# Scope of Work for Great Lakes Protection Fund Projects

***Project Applicant: Lakeshore Natural Resource Partnership (LNRP), Inc.***

***Project Title: LNRP 2017 Stewardship Investment Fund – Cultivating a Water Ethic***

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***Organizational Description***

The mission and vision of LNRP has grown out of the work of the mid-twentieth century environmentalist Aldo Leopold and his son Luna. Aldo Leopold championed community stewardship based on a land ethic that addresses our "relation to land and to the animals and plants that grow upon it.” Luna Leopold expanded on this vision by describing a water ethic in which “the health of our waters is the principle measure of how we live on the land.” These two ethics—one of land and one of water—work in tandem to guide a community toward a functional stewardship ethic. Along with attention on air quality, these ethics form the foundation of LNRP's focus on a sense of place and our continuing efforts to celebrate and protect natural resources from the Ledge to the Lakeshore.

***Project Overview***

With this request to the Great Lakes Protection Fund, LNRP seeks $30,000 to support its Stewardship Fund. The LNRP Stewardship Fund is designed to support:

* Internal investment: allocations to the operation of LNRP in the delivery of our vision, mission, operational goals, and purpose;
* Partnership funds: allocations bundled with existing capacity and designed to further collaborative partnerships, stakeholder engagement, and membership development;
* Community and project grants: allocations that fund stewardship-based Restore the Shore projects and activities with collaborative partners throughout the lakeshore. These grants will be the focus of funding from the Great Lakes Protection Fund.

Priorities for funding are:

* Water Resources Protection: Projects using best management practices that monitor or improve streams, rivers, lakes or wetlands.
* Environmental Education and Outreach: Projects that establish or improve communication and education about water quality issues for the general public, youth and stewardship community.
* Land-Use Protection and Habitat Restoration: Projects using best management practices that focus on improving land development decisions and management to restore or protect water quality.

Our goal in 2017 is to fund each partner organization under the LNRP umbrella with between $2,500 and $25,000 to initiate projects that align with these three ethics—water, land, and stewardship—described above.

***Project Location***

Located in Northeast and East Central Wisconsin, the Lakeshore basin is defined by the Niagara escarpment and includes all of Door, Kewaunee, and Manitowoc Counties, as well as the eastern portions of Calumet and Brown Counties, and the northeastern part of Sheboygan County. Its rivers, streams and creeks all drain into Lake Michigan to the east and the bay of Green Bay to the west.

The Lakeshore includes 12 watersheds covering 2650 square miles, 309 miles of Lake Michigan shoreline, 193 miles of streams, 139 inland lakes, and many forested and wetland areas. The basin’s larger river systems include the Ahnapee, Kewaunee, Manitowoc, East and West Twin Rivers, and the Sheboygan River.

In 2016, LNRP facilitated a strategic planning process for the Sheboygan River Bain Partnership resulting in the group joining the LNRP partner umbrella. The Sheboygan River Basin includes the watersheds of the Sheboygan, Pigeon, Black, Onion and Mullet Rivers, and Sauk and Sucker Creeks.

Its diversity of islands, forests, wetlands, sand dunes, and ridge and swale topography provides habitat to an abundance of rare, threatened, and endangered plants and animals.

***Our Watershed Model***

LNRP is the connective thread that holds together several different watershed projects, river restorations, and other partner efforts. LNRP works diligently to maintain our long-term relationships with our regional networks and friend groups aligned with our goals. In 2014, we instituted a model that places at least one LNRP board member as a liaison to each partner and this has strengthened communication lines, led to greater exchange between groups, and increased impact overall on our individual and collective projects and stewardship efforts. This past year, we devoted half of each monthly board meeting to discussing and learning about the activities of a different partner group to provide each organization the opportunity to be the featured focus of the board. In addition, LNRP staff was able to provide direct assistance to each partner in terms of strategic planning, goal setting and outreach for the year. This guidance and support help us create a more cohesive "collective voice" to promote improved water quality in the Lakeshore region.

Watershed Partners

The watershed partners are local groups lacking the capacity to do their work without steering committee presence and staff support from LNRP. Watershed partners come under the LNRP umbrella where we provide strategic planning support, fiscal management, collaborative grant writing, member management, and outreach. Current partner groups are: Climate Change Coalition of Door County, Friends of Crescent Beach, Friends of the Twin Rivers, Friends of the Branch River, Friends of the Manitowoc River Watershed, Friends of Hika Bay, and the Sheboygan River Basin Partnership.

Regional Networks

The regional networks all have larger scopes of concern than the watershed partners. Their leadership teams include a broad mix of stakeholders including members of governmental agencies, businesses, scientists, educators and community leaders. Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) outline LNRP's support to the networks: strategic planning, programming, development, outreach and fiscal management. Networks are essentially autonomous and have steering committee representation from numerous sectors geographically distributed throughout the Lake Michigan basin. The Lakeshore Invasive Species Management Area (LISMA) is a four-county wide organization including Fond du Lac, Calumet, Manitowoc and Kewaunee Counties; the Niagara Escarpment Resource Network (NERN) covers the length of the Wisconsin Ledge and cultivates partners throughout the Great Arc; and the Lake Michigan Stakeholders (LMS) addresses the entire Wisconsin-based Lake Michigan basin.

Restore the Shore

Restore the Shore projects are identified and initiated by the watershed partners and regional networks through stakeholder engagement and partnership building. LNRP is currently shepherding several ongoing projects through a series of engagements from invasive species mapping to full-scale restoration projects. Current Restore the Shore efforts include Door County Forest Recovery Project, Crescent Beach Restoration Projection, the Little Manitowoc Conservancy, Lower Schuette Park Adopt-a-Park on the Manitowoc River, Dodge Preserve on the Branch River, *Phragmites* Control on the Lakeshore, Fischer Creek Adopt-a-Park, and the Hika Park Centerville Creek Restoration Project.

***Project Goals and Objectives***

We expect to see each organization under the LNRP umbrella experience an increase in capacity: more volunteers, more members, and a higher level of public awareness regarding the efforts each organization undertakes to protect the waters of Lake Michigan. Also, additional groups will have the opportunity to initiate new stewardship, preservation, and "Restore the Shore" projects through Community Grant program funding.

We expect to see water quality improvements in all area watersheds. Increased systematic monitoring and data collection will allow us to advocate best management practices to reduce sediment and nutrient loads via discussions with the agricultural sector and state decision-makers. Invasive species removal, *Phragmites* in particular*,* will be the focus of several groups including the Little Manitowoc River Partnership, Friends of Hika Bay, and the Friends of the Twin Rivers. A full range of other aquatic and terrestrial species will be the focus of the four-county Lakeshore Invasive Species Management Area.

Below is a list of the regional networks and friend groups and the activities they undertook with LNRP support in 2016 with additional plans for 2017. Many activities in 2017 will build upon the successes of last year's efforts:

*Friends of Hika Bay (FOHB)*

Committee Chairs, LNRP liaisons: John Kirsch, Karl Klessig, Mickey Judkins

* Adopt-a-Park Hika Park with habitat enhancements using native trees and a pollinator mix with two volunteer days in June and September
* Adopt-a-Park Fischer Creek Park with habitat enhancements using native trees and a pollinator mix with a volunteer day in April
* Water Quality Monitoring with UW-Manitowoc student interns on five creeks in southern Manitowoc County: Centerville, Fischer, Point, Pine, and Calvin creeks

*Friends of the Branch River (FOBR)*

Board of Directors with LNRP liaison Tom Ward

* Reptile Program for Area Youth – Demonstrating the connections between indicator species and habitat quality
* Dodge Preserve Field Day – Removing invasive species and habitat enhancements using native trees

*Friends of the Manitowoc River Watershed (FMRW)*

Co-Chairs Kim Kettner and Wendy Lutzke and Strategic Planning Committee with LNRP liaison Sara Schuetze

* Spring Beach Clean Up, April
* River Clean Up, June
* Project RED Refresher Course, July
* Fall Beach Clean Up, September
* Adopt-a-Park Lower Schuette Park - Kayak Launch activities, invasive species management, restorative planting

*Friends of the Twin Rivers (FOTR)*

Co-Chairs Don Debryun and Jim Knickelbine

* Water Action Volunteer Programming with area High Schools
* Invasive Species Collaborations with Woodland Dunes and LISMA

*Friends of Crescent Beach (FOCB)*

Steering Committee with LNRP liaison Cathy Pabich

* Fall Beach Clean Up, September
* Beach Restoration Project in collaboration with the City of Algoma

*Sheboygan River Basin Partnership (SRBP)*

Steering Committee with LNRP liaison Kendra Kelling

* Habitat enhancement after dam removal at Camp Evelyn
* Willow Creek Habitat Enhancement
* River Clean Up, May

*Climate Change Coalition of Door County (CCC)*

Leadership Team: Executive Committee with LNRP liaisons Mary Smythe and Carl Giessel

* Native landscaping and tree planting as an individual and collective action
* The Climate Change Forum, May

*Restore the Shore Projects*

* Centerville Creek/Hika Park
* Little Manitowoc Conservancy
* *Phragmites* Control Project
* Forest Recovery Project of Door County

*Collaborative Community Partners*

* Lakeshore Water Institute, University of Wisconsin-Manitowoc and LNRP
* Manitowoc County Lakes Association

***Project Outcomes***

Our main objective is to promote LNRP’s mission, *‘Cultivating Community and Stewardship from the Ledge to the Lakeshore,’* by strengthening and supporting our local and regional partners. We aim to inspire a Water Ethic throughout the lakeshore region’s citizens and community leaders by extending Aldo Leopold’s Land Ethic. Within the ‘We All Live on the Water’ message, we want to expand understanding and awareness of critical water resource issues through all our media and community outreach and events. We have leveraged this approach to establish the Lakeshore Water Institute in collaboration with UW-Manitowoc. We express consistent messaging in print articles, social media, radio interviews and public presentations, letters to the editor and op-ed pieces, as well as host and collaborate on educational and experiential *‘Water’*-themed events with our community and program partners. Ultimately, we look to instill and build a greater sense of place throughout the Lakeshore region. Specific outcomes will be as follows:

* Water Quality Improvements
  + Monitoring will occur on Centerville Creek, Fischer Creek, Point Creek, Pine Creek, Calvin Creek, Little Manitowoc River
  + Outreach with the results of water quality monitoring will focus on engaging decision-makers and the agricultural sector to implement best management practices to reduce sediment and nutrient loads
* Invasive Species Removal
  + *Phragmites* will be targeted by the Little Manitowoc River Partnership, Friends of Hika Bay and the Friends of the Twin Rivers
  + A full range of other aquatic and terrestrial species will be the focus of LISMA
* Habitat Restoration and Protection
  + Hika Park will be a continued focus of restoration activities to further enhance this community resource with Lake Michigan public access
  + Little Manitowoc River Conservancy will be launched on the heels of a habitat assessment and benchmark data collection on water quality and the use of macroinvertebrate indices with the Conservancy ultimately linking several trails and providing education and recreational opportunities
* Green Infrastructure Development
  + Through collaboration with the City of Manitowoc and the Manitowoc County government, attempts will be made to identify green infrastructure improvements upstream in the Manitowoc River Watershed that will mitigate flooding downstream at lower costs
* Capacity Building
  + Membership, Supporter Sponsorships, and Volunteer Networks will be cultivated and improved for all friend groups and partner networks to better implement and grow their action plans

***Project Tracking and Evaluation***

By implementing each friend group action plan, participation and active membership will grow and we’ll identify stakeholder needs through feedback mechanisms such as surveys, conversations, planning, engagements and events. Published articles, op-ed pieces and letters to the editor will be catalogued and tracked as well as the growth in our social media pages. Success at getting our message out on water quality and climate change concerns will be evident through enhanced relationships with local, regional and state policy makers and stakeholders.

Specific Metrics

* Water Quality Monitoring
  + Monitoring will include physical, chemical and biological analyses
  + Watching for improvements in sediment and nutrient loads
* Invasive Species Removal
  + Acres restored
  + Number of private landowners
* Habitat Restoration and Protection
  + Acres of wetlands and riverine systems created and/or restored
  + Miles of beach habitat enhanced and/or restored
  + Number of trees and shrubs planted
  + Acres preserved through easements and other tools
* Green Infrastructure Development
  + Dollars of investment
  + Number of individuals reached through outreach
* Capacity Building
  + Membership numbers, trends
  + Supporter Sponsorships, donations
  + Volunteer numbers

***Project Budget***

The request to the Wisconsin Great Lakes Protection Fund is $30,000 and the attached budget shows the budget breakdown allocations and the secured match with three partial DNR River Planning Grants (through June 2017) and the recent Fall 2016 Fund for Lake Michigan award. LNRP also has a pending grant application with the Brico Fund and four pending DNR River Planning Grants.