



LCCMR Project Summary Information

The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) has proposed the following four projects for funding by the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources.

Building Environmental and Community Resilience to Extreme Weather

MPCA Grant Manager: Paul Moss **Funding Priority:** Air Quality, Climate Change, Renewable Energy
LCCMR Requested Funds: \$846,000 **State Match:** \$300,000 (MPCA)

Project Summary:

Reduce environmental damage from extreme weather through practical investments, community engagement, outreach and grants to implement green infrastructure, conservation, urban forestry, building and other adaptive practices while building community resilience.

Project Statement:

Extreme weather poses a real threat to Minnesota's environment, economic vitality and public health. Recent flooding, drought and storm events have caused costly and serious damage to environmental quality and natural habitat. Impacts include water pollution and erosion from heavy precipitation, impairment of air quality from extreme heat, decreases in water level from drought and deposition of debris and habitat destruction from storms. This project will focus on assisting communities to become more resilient to damage from extreme weather by implementing a range of environmentally-friendly practices. Practices will be promoted that offer significant benefits for environmental quality, economic viability, public health and safety.

Project Timeline: 3 years, July 2014 to June 2017

Project Partners/Cooperators: Multiple state agencies and partner organizations

Project Location (Areas of Work): Statewide

Identifying Causes of Exceptionally High Mercury in Fish

MPCA Grant Manager: Bruce Monson **Funding Priority:** Water Resources
LCCMR Requested Funds: \$2,700,869 **Non-State Funding Match:** \$347,000 (U.S. Geological Survey)
State Match: \$156,000 (MPCA) \$50,000 (DNR)

Project Summary: Quantify the probable causes of high mercury levels in fish from five impaired Minnesota rivers, providing the scientific basis to guide further mercury reductions.

Project Statement:

Mercury is toxic to the nervous system and eating fish is the primary route of exposure to humans and wildlife. More than two-thirds of Minnesota lakes and streams evaluated by the MPCA are impaired because of mercury in fish. One in 10 of these impaired waters have exceptionally high mercury in fish. This proposal will investigate the potential causes of high mercury levels in fish from five rivers: St. Louis, Red River of the North, Vermilion, Roseau, and Kettle. The goal is to achieve sufficient knowledge and certainty about the causes of exceptionally high mercury levels in these rivers to inform additional efforts to reduce mercury in fish.

Project Timeline: 3 years, July 2014 to June 2017

Project Partners/Cooperators: U.S. Geological Survey and MN Department of Natural Resources

Project Location (Areas of Work): Northeast and Northwest Minnesota

Reducing Dioxin Emissions Grant Program

MPCA Grant Manager: Hank Fisher

Funding Priority: Air Quality, Climate Change, Renewable Energy

LCCMR Requested Funds: \$620,000

Non-State Funding Match: \$150,000 (County/Township

Match) State Match: \$140,000 (MPCA)

Project Summary: Reduce dioxin emissions and their negative health consequences from household garbage burning by improving access to rural garbage collection and recycling sites through grants to townships and counties in Minnesota.

Project Statement: According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the largest source of dioxins released each year is from backyard garbage burning. Burning garbage poses a significant health risk because it releases smoke that contains dioxin. One burn barrel can produce as much dioxin as a 200 ton per day permitted waste combustor similar in size to the Olmsted County waste-to-energy facility in Rochester.

An estimated 228,000 households (39 percent of all rural residents in Minnesota) burn garbage on-site primarily because convenient and affordable garbage/recycling drop-off collection services do not exist. The project goal is to reduce the number of households that burn garbage on-site by 30%; reducing state dioxin emissions by 12%.

Project Timeline: 3 years, July 2014 to June 2017

Project Partners/Cooperators: An estimated 24 counties

Project Location (Areas of Work): All non-metropolitan counties in Minnesota

GreenStep Schools Program: School-based Environmental Education and Stewardship

MPCA Grant Manager: Bill Sierks

Funding Priority: Environmental Education

LCCMR Requested Funds: \$900,000

State Match: \$234,000 (MPCA)

Project Summary: Develop and pilot a best-practices program for students and communities to learn how to save energy and water, reduce waste and provide natural habitat at their school building and grounds.

Project Statement:

Minnesota K-12 Schools have no mandate to provide environmental education or green their operations to improve environmental impacts. Consequently, schools' efforts in these areas are often limited and disjointed. However, there is a great potential for integrating existing environmental education curriculum and proven building and campus improvement strategies into schools. Existing green school programs, despite their strengths, only address a fraction of this potential. GreenStep Schools will fill the gap by addressing several areas of need and opportunity.

Project Timeline: 3 years, July 2014 to June 2017

Project Partners/Cooperators: Center for Sustainable Building Research, University of Minnesota, Clean Energy Resource Teams (CERTS), and the MN Green Schools Coalition program of the U.S. Green Building Council, Minnesota Chapter

Project Location (Areas of Work): Statewide

More information about the final proposals submitted on June 7th to the LCCMR, including full proposal write-ups, budgets, project manager qualifications and maps or illustrations, is available on the LCCMR website: <http://www.lccmr.leg.mn>. Click on "2014 Proposal and Funding Process" and then click on "Proposals Received". Proposals are listed in alphabetical order by the last name of the Grant Manager.