



DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

DIVISION OF FISH AND WILDLIFE CONSERVATION PARTNERS LEGACY GRANT

Revision: 20191104

Data Date: February 12, 2020

PROJECT CONTACT

Project Name: Valhalla Park Restoration - Phase 2
Organization Name: Florence Township
Organization Type: Government
Mailing Address 1: PO Box 97
City, State ZIP Code: Frontenac, MN 55026

Project Manager: Peggy Knudsen
Title: Florence Township Parks Commissioner
Phone: 851-764-3156
Email: pknudsen@qwestoffice.net

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Sites / Location

County Name: Goodhue
Project Site Name: Valhalla Park
Total Project Sites: 1
Total Project Acres: 7

Land Ownership

Primary Land Ownership: Local Government
Additional Land Ownerships: (N/A)

Habitat

Primary Type: Fish, Game or Wildlife Habitat
Additional Types: (N/A)

Activities

Primary Activity: Restoration
Additional Activities: (N/A)

PROJECT FUNDING SUMMARY

Grant Type: (N/A)

Grant Request Level: (N/A)

Total Grant Amount Requested: \$50,000

Total Match Amount Pledged: \$18,000

Additional Funding Amount: \$0

Total Project Cost: \$68,000

PROJECT SUMMARY

Valhalla Park, established in 1857 shortly after the founding of Old Frontenac, is steeply sloped land adjacent to Lake Pepin. Established within a Historic Preservation District and adjacent to Frontenac State Park, at the time of the Minnesota Public Land Survey (1847-1907) the area consisted of oak woodland and bushland, specifically bur and pin oak; aspen and hazel thickets; and prairie openings. Due to the absence of fire over the last century, the park filled with invasive plants and trees highly competitive to natural species (see attached photos). The removal of invasive species and restoration of the park to restore a healthy plant and animal habitat is a priority of Florence Township as reflected in our Comprehensive Plan and Valhalla Park Restoration and Management Guidelines (see attachments). Project goals include restoring the native plant communities, providing habitat for wildlife species and maintaining the legacy character of the park. Implementation of Phase 1 park restoration of approximately 4 acres began in 2019 with a Conservation Partners Legacy grant. Phase 2 will contribute to restoring the remaining 7 acres of the park. Grant funds will support the removal of invasive species followed by site preparation and seeding of grasses, sedges, forbs and bushes selected for the site to restore the native habitat. Ongoing site management will implement Integrated Plant Management (IPM) to control weed species to include spot herbicide spraying, mowing, herbicide wicking, hand-weeding and prescribed burning through the 3 year grant period. Florence Township allocates \$5,000 annually and has accrued funds for park projects that can provide maintenance for Valhalla Park after the grant period has ended. In addition, Frontenac residents are committed to long term park maintenance as Valhalla Park is a priority for restoration. However, an initial coordinated and comprehensive restoration effort is clearly required prior to the strong intentions of local volunteers. The initial results of Phase 1 have been largely supported by Goodhue County and local residents (see attachments) and early results include an increase in native pollinators such as Monarch butterfly and rusty-patched bumble bee. Further, the contiguous location of Valhalla with Frontenac State Park on its northern and southern aspect make restoration desirable. Residents near the park have also begun to clear invasive plants on their property as an added project outcome.

CONSERVATION PARTNERS LEGACY GRANT

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Phase 2 goals, stated in the Valhalla Park Design (attached), are to: 1) restore native plant communities to Valhalla Park, 2) provide habitat for wildlife species, particularly bird species (including recently-sighted endangered red-headed woodpeckers) utilizing the Mississippi Flyway, and 3) maintain the legacy character of the park as an integral part of the Historic Preservation District. Methods to achieve these goals were identified through consultation with the DNR and Prairie Restorations, Inc. and include site preparation, plantings and maintenance. Initial site preparation (YR 1) will consist of removal of invasive species including buckthorn, tartarian honeysuckle, sumac, prickly ash, all vines, box elder, Siberian elm, ash, black locust and hackberry under 8 inches dbh. Stumps will be flush cut and treated with Triclophyr herbicide and dead vegetation will be removed by a controlled burn using appropriate permits, procedures, equipment and safety precautions. Following site preparation, planting (YR 1) will consist of at least 20 native species of wildflower and grass plants, selected native sedges, forbs and bushes, as appropriate for each area of the park (i.e., woodland, dry prairie and savannah). Maintenance and site management will follow over the remainder of the grant period (YRS 1-3). During the initial germination year and following the first growing season, (Integrated Plant Management) IPM will be used to control weed species. The second and third grant years will consist of identification of undesirable invasive species regrowth followed by the application of spot herbicide, spraying and mowing, herbicide wicking, hand weeding and prescribed burning, as needed. This work will be accomplished by contracting with qualified firms as required by Florence Township policies to assure economical use of grant funds. Residents will also provide spot spraying and weeding, as needed, to keep the park free of invasive species after the grant period has ended. Three residents have current, approved Park Activity Applications specifically for clearing invasive plant species and buckthorn in Valhalla Park with no expiration date. These residents will contribute to the initial clearing of invasive plant species so that grant monies will go further, but perhaps more importantly, and will assist with ongoing maintenance. The township has park project funds that may be designed for Valhalla Park maintenance, as needed, for long-term maintenance.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

Over the past twenty years, Florence Township and Old Frontenac residents have attempted to keep invasive species under control in various areas of Valhalla Park. As these efforts have been in limited areas generally under one acre, the areas quickly regrew with buckthorn and other invasive species. The need for CPL funding will assure that the initial cutting and replanting will be a coordinated and comprehensive effort. As we are aware, ongoing maintenance is critical to assure that these initial efforts are not in vein. To this end, Florence Township will continue to allocate \$5,000 annually to maintain the park indefinitely using IPM techniques. In addition, approximately \$30,000 in accrued park project funds are available for park maintenance with township board approval. These funds are meant for all Florence Township parks, so while they are not specifically for Valhalla Park alone, can be drawn on for long-term park maintenance. Further, Florence Township residents, and Frontenac residents in particular, have long established the need to restore the park, but have not found other resources robust enough to accomplish the initial work. The prioritization of restoring Valhalla Park over other parks in the township is exemplified by the investment required to develop the Valhalla Park Restoration Plan of 2014. The plan took over 2 years of regular community meetings to reach consensus, but adequate resources were lacking to implement the plan. Without CPL funding, the majority of Valhalla Park will continue to be overgrown with buckthorn and other invasive species. Wildlife will not be able to penetrate the thick undergrowth and the endangered species in the area will not have the opportunity to repopulate and thrive.

METHODS

(N/A)

EXPERIENCE / ABILITIES

(N/A)

PROJECT TIMELINE

Time Frame	Goal
Spring 2020	Site preparation
Spring 2020	Planting
Summer-Fall 2020	Initial maintenance
Spring - Fall 2021	Integrated plant management
Spring - Fall 2022	Integrated plant management
Spring 2023	Integrated plant management

Estimated Project Completion Date: 2023-06-30

CONSERVATION PARTNERS LEGACY GRANT

PROJECT INFORMATION

1. Describe the degree of collaboration and local support for this project.

(N/A)

2. Describe any urgency associated with this project.

(N/A)

3. Discuss if there is full funding secured for this project, the sources of that funding and if CPL Grant funds will supplement or supplant existing funding.

(N/A)

4. Describe public access at project site for hunting and fishing, identifying all open seasons.

(N/A)

5. Discuss use of native vegetation (if applicable).

(N/A)

6. Discuss your budget and why it is cost effective.

(N/A)

7. Provide information on how your organization encourages a local conservation culture. This includes your organization's history of promoting conservation in the local area, visibility of work to the public and any activities and outreach your organization has completed in the local area.

(N/A)

BUDGET INFORMATION

Organization's Fiscal Contact Information

Name: Tom Gnotke
Title: Township treasurer
Email: gnotketn@gmail.com
Phone: 612-236-0888

Street Address 1: 34693 Rainwater Ct.

City, State ZIP Code: Frontenac, MN 55026

Budget Details

Personnel

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title / Work to be completed</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Grant/Match</u>	<u>In-kind/Cash</u>
Peggy Knudsen	Project manager	\$5,000	Match	In-Kind
Tom Gnotke	Township treasurer/ accounting	\$1,500	Match	In-Kind

Contracts

<u>Contractor Name</u>	<u>Contracted Work</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Grant/Match</u>	<u>In-kind/Cash</u>
TBD	park restoration	\$43,000	Grant	(N/A)

Professional Services

<u>Professional Name</u>	<u>Description of Services</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Grant/Match</u>	<u>In-kind/Cash</u>
Area volunteers	Buckthorn cutting	\$5,000	Match	In-Kind
TBD	Park maintenance	\$5,000	Match	Cash

Equipment/Tools/Supplies

<u>Item</u>	<u>Purpose</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Grant/Match</u>	<u>In-kind/Cash</u>
Bushes	woodland enhancement	\$1,000	Grant	(N/A)
Herbicide	site preparation & maintenance	\$1,000	Grant	(N/A)

CONSERVATION PARTNERS LEGACY GRANT

BUDGET INFORMATION *(Continued)*

Equipment/Tools/Supplies *(Continued)*

<u>Item</u>	<u>Purpose</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Grant/Match</u>	<u>In-kind/Cash</u>
Seeds and forbs	native plant establishment	\$5,000	Grant	(N/A)
Seeds and forbs	native plant establishment	\$1,500	Match	Cash

Additional Funding

Additional Funding Amount: \$0

Budget Overview

<u>Item Type</u>	<u>Grant</u>	<u>Match</u>	<u>Total</u>
Personnel	-	\$6,500	\$6,500
Contracts	\$43,000	-	\$43,000
Fee Acquisition with PILT	-	-	-
Fee Acquisition without PILT	-	-	-
Easement Acquisition	-	-	-
Easement Stewardship	-	-	-
Travel (in-state)	-	-	-
Professional Services	-	\$10,000	\$10,000
DNR Land Acquisition Cost	-	-	-
Equipment/Tools/Supplies	\$7,000	\$1,500	\$8,500
Additional Budget Items	-	-	-
Totals:	\$50,000	\$18,000	\$68,000

SITE INFORMATION

You may group your project sites together as long as land ownership, activity and habitat information is the same for the land manager.

Land Manager

Name: Tom Johnson

Phone: 651-345-6980

Organization: Florence Township Parks Commission

Email: b20174@gmail.com

Title: Florence Township Parks Commissioner

Site Information

Habitat: Fish, Game or Wildlife Habitat

Activity: Restoration

Land Ownership: Local Government

(1) **Site Name:** Valhalla Park

Open to Public Hunting? No

DOW Lake #: (N/A)

Open to Public Fishing? Yes - all

Acres: 7

PLS Section: Township - 112, Range - 13W, Section - 12

NATURAL HERITAGE DATABASE REVIEW

Natural Heritage elements were found within my project site(s): Yes

Natural Heritage Sites and Managers: (N/A)

Natural Heritage Elements: (N/A)

CONSERVATION PARTNERS LEGACY GRANT

NATURAL HERITAGE DATABASE REVIEW *(Continued)*

Natural Heritage Mitigation: A substantial list of elements are located near the restoration site. The restoration work will cause minimal disruption to the elements, and result in a more habitable environment once the restoration is accomplished. The elements are as follows:

Vertebrate animals:

lake sturgeon,
 skipjack herring,
 Hens low's sparrow,
 red-shouldered hawk,
 lark sparrow,
 timber rattlesnake,
 blue sucker,
 Acadian flycatcher,
 peregrine falcon,
 sucker mouth minnow,
 gopher snake,
 paddlefish,
 cerulean warbler,
 Bell's vireo.

Invertebrates include:purple wartyback

elephant-ear,
 spike,

Higgins eye,
 black bandshell,
 washboard,

Leonard's skipper,

Plant species:

Hill's thistle,
 squirrel corn,
 Goldie's fern,
 Kentucky coffee tree,
 swamp white oak,
 ovate-leaved skullcap,

Native plant communities:

Southern Dry-Mesic Oak Forest: Red Oak-White Oak Forest,
 Southern Mesic Maple Basswood Forest: Sugar Maple-Basswood-Red Oak-(Blue Beech) Forest,
 Southern Dry Prairie: Dry-Sand-Gravel Prairie,
 Southern Dry Prairie: Dry Bedrock Bluff Prairie,
 Southern Dry-Mesic Oak-Hickory Woodland: Oak-Shagbark Hickory Woodland type,
 Southern Floodplain Forest: Silver maple.

ATTACHMENTS

Additional Documentation

Attach additional documentation as applicable using the appropriate categories below. If you exceed the size limit while uploading, contact CPL Grant staff to discuss your options.

Letter of Support

File Name

Description

HedinLetter_of_Support.pdf

Hedin letter of support

Letters_of_support.pdf

Area residents letters of support

Petition_final.pdf

Petition supporting Phase 2

Wozniak_Letter_of_Support_Goodhue_County.pdf

Goodhue County letter of support

CONSERVATION PARTNERS LEGACY GRANT

ATTACHMENTS *(Continued)*

Photo

File Name	Description
bur_oak_surrounded.JPG	Current park conditions
Little_bluestem.JPG	Little blue stem remaining in park

Restoration Plan

File Name	Description
FrontenacPhase1_2map.jpg	Restoration map for Phases 1 & 2

Engineering/Survey/Design Plan

File Name	Description
Florence_Township_Comprehensive_Plan_9-20-13.pdf	Florence Township Comprehensive Plan
ValhallaParkDesignMcGhieBetts2014.pdf	Florence Township Valhalla Park Plan

Supplemental Document

File Name	Description
NHIS_review_Valhalla.xlsx	NHIS report
Valhalla_Park_Restoration_Water_Form.pdf	Public waters project form

FINAL APPLICATION SUBMISSION

- P I certify that I have read the Conservation Partners Legacy Grants Program Request for Proposal, Program Manual and other program documents, and have discussed this project with the appropriate public land manager, or private landowner and easement holder.
- P I certify I am authorized to apply for and manage these grant and match funds, and the project work by the organization or agency listed below. I certify this organization to have the financial capability to complete this project and that it will comply with all applicable laws and regulations.
- P I certify that all of the information contained in this application is correct as of the time of the submission. If anything should change, I will contact CPL Grant staff immediately to make corrections.
- P I certify that if funded I will give consideration to and make timely written contact to Minnesota Conservation Corps or its successor for consideration of possible use of their services to contract for restoration and enhancement services. I will provide CPL Grant staff a copy of that written contact within 10 days after the execution of my grant, should I be awarded.
- P I certify that I am aware at least one Land Manager Review and Approval form is required for every application and at least one Public Waters Contact form is required for all public waters work. I am aware I must submit all completed forms by uploading them into this application. I have attached the required type and number of forms as necessary for this project.
- P I am aware that by typing my name in the box below, I am applying my signature to this online document.

Signature: Priscilla Flynn

Organization / Agency: Florence Township Board of Directors

Title: Grant writer, on behalf of Florence Township

Date Signed: January 22, 2020

(CPL Grant Application ID = 1663)