

2010 Project Abstract

For the Period Ending June 30, 2014

PROJECT TITLE: Get Outside! Urban Woodland for City Kids

PROJECT MANAGER: Bryan Murphy

AFFILIATION: City of Saint Paul, Dept of Parks and Recreation

MAILING ADDRESS: 400 City Hall Annex, 25 West Fourth Street

CITY/STATE/ZIP: Saint Paul, MN 55102

PHONE: 651.266.6411

E-MAIL: Bryan.Murphy@ci.stpaul.mn.us

WEBSITE: www.stpaul.gov

FUNDING SOURCE: Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

LEGAL CITATION: ML 2010, Chap.[_362_], Sec.[_2_], Subd._8(e)_
& ML 2013, Chap.[_52 _], Sec.[_2_], Subd._17_

APPROPRIATION AMOUNT: \$ 218,000

Overall Project Outcome and Results

The City of Saint Paul developed a 17.65 acre outdoor classroom in Como Regional Park to provide environmental education, historical interpretation, and habitat for native wildlife in an inner-city community where environmental learning opportunities are rare. The woodland is located within five miles of over 75 public and private schools. To date, the Como Woodland Outdoor Classroom has been utilized by 2,103 students and educators. It has become the School Forest for Great River School and Crossroads Elementary School through the MN DNR's School Forest Program.

The Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund's investment in the Como Woodland Outdoor Classroom has resulted in the development of outdoor study areas featuring coniferous woodland, oak savanna, tallgrass prairie, shortgrass prairie, transitional woodland, and terrace forest plant communities. Additionally, a propagation garden area has been constructed within the Classroom that will serve as a native plant demonstration garden for the public and will be utilized by students to grow native plants for the Classroom. ENRTF funds were also utilized to install 2,525 feet of ADA accessible gravel trails within the Classroom.

Funds were used to install four entry signs at each of the major entrances to the Como Woodland Outdoor Classroom. 27 numbered, interpretative posts were installed at key locations throughout the site. The City of Saint Paul has received \$17,000 from the Minnesota Historical Society and is in the final stages of developing a guide book to the cultural and natural history of the site, referencing these numbered posts. When published, the guide book will be an invaluable resource for educators wishing to bring students to the Como Woodland Outdoor Classroom.

Community volunteers were engaged throughout the restoration process. 2,005 volunteers participated in restoration activities, including planting, invasive species removal, and trail construction.

Project Results Use and Dissemination

Our advisory committee, the Como Woodland Advisory Committee, has set up a website dedicated to the classroom: <http://www.comowoodland.org/>. Progress about our project has been shared with the general public through our blog (<http://restoresaintpaul.blogspot.com/>) and

our Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/saintpaulnaturalresources>). Community volunteer events taking place in the classroom are highlighted on the City's website <http://www.stpaul.gov/index.aspx?NID=1043>. The Minnesota Lottery recently highlighted the Como Woodland Outdoor Classroom in their newly launched blog: http://blog.mnlottery.com/blog/2014/07/24/64/where_the_money_goes_como_woodland_outdoor_classroom.

Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF) 2010 Work Program Final Report

Date of Report: August 11, 2014

Date of Next Progress Report: Final Report

Date of Work Program Approval: Amendment approved June 23, 2014

Project Completion Date: June 30, 2014

I. PROJECT TITLE: Get Outside! Urban Woodland for City Kids

Project Manager: Bryan Murphy
Affiliation: City of Saint Paul, Dept of Parks and Recreation
Mailing Address: 400 City Hall Annex, 25 West Fourth Street
City / State / Zip: Saint Paul, MN 55102
Telephone Number: 651.266.6411
E-mail Address: Bryan.Murphy@ci.stpaul.mn.us
FAX Number: 651.292.7405
Web Site Address: www.stpaul.gov

Location: Como Regional Park, Ramsey County, Saint Paul, MN

Total ENRTF Project Budget:	ENRTF Appropriation	\$ 218,000
	Minus Amount Spent:	\$ 212,694
	Equal Balance:	\$ 5,306

Legal Citation: ML 2010, Chap.[362], Sec.[2], Subd. 8(e)_
& ML 2013, Chap.[52], Sec.[2], Subd. 17_

Appropriation Language:

The availability of the appropriations for the following projects are extended to June 30, 2014: (7) Laws 2010, chapter 362, section 2, subdivision 8, paragraph (e), Get Outside – Urban Woodland for Kids;

\$218,000 is from the trust fund to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with the city of St. Paul, Department of Parks and Recreation, to restore and develop an outdoor classroom for ecological education and historical interpretation at Como Regional Park in St. Paul. This appropriation is available until June 30, 2013, by which time the project must be completed and final products delivered.

II. FINAL PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS:

Overall Project Outcome and Results

The City of Saint Paul developed a 17.65 acre outdoor classroom in Como Regional Park to provide environmental education, historical interpretation, and habitat for native wildlife in an inner-city community where environmental learning opportunities are rare. The woodland is located within five miles of over 75 public and private schools. To date, the Como Woodland Outdoor Classroom has been utilized by 2,103 students and educators. It has become the School Forest for Great River School and Crossroads Elementary School through the MN DNR's School Forest Program.

The Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund's investment in the Como Woodland Outdoor Classroom has resulted in the development of outdoor study areas featuring coniferous woodland, oak savanna, tallgrass prairie, shortgrass prairie, transitional woodland, and terrace forest plant communities. Additionally, a propagation garden area has been constructed within the Classroom that will serve as a native plant demonstration garden for the public and will be utilized by students to grow native plants for the Classroom. ENRTF funds were also utilized to install 2,525 feet of ADA accessible gravel trails within the Classroom.

Funds were used to install four entry signs at each of the major entrances to the Como Woodland Outdoor Classroom. 27 numbered, interpretative posts were installed at key locations throughout the site. The City of Saint Paul has received \$17,000 from the Minnesota Historical Society and is in the final stages of developing a guide book to the cultural and natural history of the site, referencing these numbered posts. When published, the guide book will be an invaluable resource for educators wishing to bring students to the Como Woodland Outdoor Classroom.

Community volunteers were engaged throughout the restoration process. 2,005 volunteers participated in restoration activities, including planting, invasive species removal, and trail construction.

Project Results Use and Dissemination

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III. PROGRESS SUMMARY AS OF:

January 31, 2011 – Grant Agreement is being processed

July 21, 2011 – Result 1: Vegetation management and invasive species control initiated across 17.65 acres. Trail layout underway and will be constructed later this fall.
Result 2: Great River School is applying for School Forest Status through the MN DNR. A joint powers agreement has been drafted between the City and the School should be completed by November 2011. On track to complete training and student involvement deliverables by project completion date.

November 27, 2011 – Result 1: Vegetation management and invasive species control continued across 17.65 acres. Woody species control is 90% complete. Field alignment of trail system stalled until woody species removal was nearly complete,

as tree removal and tree preservation activities dictated trail alignment. Trail alignment approved by Advisory Committee November 2011. Trail construction RFP to be released this winter for spring 2012 installation. Result 2: Great River School has been authorized to complete School Forest application with the MN DNR. A second school, Crossroads Elementary is applying for School Forest status as a result of school board authorization. On track to complete training and student involvement deliverables by project completion date.

June 16, 2012 – Result 1: Vegetation management and invasive species control continued across 17.65 acres. Conservation Corps MN crews have achieved excellent control of major, herbaceous invasive threats – garlic mustard and burdock. Trail construction activities scheduled to begin in July. Prairie installation to be completed in 2012. Result 2: Great River School (ISD#4105) achieved School Forest status in October 2011. The City of Saint Paul Public School District (ISD #625) authorized the use of the Como Woodland Outdoor Classroom for use as a School Forest in April 2012. Saint Paul public school, Crossroads Elementary, is now using the Como Woodland Outdoor Classroom as their School forest.

Amendment Request (09/06/12):

- A fund shift of \$4,000 is requested under Result 1, *Personnel* to engage Angela Koebler, Lead Landscaper, in the design of the propagation garden, and to oversee the *Propagation Garden Construction Contract* related to this work. A reduction in Result 2, *Personnel*, funding for Meghan Manhatton allows for this addition.
- It was anticipated that a section of roadway running through the classroom was to be closed as a part of an unrelated project during the grant period. As this did not happen, trails will not be constructed adjacent to the ephemeral wetland site at this time, reducing the total length of the trail system from ~4,000 to ~2,525 feet.
- Parks has been coordinating gravel trail installation specifications with the National Center on Accessibility. In order to maintain accessibility, the aggregate material mixture recommended by the National Center on Accessibility is more complex, more expensive, and more labor intensive to install than our initial estimates. Due to these conditions, Parks is requesting a fund shift of \$10,000 under Result 1, *Trail Installation Contract*. A fund reduction of \$10,000, under the *Forest Restoration Contract*, allows for this change.
- The addition of a Result 1, *Plant, Herbicide & Erosion Control Materials* budget under *Other* will allow the City to better engage volunteers and Conservation Corps Minnesota in restoration and enhancement activities. A fund shift of \$4,000 under *Prairie Installation Contract*, and \$6,000 from *Personnel*, funding for Don Ganje, is requested to provide this funding.

Amendment Approved: September 18, 2012

Extension Request (03/01/13):

- The City of Saint Paul Department of Parks and Recreation formally requested a four month extension for our 2010 LCCMR project: Get Outside! Urban Woodland for City Kids (179-F). Our current grant period ends on June 30, 2013. We are asking for an extension through October 31, 2013. Two external factors are the basis behind this request:

- First, the City commissioned a comprehensive sign redesign analysis for Como Regional Park in 2012. Visual Communications Inc completed their analysis and design work in late January, 2013. Results of this analysis have produced a specific sign type which now needs to be modified for use in the Como Woodland Outdoor Classroom. The current timeline to design and manufacture signs for the Outdoor Classroom will result in a rushed design and the final product may not be completed in time.
- Second, the City received a small grant from the Minnesota Historical Society to research the history of the Como Woodland Outdoor Classroom site. This research will facilitate the production of a classroom guide for educators which will reference interpretive posts that will be installed in the classroom using LCCMR funding. This research will not be completed until May 2013. We believe that this research is crucial to inform our placement of the interpretative posts. Additional time to work through this process with local educators and the classroom's advisory committee would result in a better final product.

Amendment Approved: May 9, 2013

April 24, 2012 – Result 1: 2,525 feet of accessible gravel trail have been installed as of November 1, 2012. With the exception of a small washout on 30 feet of trail, which has since been restored, the trail held up beautifully through winter weather and spring thaw. Two acres of native prairie were seeded and 2,200 plugs installed in the fall. Erosion and sediment control materials were installed to stabilize trail work and support prairie establishment. Volunteers initiated installation of understory plant material within the coniferous woodland. One acre of disturbed woodland seeded. Conservation Corps Minnesota crews removed declining green ash trees with targets, as an Emerald Ash Borer infestation has been confirmed within 500 feet of the outdoor classroom. Propagation garden design has been completed. RFP to be released shortly. Sign construction contract awarded. Sign order to be placed shortly.

Amendment Request (04/24/13):

- A fund shift of \$3,000 is requested under Result 1, from *Personnel – Don Ganje to Contracts – Propagation Garden Construction* to provide a larger construction budget for the propagation gardens.
- A fund shift of \$187 is requested under Result 1, from *Contracts – Prairie Installation Contract to Other – Plant, Herbicide & Erosion Control Materials* to provide a larger budget for Parks and Recreation staff to enhance the project's native plant communities. The prairie installation contract has been fully implemented. Remaining prairie installation contract funding will cover spring 2013 maintenance.
- A fund shift of \$3,776 is requested under Result 1, from *Contracts – Trail Installation Contract to Other – Plant, Herbicide & Erosion Control Materials* to provide a larger budget for Parks and Recreation staff to enhance the project's native plant communities. The trail installation contract has been fully implemented.
- A fund shift of \$5,885 is requested under Result 1, from *Contracts – Sign Construction Contract to Contracts – Propagation Garden Construction* to provide a larger construction budget for the propagation gardens.

Amendment Approved: May 7, 2013

October 29, 2013 – Result 1: Conservation Corps Minnesota crews have continued comprehensive management of herbaceous and woody invasive species. Planting has been completed in the coniferous woodland section of the outdoor classroom. Local school groups and community volunteers have been engaged in management and planting efforts. Modifications to the propagation garden design has held up release of an RFP. As construction costs of the garden will dictate how much money can be spent on signage, we have held off on ordering entry signs, but have designed and ordered interpretative trail signs.

Amendment Request (10/29/2013):

- Requesting a project completion date shift from October 31, 2013 to June 30, 2014 as allowed under appropriation language: ML 2013, Chap.[_52 _], Sec.[_2 _], Subd._17
- A fund shift of \$1,942 is requested under Result 2, from *Personnel* to Result 1 *Contracts – Propagation Garden Construction* to provide a larger construction budget for the propagation gardens.

Amendment Approved: November 12, 2013

Amendment Request (06/15/14):

- A fund shift of \$24,308 is requested out of *Contracts – Sign Construction* to other items within Result 1. The original plan for the four entry signs included one, 4-sided sign. When the bids came in for the entry signs, the cost was overly prohibitive and the four-sided sign needed to be scaled back to a one-sided sign. All four entry signs are now slated to be single-sided signs. The following is a breakdown of the requested \$24,308 fund shift.
 - o *Invasive Species Management* (\$2,900) – the invasive plant, burdock, continues to persist in large colonies in the project area and continues threaten the viability of our restoration efforts. This request would provide additional time for Conservation Corps MN crews to control this invasive species.
 - o *Forest Restoration* (\$82) – we inadvertently overspent our originally approved (11/12/13) budget by \$82. We would like to shift \$82 to cover these costs.
 - o *Propagation Garden Construction* (\$13,173) – The City's original estimate for propagation garden construction was \$30,827 (approved on 11/12/13 budget). Following a competitive bidding process, the lowest bidder came in at \$66,900, as designed. After scaling back the project to include only the essential elements of the propagation gardens, the bid was lowered \$42,900. We are requesting the difference between our current, approved budget and the adjusted bid to complete this element of the project.
 - o *Plant, herbicide and erosion control materials* (\$3,728) – as invasive plants are removed from the woodland and prairie restoration areas, bare soil is often the result. We would like to purchase additional plant material to fill in these voids to outcompete invasive plant encroachment. Additionally, we need to install several water bars (timbers) and backfill with aggregate to correct several small erosion issues.
 - o *Fencing materials* (\$1,750) – our two prairie restoration areas on site have been damaged by vandalism. Specifically, we have experienced three

separate incidences when cars have driven into the prairies and ‘spun doughnuts’. This was an unpredicted situation, as there is significant topography in both areas. We would like to install cedar split-rail fencing to restrict access to the prairies.

- *Sign materials* (\$3,675) – The sign construction contract only covers the manufacturing of the four entry signs. Interpretative signs were not included in the contract. This fund shift will cover the cost of interpretive posts and ENRTF acknowledgement sign materials produced and installed by City staff.
- A fund shift of \$1,000 is requested under Result 1, from *Personnel – Don Ganje* to *Other – Plant, herbicide and erosion control materials*. Mr. Ganje’s time was earmarked to assist with the design of the propagation gardens. Mr. Ganje has decided not to code his time to this project so these funds can be used to purchase plant material to propagate in the propagation garden. This budget item was not included in the propagation garden construction contract.
- A fund shift of \$1,000 is requested under Result 1, from *Personnel – Angela Koebler* to *Other – Plant, herbicide and erosion control materials*. Ms. Koebler’s time was earmarked to assist with the design of the propagation gardens. Ms. Koebler will not code additional time to this project so these funds can be used to purchase plant material to propagate in the propagation garden. This budget item was not included in the propagation garden construction contract.

Amendment Approved: June 23, 2014

IV. OUTLINE OF PROJECT RESULTS:

RESULT 1: Develop outdoor classroom study areas.

Description:

Result One of this proposal is to develop seven outdoor study areas encompassing 15 $\frac{1}{3}$ acres according to the recently completed Como Woodland Outdoor Classroom Master Plan. The study areas will include: oak woodland, coniferous forest, oak savanna, tallgrass prairie, sedge meadow, transitional woodland, and propagation gardens.

A three year invasive species management contract for the entire 17 $\frac{3}{4}$ acre classroom will ensure establishment and growth of the classroom study areas. Construction of accessible, gravel trails will provide access to each of these study areas and informal gathering areas for small groups of students will provide a location for learning in the study areas. Informational signage and interpretative trail signs will direct the outdoor classroom experience.

- Complete 10.9 acres of woodland restoration and enhancement to include oak woodland, coniferous forest, and transitional woodland.
- Invasive species management. 17.65 acres annually for three years.
- Complete 3.6 acres of prairie, savanna and sedge meadow enhancement.
- Contractor(s) to construct 0.85 acre propagation gardens. These propagation beds will highlight useful native species in the home landscape and provide a

source for local ecotype plant material for future restoration activities within the classroom.

- Contractor to construct 2,525 feet of ADA accessible gravel trails.
- Sign construction and installation contract(s). Four entry signs and approximately fifty interpretative trail signs.
- In-house design, engineering services, and project management to fully develop restoration, trail, and sign construction activities.

Summary Budget Information for Result 1: ENRTF Budget: \$ 215,942
Amount Spent: \$ 210,636
Balance: \$ 5,306

Deliverable	Completion Date	Budget
1. Woodland restoration – 10.9 acres (Oak woodland – 5.8 acres, coniferous forest – 1.9 acres, & transitional woodland – 3.2 acres)	June 2014	\$ 70,982
2. 3.6 acres (Prairie –.95 acres re-creation, Oak Savanna – 2.3 acres by removing invasive woody and herbaceous species and additional native species planting and Sedge Meadow restoration – .35 acres)	June 2014	\$ 10,813
3. Propagation gardens – 0.85 acres	June 2014	\$ 44,000
4. Construction of 2,525 feet of ADA accessible trails	November 2012	\$ 31,224
5. Entry signs (four) and interpretative trail signage (~fifty)	June 2014	\$ 19,807
6. Design and engineering for trails, signage, planting, and classrooms (City of Saint Paul staff)	June 2014	\$ 15,000
7. Budget Item: <i>Other – Plant, Herbicide & Erosion Control Materials</i>	June 2014	\$18,691
8. Budget Item: <i>Other – Fencing materials</i>	June 2014	\$ 1,750
9. Budget Item: <i>Other – Sign materials</i>	June 2014	\$ 3,675

Result Completion Date: June 2014

Result Status as of November 2010: Vendors contacted and processing contracts to initiate restoration activities in March 2011.

Result Status as of July 2011: Woodland and prairie restoration activities initiated by City staff and contractors. Large tree removal completed in prairie and savanna plant communities. Seed and plugs ordered for prairie and savanna restoration. Trail construction activities are still in the planning phase. Community volunteer event scheduled for September 2011 to install sedge meadow.

Result Status as of November 2011: City staff and Conservation Corps crews to complete woody species removal this winter. Prairie and savanna restoration activities

highlighted by installation of 3,000 local ecotype, native grass plugs. Savanna areas to be frost-seeded this winter by Conservation Corps crews. Prairie areas to be prepared and drilled with native seed, spring 2012. Trail installation to begin spring 2012. Trail alignments approved by Advisory Committee. Community volunteers installed 1,204 woodland plants during September event in sedge meadow (floodplain terrace forest plant community). Youth Job Corps crews completed nearly \$15,000 in labor to control exotic species. Propagation garden construction planning to begin in winter 2012. Sign design and construction activities to begin winter 2012.

Result Status as of June 2012: Trail construction activities were pushed back to July to reduce the possibility of oak wilt introduction, and so as not to interfere with a scheduled event in Como Park on July 1. Prairie installation activities need to be completed after trails are installed, so this was also pushed back. Woodland restoration activities are proceeding as scheduled. Invasive species management continues to be a priority across the classroom. 290 volunteers have assisted with restoration activities during the spring of 2012.

Result Status as of November 2012: Trail construction activities have been completed. 2,525 feet of ADA accessible gravel trails have been installed. Prairie restoration activities have been completed. 1.5 acres of prairie have been seeded and plugged. Savanna areas previously completed. Woodland restoration activities are proceeding as scheduled. Invasive species management and prairie maintenance will be a priority in 2013. 286 volunteers assisted with restoration activities during the fall of 2012. Sign design underway with installation to occur in spring 2013.

Result Status as of April 2013: Erosion and sediment control materials have been installed to stabilize trail work and support prairie establishment. Volunteers initiated installation of understory plant material within the coniferous woodland. One acre of disturbed woodland seeded. Conservation Corps Minnesota crews removed declining green ash trees with targets, as an Emerald Ash Borer infestation has been confirmed within 500 feet of the outdoor classroom. Propagation garden design has been completed. RFP to be released shortly. Sign construction contract awarded. Sign order to be placed shortly.

Result Status as of October 2013: Conservation Corps Minnesota crews have continued comprehensive management of herbaceous and woody invasive species. Planting has been completed in the coniferous woodland section of the outdoor classroom. Local school groups and community volunteers have been engaged in management and planting efforts. Modifications to the propagation garden design has held up release of an RFP. As construction costs of the garden will dictate how much money can be spent on signage, we have held off on ordering entry signs, but have designed and ordered interpretative trail signs.

Final Report Summary:

Invasive Species Management (17.65 acres) and Forest Restoration (10.9 acres) – Conservation Corps Minnesota (CCM) crews and community volunteers completed invasive species management and forest management work across the entire 17.65

acre site. CCM crews were hired for their technical skills (chainsaw/brushsaw operation and herbicide application), while community volunteers provided the “grunt” labor to haul brush and hand-pull invasive weeds. Over the life of this project 2,149 community volunteers have contributed 5,002 volunteer hours helping to restore and enhance the classroom’s native plant communities. That is equivalent to 2.4 full-time employee’s worth of labor. CCM’s initial control work was focused on managing woody species such as common buckthorn and Tartarian honeysuckle. As the crews were working through the site, additional invasive or diseased trees were removed to create suitable planting locations for native species. We took this opportunity to target select green ash for removal across the site, as Emerald Ash Borer was discovered in the area in May 2009. The primary herbaceous weed species targeted on site were garlic mustard and common burdock. The most problematic species to manage has been burdock due to its distribution, tenacity, and stature. We have managed to keep nearly all of the burdock plants from seeding out over the last four years. We have used a combination of repeated brush cutting, using a shovel to “spike” the root, herbicide application, and seed head collection and removal. We are having success reducing the burdock population, but this will need to continue to be our top priority in terms of managing the site for invasive species into the future.

Prairie (1.5 acres) and Savanna (2.3 acres) Installation: 1.5 acres of prairie were seeded and plugged in 2012. Shortly after installation, we entered into a drought. Saint Paul Parks staff did their best to keep the site watered during this period. Supplemental seed was frost-sown in late 2012. Due to several acts of vandalism – vehicles driving through the prairie areas – split rail cedar fencing was installed adjacent to the prairies to prevent vehicles from entering these areas. Supplemental plugging occurred in the prairies in the spring of 2014. Oak savanna, 2.3 acres, was enhanced on site through the removal of invasive species and the reintroduction of native seed and plugs during the fall/winter of 2011/2012. Parks and Recreation staff were able to perform a prescribed burn of the savanna in November 2013. The fire dramatically reduced the density of garlic mustard and burdock in the savanna, knocked-back woody species, and invigorated growth of the reintroduced native seed and plugs.

Trail Installation (2,525 feet): Trail installation occurred in the Fall of 2012. Trail alignment was determined by merging existing trails with areas of invasive species removal, while following the intent of the classroom’s master plan. This work had very little impact on desirable native species. Saint Paul Parks and Recreation consulted with the National Center on Accessibility in Bloomington, Indiana to develop a trail implementation plan for the site. After reviewing several case studies, Parks opted to: excavate the existing soils to a depth of 6” with a skid steer, compact the subsoil with a 4 ½ ton vibratory roller, use a paving machine to install 6” of 3/8” minus limestone, and then compact the surface – a minimum of four passes – with the vibratory roller. Parks then seeded the edges of the trails with a site-appropriate seed mix. In all, 2,525 feet of trail were installed. The trail has held up remarkably well. Early on, there were four locations that were experiencing erosion problems. Three locations required only minor trail repair until the surrounding vegetation established. One location required more troubleshooting to stabilize, but was finally corrected once erosion blanket and biologs were utilized to redirect stormwater flow.

Sign Construction and Installation: Four entry signs to the Como Woodland Outdoor Classroom were installed as a part of this project. The design was dictated by a signage and wayfinding master plan for Como Park completed in October 2012. Additionally, 27 interpretative trail markers were installed. These trail markers will correspond to a classroom guide, projected to be published in May 2015.

Propagation Garden Construction (0.85 acres): Propagation garden design was completed and the planting beds and associated aggregate trails were constructed. The beds were designed after plans from the Chicago Botanic Gardens. The beds will provide users of the site with an opportunity to learn about the native plants in the woodland in an up-close and personal setting. The area surrounding the propagation beds provides space for classroom users to congregate and learn.

RESULT 2: Teacher training and student involvement.

Description:

Result Two of this proposal will allow Saint Paul Parks to develop and implement an outreach program to advertise the classroom availability of the site. This plan will include establishment of the site as a MN DNR School Forest. This will allow Parks to tap into the program's resources and establish a long-range support network. Additionally, an 'Educate the Educator' program for local teachers in outdoor environmental education at all levels will be developed.

- Receive DNR School Forest status.
- Host six educator training sessions (two each for elementary, middle, and high school teachers). Involve ten educators per session. Designed to help educators adapt to teaching in an outdoor classroom.
- Student participation in site restoration activities (500 youth/year).
- Coordinate and implement an outreach and marketing plan for the classroom.

Summary Budget Information for Result 2:

ENRTF Budget:	\$ 2,058
Amount Spent:	\$ 2,058
Balance:	\$ 0

Deliverable	Completion Date	Budget
1. Receive DNR School Forest status	October 2011	\$0
2. Host six educator training sessions	October 2013	\$2,058
3. Student participation in site restoration (500 youth/year)	October 2013	\$0

Result Completion Date: October 2013

Result Status as of November 2010: School Forest joint powers agreement in draft form. 27 educators involved in training session. 292 youth engaged in restoration activities. Registration system initiated to schedule the outdoor classroom.

Result Status as of July 2011: Great River School is pursuing School Forest status for the Como Woodland Outdoor Classroom. Registration system is available to schedule use of the outdoor classroom. Outreach and marketing plan timeline drafted. Since July 1, 2010: 47 educators involved in two training sessions; 676 youth engaged in education and restoration activities.

Result Status as of November 2011: Great River School is nearing completion of School Forest status for the Como Woodland Outdoor Classroom. Crossroads Elementary is beginning process. Registration system accepted 6 requests for classroom reservations. Since July 1, 2010: 47 educators involved in 2 training sessions; approximately 870 youth engaged in education and restoration activities.

Result Status as of June 2012: Great River School (ISD#4105) achieved School Forest status in October 2011. The City of Saint Paul Public School District (ISD #625) authorized the use of the Como Woodland Outdoor Classroom for use as a School Forest in April 2012. Saint Paul public school, Crossroads Elementary, is now using the Como Woodland Outdoor Classroom as their School forest. Registration system accepted 12 requests for classroom reservations since going live. Since July 1, 2010: 58 educators involved in 3 training sessions; approximately 1,160 youth engaged in education and restoration activities.

Result Status as of November 2012: Registration system accepted 24 requests for classroom reservations since going live. Since July 1, 2010: 155 educators involved in 12 training sessions; approximately 1,491 youth engaged in education and restoration activities. Minnesota Historical Society grant received to develop classroom guide for educators. Guide will be used for marketing and outreach purposes.

Result Status as of April 2013: 28 requests for classroom reservations since implementing a reservation system. Since July 1, 2010: 155 educators involved in 12 training sessions; approximately 1,525 youth engaged in education and restoration activities. Two historical researchers contracted under Minnesota Historical Society grant to develop classroom guide for educators. Research to be completed by September 2013.

Result Status as of October 2013: 39 requests for classroom reservations since implementing a reservation system (there are also a number of known educators using the classroom without pulling free permits). Since July 1, 2010: 155 educators involved in 12 training sessions; approximately 1,882 youth engaged in education and restoration activities. Two historical researchers contracted under Minnesota Historical Society grant to develop classroom guide for educators. Research completed. Parks will be applying for second round of MHS funding to edit research and produce guide.

Final Report Summary:

Great River School (ISD #4105) achieved School Forest status in October 2011. The City of Saint Paul Public School District (ISD #625) authorized the use of the Como Woodland Outdoor Classroom for use as a School Forest in April 2012. Saint Paul public school, Crossroads Elementary (ISD #625), is now also using the Como Woodland Outdoor Classroom as their School Forest.

Saint Paul Parks and Recreation has received 85 requests for classroom reservations since implementing a reservation system in June 2011. The classroom is also actively used by non-permitted groups. Non-permitted groups are allowed to use the site, while permitted groups receive priority if there is a conflict.

Since July 2010, 190 educators were involved in 18 training sessions; approximately 1,913 youth engaged in education and restoration activities.

Saint Paul Parks and Recreation received a Minnesota Historical Society (MHS) grant in 2012 to compile research to develop a guide to the Como Woodland Outdoor Classroom (CWOC) for educators. Research for the guide was completed in September 2013. Saint Paul Parks and Recreation has received a second MHS grant to publish the guidebook for CWOC. The guide is projected to be published in May 2015.

V. TOTAL ENRTF PROJECT BUDGET:

Personnel: \$17,058 – *Design and engineering for trails, signage, planting, and classrooms (City of Saint Paul staff) and teacher training*

Contracts: \$176,826 – Invasive species management, forest restoration, prairie installation, Trail and signage construction, and propagation garden installation

Equipment/Tools/Supplies: \$24,116 – Plant, herbicide, & erosion control materials, fencing materials, and sign materials.

Acquisition (Fee Title or Permanent Easements): \$ 0

Travel: \$ 0

Additional Budget Items: \$ 0

TOTAL ENRTF PROJECT BUDGET: \$ 218,000

Result Status as of July 21, 2011: Other Funds spent during the Project Period

Spending: Total \$379,250	Anticipated Spending	Estimated Spending to Date
State Funds Being Applied to Project During Project Period: Parks and Trails Legacy Grant funds from the Metropolitan Council to develop the classroom entrance and meeting location.	\$ 250,000	\$ 238,862.74
Other Non-State \$ Being Applied to Project During Project Period: Saint Paul Parks and Recreation, Environmental Services (Operations & Youth Job Corps) staff time.	\$ 50,000	\$23,000
In-kind Services During Project Period:		
Website content development, curriculum and guide development	\$ 14,000	\$500
Volunteer labor (\$10 per hour)	\$ 45,000	

		\$10,000
Como Woodland Outdoor Classroom Advisory Committee (\$20.25 per hour)	\$ 20,250	\$4,000

Result Status as of November 28, 2011: Other Funds spent during the Project Period

Spending:	Anticipated Spending: <i>Total \$379,250</i>	Estimated Spending to Date: <i>Total \$312,233</i>
State Funds Being Applied to Project During Project Period: Parks and Trails Legacy Grant funds from the Metropolitan Council to develop the classroom entrance and meeting location. (<u>Includes Legacy funded position time & Community Forest Bonding grant</u>)	\$ 250,000	\$ 244,725
Other Non-State \$ Being Applied to Project During Project Period: Saint Paul Parks and Recreation, Environmental Services (Operations & Youth Job Corps) staff time. (<u>Includes Conservation Corps (YO!) time</u>)	\$ 50,000	\$ 43,463
In-kind Services During Project Period:		
Website content development, curriculum and guide development	\$ 14,000	\$ 1,539
Volunteer labor (\$10 per hour)	\$ 45,000	\$ 13,855
Como Woodland Outdoor Classroom Advisory Committee (\$20.25 per hour)	\$ 20,250	\$ 8,651

Result Status as of June 16, 2012: Other Funds spent during the Project Period

Spending:	Anticipated Spending: <i>Total \$379,250</i>	Estimated Spending to Date: <i>Total \$327,440</i>
State Funds Being Applied to Project During Project Period: Parks and Trails Legacy Grant funds from the Metropolitan Council to develop the classroom entrance and meeting location. (<u>Includes Legacy funded position time & Community Forest Bonding grant</u>)	\$ 250,000	\$ 244,819
Other Non-State \$ Being Applied to Project During Project Period: Saint Paul Parks and Recreation, Environmental Services (Operations & Youth Job Corps) staff time. (<u>Includes Conservation Corps (YO!) time</u>)	\$ 50,000	

time <i>through 11/28/11</i>)		\$ 49,270
In-kind Services During Project Period:		
Website content development, curriculum and guide development	\$ 14,000	\$ 1,701
Volunteer labor (\$10 per hour)	\$ 45,000	\$ 20,675
Como Woodland Outdoor Classroom Advisory Committee (\$20.25 per hour)	\$ 20,250	\$ 10,975

Result Status as of November 16, 2012: Other Funds spent during the Project Period

Spending:	Anticipated Spending: <i>Total \$379,250</i>	Estimated Spending to Date: <i>Total \$348,518</i>
State Funds Being Applied to Project During Project Period: Parks and Trails Legacy Grant funds from the Metropolitan Council to develop the classroom entrance and meeting location. (Includes Legacy funded position time & Community Forest Bonding grant)	\$ 250,000	\$ 245,149
Other Non-State \$ Being Applied to Project During Project Period: Saint Paul Parks and Recreation, Environmental Services (Operations & Youth Job Corps) staff time. (Includes Conservation Corps (YO!) time)	\$ 50,000	\$ 61,457
In-kind Services During Project Period:		
Website content development, curriculum and guide development	\$ 14,000	\$ 1,762
Volunteer labor (\$10 per hour)	\$ 45,000	\$ 27,879
Como Woodland Outdoor Classroom Advisory Committee (\$20.25 per hour)	\$ 20,250	\$ 12,271

Result Status as of April 24, 2013: Other Funds spent during the Project Period

Spending:	Anticipated Spending: <i>Total \$379,250</i>	Estimated Spending to Date: <i>Total \$360,019</i>
State Funds Being Applied to Project During Project Period: Parks and Trails Legacy Grant funds from the Metropolitan Council to develop the classroom entrance and meeting location. (Includes Legacy	\$ 250,000	

funded position time, Community Forest Bonding grant, and MN Historical Society grant)		\$ 252,149
Other Non-State \$ Being Applied to Project During Project Period: Saint Paul Parks and Recreation, Environmental Services (Operations & Youth Job Corps) staff time & equipment costs. (Includes Conservation Corps (YO!) time)	\$ 50,000	\$ 64,945
In-kind Services During Project Period:		
Website content development, curriculum and guide development	\$ 14,000	\$ 1,762
Volunteer labor (\$10 per hour)	\$ 45,000	\$ 27,879
Como Woodland Outdoor Classroom Advisory Committee (\$20.25 per hour)	\$ 20,250	\$ 13,284 (estimated 4/24/13)

Result Status as of October 29, 2013: Other Funds spent during the Project Period

Spending:	Anticipated Spending: <i>Total \$379,250</i>	Estimated Spending to Date: <i>Total \$378,907</i>
State Funds Being Applied to Project During Project Period: Parks and Trails Legacy Grant funds from the Metropolitan Council to develop the classroom entrance and meeting location. (Includes Legacy funded position time, Community Forest Bonding grant, and MN Historical Society grant)	\$ 250,000	\$ 252,996
Other Non-State \$ Being Applied to Project During Project Period: Saint Paul Parks and Recreation, Environmental Services (Operations & Youth Job Corps) staff time & equipment costs. (Includes Conservation Corps (YO!) time)	\$ 50,000	\$ 70,516 (not including YJC & YO for this period)
In-kind Services During Project Period:		
Website content development, curriculum and guide development	\$ 14,000	\$ 2,062 (estimated 10/29/13)
Volunteer labor (\$10 per hour)	\$ 45,000	\$ 39,049
Como Woodland Outdoor Classroom Advisory Committee (\$20.25 per hour)	\$ 20,250	\$ 14,284 (estimated 10/29/13)

Result Status as of June 30, 2014: Other Funds spent during the Project Period

Spending:	Anticipated Spending: <i>Total \$379,250</i>	Estimated Spending to Date: <i>Total \$407,140</i>
State Funds Being Applied to Project During Project Period: Parks and Trails Legacy Grant funds from the Metropolitan Council to develop the classroom entrance and meeting location. (Includes Legacy funded position time, Community Forest Bonding grant, and MN Historical Society grant)	\$ 250,000	\$ 255,540
Other Non-State \$ Being Applied to Project During Project Period: Saint Paul Parks and Recreation, Environmental Services (Operations & Youth Job Corps) staff time & equipment costs. (Includes Conservation Corps (YO!) time). Includes Xcel and REI grant.	\$ 50,000	\$ 79,983
In-kind Services During Project Period:		
Website content development, curriculum and guide development	\$ 14,000	\$ 1,944
Volunteer labor (\$10 per hour)	\$ 45,000	\$ 50,020
Como Woodland Outdoor Classroom Advisory Committee (\$20.25 per hour)	\$ 20,250	\$ 19,653

Explanation of Capital Expenditures Greater Than \$3,500:

VI. PROJECT STRATEGY:

A. Project Partners:

Project partners not receiving money from this fund

Como Woodland Advisory Committee: Project advice, website content development, curriculum and guide development. (\$0.00)

Ramsey Conservation District: Provide project guidance. (\$0.00)

District 10 Community Council and Environment Committee: Provide meeting space and community involvement. (\$0.00)

B. Project Impact and Long-term Strategy:

Natural resources restoration of this area will be the first step in the process to provide outdoor environmental education opportunities to over 75 public and private schools within a five-mile radius of the woodland. In addition, the woodland will provide an

additional recreational and educational opportunity for more than 2.3 million visitors to Como Regional Park per year.

In early 2010, Saint Paul Parks and Recreation is adding an Education Coordinator position and a Volunteer Coordinator position to the Environmental Services program. These two individuals will guide development of curricula and signage, and coordinate volunteer groups working within the Como Woodland Outdoor Classroom. Given the history of volunteer involvement on site and the growth of Saint Paul Parks' volunteer program, we are confident that maintenance of this site will become a perennial community and youth-based volunteer effort. Historically, the Environmental Services program has engaged 4,000 community volunteers annually, totaling approximately 13,000 hours of service per year. A larger portion of these hours will be shifted to cover the needs of the classroom as it develops. In 2010 and beyond, Parks will assign a dedicated, paid, summer youth crew to the classroom site to maintain the site and manage exotic species. The Como Woodland Advisory Committee has and will continue to seek support from local foundations and non-profit organizations.

C. Other Funds Proposed to be spent during the Project Period:

Spending: Total \$379,250	
State Funds Being Applied to Project During Project Period:	
Parks and Trails Legacy Grant funds from the Metropolitan Council to develop the classroom entrance and meeting location.	\$ 250,000
Other Non-State \$ Being Applied to Project During Project Period:	
Saint Paul Parks and Recreation, Environmental Services (Operations & Youth Job Corps) staff time.	\$ 50,000
In-kind Services During Project Period:	
Website content development, curriculum and guide development	\$ 14,000
Volunteer labor (\$10 per hour)	\$ 45,000
Como Woodland Outdoor Classroom Advisory Committee (\$20.25 per hour)	\$ 20,250

D. Spending History:

Funding History: Total \$87,709	
City of Saint Paul CIB funds to develop master plan for the Como Woodland Outdoor Classroom in 2008	\$ 40,000
July 1, 2008 – June 30, 2010 - Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Environmental Services, Forestry, YJC, Support Maintenance staff time and equipment in-kind. (<i>estimate</i>)	\$ 15,000
In-kind volunteer labor, July 1, 2008 – June 30, 2010. Valued at \$10 per hour for field activities and \$20.25 hours for professional activities. (<i>estimate</i>)	\$ 28,000
Anderson Foundation environmental education grant.	\$ 505
Minnesota Native Plant Society environmental education grant.	\$ 279
Audubon Minnesota environmental education grant.	\$ 500
Saint Paul Audubon Society bird habitat research grant.	\$ 1,050
City of Saint Paul COPP environmental education grant.	\$ 2,000
Together Green (National Audubon Society) invasive species removal grant.	\$ 375

VII. DISSEMINATION:

The outdoor classroom will include entry and interpretative trail signage to guide all user levels. A primary level of entry signage for casual site users will include orientation maps, information about site history, and describe the restoration activities occurring at this location. A secondary level of interpretative trail signage will include numbered posts that correspond to site guides and online lesson plans for educators and explorers of the classroom areas. Lesson plans, visual, and written information documenting project progress will be accessible through the City of Saint Paul website at www.stpaul.gov

During the project period, Parks will apply for DNR School Forest status, host six educator training sessions, and engage student groups and the community in site restoration activities – 500 youth per year. We will also coordinate and implement an outreach and marketing plan for the classroom.

VIII. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS: Periodic work program progress reports will be submitted not later than **November 2010, May 2011, November 2011, May 2012, November 2012, and March 2013, November 2013**. A final work program report and associated products will be submitted between **June 30 and August 1, 2014** as requested by the LCCMR.

IX. RESEARCH PROJECTS:

Final Attachment A: Budget Detail for 2010 Projects - Summary and a Budget page for each partner (if applicable)								
Project Title: 179-F: Get Outside! Urban Woodland for City Kids								
Project Manager Name: Don Ganje								
Trust Fund Appropriation: \$ 218,000								
1) See list of non-eligible expenses, do not include any of these items in your budget sheet								
2) Remove any budget item lines not applicable								
2010 Trust Fund Budget	Result 1 Budget: approved 6/23/14	Amount Spent	Balance	Result 2 Budget: approved 11/12/13	Amount Spent	Balance	TOTAL BUDGET	TOTAL BALANCE
	Develop outdoor classroom study areas.			Teacher training and student involvement.				
BUDGET ITEM								
PERSONNEL: wages and benefits (List individual names, amount budgeted and %FTE; add rows as needed)								
Don Ganje (\$0, 0% FTE)	0	0	0				0	0
Bryan Murphy (\$12,000, 16% FTE)	12,000	12,000	0				12,000	0
Meghan Manhattan (\$2,058, 4% FTE)				2,058	2,058	0	2,058	0
Angela Koebler (\$3,000, 4% FTE)	3,000	3,000	0				3,000	0
Contracts								
Professional/technical (with whom?, for what?)								
Other contracts (with whom?, for what?) list out: personnel, equipment, etc.								
Invasive Species Management Contract (Conservation Corps Minnesota, personnel)	30,900	30,858	42				30,900	42
Forest Restoration Contract (Conservation Corps Minnesota, personnel)	40,082	40,082	0				40,082	0
Prairie Installation Contract (Natural Shore Technologies, personnel, materials)	10,813	10,813	1				10,813	1
Trail Installation Contract (Semple Excavating, equipment + operator, materials) & Conservation Corps MN	31,224	31,224	0				31,224	0
Sign Construction Contract (Serigraphics Sign Systems, fabrication & installation)	19,807	18,587	1,220				19,807	1,220
Propogation Garden Construction Contract (Urban Companies, fabrication and installation)	44,000	42,900	1,100				44,000	1,100
Other (Describe the activity and cost) be specific								
Plant, Herbicide & Erosion Control Materials (Materials to be installed by contractor, staff, and/or community volunteers)	18,691	17,054	1,637				18,691	1,637
Fencing materials (200' Cedar split-rail fencing to protect prairie, related materials)	1,750	945	805				1,750	805
Sign materials (Trail marker and acknowledgement signs plus related materials)	3,675	3,174	501				3,675	501
COLUMN TOTAL	\$215,942	\$210,636	\$5,306	\$2,058	\$2,058	\$0	\$218,000	\$5,306

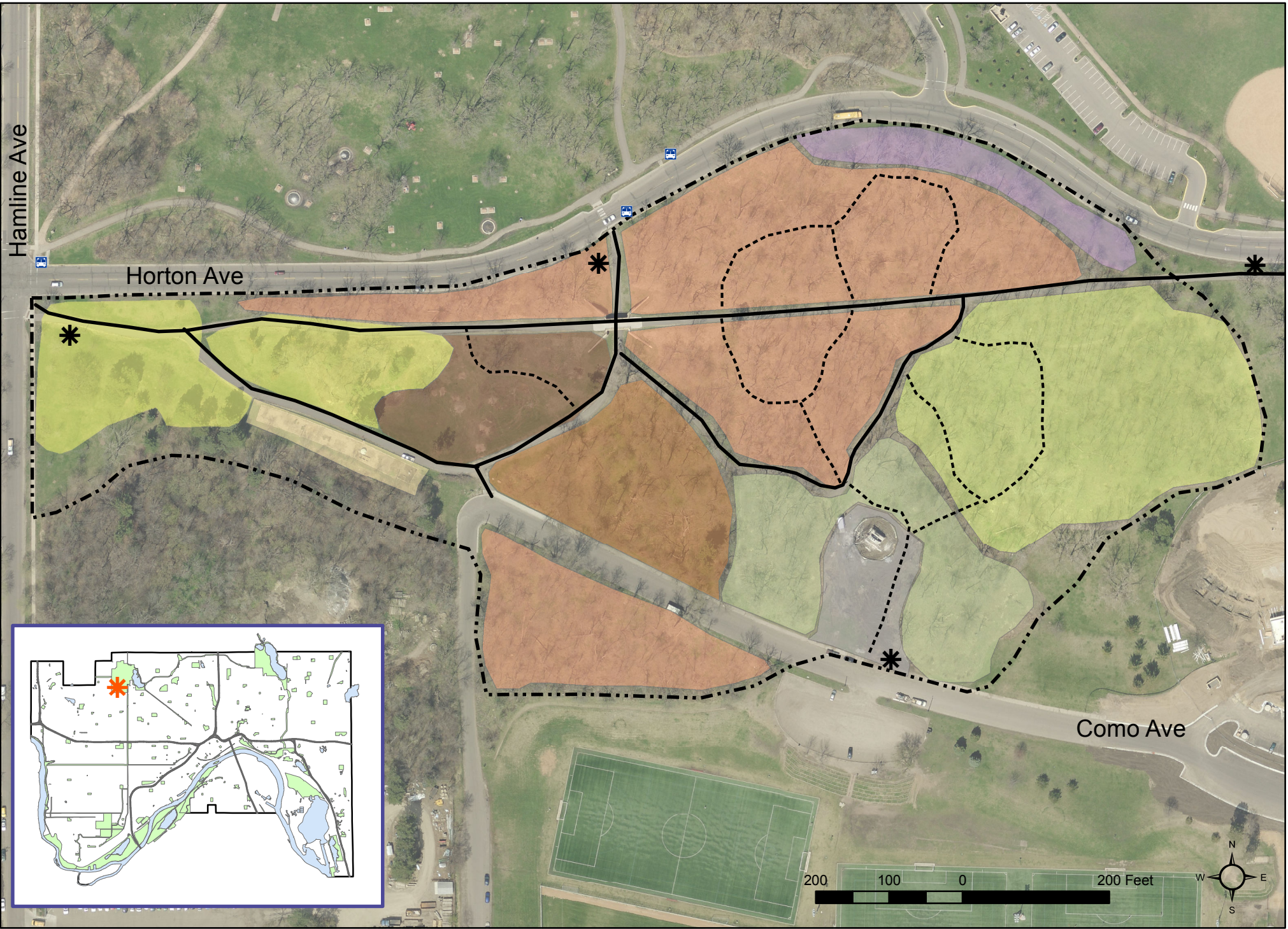
Como Woodland Outdoor Classroom

1221 Como Avenue
Saint Paul, MN

44° 58' 35", -93° 9' 8"



- Paved Trail
- - - Gravel Trail
- * Signs
- - - CWOC Boundary
- Transit Stops
- CWOC Plant Communities
- Coniferous Woodland
- Oak Savanna
- Oak Woodland
- Propagation Garden
- Shortgrass Prairie
- Tallgrass Prairie
- Terrace Forest
- Transitional Woodland
- Wet Forest



Manhattan, Meghan (CI-StPaul)

From: City of Saint Paul <cityofsaintpaul@public.govdelivery.com>
Sent: Wednesday, July 25, 2012 10:47 AM
To: Robbins, Adam (CI-StPaul)
Subject: Coca-Cola and Saint Paul Parks and Rec. Placing Recycling Bins at Como Park



Coca-cola and Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Department Partner in Recycling Effort

Coca-Cola Refreshments presents Saint Paul Parks and Recreation with 35 recycling bins and participates in a volunteer event

Saint Paul, July 25, 2012- Today, employees from Coca-Cola and the St. Paul Parks and Recreation will gather for a community service planting event and formal presentation of recycling bins for the park district. The recycling bins will be distributed throughout the parks in the area in an effort to encourage people to recycle their bottles and cans while visiting their local parks. St. Paul Parks Director Mike Hahm will speak at the event along with Coca-Cola's Area Sales Manager, Michelle Fick.

"We are really happy to accept Coca-Cola's donation of these recycling bins," said Mike Hahm, Director of the St. Paul Parks and Recreation Department. "We are always looking for more ways to encourage people to recycle their bottles and cans when they visit our parks and we believe these bins will do just that."

Company has placed more than 150,000 recycling bins throughout North America. Today's donation to Saint Paul Parks & Recreation will add to that figure. "I cannot think of a better way to support our local community than to bring our employees out here to volunteer with park employees and to provide some much-needed recycling bins to the park system," said Michelle Fick from Coca-Cola Refreshments. "We enjoy being part of this community and want to see the park system continue to flourish for many years to come."

Coca-Cola employees also assisted park staff by planting indigenous plants at the Como Woodland Outdoor Classroom. This project was made possible by a 2010 Saint Paul Parks and Recreation grant from the Minnesota Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund as recommended by the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources. The project was designed to create a 17.5 acre outdoor classroom in Como Regional Park. The classroom will feature 7 distinct Minnesota plant communities: oak woodland, oak savanna, tallgrass prairie, short grass prairie, coniferous forest, sedge meadow, and transitional woodland. In order to pull off this ambitious project, Saint Paul Parks and Recreation need the help of hundreds of volunteers to control invasive species, build trails, plant trees and sow native seed.

For more information about this project, see: <http://www.comowoodland.org/>

To find out more about Coca-Cola's recycling bins and efforts, visit <http://www.cokerecycling.com/>.

For additional information, contact:

Media Relations / Public Service Manager

Brad Meyer at 651-266-6377 (office) or 651-894-3258 (cell)

brad.meyer@stpaul.gov


About Saint Paul Parks & Recreation

Saint Paul Parks and Recreation is a nationally accredited and gold medal award-winning organization that manages more than 170 parks and open spaces, an AZA accredited Como Park Zoo and Conservatory, 25 city operated recreation centers, 4 municipal golf courses, more than 100 miles of trails, an indoor and outdoor aquatic facility, a public beach, a variety of premium sports facilities, and Great River Passage - which is the new identity for all public development along Saint Paul's more than 17 miles of Mississippi riverfront. For more information about Saint Paul Parks and Recreation visit www.stpaul.gov/parks.

The Coca-Cola Company

The Coca-Cola Company (NYSE: KO) is the world's largest beverage company, refreshing consumers with more than 500 sparkling and still brands. Led by Coca-Cola, the world's most valuable brand, our Company's portfolio features 15 billion dollar brands including Diet Coke, Fanta, Sprite, Coca-Cola Zero, vitaminwater, Powerade, Minute Maid, Simply, Georgia and Del Valle. Globally, we are the No. 1 provider of sparkling beverages, ready-to-drink coffees, and juices and juice drinks. Through the world's largest beverage distribution system, consumers in more than 200 countries

commitment to building sustainable communities, our Company is focused on initiatives that reduce our environmental footprint, support active, healthy living, create a safe, inclusive work environment for our associates, and enhance the economic development of the communities where we operate. Together with our bottling partners, we rank among the world's top 10 private employers with more than 700,000 system employees. For more information, please www.thecoca-colacompany.com or follow us on Twitter at twitter.com/CocaColaCo.

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District 10 Como Community Council - eNews

February 18

In This Issue

1. **Como Woodlands Receives \$218,000 Grant |**
2. **Land Use Action Item Voting Results |**
3. **McMurray Field Update |**
4. **Sub-district 3 Open Board Position |**
5. **Northwest Como Chill Out |**
6. **Last Weekend for Como Park Ski Center |**

Hi neighbors!

To better serve the needs of the Como community, District 10 invites you to participate in our 2010 Evaluation Survey. This survey pertains to the performance of the District 10 Como Community Council from January 1, 2010 through December 31, 2010. All responses are confidential. Results will help us to plan and improve programs and operations of the District Council and will be shared with the city. Responses will be accepted through **Friday, February 25, 11:59 PM.**

We appreciate and value your input!

One survey per person, please.

To participate, please [click here](#).

Upcoming Meetings

Como Woodland Advisory Committee (CWAC) Meeting:


Tuesday, February 22
7:00 PM - 9:00 PM

| Como Woodlands Receives \$218,000 Grant |

Restoration work is set to begin on the Como Woodland Outdoor Classroom. The City of Saint Paul received a \$218,000 grant from the Minnesota Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund to transform a 17.75-acre woodland located within Como Regional Park into the Como Woodland Outdoor Classroom.

@ Historic Streetcar Station

[Click here](#) to read the full story.



COMO PARK
A Saint Paul Neighborhood

DISTRICT 10 COMO COMMUNITY COUNCIL

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[Home](#) > [News & Information](#) > [Neighborhood News](#)

Local teens are committed to community service and the Como Woodland

Thursday, November 10, 2011 1:35 PM

Update by: Deb Robinson, Como Woodland Advisory Committee volunteer

Volunteerism is alive and well in the hearts and minds of local school students. As is the case on many Wednesday afternoons during the school year, [Great River School](#) (GRS) students were out doing volunteer work in the community. And the benefit of their service on October 26 was the [Como Woodland Outdoor Classroom](#) (CWOC) project site. Sixteen teens and their teacher, Enrique Garita, walked from their school to Como Park to help restore the 17-acre woodland.

Great River School has a long association with volunteerism, which is an important part of their mission to "prepare students for their unique roles as responsible and engaged citizens of the world." Great River School also has a long association with the CWOC going back to 2008 when one of their classes adopted the Como Woodlands as a project and worked on a variety of volunteer activities that benefited the site.


In 2011, Great River School applied for DNR Minnesota School Forest status for the Como Woodland Outdoor Classroom. School Forest status will bring valuable state support and resources to this urban woodland educational facility in exchange for a long-term commitment from students and their school forest committee volunteers.

GRS students planted 20 flats of prairie plants in the Savanna Woodland portion of the outdoor classroom. Four Conservation Corps youth leaders and City of Saint Paul Parks & Recreation's Natural Resources Technician, Meghan Manhattan, provided guidance.

Extra volunteer support on this planting day came from five Honor Society students from Murray Junior High School and their science teacher, Tim Chase. After GRS students finished planting, Murray students spread bales of bluestem grass straw on any bare earth that remained in the planting area. Three adult volunteers connected to the project's Advisory Committee rounded out the crew on October 26.

The Como Woodland Outdoor Classroom received a grant from the Environmental and Natural Resources Trust Fund a few years ago. However, the long-term health of this urban woodland depends on dedicated volunteers like the students of Great River School, Murray Junior High School, and community members – thanks to all.

For more information about the Como Woodland Outdoor Classroom project, visit: www.comowoodland.org
 How to get involved with volunteering in Saint Paul's parks and natural areas: www.stpaul.gov/index.aspx?NID=3811
 For more information on the DNR School Forest Program, visit: www.dnr.state.mn.us/schoolforest/index.html



Great River School volunteers get planting instructions from Meghan Manhattan, St. Paul Parks & Recreation natural resources technician.

District 10 Como Community Council | [1224 Lexington Pkwy. St. Paul, MN 55103](#) | 651.644.3889 | Office Hours: 12:30 - 2:30 PM, Mon-Fri (or by appointment)

Quick Links: Board Members Committees, Agendas, & Minutes	Como Pool Updates Shalom Home Updates Neighborhood News	Newsletters Block Club	City of Saint Paul Saint Paul PD Saint Paul Parks and Rec
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Work Begins on Como Park Outdoor Classroom

Submitted by [Jessica M. Lopez](#)

Tuesday, February 15th, 7:48 p.m.

Topics: [News](#)

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Major changes are coming to a St. Paul park, and it should have a huge impact not only for visitors but for students as well.

Como Park just got a \$200,000 dollar state grant, and with the money they plan to build an outdoor classroom.

The classroom will be developed in 18 acres of woods, it will be split up into seven different sections.

The city says there are 75 schools within five miles of the park, and when everything is done its expected to be a popular learning spot.

Tuesday workers with the Minnesota Conservation Corps cut down invasive trees and plants so native grasses and wildflowers can be replanted.

The classroom will include 4000 feet of trails, with separate study areas in each of the seven sections for students to have lessons outside.

Adam Robbins with the St. Paul Parks and Recreation department says the lessons don't have to be about the outdoors.

"It doesn't necessarily have to be about the environment it can be math it can be writing it can be cultural history, anything a teacher is willing to teach outside in an outdoor setting."

The study areas will eventually have kiosks so teachers can download curriculum, and use the kiosks out in the woods to help teach their lessons.

This is all a work in progress, the actual 18 acre classroom won't be done for about two years, but the trails will be ready for visitors this spring.

Volunteers will be needed as the project continues, to find out how you can help, [click here](#).

To find out more about the Minnesota Conservation Corps, [click here](#).



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Topics: [News](#)

TOP ST. ANTHONY - COMO STORIES

TwinCities.com

Como Park to add wooded classroom

Pioneer Press

Updated: 02/11/2011 11:03:24 PM CST

St. Paul's Como Park soon will offer a new window onto the natural world. The city received a \$218,000 grant from the Minnesota Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund to turn a 17.75-acre wooded area within the regional park into the Como Woodland Outdoor Classroom.

The space is aimed at schoolchildren and adults. The funding will allow the city to remove invasive plant and tree species and create six "study areas" representing six different plant "communities" found in Minnesota.

Beginning this month, Conservation Corps Minnesota members will remove invasive trees.

The Minnesota Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund is funded through proceeds from the Minnesota State Lottery.

For more information about the project, go to stpaul.gov/parks/environment.

— Frederick Melo

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Como Park restoration work set

State trust fund money will be used to start work on the Como Woodland Outdoor Classroom.

Last update: February 11, 2011 - 9:12 PM

Removal of invasive trees will pick up speed later this month at St. Paul's Como Woodland Outdoor Classroom. The city will use proceeds from a \$218,000 grant from the state Environment and Natural Resources Trust fund.

The Como Woodland Outdoor Classroom includes an 18-acre woodland within Como Regional Park. Volunteers have worked at the tree removal process for years, but now the Conservation Corps Minnesota will start removing the trees as designated by the classroom's master plan.

The grant also will be used to develop six study areas representing six unique Minnesota plant communities.

A city news release said, "This classroom will provide environmental education and historical interpretation for school children and adults, habitat for native wildlife, and an u


rbans woodland oasis for the inner-city community where local place-based, hands-on environmental learning opportunities are rare."

The money comes from a fund established through a state constitutional amendment approved by voters. The trust fund receives 40 percent of the net proceeds from the Minnesota State Lottery and must be used for the environment and natural resources.

ROCHELLE OLSON

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Front Page News • Como Park restoration set to begin in St. Paul

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Updated: February 13th, 2011 5:00am

Como Park restoration set to begin in St. Paul

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Buzz

Visitors at Como Park in St. Paul will soon see the beginnings of a more than \$200,000 restoration project.

It will begin next week with volunteers removing invasive tree species as the city transforms nearly 18 acres of woodland in the park into the Como Woodland Outdoor Classroom.

This classroom will provide environmental education for children and adults and habitat for native wildlife. Regular park visitors can expect to see more hikers and groups in the area.

The project is being paid for by the Minnesota Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund. Currently 40 percent of net state lottery proceeds are dedicated to building the fund to benefit Minnesota's environment and natural resources.

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NEWS

Como Park Restoration Set To Begin In St. Paul

February 13, 2011 8:48 AM

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(Credit: CBS)

ST. PAUL, Minn. (AP) — Visitors at Como Park in St. Paul will soon see the beginnings of a more than \$200,000 restoration project.

It will begin next week with volunteers removing invasive tree species as the city transforms nearly 18 acres of woodland in the park into the Como Woodland Outdoor Classroom.

This classroom will provide environmental education for children and adults and habitat for native wildlife. Regular park visitors can expect to see more hikers and groups in the area.

The project is being paid for by the Minnesota Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund. Currently 40 percent of net state lottery proceeds are dedicated to building the fund to benefit Minnesota's environment and natural resources.

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CITY OF SAINT PAUL
Mayor Chris Coleman

25 West 4th Street
Suite 400
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55102
www.stpaul.gov/parks

Telephone: 651-266-6400
Facsimile: 651-292-7405

For Immediate Release

Contact: Brad Meyer – brad.meyer@stpaul.gov
651-266-6377 – 651-894-3258

Saint Paul's Como Park Receives \$200,000 Grant

Restoration work will clean-up and bring environmental education to urban outdoor classroom

(Saint Paul) - Restoration work is set to begin on the Como Woodland Outdoor Classroom. The City of Saint Paul received a \$218,000 grant from the Minnesota Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund to transform a 17.75-acre woodland located within Como Regional Park into the Como Woodland Outdoor Classroom. This classroom will provide environmental education and historical interpretation for school children and adults, habitat for native wildlife, and an urban woodland oasis for the inner-city community where local place-based, hands-on environmental learning opportunities are rare.

Mayor Coleman has long championed Saint Paul's award winning parks system remarking, "The parks system in Saint Paul is second to none and this grant will allow us to further that tradition of excellence. With the support of the Minnesota Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund, our Parks and Recreation Department will transform Como Regional Park by cleaning-up the woodlands and expanding environmental education. This outdoor classroom will become a destination for local families, furthering Saint Paul as a great place to work, live and play."

Community volunteers have long been involved in removing invasive species from the woodlands within Como Regional Park. This new funding will allow the City to complete invasive species removal within the Como Woodland Outdoor Classroom, and develop six study areas representing six unique plant communities found in Minnesota.

As work begins on constructing the Como Woodland Outdoor Classroom, residents and visitors to Como Regional Park will notice some changes. Beginning later this month, Conservation Corps Minnesota will be selectively removing invasive trees per the Como Woodland Outdoor Classroom Master Plan.

Funding to create this rare asset was provided by the Minnesota Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund as recommended by the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR). The Trust Fund is a permanent fund constitutionally established by the citizens of Minnesota to assist in the protection, conservation, preservation, and enhancement of the states air, water, land, fish, wildlife, and other natural resources. Currently 40% of net Minnesota State Lottery proceeds are dedicated to building the Trust Fund and ensuring future benefits for Minnesota's environment and natural resources.

To see the full Como plan, to get involved, or to find out more about the project, visit www.stpaul.gov/parks/environment.



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Many projects underway at Como Regional Park

BY KRISTAL LEEBRICK, PARK BUGLE
December 25, 2010

Como Regional Park never sleeps. The 347-acre park has been an ever-evolving work in progress since the first 259.95 acres of farmland were purchased in 1873.

In June, the park opened its new Polar Bear Odyssey exhibit. Construction on the zoo's next new habitat, the Gorilla Forest, is slated to begin in late 2011. Ground broke for the new aquatic facility in October. It will replace the 1960s-era Como Pool. In November, the city's Parks and Recreation Department began work on the Como Woodland Outdoor Classroom project, which will provide an outdoor learning area and the restoration of the Joyce Kilmer Memorial Fireplace site.

Here's an update of some of the projects under way at the park:

WPA-era memorial restored

In the southern area of the park, just west of the pool site, stands a half-hidden stone fireplace dedicated to a New Jersey poet known best for his work "Trees" ("I think that I shall never see / A poem as lovely as a tree . . .").

The Joyce Kilmer Memorial—also known as the "Dutch Oven"—was built by the Works Progress Administration in 1936. That structure, which had been covered with graffiti and in general disrepair, is in the heart of the Como Woodland Outdoor Classroom and is now being restored.

The park received a \$250,000 Legacy Grant from the Minnesota Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund to help remove the graffiti and paint on the fireplace, replace the broken stone, rebuild the firebox and mantels, create and install fireplace gates and restore the fire ring, said Bryan Murphy, landscape architect with the Parks and Recreation Department. The restoration, which is scheduled for completion in April, comes just in time for the memorial's 75th anniversary in 2011. A rededication is scheduled for May.

The original memorial, which was funded by the Joyce Kilmer American Legion Post (St. Paul parks superintendent at that time, W. Lamont Kaufman, was a member), was a larger complex that included a cascading waterfall, a wooded grove, the fireplace and a plaque with Kilmer's poem "Trees" hanging from a nearby tree. Only the fireplace remains.

The Como Woodland Outdoor Classroom project includes a 17 3/4-acre woodland restoration with seven woodland "classrooms": oak savanna, coniferous forest, transitional woodland oak woodland, sedge meadow, ephemeral wetland and tall grass prairie. Each area will have a series of trails meandering through it, providing visitors with a view of what these respective woodlands are like, Murphy said. Also, each classroom will contain a small clearing with groupings of logs or boulders for seating to accommodate six to eight students. It is hoped the classrooms will be used by local schools, Murphy said.

A \$218,000 Minnesota Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund grant will be used for the first phase of the outdoor classroom project, Murphy said. That work includes removal and management of invasive species, construction of gravel trails, construction of the small clearings, informational signage, the development of an outreach program and an "Educate the Educator" program for teachers in outdoor environmental education.



Pool construction begins

Despite the increased number of amenities planned for the new aquatic center in the park, the new pool area will not be much larger than the one it is replacing, Murphy said. The old facility totaled 28,949 square feet (that included 7,847 square feet of water surface and 21,302 square feet of deck space). The new facility will be 29,231 square feet, 16,218 of which will be dedicated to water surface and 13,013 to deck space. The bather load will be 548, Murphy said.

Ground was broken for the new aquatic center in October. So far, grading has been done for the parking lot and pool area and excavation for the administrative and shower buildings has begun.

The city recently received a \$150,000 Solar Energy Legacy Grant from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, which will go toward installing a solar system that will be used to heat the showers, sinks and pool, Murphy said. That system will also offset some of the heating needed for the winter, as the offices that will be built at the pool will be year-round by the St. Paul Municipal Athletic Office.

Completion is expected by September 2011, Murphy said, and the pool is tentatively planned to open Memorial Day weekend of 2012.

There are three pools planned for the project:

- A six-lane lap pool with an adjacent diving well. The pool will flow into a two-lane 25-meter lap pool, featuring a zip-line (a pulley suspended on a cable that bathers can use to traverse across the pool).
- A splash pool with a zero-depth, beach-like entry that will rise to a depth of 3 feet. The splash pool will have some small water slides along with ground sprays and interactive features where bathers will be able to turn water sprays on and off.
- The third pool will be a lazy river in which guests can float in a tube down a waterway that will split into either a water slide or an area where there will be spray cannons and guests can spray their friends from the sides as they float along.

The project includes the realignment of Como Avenue near the pool. Two new buildings will house showers, restrooms, admissions, an office and concessions.

A number of trees were removed to accommodate the new facility, but Murphy said they were ash trees that would probably have been removed in the next several years due to the local emerald ash borer infestation. More than 200 new trees will be planted in the area. The new aquatic facility will provide more shade than the old pool, Murphy said, as there will be trees and landscaping inside the pool fencing. The new 215-space parking lot is larger than the old lot to accommodate both pool parking and activity at McMurray Field. The pool restrooms will be accessible to pool guests only.

Historic Streetcar Bridge

There is funding to restore the Historic Streetcar Bridge, the footbridge near the Historic Streetcar Station at 1224 N. Lexington Pkwy., Murphy said. No plans have been finalized for this restoration, but it will likely be restored as "a ruins" with some parts of the bridge remaining and the installation of interpretive boards to show how the bridge was used, what it looked like and its history, he said.

West Picnic play area

Parks and Recreation has approximately \$250,000 in funding to build a new play area at the West Picnic play area, Murphy said, but no architect has been assigned to the project yet and no plans have been made for the project.





