

# Fact Sheet:

## MN ENRTF Community Grants Program



The Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF) is one of Minnesota's foundational programs for our Great Outdoors, using Lottery funds to pay for environment and conservation projects across the state.

The Constitutional Amendment that created the ENRTF says that it shall be spent for "protection, conservation, preservation, and enhancement of the state's air, water, land, fish, wildlife, and other natural resources."

**More than 82% of Minnesotans** voted in the 2024 general election to renew the ENRTF's share of state lottery dollars for the next 25 years.

### A New Enhancement: Community Grants Program

The 2023 Legislature created a new tool for the ENRTF to help smaller organizations and projects that became effective when the fund was renewed: the **Community Grants Program**. Using 1.5% of the ENRTF's funds each year, this program will "expand the number and diversity of recipients who benefit from the ENRTF, especially in communities that have been adversely affected by pollution and environmental degradation." The aim of the Community Grants Program is to reduce administrative barriers that have historically made access to the ENRTF difficult for many Black, Brown, Indigenous and rural community members. There is now a [DNR Community Grants website\\*](https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/communitygrants/) where you can sign up to keep updated on when the Advisory Council is being formed and applications open for funding.

#### Community Grant-eligible projects must involve:

- 1.helping adversely impacted communities respond to environmental degradation and related health concerns;
- 2.education and awareness related to stewardship of air, land, water, forests, fish, wildlife, and other natural resources; **or**
- 3.preserving or enhancing air, land, water, and other natural resources that otherwise may be substantially impaired or destroyed in any area of the state



#### Examples of possible projects include:

- Monitoring and supporting communities impacted by industrial pollution
- Environment and related health education
- Energy efficiency and weatherization upgrades in low-income communities
- Investments in parks and greenspace to improve community access and habitat
- Creating pollinator corridors that provide habitat and food to vulnerable species
- Reforestation and restoration that provides habitat and sequesters carbon
- Building forest canopy in cities to reduce the effect of urban heat islands
- Plantings to protect surface and groundwater

**\*[bit.ly/communitygrantsmn](https://bit.ly/communitygrantsmn)**