



Pre-proposal Project Narrative

Project Outcomes:

The Stewardship Network in partnership with the City of Duluth, the US Forest Service, the 1854 Treaty Authority, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, the US Fish & Wildlife Service and regional non-profits, private property owners and businesses propose the development of a southern St Louis County (Minnesota) Cooperative Weed Management Area (CWMA). This project builds on the significant level of commitment and effort already present in the community to control invasive plants. Through this proposal we will enhance these efforts on successful invasive species control within the area and engage a broader audience of stakeholders on invasive species control. We will hire a CWMA coordinator; plan and record accomplishments so that we can learn from and improve upon successful strategies and develop a strategic invasives management plan for the area.

By reducing and controlling terrestrial and aquatic invasive species in this CWMA we are helping to conserve native coastal forests in the region, protecting habitat for native populations of fish and wildlife and promoting the biodiversity of native plant populations in this area. The ultimate goal is to reduce invasive infestations of common and glossy buckthorn, honeysuckle, tansy, Japanese knotweed, and garlic mustard and early infestations of non-native phragmites in order to support native plant communities and healthy ecosystems in all public lands and conservation areas and to educate and encourage stewardship of private properties by supporting the reduction of problem invasive species infestations.

Measuring Progress:

The Stewardship Network and project partners will track progress across the life of this grant along the following metrics:

Project Activity	Metric	Description	Goal
Building institutional capacity	# of orgs. contributing to goals	The number of organizations contributing to the initiative's conservation goals	15
Outreach/ Education/ Technical Assistance	# people reached	The number of people reached by outreach, training, or technical assistance activities	800
Outreach/ Education/ Technical Assistance	# people targeted	The number of people targeted by outreach, training, or technical assistance activities	95,000
Volunteer participation	# volunteers participating	The number of volunteers participating in projects	250
Improved mgt practices	Acres under improved mgt	The number of acres under improved management	100
Removal of invasives	Acres restored	The number of acres restored. Acres restored are those where only minor ongoing invasive treatment is necessary and that native plants have been reestablished on the site.	20
Management or Governance Planning	# plan activities implemented	The number of management plan activities being implemented, e.g. the number of activities contained in a CWMA strategic plan	8
Management or Governance Planning	# plans developed	The number of plans developed that will have input from multiple stakeholders, e.g. how many plans were developed as part of the establishment of a CWMA	1

Strategies/Activities for Achieving Outcomes:

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8
Strategies/Activities								
Hire CWMA Coordinator	X							
Bring additional regional partners on board	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Develop and implement pre-CWMA survey	X	X						
Develop CWMA Steering Committee	X	X	X					
Develop CWMA MOU & have project partners sign	X	X						
Inventory existing efforts, identify gaps		X	X					
Attend Stewardship Network Cluster Summit				X				X
Develop Strategic Invasive Species Management Plan			X	X	X			
On-the-ground invasive species control		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Public engagement, education and outreach		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Training and use of regional mapping tools (MISIN/GLEDN)		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Identify durable funding for ongoing invasive species control				X	X	X	X	X
Conduct end-of-project survey re: impact								X

A CWMA to address priority conservation needs in southern St Louis County

The St Louis River, the largest U.S. tributary to Lake Superior, has a watershed of 3,634 square miles, entering the southwestern corner of the lake in Duluth, Minnesota. The southern St Louis County CWMA encompasses the St Louis River Estuary where it flows from its headwaters in Minnesota's Northwoods to Lake Superior and forms a 12,000 acre freshwater estuary – like none other in the Great Lakes nor the world. This region contains some of the region's best lowland conifer forest and peatland. The region has been identified by the Minnesota DNR as outstanding in terms of biological diversity. The formation of a regional CWMA will help protect the biological diversity of the area from the threat of non-native invasive species.

This region is the headwaters to the Great Lakes and a gateway to Superior National Forest and the Boundary Waters. Indeed it is the ecological interconnection between the Great Lakes and the sub-boreal forests of the northern stretches of the county. The formation of this CWMA is shovel-ready and the lack of cross-sector coordination in invasive species control has been identified as a barrier by many regional efforts to control invasive species including the St Louis River Area of Concern, the City of Duluth's Duluth Invaders program, the 1854 Treaty Authority, the US Forest Service Superior National Forest, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, St Louis River Alliance and private property owners.