Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

ML 2022 Request for Funding

General Information

Date: 06/07/2021

Proposal Title: Daylighting Phalen Creek

Funds Requested: $6,338,000

Manager Information

Manager's Name: Samuel Wegner
Title: Environmental Stewardship Program Manager
Organization: Lower Phalen Creek Project
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Office Number:
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Fax Number:
Website: https://www.lowerphalencreek.org/

Location Information

County Location(s): Ramsey.

Eco regions in which work will take place:

- Metro / Urban

Activity types:

- Restore

Priority resources addressed by activity:

- Habitat

Narrative

Abstract

Phalen Creek is a long-buried waterway snaking through Saint Paul's East Side. Until the early twentieth century, Phalen Creek served as a thriving wildlife corridor and as a cultural resource for the Dakota people. Now, Lower Phalen Creek Project, with widespread support from local residents, community organizations, and a wide array of

government entities and additional stakeholders, proposes to daylight Phalen Creek for a ¼-mile stretch south of Lake Phalen. This daylit channel will restore and enhance critical habitat south of the vibrant Phalen Regional Park ecosystem and provide a range of recreational and educational opportunities for the community.

Design and Scope of Work

The proposed Reach 7 & 8 project will restore lotic aquatic habitat directly connected to Lake Phalen. The specific aquatic ecosystem intended to be restored will include several that were fully expatriated from this area, including wet meadows, shallow fresh marshes, and seasonally flooded wetlands. A 1,500 linear foot segment of Phalen Creek will be daylighted and approximately 9 acres restored to native habitat within City of Saint Paul property. The creek will be connected to Lake Phalen with a fish-passage friendly structure to support sustainable fishing within the proposed daylighted stream. Lake sedge, white turtlehead, and joe pye weed are among a diversity of native species that will be reintroduced through seeding and planting restoration strategies to support the establishment of healthy native plant communities. Restoration of these communities will help stabilize shoreline conditions and trap sediment to improve water quality while enhancing the terrestrial and aquatic habitat value. The stream itself will be representative of the former perennial stream that likely meandered through the oak savanna of the Mississippi River Valley uplands. Upland areas within the project will also be re-established with native plant and pollinator species. Flowering species such as Bottle Gentian, asters, butterfly milkweed and white wild indigo - a state-listed species of special concern native to prairie habitats- provide critical forage and nesting habitat for specialist pollinators while also providing year-round visual interest.

The project will also re-establish opportunities for wildlife habitat that disappeared when the stream was redirected to storm sewer pipes. The present-day context of the site within a dense urban area will limit some species from re-occupying their niches, but there are ample opportunities for a number of wildlife species to take advantage of the recreated ecology. At its core, the project will restore a meandering stream that will support macroinvertebrates, terrapins, amphibians, reptiles, wading birds and warm-water fish species endemic to the area.

The scope of the proposed project will include the following elements:

Site Investigation: Topographic survey and Geotechnical Investigation of the site to support design, permitting, bidding, and construction phases. The survey will include topography, transportation and recreation infrastructure, existing utilities and easements, and major vegetation.

Public Outreach and Stakeholder Engagement: Meetings, engagement events, web site updates, and emails are planned throughout the process to guide the design effort and inform the public.

Design: Engineering, ecological, and geomorphic assessment and design of the proposed restored channel and associated wetland and upland areas. Deliverables include concept through final design of Bid Documents. Bid Documents will be sealed by a Professional Engineer licensed in the State of Minnesota.

Permitting: Submittal of necessary permits for construction

Construction Bidding: Solicitation of competitive bids for construction services

Construction: Site construction and professional oversight and administration to implement the design vision.

Plant Warranty and Replacement: The anticipated construction contracts will include 2-year plant replacement

warranties and maintenance requirements to support successful completion of the restoration efforts. The project will be closed out at the termination of the plant warranty period.

How does the proposal address habitats that have significant value for wildlife species of greatest conservation need, and/or threatened or endangered species, and list targeted species?

This project restores lost aquatic habitat that supports the ecological health of the lake and stream system of Phalen Creek, which was once the ecological backbone of the local environment. The specific aquatic habitats that are targeted include stream, inland shallow fresh marsh, inland deep fresh marsh, inland open fresh water, and inland fresh meadow. The proposed restoration of the creek and riparian habitat will support the return of a range of terrestrial, avian, insect, and aquatic species formerly endemic to this area. Specifically, the proposed habitat will be a high value resource for the following species.

The design will incorporate standing dead wood in the naturalized area, which will provide immediate habitat opportunities for bats, including the Eastern Pipistrelle, Northern Long-eared Bat, and Big Brown Bat, which are listed as species of Special Concern.

Insect species we anticipate to colonize the site include aquatic macroinvertebrates as well as terrestrial species like Monarch Butterflies. Insect species listed as Endangered, Threatened, or of Special Concern in Minnesota, which are anticipated to return, include several species of Caddisfly, Ghost Tiger Beetles, Iowa Skipper, Leadplant Flower Moth, Regal Fritallary, and Whitney's Underwing.

The site will provide habitat for a range of endemic turtle species, including the SGCN "threatened" status Blanding's Turtle. The restored naturalized shoreline and connectivity to the lake will be paired with areas in which the designers will dissuade human use, allowing for nesting sites.

The creek will be directly connected to Lake Phalen and provide enhanced forage and spawning habitat for many fish species including northern pike, green sunfish, pumpkinseed, sauger, bluegill, channel catfish, walleye, and largemouth bass. The proposed stream habitat will have sections that will be fishable for these species, offering a unique fishing experience to the residents and visitors. To support sustainable fish populations and aquatic ecology, the project proposes fish-passage connections to Lake Phalen and under Maryland Avenue, which will allow for the natural replenishment of fish lost through predation or resident fishing. The project will include a carp gate to exclude larger carp from the channel and improve water quality and clarity.

What is the degree of timing/opportunistic urgency and why it is necessary to spend public money for this work as soon as possible?

Two factors—political support and available urban space—create an urgent need to act now on this project. The community began advocating for creek restoration in 1997, but it was not until 2016 that necessary political support aligned to make it possible. Over the past five years, LPCP has engaged the community, cultivated leadership, and built a strong case for creek daylighting. The work resulted in more momentum than we imagined, in part because the environmental benefits overwhelmingly captured the interest of the community. Urban development pressures are ever-present; luckily, LPCP's feasibility study determined that sufficient undeveloped land remains to daylight much of the creek. However, with the pending Bus Rapid Transit Rush Line catalyzing development, undeveloped space may not be available for long. The proposed project is physical proof of concept and a catalyst that will allow LPCP to preserve the corridor and achieve a thriving ecological vision.

Describe how the proposal uses science-based targeting that leverages or expands corridors and complexes, reduces fragmentation or protects areas identified in the MN County Biological Survey:

The importance of this project is exemplified by the current lack of Natural Communities and Rare Species in the vicinity of the project. Similar to the efforts at the Trout Brook Nature Sanctuary, 2 miles to the east, this project continues the process of creating and expanding north-south habitat corridors that enhance and support the overall Mississippi River flyway. There is a distinct lack of connectivity between the Mississippi River and riparian resources to the north of Saint Paul. This project will create critical habitat to reduce the isolation and fragmentation of critical habitat, bridging the gap between resources north and south of Saint Paul. To achieve those goals, LPCP previously completed a feasibility study (2017) which included the scientific evaluation of geology (surficial and bedrock) hydrology, topography, and soil types to identify the likely location of the lost riparian and creek habitat resources. Based on these foundational elements, LPCP has identified targeted habitats and appropriate locations to leverage the natural site conditions to achieve the ecological restoration goals.

LPCP has also conducted a series of preliminary habitat evaluations in the project area, with support and consultation from wildlife ecologists at the University of Minnesota, conservation professionals with Saint Paul Natural Resources, the DNR and the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge, technicians from Capitol Region and Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed Districts, and other knowledgeable stakeholders. Additional research has been conducted to ensure that the daylighting of Phalen Creek is designed for targeted habitat improvements and expansions for Species of Greatest Conservation Need, in addition to the expansion of valuable riparian habitat.

Which two sections of the Minnesota Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan are most applicable to this project?

- H5 Restore land, wetlands and wetland-associated watersheds
- H6 Protect and restore critical in-water habitat of lakes and streams

Which two other plans are addressed in this proposal?

- Minnesota DNR Strategic Conservation Agenda
- Minnesota's Wildlife Action Plan 2015-2025

Describe how your program will advance the indicators identified in the plans selected:

This project advances the DNR's 2015-2025 Strategic Plan for Waters & Watersheds by contributing to the goal of no statewide net loss in wetland acres. (Re)creating portions of Phalen Creek will provide valuable ecosystem services in an urban area. Minnesota Statutes, Sec. 103A.201 notes [...] that it is in the public interest to [...] increase the quantity, quality, and biological diversity of Minnesota's wetlands by restoring or enhancing diminished or drained wetlands."

By restoring a lost waterway in a residential area—more than 5,000 people live within a 10-minute walk of the buried Phalen Creek—this project also advances the MN WAP 2015-2025 goal of enhancing "opportunities to enjoy Species in Greatest Conservation Need and other wildlife and to participate in their conservation.

Which LSOHC section priorities are addressed in this proposal?

Metro / Urban

- Protect, enhance, and restore riparian and littoral habitats on lakes to benefit game and nongame fish species

Describe how your program will produce and demonstrate a significant and permanent conservation legacy and/or outcomes for fish, game, and wildlife as indicated in the LSOHC priorities:

The project is anticipated to create more than 9 acres of restored upland and riparian wildlife habitat, which has been extirpated from most of the metro area of the Twin Cities. This habitat is critical to both migratory and resident species that evolved to utilize the Mississippi River flyway and ecological corridor. As noted in other parts of this grant document, the list of species that may benefit from the restoration of this lost habitat is extensive. The project will demonstrate that fish and wildlife can be restored in ecologically critical yet infrastructure-challenged sites within urban areas. This localized re-wilding process of targeted areas of our urban landscape will offer hope to change the long-term trajectory of sterilization and homogenization of the landscape.

In addition to the re-wilding of the site, the proposed project includes creation of approximately 1,500 linear feet of daylighted stream channel. The new channel is proposed to be constructed to harbor a wide range of fish and aquatic-dependent species. The intersection of aquatic and terrestrial ecology is the crux of why this site is anticipated to be particularly productive for wildlife. The establishment of a fishable channel will support the LSOHC priority of reconnecting urban communities with fish and wildlife.

What other fund may contribute to this proposal?

- Clean Water Fund
- Parks and Trails Fund

Does this proposal include leveraged funding?

Yes

Explain the leverage:

LPCP has applied and will apply in the future for modest non-federal grants from Capitol Region WD and Ramsey-Washington Metro WD to support community engagement along the Phalen Creek corridor. Other stakeholders will provide in-kind contributions of staff & volunteer labor for design, engagement, and public habitat installation events.

Per MS 97A.056, Subd. 24, Please explain whether the request is supplanting or is a substitution for any previous funding that was not from a legacy fund and was used for the same purpose.

This request is not supplanting or substituting for any previous funding not from legacy funds or used for the same purpose.

Non-OHF Appropriations

Year	Source	Amount
2017	Capitol Region Watershed District	$15,000
2020	Capitol Region Watershed District	$4,700
2021	Capitol Region Watershed District	$8,500
2021	Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District	$10,000
Ongoing	City of Saint Paul	TBD
Ongoing	Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District	TBD

How will you sustain and/or maintain this work after the Outdoor Heritage Funds are expended?

This project will apply U.S. Fish and Wildlife Strategic Habitat Preservation principles throughout the project to ensure that project outcomes are achieved and maintained after the listed funding period. Namely, this project: (1) is prepared to monitor and encourage the positive watershed-wide impacts of extending riparian habitat from the north metro to the Mississippi River; (2) will continue a legacy of collaboration by working in partnership with community members, government entities, scientists, conservation professionals, and other stakeholders; (3) will utilize an adaptive management framework that incorporates biological planning, conservation design, and monitoring and research in the project and post-project activities; and (4) will rely on science and related tools to evaluate gaps in knowledge and implement best management practices.

Actions to Maintain Project Outcomes

Year	Source of Funds	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
2026	Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District	Maintenance of riparian plantings	Routine water-quality monitoring	IBI assessment
2027	Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District	Maintenance of riparian plantings	Routine water-quality monitoring	IBI assessment
2028	City of Saint Paul	Routine parkland maintenance (trash removal, etc.)	-	-

Identify indicator species and associated quantities this habitat will typically support:

The wetland habitats that will be restored include stream, inland shallow fresh marsh, inland deep fresh marsh, inland open fresh water, and inland fresh meadow. The wetland habitat will be constructed with soil type, hydrology, and topography in mind to support specific native plant communities. A specific targeted ecosystem will include a Southern Wet Prairie system, which are characterized by the following indicator plant species: Gray-headed coneflower, Canada tick trefoil, Skyblue aster, Wild garlic, Cup plant, Tussock sedge, Veiny pea, Prairie phlox. Based on an initial assessment of the site, the soils are characterized as urban fill with pre-development soil conditions likely being loam. The site is low-relief and shallow geology is meltwater stream sediment. These natural site factors will support the establishment of approximately one acre of Southern Wet Prairie. We anticipate the site will support variation of topography from the stream system up to drier terrestrial habitat; once site soil conditions are better understood, further detailed targeted native plant communities will be identified for inclusion.

In addition to the vegetation communities, the goal is to establish habitat for several other key indicator species that will thrive on-site. Macroinvertebrates are a good measure of stream health and will meet or exceed IBI benchmarks from similar streams in the metro area. Potential avian indicator species may include: Belted Kingfisher, American Kestrel, American Black Duck, Black-throated Blue Warbler, Black-crowned Night-heron. Potential insects may include dragonflies, including: Blue-eyed Darner, Smoky Shadowdragon, Plains Emerald, Russet-tipped Clubtail, and Fragile Forktail.

How will the program directly involve, engage, and benefit BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) and diverse communities:

The project to daylight Phalen Creek directly south of Lake Phalen represents a unique opportunity to restore a natural resource with longstanding cultural value to the Dakota people of Minnesota, and presents a rare opportunity for stream restoration in the urban core.

The project directly serves environmental justice and social equity needs. More than 1,000 community members

will be directly engaged during this project. Community engagement will parallel the development of compelling graphics and renderings, and community members will have direct input on project designs throughout the process. This is of particular importance to the East Side, where many residents lack access to naturalized public green spaces, and to the knowledge and health benefits these spaces provide. The area has the second-highest vacancy rate among all Racially Concentrated Areas of Poverty in Minnesota; 40% of households report an annual income of less than $35,000, and over 64% of residents identify as People of Color. In the Payne-Phalen neighborhood alone, 37% of residents are Asian or Pacific Islander; 14% are Black or African American; 13% are Hispanic or Latino, and the neighborhood's 400+ Native American and Alaska Native residents are bolstered by a strong East Metro Indigenous community. Consistent engagement will ensure that community interests shape how the creek channel is designed and best utilized by residents.

According to the EPA, residents living within ½-mile of the Phalen Creek corridor are, statewide, in the 90th percentile or higher for wastewater discharge, traffic proximity and volume, respiratory hazards, and cancer risk. For over twenty years, LPCP has engaged local residents about restoring Phalen Creek. Numerous community surveys and targeted outreach events have shown overwhelming support for bringing Phalen Creek back to the surface—to recognize and celebrate the creek's value to the Dakota people, to whom this land has belonged for time immemorial and which holds unique value as a trade route and resource cache; to improve access to natural spaces and water resources in a heavily industrialized area of the city; and to align with regional watershed management plans surrounding water quality, storm-water runoff, and flood risk mitigation.

Activity Details

Requirements

If funded, this proposal will meet all applicable criteria set forth in MS 97A.056?
Yes

Will restoration and enhancement work follow best management practices including MS 84.973 Pollinator Habitat Program?
Yes

Is the restoration and enhancement activity on permanently protected land per 97A.056, Subd 13(f), tribal lands, and/or public waters per MS 103G.005, Subd. 15?
Yes

Where does the activity take place?

- County/Municipal

Land Use

Will there be planting of any crop on OHF land purchased or restored in this program?
No

Other OHF Appropriation Awards

Have you received OHF dollars in the past through LSOHC?
No

Timeline

Activity Name	Estimated Completion Date
Project Initiation	July 2022

Design	February 2023
Construction	June 2024
Plant Warranty & Replacement / Project Close-out	June 2026

Budget

Totals

Item	Funding Request	Antic. Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	$196,000	$158,200	-	$354,200
Contracts	$4,900,000	-	-	$4,900,000
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	-	-	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	-	-	-	-
Easement Acquisition	-	-	-	-
Easement Stewardship	-	-	-	-
Travel	$1,000	-	-	$1,000
Professional Services	$1,239,000	$10,000	In-kind & grant-supported legal counsel	$1,249,000
Direct Support Services	-	$2,000	Grant-supported administrative tasks	$2,000
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	-	-	-	-
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	$1,000	-	-	$1,000
Supplies/Materials	$1,000	$5,000	Grant-supported gardening and habitat restoration materials	$6,000
DNR IDP	-	-	-	-
Grand Total	**$6,338,000**	**$182,000**	**-**	**$6,520,000**

Personnel

Position	Annual FTE	Years Working	Funding Request	Antic. Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Design Support	-	4.0	0	$22,500	CRWD ($11,250 over two years)	$22,500
Habitat Installation Labor	-	2.0	0	$20,700	In-kind labor from staff & volunteers: Trust for Public Land ($18,800); Urban Roots ($1,900)	$20,700
City of Saint Paul Project Design Member	0.1	4.0	35000	$15,000	City of Saint Paul in-kind labor / donation	$50,000
RWMWD Design Engineer	0.25	4.0	0	$100,000	RWMWD in-kind labor / staff-time donation	$100,000
LPCP Staff	1.65	4.0	161000	-	-	$161,000

Amount of Request: $6,338,000
Amount of Leverage: $182,000
Leverage as a percent of the Request: 2.87%

DSS + Personnel: $196,000
As a % of the total request: 3.09%
Easement Stewardship: -
As a % of the Easement Acquisition: -

Describe and explain leverage source and confirmation of funds:
A range of public and private stakeholder organizations have committed to providing in-kind contributions of staff time and/or volunteer labor for design, construction, implementation, and/or maintenance. A number of these organizations are represented in attached letters of support for the project.

Does this proposal have the ability to be scalable?
Yes

If the project received 70% of the requested funding

Describe how the scaling would affect acres/activities and if not proportionately reduced, why?
The channel length and associated riparian acreage would not be reduced. An allocation of 70% of the budget would result in the following reductions of project scope from the base-line project as described above:
i.. 25% reduced planting
ii. reduced area of aggregate in channel bottom for macroinvertebrate habitat

Describe how personnel and DSS expenses would be adjusted and if not proportionately reduced, why?
Design fees would be reduced by 17% from the base-line design. Some elements of the project are fixed costs, including survey, permitting, connections to existing infrastructure, and public outreach, which cannot be scaled to reflect a reduced construction budget.

If the project received 50% of the requested funding

Describe how the scaling would affect acres/activities and if not proportionately reduced, why?
The channel length and associated riparian zone cannot be reduced. However, we propose the following scope reductions:
i. no fish passage connection
ii. reduced creek depth
iii. salvaged topsoil reduced to 6" from 1ft
iv. 50% reduced planting
v. eliminate aggregate in channel

Describe how personnel and DSS expenses would be adjusted and if not proportionately reduced, why?
Design fees would be reduced by 24% from the base-line design. Some elements of the project are fixed costs, including survey, permitting, public outreach, which cannot be scaled to reflect a reduced construction budget.

Personnel

Has funding for these positions been requested in the past?
Yes

Please explain the overlap of past and future staffing and position levels previously received and how that is coordinated over multiple years?

LPCP has received limited project-based funding for community engagement events regarding Phalen Creek. In 2019, LPCP received $4,500 from Capitol Region Watershed District for engagement events; in 2020, LPCP received $8,500 from Capitol Region and $10,000 from Ramsey Washington Metro Watershed District for engagement activities.

Contracts

What is included in the contracts line?
This task includes the completion of site investigation (survey and geotechnical); 30/60/90 and bid-ready construction plans sealed by a professional engineer, specifications, and cost estimates; and construction administration and oversight tasks on behalf of LPCP. Partners for consulting support include Inter-Fluve, Alliant Engineering and Damon Farber.

Travel

Does the amount in the travel line include equipment/vehicle rental?
No

Explain the amount in the travel line outside of traditional travel costs of mileage, food, and lodging
N/A

I understand and agree that lodging, meals, and mileage must comply with the current MMB Commissioner Plan:
Yes

Other Equipment/Tools

Give examples of the types of Equipment and Tools that will be purchased?
LPCP will purchase basic habitat installation equipment (rakes, shovels, gloves, etc.) for public habitat installation planting events.

Federal Funds

Do you anticipate federal funds as a match for this program?
No

Output Tables

Acres by Resource Type (Table 1)

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat	Total Acres
Restore	0	0	0	9	9
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Easement	0	0	0	0	0
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0
Total	**0**	**0**	**0**	**9**	**9**

Total Requested Funding by Resource Type (Table 2)

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat	Total Funding
Restore	-	-	-	$6,338,000	$6,338,000
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	-	-	-	-	-
Total	**-**	**-**	**-**	**$6,338,000**	**$6,338,000**

Acres within each Ecological Section (Table 3)

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N. Forest	Total Acres
Restore	9	0	0	0	0	9
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Easement	0	0	0	0	0	0
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	**9**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**9**

Total Requested Funding within each Ecological Section (Table 4)

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N. Forest	Total Funding
Restore	$6,338,000	-	-	-	-	$6,338,000
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	**$6,338,000**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**$6,338,000**

Average Cost per Acre by Resource Type (Table 5)

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat
Restore	-	-	-	$704,222
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-
Enhance	-	-	-	-

Average Cost per Acre by Ecological Section (Table 6)

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N. Forest
Restore	$704,222	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State	-	-	-	-	-

PILT Liability					
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	-	-	-	-	-

Target Lake/Stream/River Feet or Miles

1,500 feet of riparian stream habitat

Outcomes

Programs in metropolitan urbanizing region:

- A network of natural land and riparian habitats will connect corridors for wildlife and species in greatest conservation need ~ *Success for this project is measured in the length of the restored stream channel and in the acreage of restored riparian habitat. The daylit stream channel will be assessed based on similar IBI indexes and hook and line surveys. Vegetation community will be assessed with transect surveys and/or confirmation of the presence of targeted plant species on-site. LPCP will also conduct regular wildlife habitat surveys to track presence of indicator species in the project area. University of Minnesota and additional academic institutions will act as partners in these studies, surveys, and evaluations.*

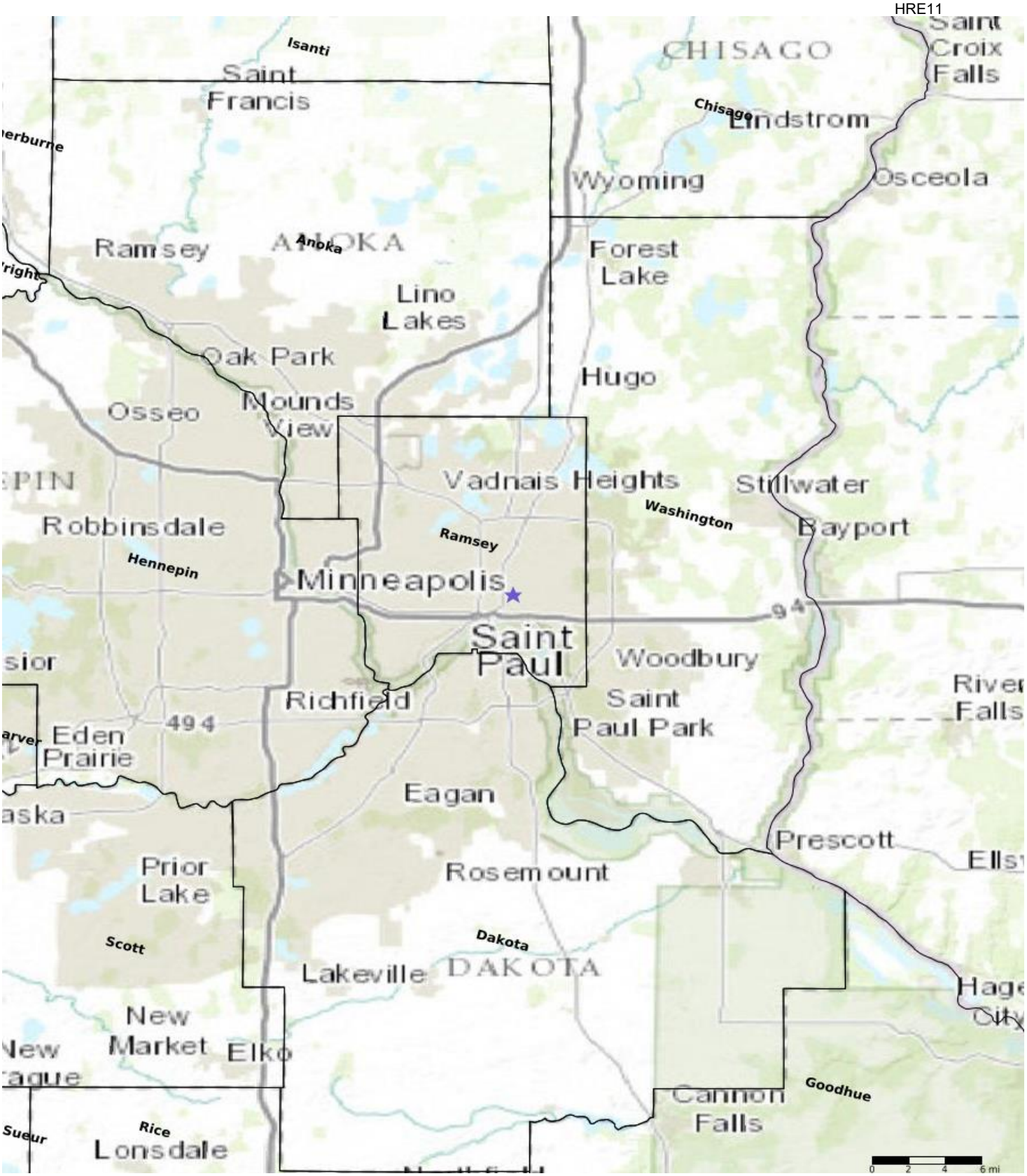
Parcels

Sign-up Criteria?
No

Explain the process used to identify, prioritize, and select the parcels on your list:
The project area encompasses an urban parcel south of Lake Phalen and near Maryland Avenue. The parcel was identified during a 2017 feasibility study commissioned by LPCP to evaluate ideal portions of Phalen Creek to be daylit. Subsequent project work has confirmed that this parcel is the ideal location for daylighting Phalen Creek.

Restore / Enhance Parcels

Name	County	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection
Phalen Creek - Reach 7 & 8	Ramsey	02922228	9	$6,430,000	Yes



Protect in Easement
Protect in Fee with PILT
Protect in Fee W/O PILT
Restore
Enhance
Other

Parcel Map
Daylighting Phalen Creek
(Data Generated From Parcel List)

Daylighting Phalen Creek

Supporting over 40 Species of Greatest Conservation Need

About the Project

This project represents a longstanding effort to restore Phalen Creek in the middle of Saint Paul's East Side.

Phalen Creek was an important waterway for people and wildlife, serving as a travel route and a source of psiŋ (wild rice) for Dakota people.

Project Outcomes:

- 1,500 linear feet daylighted stream
- 9 acres wildlife habitat
- Critical ecological reconnection
- Fishing and wildlife viewing experiences

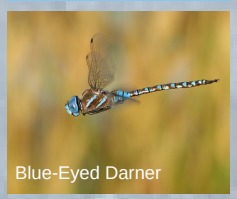
Nibi Walk, a water ceremony often conducted by Anishinaabe women water-bearers

Sky-Blue Aster

Cup Plant

Belted Kingfisher

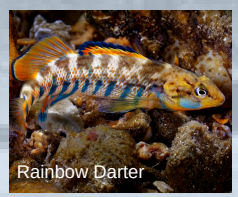
American Kestrel



Blue-Eyed Darner

Russet-Tipped Clubtail

Blanding's Turtle



Rainbow Darter

Project Funding Request

$6.3M

LAKE PHALEN

WHEELOCK PKWY

FISH PASSAGE CULVERT

MARYLAND AVE

FISH PASSAGE CULVERT

LINK TO EXISTING STORM SEWER

PROJECT AREA
MN STATE CAPITOL
ST. PAUL

PHALEN CREEK DAYLIGHTING

ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION COMPONENTS

IN-STREAM HABITAT

- SPAWING GRAVELS
- FISH FORAGE AREAS
- MUSSEL HABITAT

FLOODPLAIN WETLAND

- AMPHIBIAN HABITAT
- TURTLE BASKING LOGS
- NATIVE RIPARIAN PLANTINGS
- POLLINATOR FORAGE AREAS

UPLAND PRAIRIE

- PERSERVE EXISITNG TREES
- NATIVE PRAIRIE PLANTINGS
- POLLINATOR FORAGE AREAS
- SONG BIRD HABITAT

Feet
0 100 200

N

Benefits to Daylighting

IMPROVED WATER QUALITY

IMPROVED LOCAL ECOSYSTEMS

CREATION OF AQUATIC HABITAT

STORM WATER MANAGEMENT

CONNECTING PEOPLE TO NATURE

WÓPIDA TAŊKA (THANK YOU) TO OUR INCREDIBLE PROJECT PARTNERS!

Capitol Region Watershed District

City of Saint Paul

Dayton's Bluff Community Council

Friends of Swede Hollow

Payne-Phalen Community Council

Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District

In 2019 LPCP completed a water feasibility study to determine the best areas to daylight the creek. Two stretches of the creek came out as most immediately possible: (1) Johnson Parkway between Maryland Avenue and Phalen Boulevard, and (2) along the Bruce Vento Regional Trail between Frank Avenue and Swede Hollow Park.

Now, LPCP is working with Capitol Region Watershed District and Ramsey-Washington Watershed District to daylight Phalen Creek at Reach 5 and Reach 7.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

GIVE ... VOLUNTEER ... SHARE

CONTACT US

Maggie Lorenz
Executive Director
mlorenz@lowerphalencreek.org
804 Margaret Street
Saint Paul, MN 55106

www.lowerphalencreek.org/daylighting

@lowerphalencreek

DAYLIGHTING PHALEN CREEK

In Dakota culture, mní(water) is our first medicine, that ultimate life source that connects us all.

These waterways we find across Minnesota are the veins of Uŋči Makha (grandmother earth), carrying stories that connect us to each other and the land.

Phalen Creek History

For countless generations, the waterways of Imnižaska (Saint Paul) have cared for and been cared for by Minnesota's Dakota people. Historically, Phalen Creek flowed out of Lake Phalen, meandering for about four miles through what is now the East Side of St. Paul, emptying into the Wakpa Taŋka (Mississippi River).

The creek served as a cultural and spiritual corridor for Dakota people, who made their way up the chain of lakes by canoe to White Bear Lake to gather traditional foods like psiŋ (wild rice).

This waterway also nurtured newly immigrated Swedish, Italian, Polish, and Mexican communities who made their homes in Swede Hollow.

When most Dakota people were exiled in the late 1800's from their homelands and settlers expanded their presence, Phalen Creek became less and less recognizable.

By the 1930's, the creek was driven underground and piped to promote housing and development on the East Side.

Daylighting Phalen Creek

The restoration and daylighting of this creek is the namesake and inspiration that started our organization back in 1997 and after more than 20 years, that vision is still a driving force in our work!

◀ Rendering of a creek restoration provided by Capitol Region Watershed District. Brochure photos by Caroline Yang. Archival photos courtesy of Minnesota Historical Society

Community Engagement

Though the Phalen Creek corridor runs through the Payne-Phalen and Dayton's Bluff neighborhoods, few residents are aware that they live so close to this historic waterway. We are working with neighborhood district councils to engage residents living near the creek path and ensure that these communities have access to and input on all future daylighting projects.

In the fall of 2020, we brought community artists and residents together at the southern outlet of Lake Phalen, where Phalen Creek begins, to envision and celebrate the value of daylighting Phalen Creek.

EJSCREEN Report (Version 2020)

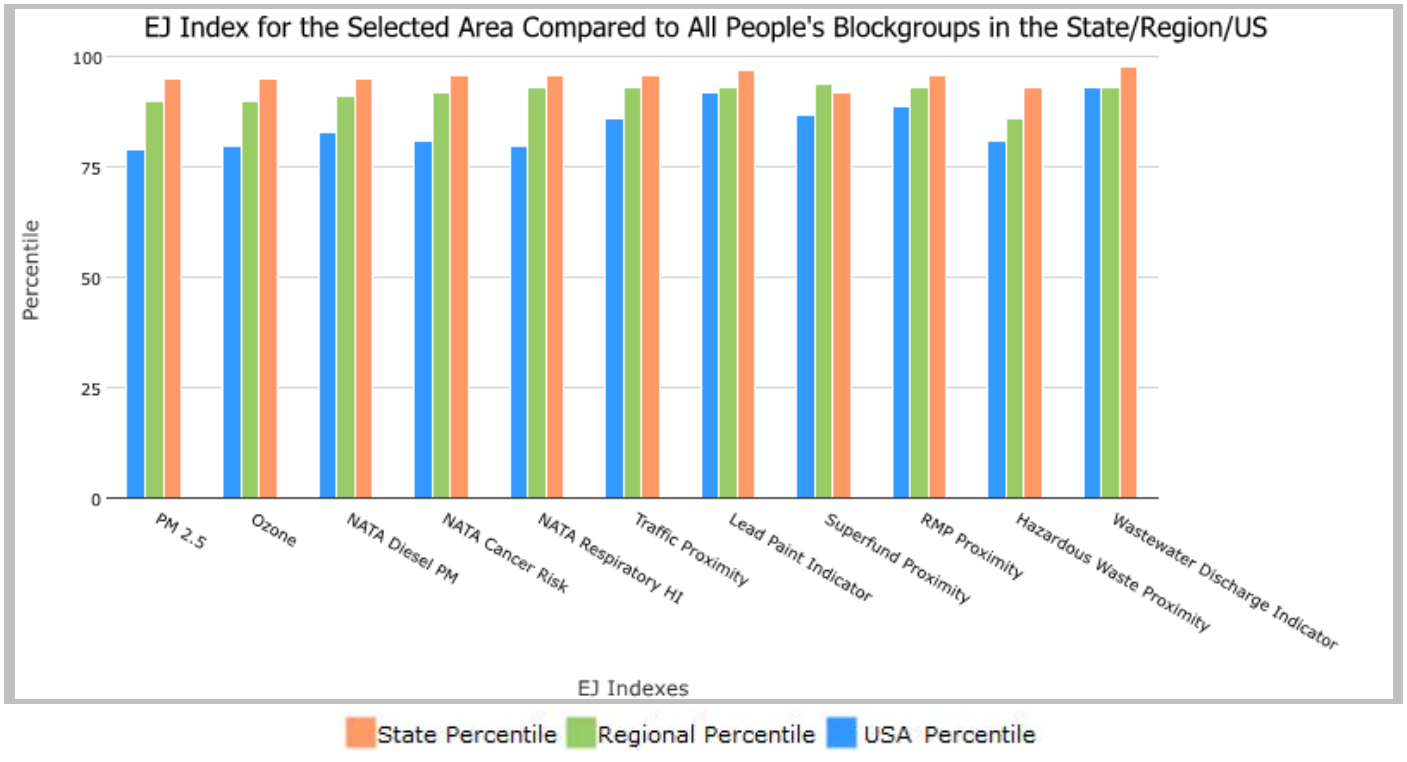
0.5 miles Ring around the Corridor, MINNESOTA, EPA Region 5

Approximate Population: 26,354

Input Area (sq. miles): 4.44

Phalen Creek Pathway (The study area contains 1 blockgroup(s) with zero population.)

Selected Variables	State Percentile	EPA Region Percentile	USA Percentile
EJ Indexes			
EJ Index for PM2.5	95	90	79
EJ Index for Ozone	95	90	80
EJ Index for NATA* Diesel PM	95	91	83
EJ Index for NATA* Air Toxics Cancer Risk	96	92	81
EJ Index for NATA* Respiratory Hazard Index	96	93	80
EJ Index for Traffic Proximity and Volume	96	93	86
EJ Index for Lead Paint Indicator	97	93	92
EJ Index for Superfund Proximity	92	94	87
EJ Index for RMP Proximity	96	93	89
EJ Index for Hazardous Waste Proximity	93	86	81
EJ Index for Wastewater Discharge Indicator	98	93	93



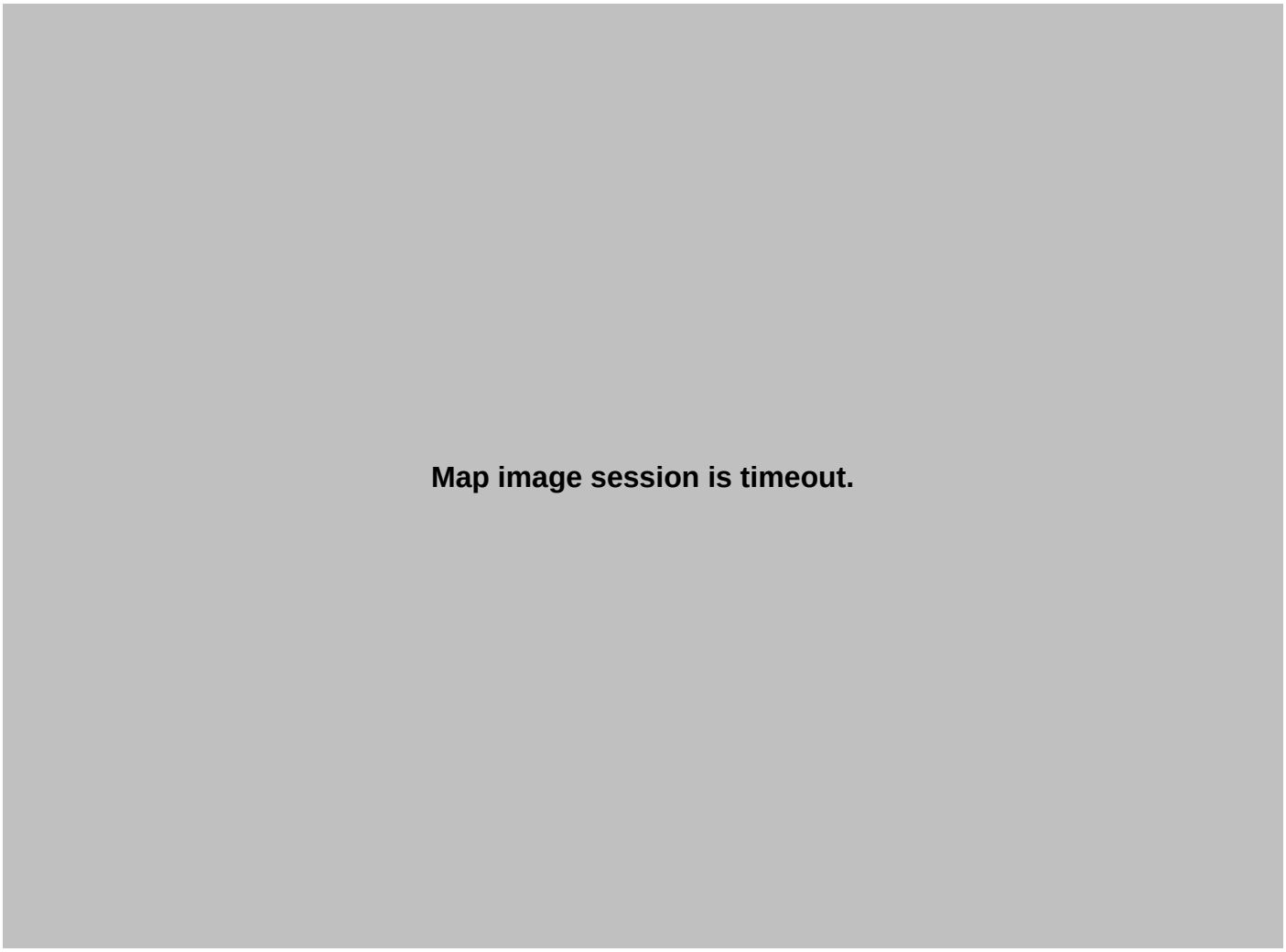
This report shows the values for environmental and demographic indicators and EJSCREEN indexes. It shows environmental and demographic raw data (e.g., the estimated concentration of ozone in the air), and also shows what percentile each raw data value represents. These percentiles provide perspective on how the selected block group or buffer area compares to the entire state, EPA region, or nation. For example, if a given location is at the 95th percentile nationwide, this means that only 5 percent of the US population has a higher block group value than the average person in the location being analyzed. The years for which the data are available, and the methods used, vary across these indicators. Important caveats and uncertainties apply to this screening-level information, so it is essential to understand the limitations on appropriate interpretations and applications of these indicators. Please see EJSCREEN documentation for discussion of these issues before using reports.

0.5 miles Ring around the Corridor, MINNESOTA, EPA Region 5

Approximate Population: 26,354

Input Area (sq. miles): 4.44

Phalen Creek Pathway (The study area contains 1 blockgroup(s) with zero population.)



Sites reporting to EPA	
Superfund NPL	0
Hazardous Waste Treatment, Storage, and Disposal Facilities (TSDF)	0

EJSCREEN Report (Version 2020)

0.5 miles Ring around the Corridor, MINNESOTA, EPA Region 5

Approximate Population: 26,354

Input Area (sq. miles): 4.44

Phalen Creek Pathway (The study area contains 1 blockgroup(s) with zero population.)

Selected Variables	Value	State Avg.	%ile in State	EPA Region Avg.	%ile in EPA Region	USA Avg.	%ile in USA
Environmental Indicators							
Particulate Matter (PM 2.5 in µg/m^3)	7.79	7.07	83	8.4	26	8.55	27
Ozone (ppb)	38.6	38.5	38	43.8	6	42.9	22
NATA* Diesel PM (µg/m^3)	0.59	0.333	88	0.446	70-80th	0.478	70-80th
NATA* Cancer Risk (lifetime risk per million)	33	24	97	26	80-90th	32	50-60th
NATA* Respiratory Hazard Index	0.45	0.31	94	0.34	80-90th	0.44	50-60th
Traffic Proximity and Volume (daily traffic count/distance to road)	1000	440	90	530	87	750	82
Lead Paint Indicator (% Pre-1960 Housing)	0.67	0.31	86	0.38	79	0.28	86
Superfund Proximity (site count/km distance)	0.15	0.19	67	0.13	80	0.13	78
RMP Proximity (facility count/km distance)	1.6	0.77	85	0.83	84	0.74	86
Hazardous Waste Proximity (facility count/km distance)	1.9	1.7	72	2.4	62	5	64
Wastewater Discharge Indicator (toxicity-weighted concentration/m distance)	0.033	1.7	90	2.4	78	9.4	85
Demographic Indicators							
Demographic Index	63%	22%	95	28%	90	36%	84
People of Color Population	71%	20%	95	25%	89	39%	79
Low Income Population	55%	25%	92	30%	86	33%	84
Linguistically Isolated Population	12%	2%	94	2%	93	4%	86
Population With Less Than High School Education	23%	7%	95	10%	91	13%	84
Population Under 5 years of age	9%	6%	80	6%	80	6%	78
Population over 64 years of age	7%	15%	15	16%	13	15%	15

* The National-Scale Air Toxics Assessment (NATA) is EPA's ongoing, comprehensive evaluation of air toxics in the United States. EPA developed the NATA to prioritize air toxics, emission sources, and locations of interest for further study. It is important to remember that NATA provides broad estimates of health risks over geographic areas of the country, not definitive risks to specific individuals or locations. More information on the NATA analysis can be found at: https://www.epa.gov/national-air-toxics-assessment.

For additional information, see: www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice

May 26, 2021

Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
Legislative Coordinating Commission
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council:

This letter is to express my support of the Phalen Creek Daylighting Project for which Lower Phalen Creek Project, a 501(c)(3) based in East Side St. Paul, requests funding support from the Outdoor Heritage Fund.

With a rich history as a key Dakota waterway and important resource for new immigrants, Phalen Creek currently flows entirely underground in a pipe from its outlet at the south end of Lake Phalen to the Mississippi River. Ample public land allows for restoring the creek and converting low value mowed grass into high quality green space, fresh flowing water, and the resulting habitat that would attract wildlife in an otherwise dense urban area. An ecologically healthy creek flowing through East Side St. Paul would be an incredible asset to the community. It also would provide a useful example or template for similar projects in Minnesota, reducing barriers for further ecological improvements in urban areas.

I ask that you provide funding for the Phalen Creek Daylighting Project. Thank you for your consideration.

Pidamayaye (Thank you),

Shelley Buck

Shelley Buck
Tribal Council President

OFFICE OF THE CITY COUNCIL
JANE PRINCE, COUNCIL MEMBER

15 West Kellogg Boulevard, 320 City Hall, Suite 320C
Saint Paul, MN 55102-1615
Email: ward7@ci.stpaul.mn.us
Tel: 651-266-8670 | Fax: 651-266-8574

May 5, 2021

Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
Legislative Coordinating Commission
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155

Dear Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council:

This letter is to express my support of the Phalen Creek Daylighting Project for which Lower Phalen Creek Project, a 501(c)(3), based in the East Side of Saint Paul, requests funding support from the Outdoor Heritage Fund.

With a rich history as a key Dakota waterway and important resource for new immigrants, Phalen Creek currently flows entirely underground in a pipe from its outlet at the south end of Lake Phalen to the Mississippi River. Ample public land allows for restoring the creek and converting low value mowed grass into high quality green space, fresh flowing water, and the resulting habitat that would attract wildlife in an otherwise dense urban area. An ecologically healthy creek flowing through East Side of Saint Paul would be an incredible asset to the community. It would also provide a useful example or template for similar projects in Minnesota, reducing barriers for further ecological improvements in urban areas.

I ask that you provide funding for the Phalen Creek Daylighting Project. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jane L. Prince

Jane L. Prince
Saint Paul City Councilmember, Ward 7
651-308-4984

SAINT PAUL
PUBLIC WORKS

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
SEAN KERSHAW, DIRECTOR

25 West 4th Street, 1500 City Hall Annex
Saint Paul, MN 55102
Tel: 651-266-6100 | Fax: 651-266-6222

May 7, 2021

TO: Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
Legislative Coordinating Commission
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155

FROM: Sean Kershaw, Director, Department of Public Works

SUBJECT: Letter of Support – Lower Phalen Creek Project

Dear Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council:

This letter is to express my support of the Phalen Creek Daylighting Project for which Lower Phalen Creek Project, a 501(c)(3) based in East Side Saint Paul, requests funding support from the Outdoor Heritage Fund.

This effort has been working with a variety of City departments over the years, and we believe it is part of the larger effort both to improve water quality and the public's understanding of the importance of water quality and ecology, and to restore the natural habitat as an amenity to the larger community.

With a rich history as a key Dakota waterway and important resource for new immigrants, Phalen Creek currently flows entirely underground in a pipe from its outlet at the south end of Lake Phalen to the Mississippi River. Ample public land allows for restoring the creek and converting low value mowed grass into high quality green space, fresh flowing water, and the resulting habitat that would attract wildlife in an otherwise dense urban area. An ecologically healthy creek flowing through East Side Saint Paul would be an incredible asset to the community. It would also provide a useful example or template for similar projects in Minnesota, reducing barriers for further ecological improvements in urban areas.

While Public Works won't own the facility when it is completed, we are excited to work with the public, non-profit, and private partners toward this end.

I ask that you provide funding for the Phalen Creek Daylighting Project. Thank you for your consideration.

Best regards,

Sean Kershaw
Director, Saint Paul Public Works

RAMSEY-WASHINGTON
METRO WATERSHED DISTRICT

May 20, 2021

Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
Legislative Coordinating Commission
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155

Dear Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council:

This letter is to express Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District (RWMWD) support of the Phalen Creek Daylighting Project for which Lower Phalen Creek Project, a 501(c)(3) based in East Side Saint Paul, requests funding support from the Outdoor Heritage Fund.

RWMWD will work in collaboration with our project partners and is committed to the project in these ways:

- February 3, 2021, The RWMWD Board of Managers committed to providing $10,000 in match dollars for a study to daylight Phalen Creek.
- RWMWD will also commit staff time and engineer time to attend meetings, review materials, and gather data as requested in order to contribute to the design and implementation of a plan for the daylighting of Phalen Creek, in accordance with contractor findings, regional watershed management plans and Best Management Practices methods, and requirements of the City of Saint Paul in its capacity as landowning entity.
- RWMWD is also committed to assisting with long term monitoring and maintenance responsibilities for the daylighting of Phalen Creek.

RWMWD has a long history of working with public and private partners and embraces this opportunity to collaborate with the partners of Lower Phalen Creek Project to promote, implement, and maintain this project. Public awareness of accessible natural areas in the watershed is increased through partnerships and this project will support that effort.

Sincerely,

Paige Ahlborg
Watershed Project Manager
Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District

office@rwmwd.org (651) 792-7950 fax (651) 792-7951
rwmwd.org 2665 Noel Drive, Little Canada, MN 55117

Capitol Region Watershed District
595 Aldine Street • Saint Paul, MN 55104
T: 651-644-8888 • F: 651-644-8894 • capitolregionwd.org

May 27, 2021

Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
Legislative Coordinating Commission
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155

Dear Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council:

This letter is to express the Capitol Region Watershed District's (CRWD) support of the Phalen Creek Daylighting Project for which Lower Phalen Creek Project, a 501(c)(3) based in East Side Saint Paul, requests funding support from the Outdoor Heritage Fund.

As a special purpose unit of local government, CRWD's mission is to protect, manage, and improve surface water resources. Our involvement in the Phalen Creek daylighting effort began in 2010 and most recently included funding a study in 2020 to explore stormwater and daylighting options with an upcoming transit project in the corridor. As a supporting partner to this project, CRWD will:

- Encourage and support, both financially and organizationally, efforts along the full corridor to daylight the historic Phalen Creek, recognizing the social, economic, spiritual, and environmental benefits of a flowing water feature at the ground surface in Saint Paul;
- Participate in existing and future community engagement with residents of East Side Saint Paul to maintain a strong coalition of stakeholder organizations; and
- Coordinate with partners to design and implement plans for the daylighting of Phalen Creek, in accordance with study findings, CRWD stormwater regulations, adopted 2020 Watershed Management Plan, and requirements of the City of Saint Paul in its capacity as landowner.

With a rich history as a key Dakota waterway and important resource for new immigrants, Phalen Creek currently flows entirely underground in a pipe from its outlet at the south end of Lake Phalen to the Mississippi River. Ample public land allows for restoring the creek and converting low value mowed grass into high quality green space, fresh flowing water, and the resulting habitat that would attract wildlife in an otherwise dense urban area. An ecologically healthy creek flowing through East Side Saint Paul would be an incredible asset to the community and interconnected water resources. It would also provide a useful example or template for similar projects in Minnesota, reducing barriers for further ecological improvements in urban areas.

I ask that you provide funding for the Phalen Creek Daylighting Project. Thank you for your consideration.

Capitol Region Watershed District
595 Aldine Street • Saint Paul, MN 55104
T: 651-644-8888 • F: 651-644-8894 • capitolregionwd.org

Best regards,

Elizabeth M Hosch

Elizabeth Hosch, Permit Program Manager
Capitol Region Watershed District

May 4, 2021

Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
Legislative Coordinating Commission
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155

Dear Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council:

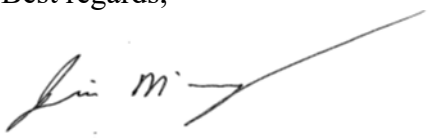
This letter is to express my support of the Phalen Creek Daylighting Project for which Lower Phalen Creek Project, a 501(c)(3) based in East Side Saint Paul, requests funding support from the Outdoor Heritage Fund.

I have been involved from the beginning and strongly encouraged the Lower Phalen Creek Project to resume their effort to daylight the creek when they interviewed me for their 2016 Strategic Plan.

With a rich history as a key Dakota waterway and important resource for new immigrants, Phalen Creek currently flows entirely underground in a pipe from its outlet at the south end of Lake Phalen to the Mississippi River. Ample public land allows for restoring the creek and converting low value mowed grass into high quality green space, fresh flowing water, and the resulting habitat that would attract wildlife in an otherwise dense urban area. An ecologically healthy creek flowing through East Side Saint Paul would be an incredible asset to the community. It would also provide a useful example or template for similar projects in Minnesota, reducing barriers for further ecological improvements in urban areas.

I ask that you provide funding for the Phalen Creek Daylighting Project. Thank you for your consideration.

Best regards,



Commissioner Jim McDonough
Ramsey County Commissioner

RAMSEY COUNTY
Public Works

May 14, 2021

Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
Legislative Coordinating Commission
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155

Dear Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council:

This letter is to express Ramsey County Public Works' support of the Phalen Creek Daylighting Project near the south end of Lake Phalen on the west side of Wheelock and Johnson Parkways near Maryland Avenue, for which Lower Phalen Creek Project, a 501(c)(3) based in East Side Saint Paul, requests funding support from the Outdoor Heritage Fund. An ecologically healthy creek flowing on the East Side of Saint Paul would be an incredible asset to the community, honoring Phalen Creek's rich history as a key Dakota waterway and important resource for new immigrants.

Ramsey County Public Works is leading preliminary design and environmental review for the Rush Line Bus Rapid Transit Project, a proposed 15-mile transit route between downtown Saint Paul and White Bear Lake via Saint Paul's East Side. Over the last few years, Ramsey County Public Works has collaborated with the Lower Phalen Creek Project, the City of Saint Paul and the Capitol Region Watershed District to identify opportunities to incorporate aspects of the Phalen Creek Daylight Project into the Rush Line's stormwater management design at two additional sites along Phalen Boulevard. These sites would be complemented by a daylighted creek approximately a mile north, near the south end of Lake Phalen. The proposed daylighting project near the south end of Lake Phalen is also within a short distance of the proposed Maryland Avenue Rush Line station, offering Rush Line riders access to a restored ecological and cultural destination. Ramsey County Public Works looks forward to continuing to coordinate with Lower Phalen Creek Project as the design of the Rush Line advances over the next few years.

Furthermore, Ramsey County Public Works offers to coordinate with Lower Phalen Creek Project insofar as the daylighting project near the south end of Lake Phalen may affect Maryland Avenue, a Ramsey County road.

Ramsey County Public Works asks that you provide funding for the Phalen Creek Daylighting Project. Thank you for your consideration.

Best regards,

Ted W Schoenecker

Ted Schoenecker
Ramsey County Public Works Director/County Engineer

1425 Paul Kirkwold Drive
Arden Hills, MN 55112
651-266-7100
www.ramseycounty.us

Jay Xiong
State Representative
District 67B

Minnesota House of Representatives

May 13, 2021

Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
Legislative Coordinating Commission
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155

Dear Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council,

This letter is to express my support of the Phalen Creek Daylighting Project for which Lower Phalen Creek Project, a 501(c)(3) based in East Side Saint Paul, requests funding support from the Outdoor Heritage Fund.

With a rich history as a key Dakota waterway and important resource for new immigrants, Phalen Creek currently flows entirely underground in a pipe from its outlet at the south end of Lake Phalen to the Mississippi River. Ample public land allows for restoring the creek and converting low value mowed grass into high quality green space, fresh flowing water, and the resulting habitat that would attract wildlife in an otherwise dense urban area. An ecologically healthy creek flowing through East Side Saint Paul would be an incredible asset to the community. It would also provide a useful example or template for similar projects in Minnesota, reducing barriers for further ecological improvements in urban areas.

I ask that you provide funding for the Phalen Creek Daylighting Project. Thank you for your consideration.

Best regards,

Jay Xiong
State Representative

537 State Office Building, 100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. St. Paul, Minnesota 55155-1298
651-296-4201 • rep.jay.xiong@house.mn

Senator Foung Hawj
Minnesota Senate District 67
95 University Ave. W., Suite 2201
St. Paul, MN 55155
Office: (651) 296-5285

Senate
State of Minnesota

May 3, 2021

Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
Legislative Coordinating Commission
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155

Dear Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council:

This letter is to express my support of the Phalen Creek Daylighting Project for which Lower Phalen Creek Project, a 501(c)(3) based in East Side Saint Paul, requests funding support from the Outdoor Heritage Fund.

With a rich history as a key Dakota waterway, Phalen Creek currently flows entirely underground in a pipe from its outlet at the south end of Lake Phalen to the Mississippi River. Ample public land allows for restoring the creek and converting low value mowed grass into high quality green space, fresh flowing water, and the resulting habitat that would attract wildlife in an otherwise dense urban area. An ecologically healthy creek flowing through East Side Saint Paul would be an incredible asset to the community as well providing ecology learning for the new generation. It would also provide a useful example or template for similar projects in Minnesota, reducing barriers for further ecological improvements in urban areas.

As a resident of St. Paul for 30 years, I have seen a number of positive transformations of Lake Phalen towards environmental restoration and community engagements. The Lower Phalen Creek Project has been there throughout many pivotal moments as well as connecting with our culturally diverse neighborhood for ecological improvements.

I believe the Phalen Creek Daylighting Project will bring the past, present and our future together. Thank you for your time and hope for your consideration.

Best regards,

Foung Hawj
MN State Senator

Committees:
Environment and Natural Resources Policy and Legacy Finance,
Jobs and Economic Growth Finance and Policy, and Veterans and Military Affairs Finance and Policy

5/24/2021

Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
Legislative Coordinating Commission
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155

Dear Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council:

This letter is to express my support of the Phalen Creek Daylighting Project for which Lower Phalen Creek Project, a 501(c)(3) based in East Side Saint Paul, requests funding support from the Outdoor Heritage Fund.

Urban Roots' mission is to cultivate and empower youth through nature, healthy food, and community. This project of daylighting Phalen Creek excites us as it will provide new access points to green space with running water, a powerful community asset. Lower Phalen Creek Project has worked hard to include the community in every step of the process in daylighting the creek, including interviewing and surveying our youth interns in the past. This project will help create connections between green spaces in our community further enhancing our work, and the community we are invested in.

Urban Roots and Lower Phalen Creek Project have a mutual stake in the success of natural spaces in our community in St Paul, and both have a commitment to connecting and empowering the voices of historically marginalized communities. This project offers an exciting opportunity to expand the work we do and create new opportunities to engage our constituents in fun, hands-on opportunities to learn and be active in monitoring water health in our neighborhoods.

With a rich history as a key Dakota waterway and important resource for new immigrants, Phalen Creek currently flows entirely underground in a pipe from its outlet at the south end of Lake Phalen to the Mississippi River. Ample public land allows for restoring the creek and converting low value mowed grass into high quality green space, fresh flowing water, and the resulting habitat that would attract wildlife in an otherwise dense urban area. An ecologically healthy creek flowing through East Side Saint Paul would be an incredible asset to the community. It would also provide a useful example or template for similar projects in Minnesota, reducing barriers for further ecological improvements in urban areas.

I ask that you provide funding for the Phalen Creek Daylighting Project. Thank you for your consideration.

Best regards,

David Woods
Conservation Program Director
Urban Roots MN

2610 University Ave., Suite 300
Saint Paul, MN 55114
t: 651.917.2240
f: 651.917.2248
e:minnesota@tpl.org
tpl.org

May 26, 2021

Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
Legislative Coordinating Commission
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155

Dear Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council:

This letter is to express my support of the Phalen Creek Daylighting Project for which Lower Phalen Creek Project, a 501(c)(3) based in East Side Saint Paul, requests funding support from the Outdoor Heritage Fund.

The Trust for Public Land is a nonprofit organization with offices in Saint Paul, Minn. We create parks and protect land for people, ensuring healthy, livable communities for generations to come. The Trust for Public Land and Lower Phalen Creek Project have a longstanding relationship, having worked on the creation of the Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary. More recently, through our Equitable Communities Fund, we were able to provide Lower Phalen Creek Project financial resources to support the hiring of a new environmental justice coordinator staff position. Our two organizations are dedicated to advancement of parks and open space to address health, equity, and climate.

With a rich history as a key Dakota waterway and important resource for new immigrants, Phalen Creek currently flows entirely underground in a pipe from its outlet at the south end of Lake Phalen to the Mississippi River. Ample public land allows for restoring the creek and converting low value mowed grass into high quality green space, fresh flowing water, and the resulting habitat that would attract wildlife in an otherwise dense urban area. An ecologically healthy creek flowing through East Side Saint Paul would be an incredible asset to the community. It would also provide a useful example or template for similar projects in Minnesota, reducing barriers for further ecological improvements in urban areas.

The Trust for Public Land fully supports this application and the Lower Phalen Creek daylighting project. I ask that you provide funding for the Phalen Creek Daylighting Project.

Best regards,
Eric Weiss
Community Powered Parks Program Director