LCCMR project summary information

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

Replace chemical hazards in products; reduce emerging contaminants

MPCA Grant Manager: Alister Innes
LCCMR requested funds: $1,039,600
Funding priority: Water Resources
Other funds: $82,942 (MPCA)

Project summary: Studies show chemical hazards in products are released to become environmental contaminants. Grants will incentivize Minnesota product developers to pursue safer alternatives that market forces have been slow to address.

Project statement: Recent monitoring of chemicals in Minnesotans and their environment shows the prevalence of priority chemical contaminants such as endocrine-disrupting plasticizers and flame retardants, and ecotoxic antibacterials and surfactants. Additional research shows these chemical contaminants can harm the environment and human health, even at low concentrations. Some of these priority chemicals are:

- Bisphenol A (BPA) - toxic, endocrine-active, and "pseudo-persistent" due to large amounts in and released from a wide variety of plastic and resin products
- Nonylphenol (NP) – degradation product of widely-used surfactants; are toxic, endocrine-active, and persistent/bioaccumulative/toxic
- Phthalates – softeners and stabilizers in plastics and personal care products; are endocrine-active

Relatively few private resources or public funds are directed at developing replacements for the high-volume product chemistries that are the root cause of these environmental and health impacts. This project aims to fill that gap. Replacing hazardous product chemistries can, over time, prevent reproductive, developmental, and genetic impairments of ecosystems by eliminating the source of these hazards that end up in water, sediment, and soil.

The primary goal of the project is to replace hazardous chemicals in products sold in Minnesota with safer alternatives in order to protect human health and the environment. Additional project goals:

1. Reducing pollution in Minnesota's water, soil and sediment;
2. Supporting Minnesota companies' development of new products, safer product market share, and jobs.

Many Minnesota businesses are already pursuing safer product chemistries, making the state a national leader in this regard. That status has spurred discussion with federal and academic green chemistry leaders to establish a national center for product green chemistry in Minnesota, bringing much larger investment into the state. This project is a signal of the state's commitment.

Project Partners/Cooperators: Minnesota Green Chemistry Forum Members, University of Minnesota, Center for Sustainable Polymers, University of Minnesota, Water Resources Center, and others

Project Location (areas of work)**:** Statewide

Empowered citizens improve five urban forests: statewide

MPCA Grant Manager: Sarah Rudolf
LCCMR requested funds: $835,342
Funding priority: Air Quality, Climate Change, Renewable Energy
Other funds: $527,013

Project summary: Mobilize citizen volunteers to meet escalating urban forestry needs in Duluth, Mankato, Rochester, Saint Cloud and Saint Paul, ready 40 additional communities and prepare for statewide expansion.

Project statement: Community forests are in crisis, and many cities and towns lack the financial and staffing resources to adequately address this crisis. Without decisive action, the decline of community forests will impact air, water, public health, and the natural environment now and into the future.

The goal of the project is to protect and improve Minnesota's community forests by developing a sustainable model that creates enduring connections between citizen volunteers and their local urban forests.

ENRTF will seed a Phase 1 effort to:

A. Design a program that supports cities leveraging volunteers to improve community forests
B. Mobilize volunteers in 5 cities to meet local urban forestry needs
C. Measure the impact of activities by projecting environmental, public health and economic benefits
D. Identify and prepare 40 additional Minnesota communities for Phase 2

Project partners/cooperators: Univ. of MN Dept. of Forest Resources, MN Dept. of Natural Resources, MN Dept. of Health, Tree Trust, Conservation Corps of MN/IA, Hands on Twin Cities, MN Nursery and Landscape Assn., local government, community partners and volunteers.

Project location (areas of work)**:** Duluth, Mankato, Rochester, St. Cloud, and St. Paul

Project impacts and long-term strategy: Urban forests provide many benefits, impacting communities in the following ways:

Urban forest benefit	Project impact
Improve air quality, reduce ozone & fine particles	Protect vulnerable populations (asthma, lung disease)
Mitigate urban heat island effects	Reduce heat stress on residents
Control stormwater and soil erosion	Protect homeowners/businesses from flooding
Conserve energy (less heating/cooling required)	Save costs for individuals/businesses
Sequester carbon	Help MN meet greenhouse gas reduction goals
Address climate change	Support community resilience
Provide native habitat for animals and pollinators	Strengthen local ecosystems

A link to information about the final proposals submitted on March 28th to the LCCMR, including full proposals, budgets, project manager qualifications and maps or illustrations will be available on the LCCMR website here: http://www.lccmr.leg.mn