

Fiscal Year 2019 Projects

The University of Minnesota Extension **Regional Sustainable Development Partnerships (RSDP)** connect **Greater Minnesota** communities to **University of Minnesota** resources through sustainability projects. RSDP brings together local talent and innovation with University knowledge and resources.

Projects are supported by **community-driven** boards in **five Regions** of Greater Minnesota as well as through a statewide office based on the Twin Cities campus. This list presents projects active during Fiscal Year 2019 (July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019), along with their **community and University partners**.

RSDP supports work in the following **four sustainability focus areas**. RSDP's energy programming is provided by the **Clean Energy Resource Teams (CERTs)**.



Agriculture and food systems



Clean Energy



Natural Resources



Resilient Communities

Regional Sustainable
Development Partnerships

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
EXTENSION

rsdp.umn.edu



CERTs
CLEAN ENERGY RESOURCE TEAMS

cleanenergyresourceteams.org

Regional Sustainable
Development Partnerships
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
EXTENSION

By the numbers **2019**
Fiscal Year



5 Greater Minnesota Regions

135 community
projects



278 community
partners

126 university
partners



88 cities,
towns & Native
nations

51 UMN students
working with
communities



5,651 volunteer
hours

(calendar year 2018)

96%

Past project partners say
RSDP produces tangible
outcomes for communities

"RSDPs are on the front lines. By listening to the community members' innovative ideas, RSDP acts as a conduit and connector between the U of MN and outstate groups in order to empower, build capacity, and incorporate sustainable practices all across the state." - 2018 RSDP Board & Work Group Evaluation

rsdp.umn.edu



CENTRAL REGION

Executive Director: Molly Zins, zend0007@umn.edu

Learn more: rsdp.umn.edu/central

Conservation Corps serves Natural Resources Focus Area

FOCUS AREAS: 

UMN Extension, RSDP Natural Resource Work Groups, Conservation Corps of MN & IA

Brainerd – A Conservation Corps member assisted the UMN Extension RSDP with its Natural Resources Focus Area. In 2018, the RSDPs focused on water-related projects in the Natural Resource focus area. Water projects include communities participating in the We Are Water MN traveling exhibit, as well as water recreation, water quality and soil health, and watershed planning efforts. The Corps member gained professional experience as a team member, and was introduced to community-based engagement, design and project development.

Cuyuna Lakes Chamber of Commerce [NEW]

FOCUS AREAS: 

Cuyuna Lakes Chamber of Commerce, Crosby area businesses and community members, UMN Morris – Center for Small Towns (CST)

Crosby – The Chamber, area businesses and community leaders are working with CST students to identify communication and marketing best practices to use during a large road reconstruction process. The Chamber and community team aim to keep residents and visitors well informed, while maintaining vibrant downtown activities and business during the construction project.

Deep Winter Greenhouse

FOCUS AREAS: 

UMN College of Design Center for Sustainable Building Research (CSBR), UMN Extension, Grampa G's Farm Pillager – The UMN Extension RSDP's Deep Winter Greenhouse (DWG) demonstration and research is developing and refining an innovative solar greenhouse that enables Minnesota farmers to grow and sell local, fresh greens throughout the winter. Five DWGs were built, one in each RSDP region, including Grampa G's Farm in Pillager. The DWG will serve as an educational and business-development resource for Central Minnesota growers and producers for years to come.

Deer Exclosure Literature Review

FOCUS AREAS: 

Green Island Farm, UMN College of Food, Agricultural & Natural Resource Sciences

Wadena – The Deer Exclosure study partnered a UMN B.S. Plant Science student researcher with community partners to conduct a literature review of research-based information on deer exclosures for food production and agroforestry. The study focused on simple, low-cost wildlife exclosures and the critical role they play in the success of any gardener, landowner or small farmer wishing to expand food production near areas of deer habitat. The team summarized the pertinent information on affordable deer exclosures and developed a webpage to provide easy access for interested growers.

Leech Lake Megwayaak Project [NEW]

FOCUS AREAS: 

Leech Lake Early Childhood Development, UMN Extension, UMN Center for Urban and Regional Affairs Community Assistantship Program, UMN Public Health Graduate Research Assistant, UMN Morris – Center for Small Towns

Cass Lake – The heart of the Megwayaak Project is a 3-acre wooded area located directly behind the Early Childhood Center, providing an invaluable resource for community children, families and staff. The project team is identifying indigenous education and outdoor learning best practices, creating relevant activity design, and developing an evaluation plan.

National Loon Center

FOCUS AREAS: 

UMN Department of Applied Economics, UMN College of Design Center for Sustainable Building Research (CSBR), UMN Extension, National Loon Center Foundation Board, City of Crosslake, US Army Corps of Engineers, MN Department of Natural Resources, Brainerd Lakes Chamber of Commerce, Sourcewell, Initiative Foundation, National Park Service Rivers – Trails & Conservation Assistance Program

Crosslake – Community leaders collaborated with several regional and statewide organizations and UMN partners to envision and create a community-design Masterplan, develop the Market and Feasibility Study, and create the Economic Impact Analysis.

Passive Solar Mobile Greenhouse [NEW]

FOCUS AREAS: 

UMN Extension East Ottertail County Master Gardener Coordinator and Master Gardeners, Perham School District, Pelican Rapids School District

Pelican Rapids & Perham – The project team built a passive solar mobile greenhouse to help educate area youth about growing healthy produce with clean energy. The sustainably designed greenhouse is being integrated across participating schools K-12 curriculum, in addition to use in 4-H, Kinship, and Boys & Girls Club programs.

Promise Neighborhood [NEW]

FOCUS AREAS: 

UMN Center for Urban and Regional Affairs Community Assistantship Program, UMN College of Education and Human Development, Promise Neighborhood community members and organization leaders
St. Cloud – Promise Neighborhood is a community-led organization serving St. Cloud's Talahi area families (a community with a 95% poverty rate), providing free, after school programs for youth and developing resources, trainings and leadership programs for adults. Community participants, Promise Neighborhood leaders and the UMN graduate student are researching best practices and co-creating solutions to improve the well-being of children in southeast St. Cloud.

Salsa Fest [NEW]

FOCUS AREAS:  

Sustainable Farming Association Statewide and Central Chapters, Agua Gorda Grower Cooperative, Long Prairie Community Members, UMN Carlson School of Management
Long Prairie – The second annual Salsa Fest celebrated the locally grown and diverse harvest, communities and cultures that make up the region. The gathering brought people together to share food, music and dance traditions, and the project team looks forward to exploring opportunities to expand their reach and engagement.

Scholarships/ Sponsorships

FOCUS AREAS:    

Climate Adaptation Conference, Red Lake Nations Food Summit
Brainerd – Funds are available for scholarships and sponsorships for Central region residents. Community members are invited to apply for scholarships to participate in activities intended to increase their capacity to serve their communities.

Social Media Development [NEW]

FOCUS AREAS: 

City of Morris, UMN Morris – Center for Small Towns (CST)
Morris – CST is collaborating with the City of Morris to establish social media communication tools, platforms and applications to make it possible for the City to more effectively and efficiently communicate with residents.

Once complete, the social media tool kit will be available for small communities across Greater Minnesota.

Solar for Humanity [NEW]

FOCUS AREAS:  

Rural Renewable Energy Alliance, Central Minnesota Habitat for Humanity, UMN Humphrey School of Public Affairs
Backus – Solar for Humanity looked at how to expand solar energy arrays on Habitat for Humanity homes in Minnesota to help reduce homeownership costs for families. Partnering community organizations with Humphrey School students and a faculty member, the team researched best practices and interviewed Habitat for Humanity affiliates that have installed solar arrays to better understand the process, finance mechanisms and partnerships that contribute to project success.

Solar Schools

FOCUS AREAS: 

Region Five Development Commission, Pine River School District, Central Lakes College, Pequot Lakes School District, TenKsolar, Rural Renewable Energy Alliance, Sourcewell, UMN Humphrey School of Public Affairs Pine River, Pequot Lakes, Staples – The Solar Schools project brought together school districts, regional organizations, utility companies and UMN students to install solar arrays on schools across the region and to document the project case study. The team conducted surveys and interviews, gathered data, and compiled information on best practices for building collaboration and moving toward implementation in a project of this significant scope and scale.

Tourism Center Collaborative Staffing

FOCUS AREAS: 

CRSDP Sustainable Tourism work group members & project partners, UMN Extension Tourism Center Brainerd – All RSDPs supported Tammy Koerte, UMN Tourism Center Extension Educator, for one day per week to help coordinate Tourism and Resilient Communities work groups in all regions; build relationships among regional work groups and key partners; advance a future vision for the focus area; and connect strategic partners, resources and opportunities across Minnesota.

CENTRAL CERT

Central Minnesota Habitat for Humanity

ENERGY FOCUS AREAS: 

Renewable Energy

Backus - Rural Renewable Energy Alliance (RREAL) – Nearly half of American adults experience housing insecurity at some point in their lives due to

unpredictable rent prices, moving and lack of access to affordable housing. RREAL is working with Central Minnesota Habitat for Humanity to make solar energy more accessible and reduce electric bills for a new Habitat homeowner. Every effort made to help reduce energy costs for low-income families is key to the affordability of owning a home.

LED Lighting for Library

ENERGY FOCUS AREAS: ☀

Energy Efficiency

Brainerd – Discovery Woods School, ISD 4198, is a public charter located in an historic school building in the city. The school was built in 1940 and has been through multiple renovations but has not been upgraded in many years. Library space has old fluorescent tube lighting that is irreplaceable and many tubes are burned out. The project will replace the lighting with new energy efficient LED lights to provide a more welcoming space as well as educate families about the benefits of LED lighting.

Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe Solar Master Plan

ENERGY FOCUS AREAS: ☀

Energy Efficiency, Renewable Energy

Cass Lake – Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe will develop a Solar Energy Master Plan for all primary Tribal facilities. This Master Plan effort will, for all subject tribal government facilities: (1) collect annual energy use data, calculate EUI and performance evaluation against ENERGY STAR/B3 peers; (2) evaluate the viability of solar PV; (3) develop a detailed solar PV concept design, calculate annual energy generation possible, and develop preliminary project budgets; and (4) develop a Solar PV Master Plan report summarizing all findings, identifying Tribal economic development potential of solar PV development, and propose a solar implementation plan for Tribally owned facilities.

Mahube-OTWA Community Action Partnership Lighting upgrades [NEW]

ENERGY FOCUS AREAS: ☀

Energy Efficiency

Detroit Lakes – Upgrade old inefficient lighting systems to cut energy consumption and costs. Upgrade 19 T12HO lighting fixtures in warm and cold garages to LED lights. Retrofit 76 CFL wall sconce fixtures to LED. Retrofit 6 metal halide and 4 high pressure sodium exterior light fixtures to LED. Install occupancy sensors in garages and warm storage room. This project will reduce energy consumption by roughly 23,600 kWh/year.

Mille Lacs Band of the Ojibwe Indians: Weatherization [NEW]

ENERGY FOCUS AREAS: ☀

Energy Efficiency

Onamia – The seed grant will provide additional dollars to help the weatherization program conduct energy audits for income-eligible households and perform energy saving measures. These measures will improve the performance of residential homes in the community.



NORTHEAST REGION

Executive Director: David Abazs, dwabazs@umn.edu

Learn more: rsdp.umn.edu/northeast

Carlton County Next Generation [NEW]

FOCUS AREAS: 

UMN Extension, UMN Urban Studies, Center for Cultural Entrepreneurship, Fond du Lac, NE Minnesota Beekeepers Association

Carlton – Olenburg Arts and Cultural Community is a nonprofit-led effort to build on our region’s distinctive character and assets. This project will expand the annual music and pollinator advocacy event held the first weekend in August – the ‘Honey Bee Folk Festival’ – and involve local sustainable farmers and beekeepers, musicians and artists, outdoor enthusiasts and conservationists, and members of the Fond du Lac Band and the Tribal College’s Environmental Institute in a high-profile event that draws participants from all across Minnesota to Carlton County.

Conservation Corps serves Natural Resources Focus Area

FOCUS AREAS: 

UMN Extension, RSDP Natural Resource Work Groups, Conservation Corps of MN & IA

Duluth – A Conservation Corps member assisted the UMN Extension RSDP with its Natural Resources Focus Area. In 2018, the RSDPs focused on water-related projects in the Natural Resource focus area. Water projects include communities participating in the We Are Water MN traveling exhibit, as well as water recreation, water quality and soil health, and watershed planning efforts. The Corps member gained professional experience as a team member, and was introduced to community-based engagement, design and project development.

Deep Winter Greenhouse

FOCUS AREAS: 

UMN Extension, UMN College of Design Center for Sustainable Building Research (CSBR), CFANS, Organic Consumers Association

Finland – Provide joint research, outreach and education for participants in the RSDP Finland Deep Winter Greenhouse (DWG) Campaign project. This includes spring hosting of the DWG open houses in Finland with project partner Organic Consumers Association.

Economic Impact Study Lake Superior & Mississippi Railroad on Duluth

FOCUS AREAS: 

UMN Duluth Bureau of Business & Economic Research, Friends of Western Duluth Parks & Trails, Lake Superior & Mississippi Railroad

Duluth – The purpose of the study is to inform stakeholders of the current and potential economic value of various western Duluth rail and trail configurations. This study is now completed. See the report here: z.umn.edu/4aw1

Farm-2-Families Event

FOCUS AREAS: 

UMN Extension, Sustainable Farming Association Greater Mille Lacs Chapter

Aitkin – The Farm-2-Families event linked local farmers with local and seasonal families in the Aitkin area. The goal of the event was to boost awareness and vitality of the local agriculture and agro-tourism economy.

Grand Rapids Farmers’ Market Aggregation

FOCUS AREAS: 

UMN Extension, Grand Rapids Farmers’ Market, Renewing the Countryside, Minnesota Farmers’ Market Association, Get Fit Itasca, SNAP-Ed

Grand Rapids – Developed an aggregation site at the Farmers Market so that the market will be able to buy from its vendors and sell to larger buyers like schools, hospitals, etc.

Grand Rapids Public Utilities Commission (GRPUC) Integrated Value Community Solar Garden Project

FOCUS AREAS: 

UMN Extension, Grand Rapids Public Utilities, Itasca Clean Energy Team, Itasca County community members

Grand Rapids – GRPUC is creating a community solar project that is of value to its customers, its operations, and to the broader Grand Rapids community. GRPUC issued a request for proposals for a consultant to provide technical assistance with designing a plan for a community solar project that incorporates energy storage, GRPUC’s current demand response programming, and potential micro grid resiliency within the community. Final installation is planned for 2019.

Great Lakes Tribal Interpretive Center [NEW]

FOCUS AREAS:    

UMN Duluth Native American Studies, UMN Humphrey School of Public Affairs, Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior

Fond du Lac Nation – This project strives to develop a Tribal Interpretive Center in the Spirit Island region by engaging in authentic relationships and work with the UMN capstone teams and the tribes to support a community conversations process to identify vision, goals and values; develop a case analysis; and provide applicable models of interpretive centers for possible incorporation into the project.

Grown on the Range [NEW]

FOCUS AREAS:  

UMN Duluth, Iron Range Partnership for Sustainability, Hometown Focus, Iron Range Tourism Bureau

Virginia – This project is building a regional promotion effort that is focusing on a robust eat-and-grow-local campaign, an Iron Range Local Food Trail tourism attraction, and a regular newspaper column highlighting past and current regional farming and food production. The purpose of this project is to put the Iron Range and all of Northeast Minnesota back on the track of food self-sufficiency with all of the economic and health benefits that will bring.

GrowShed Tour [NEW]

FOCUS AREAS:  

St. Louis, Lake and Cook County Extension, Northwoods Food Project

Duluth, Grand Marais, Two Harbors – The solar-powered GroShed toured the area to educate about this deliverable, prefabricated, fully automated, “plug, fill and plant” hydroponic gardening system capable of providing a family or community the opportunity to grow vegetables year-round.

North Shore Neighbor to Neighbor Peer Learning Program [NEW]

FOCUS AREAS: 

UMN Extension, Sugarloaf: The North Shore Stewardship Association, North Shore Forest Collaborative, MN DNR, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, USDA Forest Service, Lake County SWCD, Cook County SWCD Schroeder – Support for a program where neighbors are encouraged by other neighbors to discuss their ideas for restoration of their lands, share information, learn from each other, and help each other with forest restoration.

Northeast AgroCycle Tours (NEAT) [NEW]

FOCUS AREAS:  

Lake Superior Sustainable Farming Association, St. Louis & Lake County Regional Railroad Authority/Mesabi Trail Grand Rapids, Ely – This project is an agrotourism initiative. Using the existing Mesabi Bike Trail, this project will create a tour of farms along the route with farm descriptions and contacts for individuals and groups to explore by bike the world of food, agriculture and culture.

Northeast Local Food Systems Initiative [NEW]

FOCUS AREAS:    

UMN Center for Urban & Regional Affairs (CURA) – Community Assistantship Program (CAP), Cook County Extension, Rutabaga Project, Aitkin Farmers Market, Free Range Food Coop, Friends of Finland, Bush Foundation, Iron Range Partnership for Sustainability, Town of Crystal Bay, Wolf Ridge Environmental Learning Center, Organic Consumers Association – AgroEcology Center Finland, Grand Rapids, Virginia – Multiple projects and local food systems efforts have culminated into additional projects, including the Finland Food Chain community effort that is building a more thriving network of educated empowered consumers; diversity of food-related cooperative businesses providing sustainable distribution methods; and local processing and small-scale regenerative farms producing a variety of food, fiber, medicine and woodland resources connecting the Iron Range, Boundary Waters communities and Finland area farmers with the more lucrative restaurant market along the north shore. This Bush Foundation Community Initiative Funding is spurring region-wide food conversations that are being bolstered by the RSDP/CURA-CAP student researching food aggregation models for the region.

Range Recreation Civic Center (RRCC) Impact Study

FOCUS AREAS:  

UMN Extension, CERTs, Curl Mesabi, Iron Range Tourism Bureau, RRCC Powers Board

Eveleth – This project produced an economic impact study of the RRCC and assessed the feasibility of creating a long range RRCC energy plan. Report is available here: <http://hdl.handle.net/11299/201222>.

Scholarships/ Sponsorships

FOCUS AREAS: ☀️ 🏠 🌿 🌱

Climate Adaptation Conference, EarthFest on the Iron Range, Red Lake Nations Food Summit, Rural Generation Summit

Duluth – Funds are available for scholarships and sponsorships for Northeast region residents. Community members are invited to apply for scholarships to participate in activities intended to increase their capacity to serve their communities.

Sustainable Development Research Opportunity Program (SDROP)

FOCUS AREAS: ☀️ 🏠 🌿 🌱

UMN Duluth CLA's Center for Sustainable Community Development, UMN Duluth Office of Sustainability, NERSDP, numerous local groups & UMN Duluth students
Duluth – SDROP provides UMD students an opportunity to work closely with a variety of Northeast Minnesota communities on various sustainable development projects. Students gain the valuable research and project design and implementation experiences that only “real-life” community projects can provide, and community partners benefit from the student interns’ work.

Thriving with Nature

FOCUS AREAS: 🌿 🌱

UMN Extension, UMN Duluth, Cooperation Station, Lloyd K. Johnson Foundation, Cook County Community Members, Cook County Lions, Master Naturalist Karen Kobey

Grand Marais – This project partnered with a UMN Duluth graduate student and undergraduate class that designed a play-scape, built a play-scape, provided a community workshop on nature play, and implemented a nature play program. Project completion is scheduled for spring 2019.

Tourism Center Collaborative Staffing

FOCUS AREAS: 🌿 🌱

NERSDP Tourism work group members & project partners, UMN Tourism Center
Duluth – All RSDPs supported Tammy Koerte, UMN Tourism Center Extension Educator, for one day per week for two years to help coordinate Tourism and Resilient Communities work groups in all regions; built relationships among regional work groups and key partners; advanced a future vision for the focus area; and connect strategic partners, resources and opportunities across Minnesota.

Wild Plants & The Fond du Lac Tribal Community [NEW]

FOCUS AREAS: 🌿 🌱

Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior, UMD Master of Tribal Resource and Environmental Stewardship

Fond du Lac Nation – Fond du Lac has identified areas in the community as food deserts, recently characterized more as food apartheid. To address this challenge, they will capture their elder’s knowledge by developing a video series to facilitate utilizing wild plants as a food, utilitarian, and medicine source and to promote food sovereignty. Interviews will be conducted.

NORTHEAST CERT

AmeriCorps Legacy Building Solar Project

ENERGY FOCUS AREAS: ☀

Energy Efficiency: Renewable Energy

Duluth – The AmeriCorps Legacy Building seeks to rewrite the narrative of unaffordable housing for community service volunteers. The inaugural cohort of Resilience Corps VISTAs will redevelop a condemned property in Duluth's lowest income neighborhood into a sustainable single-family cooperative home to provide a permanent and affordable housing option for AmeriCorps members. To demonstrate adaptive reuse of structures, a deep energy retrofit will be completed with a 3 kW solar PV system. This project will be undertaken to create a model which can be replicated as a prospective solution for other communities facing similar housing and energy challenges.

Bois Forte Weatherization Project

ENERGY FOCUS AREAS: ☀

Energy Efficiency

Nett Lake – The Bois Forte Housing Department will work with a contracted technician who will install weather stripping, caulking and window coverings in up to 50 homes of the elderly and disabled on the Bois Forte reservation. The supplies for the weatherization will be provided by the Bois Forte Tribal Government. The project will be shared widely and the Bois Forte Housing Department will provide educational tools on weatherization throughout the duration of this grant.

Field-North Woods School Forest (FNWSF) Trail Lighting

ENERGY FOCUS AREAS: ☀

Energy Efficiency, Renewable Energy

Cook – This project aims to build a trail system and light the FNWSF trails with solar lights. This will allow for night-time skiing and trail hiking. The project has been in the works for four years. The school forest started out with an agreement between Field Township and ISD 2142. The project will be shared with others through the usage of the trail system, education and a brochure that describes the FNWSF system.

Healthy Homes – Healthy Neighbors Initiative

ENERGY FOCUS AREAS: ☀

Energy Efficiency, Renewable Energy

Duluth – The Healthy Homes – Healthy Neighbors Initiative is directed at building capacity in northeastern Minnesota to address housing stock conditions and resident behaviors that negatively impact the efficiency of buildings and health outcomes of residents. The holistic approach will convene cross-sector partners, jointly develop aligned energy, housing and health assessments of properties and resident concerns,

leverage funds from multiple sources to target appropriate interventions, and serve as a model for programs across Minnesota.

Renewable Mountain Iron

ENERGY FOCUS AREAS: ☀

Renewable Energy

Mountain Iron – Mountain Iron looks to deepen the community's solar energy commitment by identifying top opportunities and developing project concepts for their implementation. This effort will: (1) identify community-wide rooftop solar potential; (2) evaluate the viability of solar PV and develop a detailed solar PV concept, calculate annual energy generation, and develop project budgets at the top 20 solar sites; (3) conduct a site feasibility, selection and concept design effort for a community solar project; and (4) develop a report summarizing all findings, identifying local economic development potential of solar PV development, and include a proposed solar implementation plan for city-owned facilities.

Salem Lutheran Church LED Conversion

ENERGY FOCUS AREAS: ☀

Energy Efficiency

Mahtowa – Salem Lutheran Church, along with the neighboring community center it operates, Salem's Mahtowa Hall, are lit by approximately 202 incandescent and fluorescent bulbs. The church is seeking to reduce its carbon footprint and reduce energy use and costs while inspiring other churches, organizations and homeowners to do the same.



NORTHWEST REGION

Executive Director: Linda Kingery, kinge002@umn.edu

Learn more: rsdp.umn.edu/northwest

CERTs Stakeholder Mapping

FOCUS AREAS: 

UMN Crookston Software Engineering, Daniel Thiede, CERTs, NW CERTs Team

Crookston – A UMN Crookston student intern created a stakeholder map using Kumu.io representing steering team members involved in the Clean Energy Resource Teams (CERTs). The stakeholder map allows CERTs staff and steering team members to easily connect around specific strategies and technologies.

Conservation Corps serves Natural Resources Focus Area

FOCUS AREAS: 

UMN Extension, RSDP Natural Resource Work Groups, Conservation Corps of MN & IA

Crookston – A Conservation Corps member assisted the UMN Extension RSDP with its Natural Resources Focus Area. In 2018, the RSDPs focused on water-related projects in the Natural Resource focus area. Water projects include communities participating in the We Are Water MN traveling exhibit, as well as water recreation, water quality and soil health, and watershed planning efforts. The Corps member gained professional experience as a team member, and was introduced to community-based engagement, design and project development.

Fertile Sand Hills Master Plan

FOCUS AREAS: 

UMN College of Design, City of Fertile, Aggasiz Environmental Learning Center (AELC)

Fertile – Conduct community engagement process and develop a master recreation and environmental awareness plan for the Fertile area, with primary emphasis on the AELC and river-related recreation. The process will result in designs, drawings and site plans to facilitate engagement of the public and partners in implementation of project priorities identified in the master plan.

Future of the Old City Auditorium [NEW]

FOCUS AREAS: 

UMN Center for Sustainable Building Research – College of Design, Downtown Development Association, Auditorium Committee, Pennington County Historical Society, Thief River Falls Chamber of Commerce, City of

Thief River Falls, Pennington County Board of Commissioners

Thief River Falls – The Old City Auditorium, in the heart of Thief River Falls, is in danger of being razed for a parking lot. This project will provide an opportunity for public input, bringing together University staff and the Pennington County community to brainstorm ideas and plan for the future of the auditorium by addressing rehabilitation funding streams and new uses to help it be self-sustaining. The master plan developed with assistance from UMN had a goal of creating a unified, welcoming environment that would revitalize the downtown community, having this building remain standing and useful is of paramount importance to the vitality of downtown Thief River Falls.

Lake Bemidji State Park Nature Play

FOCUS AREAS: 

UMN College of Design, Friends of Lake Bemidji State Park

Bemidji – The Friends of Lake Bemidji State Park seek assistance with revamping an existing playground to enhance the connection to nature. A natural play and experience space will strengthen the opportunity for children and adults to connect to nature and foster a feeling of stewardship for public places.

Lake of the Woods Keep It Clean [NEW]

FOCUS AREAS: 

UMN Humphrey School of Public Affairs, UMN Extension, Lake of the Woods Keep It Clean Committee

Baudette – The Lake of the Woods Keep It Clean Committee is developing a report that assesses the shift in tourism and recreation on Lake of the Woods, addressing a dramatic increase in ice fishing using wheel houses. The report will scope out options for addressing economic and environmental issues such as trash, grey water, needed services and impacts to local economics, and will benefit other communities across the state.

Market Strategy for Organize Seed Collective [NEW]

FOCUS AREAS: 

North Star Seed Company, Sue Wika, Kathy Connell, Greg Reynolds, and Zachary Paige

Vergas – Organic seed growers are organizing a collective, North Star Seed, promoting and increasing access of diverse vegetables bred for nutrition and flavor and culturally appropriate seeds produced in MN. The

collective provides an outlet for growers and increasing access using sustainable methods in growing 5 or more varieties. This project will help support local MN seed growers and increase education about seed savings techniques, building a more sustainable and healthier community.

MN GreenSteps in Northwest Minnesota [NEW]

FOCUS AREAS: ☀️ 🏠 🌱 🌿

City of Mahnomen, City of Warren

Mahnomen & Warren – The City of Mahnomen is starting its journey as a GreenStep City to reduce energy costs and dependence and decrease maintenance expenses as a sustainability goal to become a better steward of the environment. An intern will assist the city in obtaining Step 1 and 2 of the GreenStep program for increased energy independence with involvement of the White Earth Nation into the program, building stronger relationships through fostered communication, trust and respect. The City of Warren is a Step 3 city, and is focusing on communicating its story within the community and to regional cities as they begin the process. Marissa Nix served as an intern writing articles for the newspaper and newsletter, as well as social media.

Roseau River Water Recreation Trail [NEW]

FOCUS AREAS: 🌱 🌿 🌳

UMN College of Design, City of Roseau, Roseau River Watershed District

Roseau – The Roseau River Watershed District engaged a variety of community partners to plan a recreation trail in the Roseau River from Hayes Lake State Park through the City of Roseau and on to the Canadian Border. Engagement with the College of Design’s Design for Community Resilience program brought design insight and expertise to assist partners in 1) engaging a wide range of constituents in a co-design process, 2) establishing a common identity, and 3) providing access to support year-round recreation. This project creates a coalition of community members and organizations with a common interest in connection with nature, water resources protection and active living. The project report is now available online at:

<http://hdl.handle.net/11299/201611>

Scholarships/ Sponsorships

FOCUS AREAS: ☀️ 🏠 🌱 🌿

Aqua Chautauqua hosted by Pelican River Watershed District, Red River Basin Commission Annual Summit, River Watch Forum, Red Lake Nation Food Summit
Crookston – Funds are available for scholarships and sponsorships for Northwest region residents. Community members apply for scholarships or sponsorships for educational activities.

Spindle Pruning Apple Trees in High Tunnel

FOCUS AREAS: 🏠 🌱

UMN Extension Horticulture, Chuck & Barbara Schulstad Mentor – This research evaluates the impact of spindle pruning on apple tree production in a high tunnel environment. This is a longitudinal study designed to address yield, quality (including reduction of pesticides) and economics as well as better usage of water and fertilizer components through the high tunnel system.

Tourism Center Collaborative Staffing

FOCUS AREAS: 🌱 🌿

NWRSDP Tourism work group members & project partners, UMN Tourism Center

Crookston – All RSDPs are supporting Tammy Koerte, UMN Tourism Center Extension Educator, for one day per week for two years to help coordinate Tourism and Resilient Communities work groups in all regions; build relationships among regional work groups and key partners; advance a future vision for the focus area; and connect strategic partners, resources and opportunities across Minnesota.

Visit Bemidji Tourism Profile

FOCUS AREAS: 🌱 🌿

UMN Tourism Center, Visit Bemidji, Headwaters Regional Development Commission

Bemidji – Conduct a 12-Month Visitor Profile Study with a projected timeline of 16-18 months under the direction of the UMN Tourism Center. The interceptor study will aim to achieve a target of at least 400 usable surveys per quarter/season. Site surveyors will intercept and interview adult travelers at designated sites, asking questions from a two-page survey instrument.

NORTHWEST CERT

Automatic Benchmarking for Public Buildings

ENERGY FOCUS AREAS: ☀️

Energy Efficiency

Warren – Because the City of Warren owns and operates its own electric utility rather than using an outside utility provider, the city has unrestricted access to monitor its energy usage data to assist with its benchmarking efforts to track building energy usage. As a result, this makes the City of Warren’s public municipalities a viable candidate for either interval data benchmarking using one of two vendors or to have a custom program application be created to best track energy usage and meet benchmarking expectations (tools that will be explored during this project).

Bemidji Community Food Shelf (BCFS) Building Lighting Upgrade

ENERGY FOCUS AREAS: ☀

Energy Efficiency

Bemidji – The BCFS is a faith-based organization that distributes food to over 3,000 qualifying families in Beltrami County and the Bemidji School District. Its location in the Bemidji Industrial Park is comprised of an office area, a large shopping area and a warehouse, which together make up 12,480 square feet. BCFS wants to replace its existing florescent lighting with LEDs and add motion sensors in the bathrooms and warehouse. Lighting in coolers and freezers will also be upgraded.

City of Barnesville Solar Garden

ENERGY FOCUS AREAS: ☀

Renewable Energy

Barnesville – Barnesville Municipal Utilities plans to install an 80-panel solar array near the Barnesville Community Garden during 2018. The Barnesville Community Solar Garden will provide a simple, convenient and cost-effective way for our customers to participate in solar generation. Customers will be given the opportunity to purchase the output from one or more panels for a 20-year period. While the energy created will not directly power the customer's home, on an annual basis the customers will receive a credit on their electric bill based on the output of the system.

Harmony Natural Food Cooperative Lighting Upgrade

ENERGY FOCUS AREAS: ☀

Energy Efficiency

Bemidji – Harmony Natural Food Coop will upgrade existing lighting with energy efficient LEDs. Existing T-8 fluorescent and compact fluorescent lamps (CFL) nearing the end of their lifespan will be replaced (rewired/re-ballasted by an electrician) with 351 new LED lamps. This project is part of a comprehensive approach to Harmony's commitment to reducing our energy use and our greenhouse gas footprint through building envelope and energy efficiency improvements, renewable energy, and community/business education and outreach. This project will reduce annual electricity consumption by approximately 24,581 kWh (18.3 metric tons of CO₂).

Minnesota Energy Resource Corp (MERC) LIW Administration

ENERGY FOCUS AREAS: ☀

Energy Efficiency

Bemidji – This project focuses on weatherization-related items for low-income families' homes. Measures include: attic and wall insulation, air sealing, mechanical replacements, furnace clean and tunes, rim-joint insulation, crawlspace insulation, programmable t-stat, client education, pipe insulation and safety items like CO alarms, exhaust fans and dryer vents.

Northwest CAP LED Lighting Project

ENERGY FOCUS AREAS: ☀

Energy Efficiency

Badger – Replacing T-12 lighting fixtures and incandescent bulbs at Northwest Community Action (NWCA) office building with LED bulbs and fixtures will cut their energy bills an estimated \$2,772 a year. Project results will be shared with local media outlets and with people who come into the office for assistance. NWCA helped over 1,200 families with fuel assistance last year, and offers a number of other services that clients come into the office for. A handout will also be developed to show the savings of using LED lighting.

Warren Film Festival and Energy Assessments [NEW]

ENERGY FOCUS AREAS: ☀

Energy Efficiency

Warren – The city of Warren is hosting a film festival that will show three short films highlighting clean energy. Two of the films feature Warren's efforts to advance climate protection through their partnership with Arnsberg, Germany. LED light bulbs will be given away to all participants of the festival. Energy audits of businesses will take place the day following the festival to enhance energy savings.



SOUTHEAST REGION

Executive Director: Okey Ukaga, ukaga001@umn.edu

Learn more: rsdp.umn.edu/southeast

Conservation Corps serves Natural Resources Focus Area

FOCUS AREAS: 

UMN Extension, RSDP Natural Resource Work Groups, Conservation Corps of MN & IA

Rochester – A Conservation Corps member assisted the UMN Extension RSDP with its Natural Resources Focus Area. In 2018, the RSDPs focused on water-related projects in the Natural Resource focus area. Water projects include communities participating in the We Are Water MN traveling exhibit, as well as water recreation, water quality and soil health, and watershed planning efforts. The Corps member gained professional experience as a team member, and was introduced to community-based engagement, design and project development.

Deep Winter Greenhouse Construction Support

FOCUS AREAS:  

UMN Extension; UMN Institute on the Environment; MnDRIVE Global Food Ventures; MnDRIVE Robotics, Sensors, & Advanced Manufacturing; AgriBank Farm Credit Bank; Compeer Financial; AgCountry Farm Credit Services

Lake City – The UMN Extension RSDP's Deep Winter Greenhouse (DWG) demonstration and research initiative is developing and refining an innovative solar greenhouse that enables Minnesota farmers to grow and sell local, fresh greens throughout the winter. Five DWGs have been built, one in each RSDP region. One of those DWGs is at Lake City Catholic Workers Farm. The DWG in Lake City will serve as an educational and business-development resource for Southeastern Minnesota growers and producers for years to come.

Food Access Mapping for Latinos in SE MN

FOCUS AREAS: 

UMN Humphrey School of Public Affairs, UMN Center for Urban & Regional Affairs, Latinos En Accion (LEA), City of Minneapolis Public Health Department

Dodge Center – The goal of this project is to address the challenge of food access by understanding the needs, experiences and constraints that Latino populations in Southeast Minnesota face to reach healthy and culturally relevant food. The project aims to investigate the availability, accessibility and capacities that Latinos have in reaching food that is nutritious, affordable and culturally relevant, by conducting fieldwork in

southeastern Minnesota. The goal of this project is threefold: (1) to generate questions that provide an understanding of the needs, constraints and experiences Latino families face in accessing food; (2) to develop an innovative data collection method based on participatory mapping techniques; and (3) to conduct a pilot study using the food mapping data collection tool.

LiDAR Training

FOCUS AREAS:  

UMN College of Food, Agricultural & Natural Resource Sciences (CFANS); UMN Department of Soil, Water & Climate; Board of Water & Soil Resources; MN DNR; MN GEO Land Management Information Center; US Geologic Survey; MN Department of Agriculture; US Army Corps of Engineers; MN Information Technology Services
Southeast Region – Minnesota LiDAR Training will provide GIS technicians from federal, state, county, local and private organizations the tools they need to successfully utilize LiDAR data. Basic concepts will be covered for recent hires and those who need review, and the first-ever advanced session will be offered in the state.

Measuring Soil Health Using Teabag Method [NEW]

FOCUS AREAS: 

UMN Extension Rice and Le Sueur Counties' Soil and Water Conservation Districts, local collaborating farmers
Faribault – Expanding a 2018 pilot experiment that examined an inexpensive "tea bag" method to measure microbial activity, an indicator of soil health and sustainability of farmland. Collaborating with Rice and Le Sueur County farmers and other regional partners to evaluate the validity of this low cost, on-farm method by comparing it to known laboratory tests. At the end of the study, we will host a "Sustainable Soil Day" where the results of the project will be shared with the public along with other fact-based curriculum.

Red Wing Holiday Stroll: Economic Contribution & Visitor Profile

FOCUS AREAS: 

UMN Extension, Red Wing Downtown Main Street
Red Wing – The Holiday Stroll is held on the day after Thanksgiving in Red Wing. The Fair has existed for 15 years and has been growing. It serves as an opportunity for the community to gather and celebrate the beginning of the holiday season. It also draws visitors, and their spending, into the community. Retailers in downtown

Red Wing benefit, as do the vendors selling items at the event. Red Wing Downtown Main Street is interested in learning more about the event. Who attends? What aspects of the event are most enjoyed? What aspects of the event could use improving? How much money is spent during the course of the event? How does the event contribute to the economy?

Root River Market Survey

FOCUS AREAS: 

UMN Morris Center for Small Towns, Root River Market Houston – Survey for the local grocery store to learn more about how it can serve members and non-members. The project will include sending out three mailings including a postcard, survey and follow-up survey. The goal is to send mailings out to the school district, which is approximately 500 households.

Scholarships/ Sponsorships

FOCUS AREAS:    

Climate Adaptation Conference, Red Lake Nation Food Summit

Rochester – Funds are available for scholarships and sponsorships for Southeast region residents. Community members are invited to apply for scholarships to participate in activities intended to increase their capacity to serve their communities.

Spring Grove CultureHub: Mapping Regional Resources for a Sustainable Future [NEW]

FOCUS AREAS: 

UMN College of Design, City of Spring Grove
Spring Grove – The community of Spring Grove is exploring how the local foods movement and regional artisan cultural assets can be activated as a tool for growth, youth retention, and economic development. In order to create a robust marketing strategy and identify new opportunities for programming, the project team would like to begin with thoughtful research and asset mapping of Houston County farmers, makers, producers, artists and the businesses that support them.

State Park use by Latino Residents Study

FOCUS AREAS: 

UMN Center for Urban & Regional Affairs – Community Assistantship Program, UMN Department of Bioproducts/Systems Engineering, UMN Humphrey School of Public Affairs, UMN Tourism Center, Hispanic Advocacy & Community Empowerment through Research (HACER)
Mankato, Owatonna, Dodge Center, Rochester, Austin – Park visits provide public health and social benefits. They also reduce health and public resource access disparities between Latino and Caucasian populations. The goal of this project is to understand the needs, experiences and

constraints Latino populations in Southeast Minnesota face in visiting state parks. Project findings will inform a wide range of actions: outreach campaigns, in-park programming design, collaborative planning processes, and the provision of amenities that may encourage Latino populations to visit state parks by meeting their needs.

Straight River One Watershed One Plan Civic Engagement [NEW]

FOCUS AREAS: 

UMN Department of Forest Resources, Dodge County/SWCD, Fillmore County/SWCD, Houston County/Root River SWCD, Mower County/SWCD, Olmsted County/SWCD, Winona County/SWCD, Crooked Creek Watershed District, Root River 1W1P Planning Work Group and its Education and Outreach subcommittee

Rochester – This project will lay the foundation for developing a civic engagement plan for the Root River One Watershed One Plan (1W1P) area. Landowner and Producer Engagement in Water Management is one of four priorities for implementation of the watershed plan. Focus groups with community members representing a cross section of the community will help to identify key themes affecting decisions made by individuals that affect our water resources.

Tourism Center Collaborative Staffing

FOCUS AREAS: 

SERSDP Tourism work group members & project partners, UMN Tourism Center

Rochester – All RSDPs are supporting Tammy Koerte, UMN Tourism Center Extension Educator, for one day per week for two years to help coordinate Tourism and Resilient Communities work groups in all regions; build relationships among regional work groups and key partners; advance a future vision for the focus area; and connect strategic partners, resources and opportunities across Minnesota.

Wabasha Active Living Community Bike/Walk Asset Planning [NEW]

FOCUS AREAS: 

UMN College of Design, City of Wabasha
Wabasha – The Wabasha's Active Living Community (WALC) project is a two-phase community engagement, research, and outreach strategy that will inform planning and implementation on active living opportunities, specifically enhanced walking and biking, for community residents and visitors.

SOUTHEAST CERT

Castle Community (former armory)

ENERGY FOCUS AREAS: ☀

Energy Efficiency

Rochester – A group of private investors is purchasing the former armory building from the City of Rochester and planning an adaptive reuse of this historic structure. The “Castle Community” (as the development is named) will incorporate a restaurant, bookstore, art gallery, art studios and public commons space into the renovation project. The scope of the renovation will be limited to an estimated \$1,200,000; however, the owners are interested in making sound energy-conscious design decisions. The seed grant will help defray the expense of hiring either a third-party energy modeler or expanding the scope of services of the mechanical designer to assist with energy efficiency decisions and recommendations.

City of La Crescent Public Facilities LED Lighting Upgrade

ENERGY FOCUS AREAS: ☀

Energy Efficiency

La Crescent – The City of La Crescent Green Team/Green Step Program plans to upgrade 22 inefficient outdated exterior light fixtures to new LED lighting technology. The LED lighting improvements will be made to local parks, streets and the water plant. The Green Team will also conduct educational activities that demonstrate how LED technology/lighting replacement can reduce energy consumption and maintenance costs.

Demonstration Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Station

ENERGY FOCUS AREAS: ☀

Energy Efficiency, Renewable Energy, Additional Technologies

Red Wing – The City of Red Wing will install a demonstration twin plug EV charging station within a public parking ramp. This will serve four parking spaces and will fill a gap in the EV charging infrastructure map along the southeast corridor.

New LED Street Lights

ENERGY FOCUS AREAS: ☀

Energy Efficiency

Lanesboro – This small city is very unique to Southeast Minnesota. It’s defined not only by the individuals who call it home but also by the visitors who enjoy a stroll through the city by use of the Minnesota DNR bike trail system, city events or staying for the weekend at one of the local bed and breakfasts. There are only 29 street lights in the entire city, but they are outdated, consume a lot of energy, and are expensive to keep up every year. This project will facilitate replacing them with energy-efficient LEDs.

Promoting Solar PV at Prominent City & School Sites in Faribault

ENERGY FOCUS AREAS: ☀

Renewable Energy

Faribault – Faribault recently adopted an Energy Action Plan that identifies cost-effective strategies to conserve energy and use clean energy. An objective of the plan is to use prominent buildings as models for clean and efficient energy. This project involves development of an action-oriented Solar PV Master Plan that will provide the impetus to implement solar PV at key city and school sites in Faribault. It will also serve as a model that will inspire similar actions in other public and private facilities throughout the community.

Rochester Faith & Solar Coalition

ENERGY FOCUS AREAS: ☀

Energy Efficiency, Renewable Energy

Minneapolis – Minnesota Interfaith Power and Light (MNIPL) has expanded its presence in recent years by building regional networks in the northern (Duluth) and southeastern (St. Peter) parts of Minnesota. These networks have focused on accelerating adoption of solar power, especially within faith communities. We are seeking a grant to support a bid to build a similar coalition in Rochester. We began laying groundwork for the Rochester Faith & Solar Coalition in fall 2017 with a kickoff that attracted almost 30 participants from several groups. We will continue raising awareness and assisting faith organizations in navigating the decision-making process for rooftop solar or community-based solar in 2018.

Solar Ready Albert Lea

ENERGY FOCUS AREAS: ☀

Implementation, Outreach or Education

Albert Lea – The City of Albert Lea seeks to understand the feasibility of solar energy for all primary government buildings located within the City. This effort will, for all subject city and county facilities: (1) collect annual energy use data, calculate EUI and performance evaluation against ENERGY STAR/ B3 peers; (2) evaluate the viability of solar PV; (3) develop a detailed solar PV concept design, calculate annual energy generation possible, and develop preliminary project budgets; and (4) develop a project report summarizing all findings, identifying local economic development potential of solar PV development, and include a proposed solar implementation plan for City owned facilities.

Winona Area Weatherization Installers Pool

ENERGY FOCUS AREAS: ☀

Energy Efficiency

Winona – Minnesota State College Southeast will gain the skills necessary to incorporate Building Performance Institute (BPI) Air Leakage Control (ALC) Installer training

into its curriculum. Local contractors will also receive ALC training through the grant. Currently there are no BPI ALC certified contractors in the Winona area, which may stop residents from utilizing some utility rebates.



SOUTHWEST REGION

Executive Director: Anne Dybsetter, adybsett@umn.edu

Learn more: rsdp.umn.edu/southwest

I-90 Restorative Farmers: Supply chain for perennial grain [NEW]

FOCUS AREAS:  

UMN Humphrey School of Public Affairs, UMN Carlson School of Management, Green Lands Blue Waters, I-90 Restorative Farmers group

Fairmont – A graduate research assistant explored the potential for a supply chain in south-central Minnesota for Kernza™, an emerging perennial grain produced by intermediate wheatgrass (IWG). The project was initiated by I-90 Restorative Farmers, a group of Southern Minnesota farmers seeking to expand sustainable agriculture practices through the planting of IWG and other emerging perennial crops. The report is available online at z.umn.edu/IWGSouthernMN.

Bonanza Education Center Connections: Inside to Outside [NEW]

Bonanza Education Center, Big Stone County 4-H, Big Stone SWCD, Southwest Minnesota Arts Council, Big Stone Arts

FOCUS AREAS:  

Clinton – Bonanza Education Center hosted a water resources GIS camp for youth in August 2018, with a guest scholar and artist from the UMN Institute on the Environment. Center staff developed and expanded GIS resources within environmental programs at Bonanza by attending a training and accessing resources.

Connecting Students & Communities

FOCUS AREAS:  

UMN Morris Center for Small Towns, Granite Area Arts Council, Placebased Productions, Unspoken Voices, Sustainable Farming Association, Prairie Renaissance Cultural Alliance, Grant County 4-H

Morris – This funding helps make it possible for the Center for Small Towns to offer opportunities for communities to apply to have UMN Morris undergraduate students assist with projects. In fiscal year 2019, projects included communications support for the Sustainable Farming Association, development of a community arts plan in Granite Falls, and development of marketing in small communities.

Conservation Corps serves Natural Resources Focus Area

FOCUS AREAS: 

UMN Extension, RSDP Natural Resource Work Groups, Conservation Corps of MN & IA

Willmar – A Conservation Corps member assisted the UMN Extension RSDP with its Natural Resources Focus Area. In 2018, the RSDPs focused on water-related projects in the Natural Resource focus area. Water projects include communities participating in the We Are Water MN traveling exhibit, as well as water recreation, water quality and soil health, and watershed planning efforts. The Corps member gained professional experience as a team member, and was introduced to community-based engagement, design and project development.

Douglas County Fair Sustainability Education Programming [NEW]

FOCUS AREAS:   

Douglas County 4-H, Douglas County Master Gardeners, Douglas County Fair Board

Alexandria – 4-H and Master Gardeners worked together to improve public outreach, service and sustainability at the Douglas County Fairgrounds through two separate projects. 4-Hers developed and maintained a recycling program at the 4-H food stand, including organics recycling and bottles and cans. Douglas County Master Gardeners created a demonstration space in the Open Class building to bring food/gardening skills to the general public.

Fairmont Area Visitor Profile [NEW]

FOCUS AREAS: 

UMN Tourism Center, UMN Center for Urban and Regional Affairs, Visit Fairmont, Fairmont Area Chamber of Commerce, Fairmont EDA, Martin County Area Foundation

Fairmont – A University researcher and graduate student worked with the community to develop and conduct in-person surveys to collect information on visitors' characteristics, travel behaviors, trip planning behaviors and spending patterns. The resulting visitor profile report will allow the Fairmont area to better understand visitors, to better meet their needs, and to design and implement more effective marketing efforts.

Garlic Festival Impact Study [NEW]

FOCUS AREAS: 

UMN Tourism Center, UMN Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA), Sustainable Farming Association (SFA) – Crow River Chapter

Hutchinson – A graduate research assistant will complete a market impact study of The Minnesota Garlic Festival (Hutchinson, MN) in summer 2019, in collaboration with Crow River Sustainable Farming Association and CURA. The student will research the festival's impacts on vendors and their sustainable farming businesses. The information will be used to understand if the festival is meeting its goals and to identify opportunities to improve this and other SFA events.

Hmong Community Center

FOCUS AREAS:  

UMN College of Design Center for Sustainable Building Research, UMN Center for Urban and Regional Affairs, Project Uniting Southwest Hmong (PUSH), Southwest Minnesota Housing Partnership

Tracy – Leaders from the Project Uniting Southwest Hmong (PUSH) group worked with the College of Design Center for Sustainable Building Research (CSBR) and a graduate student to undertake a community engagement and design process in the Tracy and Walnut Grove area. Project partners developed a master plan for a Hmong community center that will provide a gathering place as well as spaces for food growing, a farmer's market, arts and culture, community education, and more. The final design reflects community input, programming recommendations, and specific architecture and landscape design recommendations.

LiDAR Training

FOCUS AREAS: 

UMN Department of Soil, Water, and Climate; attendees from public agencies and private enterprises
Morris, Marshall – Funds supported two 2-day LiDAR training sessions in the Southwest region, in Morris in March 2019 and in Marshall in May 2019. The trainings provided GIS technicians the tools they need to successfully utilize LiDAR data, at both basic and advanced levels.

Luverne Main Street Plaza

FOCUS REAS: 

UMN College of Design Center for Sustainable Building Research, UMN Center for Urban and Regional Affairs, Luverne Initiative for Tomorrow (LIFT), Luverne Chamber of Commerce

Luverne – The Luverne Main Street Plaza Design project supports a community effort with Luverne Initiative for Tomorrow (LIFT) and other partners to design a downtown outdoor plaza that can support economic

vitality, provide a sense of place, and demonstrate sustainable community resilience in Luverne. A design team including the Center for Sustainable Building Research, partners, and community members planned community-engaged workshops and guided the development of a final design and recommendations.

Productive Perennials Demonstration

FOCUS AREAS: 

UMN Extension Center - Forestry, UMN Master Naturalist Program, Community coordinator and numerous volunteers, Project Food Forest

Luverne – This project seeks to demonstrate the feasibility and benefits of planting perennial crops in two different ways: first, riparian buffers suitable for managed grazing or harvesting for biomass, livestock feed, or emerging food products; and, second, "food forest" gardens in communities or rural areas with harvestable food of value to residents and/or wildlife. The perennial plantings also benefit water quality, pollinator habitat and other ecosystem services.

Robotics Solar Array

FOCUS AREAS: 

UMN West Central Research & Outreach Center (WCROC), UMN Morris Office of Sustainability, Morris Area Public Schools, The Morris Model community group
Morris – Morris Area Public Schools is installing an 8-kilowatt photovoltaic system on the high school grounds. High school students, with assistance from interns from the University of Morris, helped inform the public and other schools about opportunities of solar energy. School educators and students will work with a renewable energy scientist from U of M's WCROC to analyze data and learn about solar power. After installation, electricity cost savings at the school will be used to provide ongoing funding for the high school robotics team.

Scholarships/ Sponsorships

FOCUS AREAS:    

Minnesota Garlic Festival, Bee & Bees, the Climate Adaptation Conference, University on the Prairie, Gathering Partners of Natural Resources, Red Lake Nation Food Summit, and more

Willmar – Funds are available for sponsorships and scholarships for Southwest region residents. Community members are invited to apply for scholarships to participate in activities that will increase their capacity to serve their communities.

Support for Local Foods Work Group Event [NEW]

FOCUS AREAS: 

SWRSDP Local Food Systems Work Group, Litchfield Natural Food Co-op, SHIP of Meeker, McLeod and Sibley Counties, Land Stewardship Project, Second Harvest, many local farmers and food entrepreneurs

Litchfield – “Fields & Foods: Celebrating Local Food Connections” was held Monday, March 18, 2019, in Litchfield. The event included a vendor fair for local food producers and food entrepreneurs and a local-foods dinner featuring discussion about how locally produced foods can reach more people in our communities.

Sustainable Agriculture Case Studies

FOCUS AREAS:  

UMN Center for Integrated Natural Resources & Agricultural Management (CINRAM), UMN Center for Urban and Regional Affairs, Sustainable Farming Association, various farmers from the Southwest region Clinton, Granada, Lakefield, Madison, Montevideo, Redwood Falls – A series of case studies of sustainable agricultural practices was created to share information from Minnesota farmers who implement various soil health practices. A graduate research assistant worked with partners to review and update existing case studies and add three additional case studies. An advisory group guided the development of a farmer-friendly resource of soil health practices. The resulting case studies are available at z.umn.edu/SoilHealthCaseStudies.

Tourism Center Collaborative Staffing

FOCUS AREAS: 

SWRSDP Tourism work group members & project partners, UMN Tourism Center
Willmar – All RSDPs are supporting Tammy Koerte, UMN Tourism Center Extension Educator, for one day per week for two years to help coordinate Tourism and Resilient Communities work groups in all regions; build relationships among regional work groups and key partners; advance a future vision for the focus area; and connect strategic partners, resources and opportunities across Minnesota.

UMM Live to Garden [NEW]

FOCUS AREAS: 

UMN Morris Organic Gardening Club, UMN Morris Live to Garden students, various farmers and food entrepreneurial businesses

Morris – Student groups from UMN Morris took six field trips and gleaning trips to various farms and food-related businesses in the counties surrounding UMN Morris.

SOUTHWEST AND WEST CENTRAL CERTS

Atrium Hi-Rise Parking Lot Lighting

ENERGY FOCUS AREAS: 

Energy Efficiency

Worthington – The existing parking lot lights will be replaced by LED lighting, and additional new parking lot lights will be added, also LED. The replacement lighting will decrease electrical usage and with the added LED lighting, the parking lot will be well lit for tenant and visitor safety and will consume less electricity than existing lighting.

Blower Door Pre & Post Tests

ENERGY FOCUS AREAS: 

Energy Efficiency

Slayton – Southwest MN Housing Partnership (SWMHP) recently began to offer blower door testing as a line of business when new building code regulations went into effect that required testing on all new single-family homes. This data has provided useful information to identify potential issues with the energy efficiency of a home and to understand how our homes measure up when we are using green standards. This grant will support conducting pre and post blower door testing on a minimum of 15 single family homes or small rental developments.

Brownton Community Center Light Replacements

ENERGY FOCUS AREAS: 

Energy Efficiency

Brownton – The Brownton Community Center was built in 1993 and the lighting is original. Ballasts are now beginning to burn out. This grant will allow replacement of all fixtures and lights in the Community Center, which will ultimately be more energy efficient. Many people use the building every year and can learn about the benefits of LED lighting.

Financial Modeling of Solar PV & Battery Storage Systems for Dairy & Swine Farms

ENERGY FOCUS AREAS: 

Renewable Energy, Additional Technologies

Morris – The capital cost of solar PV has significantly declined in the last decade. Livestock farms are prime candidates for installing solar due to high energy consumption on-site, a load matched well with the generation curve, and the availability of roof space and land required. However, due to varying policies, the financial viability of solar PV in Minnesota is highly dependent on which utility serves the farm. This project seeks to address the specific financial viability of solar PV on West Central Minnesota swine and dairy farms by

modeling the impact of rates, incentives and the addition of storage.

In Home Education Course & Energy Saving Applications

ENERGY FOCUS AREAS: ☀️

Energy Efficiency

Marshall – This project will provide one-on-one education with 20 or more homes to improve their understanding of how they can lower their energy bills through conservation. There will be a survey of clients' knowledge in energy savings and installation of energy-saving devices, such as LED bulbs, pipe wrap, low-flow shower heads and weather stripping. Clients will be assessed for their eligibility for conservation programs that United Community Action Plan (UCAP) administers, working with the utility providers to replace worn-out appliances with ENERGY STAR appliances.

LED Lighting Upgrade

ENERGY FOCUS AREAS: ☀️

Energy Efficiency

Jackson – Federated's Jackson headquarters plans to upgrade to LED lighting inside and out as follows: 225 T8 tube lights in 26 rooms, halls and meeting rooms; 20 wall packs and lantern lights / high pressure sodium; 15 mercury vapor lights in warehouse to LED; and upgrade 23 mogul-base CFLs in the cold storage warehouse.

New London-Spicer Schools Lighting Systems Retrofit

ENERGY FOCUS AREAS: ☀️

Energy Efficiency

New London – There are many ideas as to what light level is required for security lighting in a parking, walking or driveway areas of the school district. This project would allow the school district to conduct a lighting analysis, Energy Analysis and Visual Simulation (lighting design) to predict a lighting system performance based on professional design parameters. This will help the school district determine the probable cost and energy savings of upgrading the district's outdoor and parking lot and building lighting to LED lighting and begin the installation of LED lighting in the high school parking lot and building exterior.

North Mankato Police Station Energy Savings

ENERGY FOCUS AREAS: ☀️

Energy Efficiency

North Mankato – The North Mankato Police Station is upgrading its existing lighting, 75 total fixtures, to energy-efficient LEDs. This project includes the replacement of three exterior metal halides and 72 interior T8 fluorescents. This building experiences high volumes of traffic from community members and includes a community room where meetings and

community events are held often. Making the switch to more energy efficient lighting can reduce annual costs by over \$2,000 and energy usage by over 18,000 kWh.

Solar Panel Project for Courtyard Outdoor Classroom

ENERGY FOCUS AREAS: ☀️

Renewable Energy

Cold Spring – This project aims to install solar panels in the Courtyard Outdoor Classroom space between the ROCORI High School and Middle School buildings. There is an existing pollinator garden, some native grasses and a greenhouse, and Principal Mark Jenson would like to see solar panels installed to provide power for lighting or watering, as well as an education opportunity for students and staff. This project will fund a feasibility study and inspection to determine how best to proceed.

Solar-Powered Welcome Sign

ENERGY FOCUS AREAS: ☀️

Renewable Energy

Windom – Windom has two solar-powered welcome signs installed in 2012 that have experienced a number of reliability issues and are currently not in operation. A solar representative has identified the various reliability issues with costs to correct. The CERT Seed Grant will enable the city to correct the reliability issues, while at the same time provide a case study for others to learn what to avoid in design and updating.

Solar-PV on Morris High School for the Robotics Team

ENERGY FOCUS AREAS: ☀️

Renewable Energy

Morris – A 7- to 8-kW solar PV system will be installed on the roof of the Morris High School. Electricity savings at the school will be used to provide ongoing funding for the robotics team and performance data will be made available to science teachers for renewable energy labs. High school students will hold public solar informational meetings with help from the Morris Model team.

Upper Sioux Community Round House Energy Efficiency Project

ENERGY FOCUS AREAS: ☀️

Energy Efficiency

Granite Falls – The Upper Sioux Community has one remaining public building that does not have energy efficient lighting installed. This project will include a lighting upgrade that will save over \$500 in costs per year. This project will launch a community-wide education component on energy efficiency through creative outreach, engaging both youth and adults and tapping the cultural resources and values of the Dakota people.



STATEWIDE PROJECTS

Statewide Director: Kathy Draeger, draeg001@umn.edu

Learn more: rsdp.umn.edu

Building Supply Chain Networks to Increase Access to Markets for UMN Specialty Crops

FOCUS AREAS:

UMN College of Food, Agricultural & Natural Resource Sciences (CFANS) Green Lands Blue Waters, UMN Carlson School of Management Grow North/Gary S Holmes Center for Entrepreneurship, Sustainable Farming Association, Riverland College, College of Design, American Hazelnut Company, UMN Horticulture Austin, Mahanomen – RSDP is leading a new collaboration among a cross-disciplinary team of UMN researchers, farmers, culinary professionals, food processors and food/ag businesses to build supply chains to increase access to UMN new or improved specialty crops. Over the course of this grant, RSDP will develop internal and external supply chain resources, host cross-disciplinary networking events for UMN researchers, host statewide supply chain convenings and evaluate the resources and value of the events.

Community Based Social Marketing with Somali Grocery Stores: In-store Interventions to Address Food Security & Diabetes Management

FOCUS AREAS:

UMN Extension Center for Family Development, UMN Epidemiology & Community Health, UMN Masonic Children's Hospital Pediatric Endocrinology, UMN Healthy Foods Healthy Lives, UMN College of Food, Agricultural & Natural Resource Sciences (CFANS); UMN Applied Economics, MN Department of Health, Pierz Foods

St. Cloud, Waite Park, Willmar – Planning grant to develop a Healthy Foods Healthy Lives Faculty Research Grant that studies in-store interventions by partnering with Somali-owned grocery stores.

Deep Winter Food Production in the North Central Region

FOCUS AREAS:

UMN College of Food, Agricultural & Natural Resource Sciences (CFANS) Horticulture, UMN Extension Community Vitality, Bemidji Community Food Shelf, Organic Consumers Association, Grampa Gs Farm, Alternative Roots Farm, Lake City Catholic Worker Farm, USDA SARE

Bemidji, Finland, Lake City, Madelia, Pillager – Conduct horticultural research trials for Deep Winter Greenhouses (DWGs); conduct interviews of DWG

producers to develop enterprise analysis; and conduct production training workshops.

Deep Winter Greenhouse Initiative

FOCUS AREAS:

UMN Extension, UMN College of Design Center for Sustainable Building Research (CSBR's Dan Handeen), UMN Institute on the Environment (IonE), MnDRIVE Global Food Ventures, Alternative Roots Farm, Bemidji Community Food Shelf, Grampa Gs Farm, Lake City Catholic Worker Farm, Organic Consumers Association, Sustainable Farming Association of Minnesota, Hmong American Farmers Association (HAFA), White Earth Land Recovery Project, MN Department of Agriculture, Paradox Farm, United FCS, AgStar Financial Services, AgCountry Farm Credit Services, AgriBank, Compeer Financial, MnDRIVE Robotics, Sensors, & Advanced Manufacturing

Bemidji, Finland, Lake City, Madelia, Pillager – RSDP is collaborating with producers and organizations throughout Minnesota. Community partners built UMN-designed Deep Winter Greenhouses (DWGs) – one in each RSDP region – to grow crops as well as participate in research and outreach events for the public for a period of three years. RSDP is also working to complete DWG training workshops at each of the five prototype DWGs and with HAFA and White Earth, as well as to develop a DWG production manual.

Designing Sustainability Metrics for Meaning and Impact

FOCUS AREAS:

UMN Institute on the Environment, Minnesota Compass St. Paul – With support from a UMN Institute on the Environment (IonE) mini grant, RSDP and IonE staff are working with board and work group members in each of RSDP's five regions to identify a framework for measurement and metrics that support RSDP's sustainability values and bedrock principles. This mini grant will be used to workshop and share the developed framework and newly identified RSDP sustainability metrics with RSDP board members, group members, community partners and University colleagues through a Google site and statewide event.

Developing Multi-Use Naked Barley for Organic Farming Systems

FOCUS AREAS: 

UMN College of Food, Agricultural & Natural Resource Sciences (CFANS) Agronomy & Plant Science & Food Science & Nutrition, craft brewers

St. Paul – The Extension Regional Sustainable Development Partnerships (RSDP) support more than 100 community-driven sustainability projects across Greater Minnesota each year. Community partners report project outcomes in a statewide evaluation database, yet understanding the collective impact of these projects is complex. To address this challenge, RSDP and IonE staff are working in partnership to apply a values hierarchy framework that illustrates how the identification of metrics can support RSDP's sustainability values and bedrock principles. This mini grant will be used to workshop and share the value hierarchy framework and newly identified RSDP sustainability metrics with RSDP board members, work group members, community partners and University colleagues through a Google site and statewide event.

Farm to Rural Grocery to Wholesale (Backhaul Project)

FOCUS AREAS: 

UMN Extension; UMN College of Food, Agricultural & Natural Resource Sciences (CFANS); UMN Applied Economics; UMN Horticultural Science; West Central Research & Outreach Center Morris; UMN Extension Community Vitality; Baker's Acres; Mason Brothers; Big Stone Garlic; Bonnie's Hometown Grocery; USDA AFRI Clinton, Wadena – RSDP is leading this integrated research and extension project that aims to develop, and pilots the feasibility of, a new model for small and medium-sized crop producers to access wholesale markets. The Farm to Rural Grocery to Wholesale (F2G2W) model leverages the existing network of rural grocery stores and their wholesale suppliers to backhaul locally grown produce on emptied wholesale trucks for redistribution through wholesale markets.

Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) Produce Safety Rule Farm Food Safety

FOCUS AREAS: 

UMN Extension, MN Department of Agriculture Monticello, St. Cloud – Provide educational outreach on the new FSMA Produce Safety Rule to small and medium size produce farmers in the state of Minnesota.

Optimizing Deep Winter Greenhouse Production and Profitability for Specialty Crop Farmers [NEW]

FOCUS AREAS: 

UMN College of Design Center for Sustainable Building Research (CSBR's Dan Handeen), UMN Extension Community Vitality, Bemidji Community Food Shelf,

Organic Consumers Association, Grampa Gs Farm, Alternative Roots Farm, Lake City Catholic Worker Farm, MDA Specialty Crop Block Grant

Lake City, Madelia, Pillager – Modifying DWG designs to reduce construction costs per square foot; developing designs for optimal planter and workspace configurations to maximize production efficiency; creating enterprise budgets and narratives so producers and financiers understand production and profitability expectations; and conducting production workshops.

Premium Minnesota Garlic: Increasing Market Access, Improving Production Practices & Supply Chain Networks

FOCUS AREAS: 

UMN College of Food, Agricultural & Natural Resource Sciences (CFANS) Agronomy & Plant Science, Sustainable Farming Association

Howard Lake – Sustainable Farming Association, in partnership with RSDP, will work with farmers throughout Minnesota to improve production practices and market access for Minnesota-grown garlic.

Winter Camelina: New Cash Crop Opportunities for Sustainable Sugar Beet Production

FOCUS AREAS: 

UMN College of Food, Agricultural & Natural Resource Sciences (CFANS) Agronomy & Plant Science & Soil, Water & Climate, USDA - ARS

Waseca – Winter camelina is a new winter annual crop in development within the Forever Green Initiative. This grant will work with sugar beet farmers to research the viability of camelina within sugar beet rotations, quantify the economics of this new system, and spur supply chain connections to bring this new crop to market.

STATEWIDE CERTS

CERTs Core Funding

FOCUS AREAS: 

Legislative appropriation via the Minnesota Department of Commerce, Division of Energy Resources. Additional core partners include: Southwest Regional Development Commission, Great Plains Institute, The Minnesota Project

Statewide – To advance CERTs' mission to connect individuals and communities with the resources they need to identify and implement community-scale energy efficiency and renewable energy projects across the State of Minnesota.

Clean Energy Job Board

FOCUS AREAS: 

Statewide – The MN Clean Energy Job Board is a tool that job seekers can use to find jobs in the energy efficiency

and renewable energy fields, and that employers can use to post their latest openings. All jobs are focused on the implementation of clean energy in Minnesota, and are not related to advocacy or policy.

Connecting Low-Income Communities to Efficiency & Renewable Sources (CLICERS)

FOCUS AREAS: ☀️

Minnesota Department of Commerce

Statewide – Connecting Low-Income Communities to Efficiency and Renewable Sources (CLICERS) is an effort geared toward developing strategies to lower household energy burden, particularly utilizing solar energy, that are data driven, based on best practices nation-wide, and based upon local stakeholder input. CERTs has assisted the MN Department of Commerce with initial data gathering, interviews and a series of stakeholder meetings targeting identification of high-value opportunities to lower the energy burden of low-income households.

GreenStep Cities/Tribal Nations

FOCUS AREAS: ☀️

Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, Great Plains Institute, League of Minnesota Cities

Statewide – Minnesota GreenStep Cities is a voluntary challenge, assistance and recognition program to help cities achieve their sustainability and quality-of-life goals. This free continuous improvement program, managed by a public-private partnership, is based upon 29 best practices.

MN Solar Pathways

FOCUS AREAS: ☀️

Minnesota Department of Commerce, Great Plains Institute

Statewide – This project facilitates collaboration to find least-risk, best-value strategies to support the realization of Minnesota's 10% by 2030 solar electricity goal and set the stage for further solar deployment.

Property Accessed Clean Energy (PACE)

FOCUS AREAS: ☀️

Saint Paul Port Authority

Statewide – CERTs staff work across the state giving presentations and educational information about PACE to county commissioners and local municipal leaders, with the goal of activating a joint powers agreement to make PACE financing available in their jurisdiction so that businesses can use it for energy efficiency and/or renewable energy projects.

Renewable Energy for Greater Minnesota

FOCUS AREAS: ☀️

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)

Statewide – CERTs is working with Minnesota farmers and rural small businesses to identify opportunities for energy efficiency in order to maximize the potential benefit of any renewable energy systems. Working statewide, the project will help prioritize renewable energy options that align with the farm or business operations and connect potential projects with resources and tools – like USDA Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) funding – to move forward on project implementation with a focus on solar (photovoltaic and thermal), biomass and small wind.

Scaling up Clean Energy Deployment across Minnesota

FOCUS AREAS: ☀️

McKnight Foundation

Statewide – This funding supports scaling up clean energy project deployment across Minnesota by developing community capacity to implement projects, cultivating innovative community connections, and expanding the use of CERTs as a technical assistance and resource hub.

Solar Possible

FOCUS AREAS: ☀️

Great Plains Institute, Office of Enterprise Sustainability

Multi-region – The Solar Possible initiative offers state agencies, local governments and schools in Xcel Energy electric territory in Minnesota the opportunity to procure solar through a joint Request for Proposal process.

SolSmart

FOCUS AREAS: ☀️

Great Plains Institute

Statewide – SolSmart is a national program that provides free technical assistance with addressing local barriers to solar energy development. In collaborating with partners, CERTs has supported Chisago and Stearns Counties and the cities of Austin, Grand Rapids, Hutchinson, Pine City, Rochester and St. Francis with participation in and advancement toward designation through SolSmart.