



Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

2021 Request for Proposal

General Information

Proposal ID: 2021-337

Proposal Title: Lawns to Legumes Program Phase 2

Project Manager Information

Name: Dan Shaw

Organization: Board of Water and Soil Resources

Office Telephone: (612) 236-6291

Email: dan.shaw@state.mn.us

Project Basic Information

Project Summary: Phase Two of the Lawns to Legumes Program builds on current momentum to further engage residents across Minnesota to establish pollinator habitat and expands into community parks and school landscapes.

Funds Requested: \$1,389,000

Proposed Project Completion: 2024-06-30

LCCMR Funding Category: Methods to Protect, Restore, and Enhance Land, Water, and Habitat (F)

Project Location

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

Statewide

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

Statewide

When will the work impact occur?

During the Project

Narrative

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

Minnesota's State Bee, the Rusty patched bumble bee, as well as many other pollinators, are at risk and Minnesota residents are motivated to support these species. The Lawns to Legumes Program has received significant attention in Minnesota and nationally as an effective model for benefiting pollinators on residential landscapes and providing other environmental benefits. The first phase of the program established strong partnerships, technical resources and coaches around the state. Having this structure and public awareness in place, as well as a large number of applications submitted statewide for assistance creates a well-timed opportunity to further engage and assist Minnesota communities and residents. In Phase one, the program had funding to support only 13 of 34 Demonstration Neighborhood applications, and many additional communities have expressed interest. There is also strong interest for the Demonstration Neighborhood grant expansion into school and community park landscapes. Over 10,000 applications are expected by late fall of 2020 for the phase one Individual Support component of the program, but current program resources allow only around 1000 applicants to be funded.

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

Phase two of this project builds on program momentum to further engage residents statewide to establish pollinator habitat through funding opportunities and technical assistance. The program has high demand for grant assistance from both Demonstration Neighborhoods and Individual Landowner Support. Phase 2 will help meet the demand for grant assistance from communities and residents by expanding outreach to greater-Minnesota through online workshops and webinars, and expanding Demonstration Neighborhood projects to include community parks and school properties to create larger pollinator corridors and refuge areas.

To meet its goals the program will continue to focus on the following three components:

- 1) A competitive RFP for Local Partners to Build Targeted "Demonstration Neighborhoods" focused on establishing projects across neighborhoods in pollinator corridors that provide high value to the Rusty Patched Bumblebee and other at-risk pollinators. Phase two will expand to provide opportunities to fund pollinator habitat in community parks and schools landscapes.
- 2) Individual Landowner Support provides a combination of cost share funding, workshops, webinars, coaching, signage, and free planting guides to residents across Minnesota.
- 3) A Social Media and Education Campaign partners with conservation organizations across Minnesota to increase awareness about at-risk pollinators and the importance of creating pollinator habitat.

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?

- 1) Increase populations of the endangered Rusty patched bumblebee and other at-risk pollinators.
- 2) Develop 15-20 high profile Demonstration Neighborhood projects that restore important pollinator corridors/pathways and include a combination of residential, school and community park landscapes that build overall interest in ecological landscaping.
- 4) Assist approximately 1,100-1,600 landowners with funding and technical assistance while also supporting landowners who want to conduct projects on their own through technical information and guidance (involving over 10,000 landowners).
- 5) Involve a wide range of conservation partners in the program as volunteer Coaches, including Master Gardeners, Master Water Stewards, etc.

Activities and Milestones

Activity 1: Competitive RFP for Local Partners to Build Targeted “Demonstration Neighborhoods”

Activity Budget: \$870,000

Activity Description:

This component of the program will involve development of a competitive RFP for local partners to build targeted “Demonstration Neighborhoods” with landowners. Eligible applicants will include cities, counties, watershed districts, conservation districts, tribes and non-profit organizations. They will provide technical and financial assistance to around 400 landowners and 15 schools or community parks to establish plantings that build pollinator pathways and provide high quality habitat for at-risk pollinators.

A technical advisory team hosted by BWSR will rank proposals based on:

- A) Location within rusty-patched bumble bee priority areas and the range of other at-risk pollinators
- B) Location within or connecting to other key habitat corridors and/or public investments in habitat
- C) Technical Expertise involved in projects
- D) Likely longevity of projects
- E) Strength of partnerships and match
- F) Demographic, social equity, geographic distribution
- G) Potential to build community interest/momentum

After grants are awarded the recipients will coordinate with landowners to plan, install and provide reimbursements for the pollinator-friendly plantings. Landowners will have access to technical resources developed through Activity #3 of this workplan, including the program guide, and planting templates, as well as signage (part of activity #2) to increase their engagement and knowledge about pollinator plantings.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Completion Date
Development of grant criteria and request for proposal	2021-11-30
Award fifteen-twenty projects (\$40,000 - \$60,000 each) for plantings in pollinator corridors	2022-03-31
Approximately 15-20 Demonstration Neighborhoods established with new plantings within high priority pollinator corridors	2024-06-30

Activity 2: Individual Landowner Support

Activity Budget: \$511,000

Activity Description:

This component of the program is focused on providing a combination of cost share funding, workshops, coaching, signage and free planting guides to residents across Minnesota. This component will be coordinated through the Blue Thumb Partnership that has run the Individual Support component of Phase one of Lawns to Legumes. Support will be provided to 1,100-1,600 landowners as well as project recognition through signage to all participants. Landowners can apply for up to \$350 of cost-share funding and are expected to provide at least 25% cash or in kind match. Thirteen online workshops will be initiated in the fall of 2021 focused on Rochester, Duluth, St. Cloud, Moorhead, Brainerd, Bemidji, Albert Lea, Worthington, New Ulm and Mankato, and other greater Minnesota communities to be identified, involving 450-500 residents and 80 – 100 coaches. The 75 minute workshop is followed by 30 minutes for question and answers, and one-on-one assistance from a volunteer coaches (Master Gardeners and Master Water Stewards). Homeowners come away with knowledge about establishing pollinator habitat and a personalized plan for

incorporating native plants in their yard. Three statewide webinars will also be conducted with an estimated audience of 1000 participants.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Completion Date
Approximately 2000 signs distributed to awarded grantees	2024-06-30
Collect landowner before and after images, mapping, match and receipts processed	2024-06-30
Coaching provided to all recipients of Individual Support cost-share through workshops, calls, email, or on-site consultation	2024-06-30
Three statewide webinars and thirteen workshops across greater Minnesota (450-500 landowners) and 80-100 coaches	2024-06-30
Targeted distribution of funding and technical assistance to 1,100-1,600 residents	2024-06-30

Activity 3: Social Media Outreach and Education Campaign

Activity Budget: \$8,000

Activity Description:

The Social Media Outreach and Education Campaign involves a partnership with conservation organizations across Minnesota to increase awareness about at-risk pollinators and the importance of creating pollinator habitat. This component will encourage and assist landowners who want to conduct habitat projects on their own through outreach, technical information and guidance (involving over 10,000 landowners). Key aspects of this component will include implementation of the program’s communications and marketing plan, social media, articles, displays and other communication with residents, as well as promotion of the program habitat guide. These resources will also support activity 1 and 2 of this program.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Completion Date
Conduct partner coordinated outreach to the public at least six times a year	2024-06-30
Implementation of the program’s communications plan to guide the social media campaign and collaboration between Partners	2024-06-30

Project Partners and Collaborators

Name	Organization	Role	Receiving Funds
Becky Rice	Metro Blooms/Blue Thumb Partnership	The Blue Thumb Partnership consists of 50+ conservation members that have been conducting landowner workshops since 2007 and coordinated the Individual Support component of phase 1. They will continue with the same role in phase 2	Yes

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 be funded?

This project builds upon ongoing work of Lawns to Legumes Phase 1 that includes Demonstration Neighborhoods, Individual Support, and Outreach components. Both Phases of funding will focus on these three components and will overlap efforts in 2021, 2022 and 2023. Phase 2 will fund additional Demonstration Neighborhoods (including expansion into school and park landscapes) and individual residents through the Individual Support Component of the program. Additional funding sources are being pursued to continue Lawns to Legumes as a key BWSR program into the future, as it has a strong structure with its partnerships, technical resources and trained coaches.

Other ENRTF Appropriations Awarded in the Last Six Years

Name	Appropriation	Amount Awarded
Lawns to Legumes	M.L. 2019, First Special Session, Chp. 4, Art. 2, Sec. 2, Subd. 08f	\$900,000
Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) Outreach and Implementation	M.L. 2017, Chp. 96, Sec. 2, Subd. 08k	\$6,000,000
Acceleration of Minnesota Conservation Assistance - Final Phase	M.L. 2015, Chp. 76, Sec. 2, Subd. 08d	\$1,000,000
Northeast Minnesota White Cedar Restoration - Phase 2	M.L. 2014, Chp. 226, Sec. 2, Subd. 06d	\$335,000
Minnesota Conservation Apprenticeship Academy	M.L. 2014, Chp. 226, Sec. 2, Subd. 09a	\$392,000

Project Manager and Organization Qualifications

Project Manager Name: Dan Shaw

Job Title: Senior Ecologist/Vegetation Specialist

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

Dan Shaw, is the Senior Ecologist and Vegetation Specialist for BWSR where he works on invasive species, restoration, native vegetation, wetland, agricultural BMPs, stormwater design, pollinator habitat, and climate adaptation programs through conservation partnerships. Dan has also taught classes at the University of Minnesota for the last seventeen years and currently teaches a course on "Ecological Restoration Planning and Management".

Related projects include:

- Establishment and management of BWSR's Native Buffer Cost-share Program
- Establishment and management of BWSR's Cooperative Weed Management Area Program
- Establishment and management of BWSR's Habitat Friendly Solar Program
- Coordination of BWSR's Pollinator Initiative
- Development and updating of BWSR's Native Vegetation Establishment and Management Guidelines

- Development of BWSR's Pollinator, Landscape Resiliency and Buffer Toolboxes
- Development of State Seed Mixes
- Author, co-author or contributing author of "Plants for Stormwater Design", "The Minnesota Wetland Restoration Guide", "Native Vegetation in Restored and Created Wetlands", The Blue Thumb Guide to Raingardens", BWSR's Native Vegetation Establishment and Enhancement Guidelines "Ecological Restoration in the Midwest, Past, Present and Future"

Before coming to BWSR, Mr. Shaw's experience included being Conservation Director at Great River Greening, working for environmental consulting firms, restoration companies, native plant nurseries, research at the University of Minnesota and over 20 years of farming experience.

Organization: Board of Water and Soil Resources

Organization Description:

BWSR Mission Statement and Charge: Improve and protect Minnesota's water and soil resources by working in partnership with local organizations and private landowners. BWSR is the state soil and water conservation agency, and it administers programs that prevent sediment and nutrients from entering our lakes, rivers, and streams; enhance fish and wildlife habitat; and protect wetlands. The 20-member board consists of representatives of local and state government agencies and citizens.

Budget Summary

Category / Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Purpose	Gen. Ineligible	% Benefits	# FTE	Classified Staff?	\$ Amount
Personnel								
Grant Coordinator		Processing and distribution of funding			22%	0.3	X	\$12,000
Program Coordinator		Coordination of the Grant Program			22%	0.9		\$69,000
Program Staff		Program Implementation, Grant oversight, approval of activities and approval of payments			22%	0.6	X	\$46,000
							Sub Total	\$127,000
Contracts and Services								
Blue Thumb/Metro Blooms Partnership	Sub award	Metro Blooms coordinates the Individual Support component of the program including awarding \$400,000 of individual support funding (\$36,000), conducting 13 workshops and 3 webinars (\$13,000); coordinating coaching of individual support recipients (\$15,000), and printing signs (\$23,000) and shipping (\$2,000) of 2000 signs				0.66		\$489,000
Grant Funding for Demonstration Neighborhoods Component of Program	Professional or Technical Service Contract	Demonstration Neighborhood grant recipients (15-20 recipients) are responsible for working with individual residents, schools and community park staff that are part of demonstration neighborhood projects to guide their project planning, installation and management.				0		\$770,000
							Sub Total	\$1,259,000
Equipment, Tools, and Supplies								
							Sub Total	-
Capital Expenditures								
							Sub Total	-

Acquisitions and Stewardship								
							Sub Total	-
Travel In Minnesota								
							Sub Total	-
Travel Outside Minnesota								
							Sub Total	-
Printing and Publication								
	Printing	Printing of approximately 400 habitat guides	Outreach to be used at tabling events for the program					\$2,000
	Printing	Lawns to Legumes Stickers (1000)	Outreach at events					\$500
	Printing	2000 brochures	Outreach at events					\$500
							Sub Total	\$3,000
Other Expenses								
							Sub Total	-
							Grand Total	\$1,389,000

Classified Staff or Generally Ineligible Expenses

Category/Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Justification Ineligible Expense or Classified Staff Request
Personnel - Grant Coordinator		Processing and distribution of funding	Classified : This position is necessary for the project to develop grant agreements and oversee the distribution of grants for Demonstration Neighborhoods.
Personnel - Program Staff		Program Implementation, Grant oversight, approval of activities and approval of payments	Classified : This position is essential to the program to conduct program implementation, and grant oversight for Demonstration Neighborhood recipients.

Non ENRTF Funds

Category	Specific Source	Use	Status	Amount
State				
In-Kind	General Fund Appropriation to BWSR (citation to be determined)	MN BWSR Senior Ecologist 9% FTE of time over three years. BWSR has and will be contributing additional time from field, communications, contract and leadership staff	Pending	\$36,450
			State Sub Total	\$36,450
Non-State				
In-Kind	City of Minneapolis	City of Minneapolis sponsored Blue Thumb workshops	Secured	\$79,000
In-Kind	25% Match from residents for pollinator plantings as part of Individual Support and Demonstration Neighborhood components of the Program	Funding will be used as part of the installation and management of the pollinator plantings.	Pending	\$292,500
In-Kind	City of Minneapolis	Blue Thumb boulevard planting program	Pending	\$174,000
In-Kind	Blue Thumb - Planting for Clean Water Partners	Sponsorship of Lawns to Legumes Workshops	Pending	\$23,000
			Non State Sub Total	\$568,500
			Funds Total	\$604,950

Acquisition and Restoration

Parcel List

Name	County	Site Significance	Activity	Acres	Miles	Estimated Cost	Type of Landowner	Easement or Title Holder	Status of Work
				-	-	-			
				-	-	-			
Totals				0	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.

Public schools and parks that are funded through this program will be the areas where ecological restoration activities will be conducted and protected by public ownership. The smaller residential plantings will occur on private property as was conducted as part of phase one of Lawns to Legumes.

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.

A restoration plan template that includes site preparation, installation and management guidance and developed to be adapted for individual projects will be used for the public school and park landscapes that will be restored through the program. These plans will be required to be uploaded to BWSR's eLINK reporting system. The plan templates will also act as long-term stewardship plans to provide guidance to landowners for long-term management of the restoration.

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.

Projects will require that high quality native seed and appropriate species are selected for the project and that the seed source sequence, diversity recommendations, seed specifications and climate considerations in the Native Vegetation Establishment and Enhancement Guidelines be followed for projects. Seed tags must also be retained for documentation of what seed was installed.

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.

The restoration plan developed for projects will include long-term management guidance. Any projects being restored through the program will be required to sign a stewardship agreement stating that long-term management will be conducted and how the work will be funded in the future.

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

Conservation Corps of Minnesota's website link will be added to BWSR's Lawns to Legumes website so that program participants can contact them as a resource.

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 of projects will be completed initially after activity completion and three years later to assess goals, identify problems and gather information about successful strategies that can be included in BWSR's What's Working webpage. This evaluation is consistent with site assessments conducted for BWSR funded projects.

Attachments

Required Attachments

Map

File: [b8303e8c-719.pdf](#)

Alternate Text for Map

This graphic shows current phase one accomplishments for the Lawns to Legumes program including 7500 resident applications for funding support, launch of the program at the state fair, Oprah Magazine feature with a circulation of 2.4 million, pollinator planting DIY tools accessed 33,351 times, and 14 resident workshops with 815 residents trained. The back side of the graphic includes the lawn sign for the program.

Administrative Use

Does your project include restoration or acquisition of land rights?

Yes: Restoration,

Does your project have patent, royalties, or revenue potential?

No

Does your project include research?

No

Does the organization have a fiscal agent for this project?

No



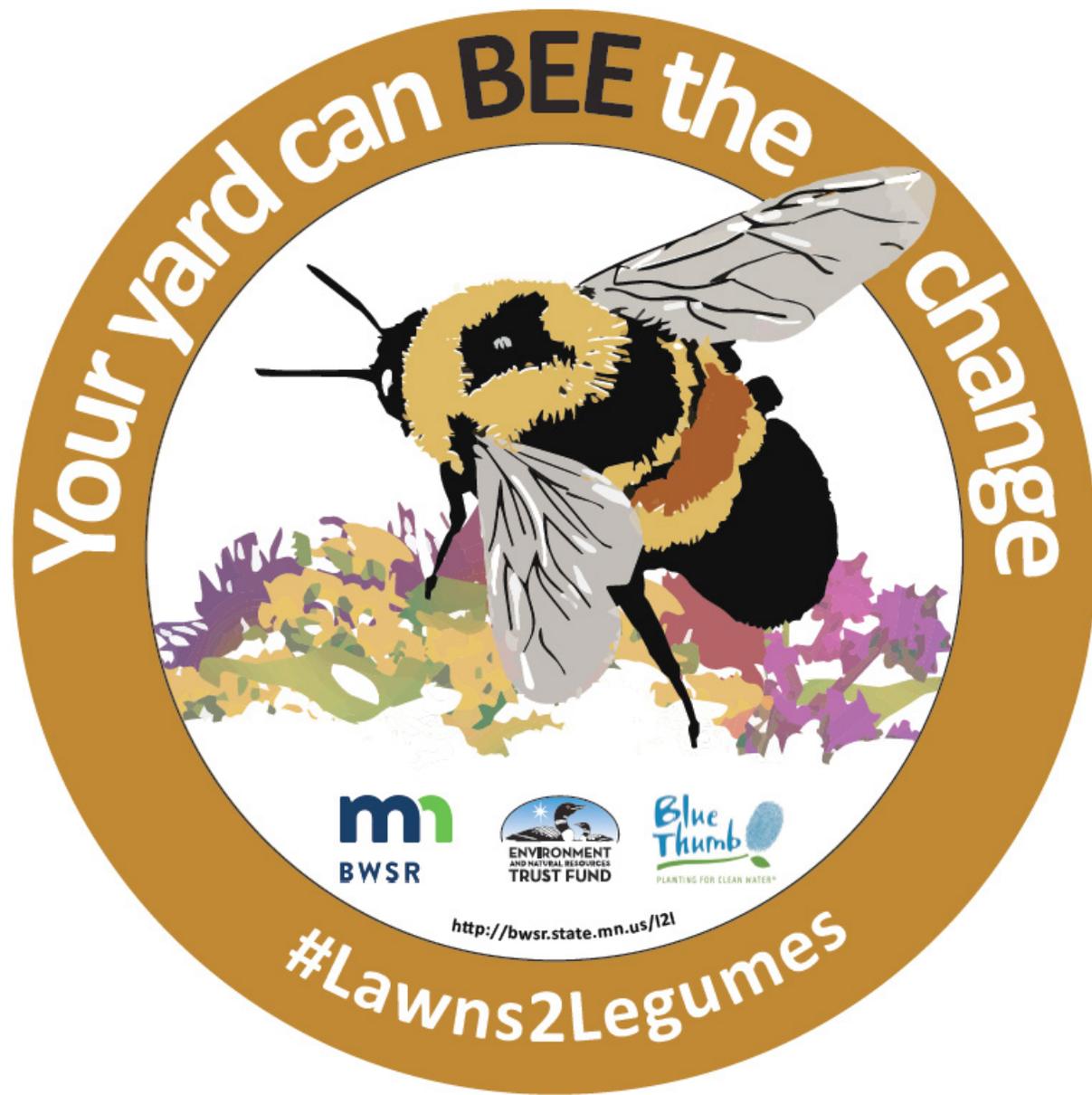
Lawns to Legumes

your yard
CAN BEE
the **CHANGE**

#Lawns2Legumes

Lawns to Legumes seeks to establish pollinator-friendly habitats across Minnesota.





Your Yard can **BEE** the change



<http://bwsr.state.mn.us/121>

#Lawns2Legumes

