

1997 Project Abstract

For the period ending June 30, 1999

This project was supported by the Minnesota Future Resources Fund.

**Project Title:** Saint Paul-Minneapolis Regional Park Urban Interpretation Program

**Project Manager:** Judy Barr, Manager of Support Services

**Organization:** Saint Paul Division of Parks and Recreation

**Mailing Address:** 25 West Fourth Street, Suite 300

Saint Paul, Minnesota 55102

**Legal Citation:** ML 1997, Ch. 216, Sec. 15, Subd. 13(k)

**Appropriation Amount:** \$200,000.00

### Statement of Objectives

Together, the six popular Saint Paul and Minneapolis Regional Parks included in this project host six million annual visits. All have received substantial state and local investment for their development and maintenance. This project capitalizes on this investment by providing inexpensive, accessible environmental opportunities for school and youth groups and visitors from the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area, the state of Minnesota and beyond.

### Overall Project Results, Use and Dissemination

This project contained ten results which, when combined, dramatically expand upon environmental educational opportunities in the following: Como, Crosby, Lilydale, Chain of Lakes, Minnehaha, and Wirth Regional Parks.

- An educational resource guide was created for the six Regional Parks identified in this grant project. This guide displays where visitors can locate examples and gives descriptions of vegetative habitats in Minneapolis and Saint Paul.
- Training of more than 200 youth volunteer interpreters was provided in order to expand educational opportunities in Minneapolis and Saint Paul parks.
- A youth interpreter and environmental education program was developed in Minneapolis. Materials and supplies for these programs were prepared and the curriculum offered in 41 parks for more than 2500 hours of program contact time.
- A youth interpreter program was developed at the Como Conservatory in Saint Paul. Over the course of the grant, more than 2265 hours were volunteered by youth interpreters.
- The Como Zoo's youth interpreter program was expanded and more than 100 youth were recruited, interviewed, selected and trained as educational volunteers. The development of interpretation carts enhanced on-site programs delivered by youth.
- Youth interpreters were trained and added to Crosby Park. Interpretive classes and family hikes were attended by approximately 3000 visitors in 1998 and 1999.
- Guidebooks were developed, printed and distributed for three Regional Parks in Minneapolis. Fact sheets, which compliment the guides, were also developed.
- Como Conservatory introduced slate signage to the plant collections. In addition, Power Plant Packs and the Rainforest Program were developed and facilitated by youth volunteers.
- Como Zoo developed a series of educational signs for the Birdyard Exhibit, which displays three Minnesota biomes, the Large Cat Building, and also for 14 selected animals from Como Zoo's collection in a self-guided tour format. Printed materials were also developed in order to enhance signage.
- Six interpretive signs were developed for Crosby Regional Park. These signs display natural resources and historical information. Printed materials were also developed.

All materials will be placed on the Internet after the grant funding period is complete, thus making information accessible to anyone with Internet capabilities.

July 1, 1999

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# LCMR Final Work Program Report

**Date of Work Program Approval:** July 1, 1997 (Contract complete 12/97)

**Project Completion Date:** June 30, 1999

**Project Title:** Saint Paul-Minneapolis Regional Park Urban Interpretation Program

**Project Manager:** Judy Barr, Manager of Support Services

**Affiliation:** Saint Paul Division of Parks and Recreation

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## Total Biennial Project Budget:

\$LCMR:	\$200,000	\$Match	\$30,000
- \$LCMR spent	<u>\$200,000</u>	- \$Match spent	<u>\$30,000</u>
\$LCMR balance	\$0	\$Match balance:	\$0

## Appropriation Language:

ML 1997, Chapter 216, Sec. 15, Subd. 13(k), as recommended by the Legislative Commission on Minnesota Resources from the Minnesota Future Resources Fund.

## PROJECT SUMMARY OF RESULTS

This grant allowed Saint Paul Parks and Recreation and the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board to:

- 1) prepare environmental education programs, activities and printed interpretive materials for six regional parks located in Saint Paul and Minneapolis;
- 2) create a Junior Naturalist-Interpreter Program involving elementary, junior and senior high school students in interpretive programs in regional parks;
- 3) conduct accessible, low-cost interpretive programs for school children and park visitors, fostering an awareness of the environment; and
- 4) demonstrate new models for providing environmental education programs.

The work plan was approved in June 1997 and the contract was completed in December 1997, pushing several project elements back several months. Organizing sessions occurred throughout October and November 1997 and in June and July 1998 with Minneapolis and Saint Paul project partners to develop the next steps for this collaborative project.

Minneapolis hired a project volunteer coordinator and two joint staff in October 1997. A tour of sites by project staff was completed in February and July of 1998 in order to identify educational signage content and placement. Key project interns were assigned to the projects outlined in the work plan in November 1997 and work on these projects was ongoing for the remainder of the funding period.

A Rainforest Program was offered for nine days during February and March 1997. An estimated 30,000 visitors, including schools and youth groups were treated to special interactive displays and on-site interpretation with plants and animals by trained youth and adults. The 1999 Rainforest Program was dramatically changed from the first year as our focus changed and we developed self-contained exhibits. This development freed up our volunteers and allowed them to spend more time interpreting, instead of setting up and taking down exhibits. This strategy also proved to be less staff intensive.

A survey of 16 Minneapolis elementary schools located within walking distance of regional parks was completed in March-April 1998. 18 percent of 475 surveys were returned by teachers; 99% of these teachers expressed an interest in educational programs in regional parks.

In 1998, youth recruitment and training was implemented and carried out. In 1998 we had more than 60 youth doing interpretation at the Conservatory and another 50 youth were trained to do interpretation on Zoo grounds. In 1999, another 100 youth were trained to do interpretation at the Zoo and Conservatory.

Educational signage and a self-guided tour of 14 selected animals at the Como Zoo were drafted and tested in the fall of 1998. The self-guided tour is designed to be flexible to meet the needs of educators. There are actually four tours in one - Adaptation, Behavior, Culture and "Did You Know?" tours help children learn about each animal one piece at a time. The signs are made using a relatively new process which allows them to be highly vandal-resistant and easy to care for or replace. In addition to these signs, fact sheets on each animal have been created and are easy for both Como Zoo and educators to reproduce. This program will be self-sustaining after the funding period is complete.

The inventory of physical and program resources in the six regional parks covered by this grant was completed and a graphic technician developed the necessary maps and basic formats for interpretive print materials. Research and draft materials were developed for review and testing by the Saint Paul and Minneapolis Parks systems in the summer and fall of 1998. These materials are easily updated and will be continually added to and changed after the funding period is complete.

**NOTE:** Most materials, if not all, will be developed for placement on the Internet, after the June 30<sup>th</sup> program completion date, for access by anyone with Internet capabilities.

## STATUS AND DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT RESULTS

**Result 1: Develop and print an educational resource guide for six Regional Parks in Minneapolis and Saint Paul.**

Budget: \$10,250                      Balance:        \$0

Status: The inventory of physical and program resources in the six regional parks covered by this grant was completed early in 1998. A graphic technician developed necessary maps and basic formats for print materials. Research and draft materials were completed in Fall 1998, and final copies were printed and distributed in 1999.

**Result 2: Provide joint training for youth volunteer interpreters in Minneapolis and Saint Paul environmental education programs.**

Budget: \$3,000                      Balance:        \$0

Status: Joint discussions were held about youth recruitment and specific training needs of each park system. In 1998 and 1999, recruitment and training was done by project staff with more than 200 youth. More intensive training, using contracted specialists, was utilized in Spring 1999.

**Result 3: Organize a youth interpreter and environmental education program in three Regional Parks located in Minneapolis. *(A contract was developed between Saint Paul and Minneapolis for the completion of this portion of the grant.)***

Budget: \$85,000                      Balance:        \$0

Status: A project youth volunteer coordinator was hired in October 1997. Contacts with the schools, recreation staff and community education were ongoing and locations for youth interpretation were identified in Chain of Lakes, Minnehaha and Wirth Regional Parks within Minneapolis. A park-based environmental education program was developed. Materials and supplies for these programs were prepared and the curriculum was offered in 41 parks (both Regional and community parks) to three Minneapolis public schools and one suburban school for more than 2500 hours of program contact time. The curriculum and printed materials developed under this program have been incorporated into city-wide environmental education programming provided in Minneapolis parks and will be sustained after the funding period is complete.

**Result 4: Organize a youth interpreter program at the Como Conservatory.**

Budget: \$16,750                      Balance:        \$0

Status: The Conservatory Education Program Coordinator worked with youth from Saint Paul and Minneapolis schools and service organizations to do interpretation on site at the Conservatory during the 1997-98 and 1998-1999 school years. Over the grant period, more than 2265 hours were volunteered by youth interpreters. For example, 48 sixth-eighth graders from Chron Middle School volunteered more than 460 hours as Activity Zone volunteers during 1998 and 1999. These students created a partnership with students from Emerson Spanish Immersion School. Chiron students visited 40 first grade students weekly, creating excitement about plants by reading stories and facilitating hands on activities. Four Girl Scouts also donated more than 50 hours of time, facilitating hands on activities for visitors to the Como Conservatory. They also helped develop, design and test the "Como Conservatory North Wing Adventure Guide." Youth volunteers were additionally involved with the "Rainforest Program" in 1998 and 1999, interpreting exhibits for more than 30,000 visitors. Staff will be continuing work with schools and youth groups into the 1999-2000 school year.

**Result 5: Expand the youth interpreter program at the Como Zoo.**

Budget: \$11,250                      Balance:        \$0

Status: The Zoo Education Program Coordinator recruited, interviewed and selected more than 100 youth and trained them as education interpreters during the springs of 1998 and 1999, for interpretation in each of those summers. Supplies and materials were acquired for use in the development of interpretation carts. These carts facilitated the youth in their on-site interpretation and were transported to various locations throughout the Zoo during the summers and fall of 1998 and 1999.

**Result 6: Develop a youth interpreter program at Crosby Park.**

Budget: \$9000                        Balance:        \$0

Status: The Naturalist Education Program Coordinator worked with 20 youth interpreters during the summer of 1998 and 1999 to provide more specific training on the natural resources found at Crosby Regional Park and other river front areas. Interpretive classes were developed and attended by approximately 4000 visitors in 1998 and 1999. Supplies and equipment were purchased for use in producing interpretive kits and to facilitate classes and nature walks for families and youth.

**Result 7: Develop and print guidebooks for three Regional Parks in Minneapolis.**  
*(A contract was developed between Saint Paul and Minneapolis for the completion of this portion of the grant.)*

Budget: \$15,000                      Balance:        \$0

Status: Meetings were held with Saint Paul and Minneapolis staff to discuss content and structure of natural resource guides for three Regional Parks in each city. These guides were researched, developed and printed by staff. Meetings were held later in the biennium with graphics staff. Fact sheets describing various types of habitat and some of Minneapolis' lakes were also developed for use in conjunction with the three Guides.

**Result 8: Develop Conservatory educational signage, print materials, guides and programs.**

Budget: \$16,750                      Balance:        \$0

Status: The Conservatory Education Program Coordinator worked with Como Education staff on signage and materials to enhance the Conservatory. Slate signs were introduced in the plant collection to slow our visitors down, to provide interesting information, and to compliment our interpretive volunteers and brochures. The "Power Plant Packs" are new educational tools to stimulate interest in the Conservatory's plant collection and improve the quality of field trips for student visitors. Three Power Plant Packs were developed: Room and Board, Living Well and What's Cooking. A discovery guide that engages the students in on-site activities, discovery cards that have a picture of the plant on one side and a story with a focused question on the other side, and finally a take-away "What Have You Learned?" booklet that focuses on plants for construction, food, and medicine are included in each Power Plant Pack.

The "Rainforest Program" was developed for use during nine days in February and March 1998 and 1999. Approximately 30,000 attended the exhibit over the course of two years. The Program was dramatically changed in 1999. We focused on developing self-contained exhibits in order to reduce the amount of time volunteers spent setting up and taking down exhibits. We were also able to provide our visitors with an experience even if volunteers were unavailable. This strategy proved to be less staff intensive because we were able to leave many of the exhibits in place during the nine day run of the program and volunteers were able to spend more time with our visitors.

**Result 9: Develop Como Zoo educational signage, print materials, guides and programs.**

Budget: \$18,500                      Balance:        \$0

Status: Education staff and zoo keepers have replanted the Birdyard exhibit at Como Zoo with native Minnesota plants to highlight three Minnesota biomes and the plants and animals associated with them. Education staff and youth installed educational signage and researched materials to be used to interpret and enhance the redesigned exhibit. Signage was designed in the summer 1998 and was installed in the fall of 1998 for evaluation.

Our Education Intern and Graphic Artist developed an overall signage concept for the Como Zoo which includes a self-guided tour and interactive signage for the Large Cat Building. By utilizing a system of signs, maps and fact sheets, visitors will be able to learn a little or a lot, whatever time allows, about selected animals in the Como Zoo collection. Text for all signs was researched and tested in the summer and fall of 1998 and was developed for a contract with a printing company in the winter of 1998/1999. Educators had an opportunity to review and test the tour and Large Cat Building signage in the early spring of 1999 and their evaluation was incorporated into the final design. The signs are made using a fiberglass embedment process which is highly vandal-resistant and relatively inexpensive to replace and update. A total of 14 signs were developed for the tour with habitat range maps, pictures, facts on adaptation, behavior, culture, status and conservation, and including a fun "Did You Know?" section. The Large Cat Building signage contains 13 signs that educate visitors in a more interactive manner about the cats found in Como Zoo's collection.

**Result 10: Develop river front educational signage, print materials, guides and programs.**

Budget: \$14,500                      Balance:        \$0

Status: Discussions began with other organizations who have or are planning on installing signage on the river in order to ensure a coordinated effort among all parties. A tour of the river front parks with MNNRA (National Park Service), the Science Museum and project staff took place in August 1998. Signs have been developed for Crosby Regional Park by Education Interns and our Graphic Artist and include information on natural resources and history. These signs were also made from a fiberglass embedment process and are designed to be highly vandal-resistant. The six signs are designed to work in conjunction with printed guides and materials for Crosby and Lilydale Regional Parks (both river front parks), also developed under this grant.

A complete final budget breakdown is attached at the end of this report. This breakdown includes LCMR and match dollars spent in order to complete the results of this grant.

Paper copies of materials which were produced for the results of this grant have been provided. Not all materials provided are in their exact and final forms (e.g. finished copies of fiberglass signs may appear somewhat different from the paper copy included for grant reporting purposes).



July 1, 1999

## LCMR 1997: FINAL WORK REPORT - BUDGET

RESULT	BUDGETED AMOUNT	ACTIVITIES	LCMR MONEY SPENT	BUDGET CODE	MATCH AMOUNT SPENT
<b>RESULT 1:</b> Develop and print Resource Guides for six Regional Parks	\$10,250	Education Intern - STACK-STENBERG 500 hours x \$8.50 = \$4250	\$4250	Yr. 1998 03100	
		Printing (Resource Guide)	\$6000	Yr. 1998 001-03108	
		Graphic Artist - GARIEPY 100 hours x \$17.00 = \$1700		Yr. 1998 03108	\$1700
<b>RESULT 2:</b> Provide training for youth and volunteer interpreters in Minneapolis and Saint Paul	\$3000	Park Naturalist - FOWLER 141 hours x \$19.00 = \$2679	\$2675	Yr. 1998 03194	
		Contracted trainers	\$325	33197	
		Park Naturalist - FOWLER Fringe benefits for 141 hours x \$19 = \$2679 \$2679 x 28% = \$750		Yr. 1998 03194	\$750
<b>RESULT 3:</b> Organize youth interpreter program in three Mpls. Regional Parks	\$85,000	Contract with Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board	\$85,000	33197	
		Minneapolis match: Staff wages and benefits, supplies and materials		N/A	\$12,500
<b>RESULT 4:</b> Organize youth interpreter program at the Conservatory	\$16,750	Program Coordinator - PARDELLO 667 hours x \$15 = \$10,005	\$10,000	Yr. 1998 FCCG- 33197 (\$8000) Yr. 1999 FCCG- 33197 (\$2000)	

RESULT	BUDGETED AMOUNT	ACTIVITIES	LCMR MONEY SPENT	BUDGET CODE	MATCH AMOUNT SPENT
		Garden Laborer - KLINKER 400 hours x \$10 = \$4000	\$4000	Yr. 1998 33193	
		Supplies and materials	\$2750	Yr. 1998 33197	
		Garden Laborer - KLINKER 29.5 hours x \$10 = \$295.00		Yr. 1998 03108	\$295
<b>RESULT 5:</b> Organize youth interpreter program at Como Zoo	\$11,250	Education Intern - WITKIN 1000 hours x \$8.50 = \$8500	\$8500	Yr. 1998 33193	
		Printing services	\$2000	Yr. 1998 33197	
		Other supplies (for educational kits and interpretive carts)	\$750	Yr. 1998 33197	
		Park Naturalist - FOWLER Fringe benefits for 500 hours x \$19 = \$9500 \$9500 x 28% = \$2660		Yr. 1998 03194	\$2660
<b>RESULT 6:</b> Develop youth interpreter program at Crosby Park	\$9,000	Intern - REZNY 209 hours x \$6.00 = \$1254	\$1250	Yr. 1998 33193	
		Intern - HULL 353 hours x \$8.50 = \$3000.50	\$3000	Yr. 1998 33193	
		Printing	\$2000	Yr. 1998 33197	
		Supplies	\$2000	Yr. 1998 33197	
		Equipment	\$750	Yr. 1998 33197	
		Graphic Artist - GARIEPY 42 hours x \$17 = \$714.00		Yr. 98 03108	\$714
<b>RESULT 7:</b> Develop and print guides for three Mpls. Regional Parks	\$15,000	Contract with Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board	\$15,000	33197	

RESULT	BUDGETED AMOUNT	ACTIVITIES	LCMR MONEY SPENT	BUDGET CODE	MATCH AMOUNT SPENT
		Minneapolis match: Staff wages and benefits, materials and supplies		N/A	\$3000
<b>RESULT 8:</b> Develop Conservatory education signage, print material, guides, programs	\$16,750	Program Coordinator - PARDELLO 400 hours x \$15 = \$6000	\$6000	Yr. 1998 FCCG 33197	
		Contracted services	\$6627.75	Yr. 1999 33197	
		Supplies and materials	\$4122.25	Yr. 1999 33197	
<b>RESULT 9:</b> Develop Zoo educational signage and print material	\$18,500	Education intern - STACK-STENBERG 1000 hours x \$8.50 = \$8500	\$8500	Yr. 98 33197	
		Contract for producing signage	\$10,000	Yr. 99 33197	
		Contract for producing signage		Yr. 99 33197	\$500
		Education intern - STACK-STENBERG Fringe benefits for 1000 hours x \$8.50 = \$8500 \$8500 x 28% = \$2380		Yr. 98 33197	\$2380
		Graphic Artist - GARIEPY 200 hours x \$17.00 = \$3400		Yr. 98 03108	\$3400
<b>RESULT 10:</b> Develop river front educational signage and print materials	\$14,500	Intern: HULL 177 hours x \$8.50 = \$1504.50	\$1500	Yr. 98 33193	
		Intern: REZNY 334 hours x \$6.00 = \$2004	\$2000	Yr. 98 33193	
		Education Intern - FREEMAN 589 hours x \$8.50 = \$5006.50	\$5000	Yr. 98 03100	
		Contract for producing signage	\$4000	Yr. 99 33197	

RESULT	BUDGETED AMOUNT	ACTIVITIES	LCMR MONEY SPENT	BUDGET CODE	MATCH AMOUNT SPENT
		Printing	\$2000	Yr. 98 33197	
		Education Intern - FREEMAN Fringe benefits for 589 hours x \$8.50 = 5006.50 \$5006.50 x 28% = \$1401.82		Yr. 98 03100	\$1400
		Graphic Artist - GARIEPY 88 hours x \$17 = \$1496		Yr. 98 03108	\$1496
TOTALS:	\$200,000		\$200,000		\$30,795