.