



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA | EXTENSION

REGIONAL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIPS

Engaging Greater Minnesota Regions in Climate Adaptation Ideation and Innovation: Interim Report

Prepared for the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency

**Running draft not yet submitted:
for writing sample purposes only**

May 26, 2015

Continual Tracking Report

(All reports should reflect an on-going, rolling status update of the project. Never delete previous information, but always add additional information at each phase of progress and always submit electronically.)

Interim Report

Final Report

Project Title: Regents of the University of Minnesota - Engaging Greater Minnesota Regions in Climate Adaptation Ideation and Innovation

Focus Area F: Communities Adapting to Climate Change and Extreme Weather

Preferred project proposal: F2. Education and outreach to communities and individuals regarding climate adaptation and extreme weather resilience.

Goal Statement: This project will help communities in Greater Minnesota adapt to climate change and extreme weather through five regional convenings that will educate communities about climate change and facilitate contacts and the exchange of ideas and technologies for climate change adaptation.

Project Evaluation Plan and Outcomes: A pre-convening survey of potential participants will be implemented to help shape the format and agenda of the convenings. Post-convenings, a survey of participants will measure learning, exposure to innovation, connections, and potential changed behaviors and new initiatives. Findings from the convenings will be documented and shared through statewide, regional and local news outlets, social media, and agencies and organizations that reach Greater Minnesota constituencies and public officials.

Climate change adaptation outcomes will take many forms across many levels: individual, household, farmstead, community and watershed. Dialogues on climate change adaptation will be increased throughout Greater Minnesota. By leveraging the reach and relationships of the University of Minnesota Regional Sustainable Development Partnerships (RSDP), this project will increase awareness and facilitate the sharing of strategies, innovations and technologies that can be employed at the local level to build resilience in the face of climate change and extreme weather.

Project Work Plan

Objective 1 of 2: The University of Minnesota Extension RSDP will invite public officials (federal, state, county, city, watershed district and other entities), farmers, community members, and innovators in Greater Minnesota along with University of Minnesota researchers and the MPCA to convene to discuss, inform, learn and share locally-appropriate solutions for extreme weather resilience and climate adaptation. The principal outcome will be that 300 attendees of up to five regional convenings (~60 in each) will learn about extreme weather resilience both within their region and statewide and will be better able to implement adaptive practices.

Task 1: Organize, coordinate, and execute up to 5 regional convenings. Engage speakers, such as Extension Climatologist Mark Seeley, other facilitators and venues. Leverage RSDP connections to advertise and recruit participants from Greater Minnesota, the University of Minnesota, and state agencies. Use pre-convening survey to help shape convening format and agenda. At conference, connect community, public officials and University of Minnesota researchers and staff around the topic of climate change adaptation. Identify and encourage sharing of grassroots and on-the-ground innovations that are occurring and evolving to adapt to climate change. Use post-convenings survey of participants to measure learning, exposure to innovation, connections, and potential changed behaviors and new initiatives.

Subtask 1A. Northeast Minnesota Regional Convening

Titles of Persons Responsible: Statewide Director Kathy Draeger, Executive Director Okey Ukaga (NE region), Statewide Associate Director Greg Schweser, Statewide Assistant Director Dan Gilchrist, Student Employee

Subtask 1B. Southeast Minnesota Regional Convening

Title of Persons Responsible: Statewide Director Kathy Draeger, Executive Director Erin Meier (SE region), Statewide Associate Director Greg Schweser, Statewide Assistant Director Dan Gilchrist, Student Employee

Subtask 1C. Central Minnesota Regional Convening

Titles of Persons Responsible: Statewide Director Kathy Draeger, Executive Director Molly Zinns (Central region), Statewide Associate Director Greg Schweser, Statewide Assistant Director Dan Gilchrist, Student Employee

Subtask 1D. Northwest Minnesota Regional Convening

Titles of Persons Responsible: Statewide Director Kathy Draeger, Executive Director Linda Kingery (NW region), Statewide Associate Director Greg Schweser, Statewide Assistant Director Dan Gilchrist, Student Employee

Subtask 1E. Southwest Minnesota Regional Convening

Titles of Persons Responsible: Statewide Director Kathy Draeger, Executive Director David Fluegel (SW region), Statewide Associate Director Greg Schweser, Statewide Assistant Director Dan Gilchrist, Student Worker

Timeframe: February 2015 – June 2016

Timeframe: February 2015 – June 2016

Objective 1 Total: Grant: \$27,610.00 Match: \$9,204.09 Total: \$36,814.09

Interim - Expenditures: Grant \$ _____ Match: \$ _____ Total Expenditures: _____

Date: 5/27/15 Progress Update/Lessons Learned:

Project Launch and Planning: Beginning in January 2015, RSDP held regularly organizing calls with its staff, local organizers and Climate Generation organizers in order to prepare for the three spring climate change convenings. The purposes of the calls were generations of ideas, consensus decisions, and assignment of tasks.

For the Lamberton convening, RSDP staff, volunteer board members and local organizers spent many hours in meetings and on calls to help arrange the agenda, venue, etc. Invitations using RSDP's regional lists were sent by US mail, email, and via Facebook and Twitter to reach farmers and others in Southwest Minnesota. Notice was also included in RSDP's monthly Happenings newsletter, and University of Minnesota Brief, which reaches all faculty and staff in the UMN system. Meeting notices for Crookston and Duluth events were also sent to Climate Generation's regionally segmented list of supporters and previous event attendees. (See examples in Appendix.)

RSDP was pleased to plan its climate change convenings in Crookston and Duluth in close collaboration with Climate Generation, a Minnesota non-profit organization committed to climate change awareness and action. The collaboration drew on the organizing and educational strengths of Climate Generation while utilizing RSDP's knowledge of the people, organizations and landscape of Greater Minnesota and its connections to the people and resources of the University of Minnesota. Climate Generation is carrying out a project called 'Climate Minnesota: Local Stories, Community Solutions,' which is supported by the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund and the McKnight Foundation. For the Crookston and Duluth convenings, RSDP and Climate Generation staff conducted organizing, "cast call" and recap conference calls to ensure that the events were locally appropriate, and interesting and inspiring for attendees.

RSDP believes this collaboration has broadened its reach, increased the number of convening attendees, and improved communications around the convenings, and plans to continue this collaboration for its Southeast and Central Minnesota convenings.

A USDA North Central Sustainable Agriculture and Research mini-grant provided funds for food at these events.

Events:

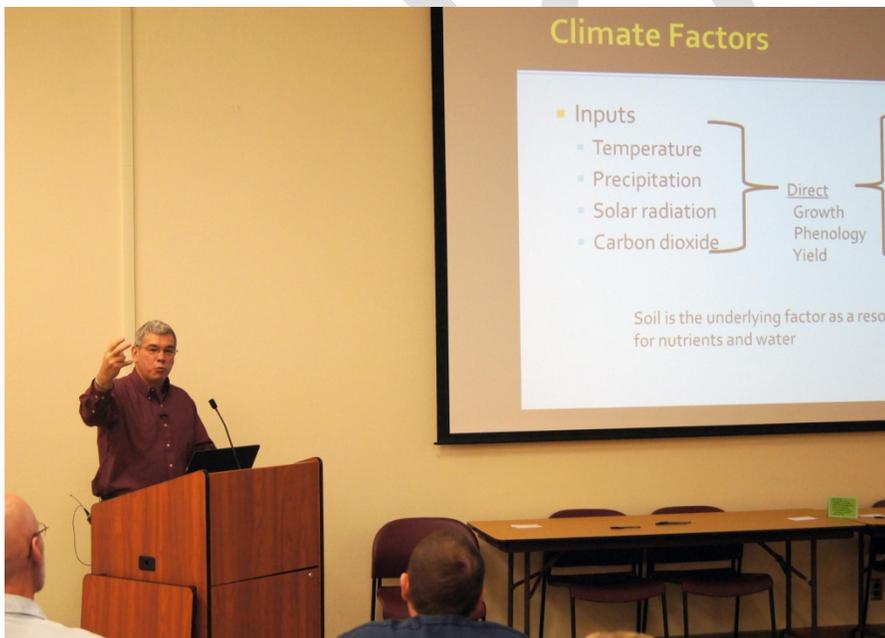
U of M Lamberton Research and Outreach Center

RSDP held a climate change convening at the University of Minnesota Southwest Research and Outreach Center (SWROC) in Lamberton on March 16. The event, titled "Farmers Leading the Way: Where Climate Adaptation Intersects with Agriculture and Food Systems", was a full-day event, running from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., and attracted nearly 90 participants.

Extension Climatologist Mark Seeley began the event by reviewing changes he has seen in rainfall events, drought and heat waves in Minnesota and specific to Southwest Minnesota over the past three decades, and Jerry Hatfield, director of the USDA ARS National Laboratory for Agriculture and the Environment in Ames, Iowa, addressed innovative ag practices designed to adapt to the changing weather.

"We need to look at what is happening in our back yard and understand it," said Seeley. "We've broken 8,923 daily climate records in the past decade in Minnesota." Seeley spoke of rising heat indexes, warmer winters, and concurrent increase in the severity of heavy rain events and droughts.

According to Hatfield, changes are definitely occurring, but that adapting to new climate conditions is nothing new to farming. "We need climate smart agriculture that can preserve productivity and the overall landscape," said Hatfield.



USDA's Jerry Hatfield discusses farming and climate change issues

After the participants heard about what scientists are learning from climate measurement data, Jeff Strock, a Soil, Water and Climate professor at SWROC provided an update on regionally-specific research involving climate change adaptation strategies in SW Minnesota.



Graduate student Bryan Runck discusses climate change innovations being developed at the University of Minnesota through the Forever Green initiative.

Bryan Runck, a U of M PhD candidate from Lamberton, overviewed a U of MN initiative to develop cover crops and perennials called the Forever Green Initiative. Perennials could help with soil retention and the common weed pennycress has the potential to be a winter annual crop that could serve as ground cover as well as a profitable oilseed crop, Runck said.

Farmers from the region then led small group conversations in a session dubbed “Farmers’ Café” that focused on exchanging ideas, tools and technologies. The small groups’ topics included Conventional Corn and Soybeans, Organic Grains, Continuous Living Cover, 3rd Crops: Adding Diversity to Corn and Soybean Row Crops, Grass-based Livestock, Vegetable Farming, and Winter Produce Production. Participants shared innovations they have created or are contemplating, with an emphasis on adaptations at the home, farmstead and community levels.

At its own significant expense, SWRSDP contracted coverage with Pioneer Public Television in Appleton for a portion of the cost to create a one-hour program based on the convening, which aired on April 30 across the region and has been offered to TPT’s Minnesota Channel for further use. The one-hour program is online at z.umn.edu/w8x.

RSDP staff and board members in Southwest Minnesota, who spent significant time and effort in creating this successful event, are following-up on possible collaborations and projects in the region that could help spread climate change adaptation among the agricultural community. MPCA was credited from the podium, on written materials and in the Pioneer Public Television broadcast.



Redwood County farmer Grant Breitreutz facilitates a small group conversation on continuous living cover.



Farmer Linda Meschke presents the findings of the small group exploring third crops.



Molina Handeen and vegetable farming group discuss on-the-farm innovations.

University of Minnesota Crookston

On April 15, RSDP's Northwest Region held a climate change convening in Crookston in cooperation with the Will Steger Foundation (now Climate Generation). Under the shared banner of Climate Minnesota: Crookston, 100 attendees came out to talk about how to make community-based change on issues related to climate change. They were welcomed by Crookston Mayor Gary Willhite. The convenings were all preceded by a resource fair that brought in 10 to 20 local and regional environmental, agriculture and energy-related organizations to connect with attendees.

Climatologist Mark Seeley told attendees that, "We're witness to our changing planet right here, right now," he said. "The things that we value, the things that we covet, the things that we count on are being affected by this and they are not likely to ease anytime soon...To dismiss this issue at this moment in time that's occurring in our very own backyard is a gross error in judgment."

As it happened, dust clouds were towering across fields in the Crookston area on April 15. Local organic farmer Robin Brekken said it was a sad day on the landscape, and he spoke about his efforts to improve soil health on his farm. Brekken was one of three local storytelling panelists, along with Dan Svedarsky and DeAndra O'Connell who shared the work their organizations were doing to promote sustainability in the Crookston area. Svedarsky, director of U of M Crookston's Center for Sustainability, talked about the university community garden and the importance of local food production. Brekken, a local farmer, also shared his food initiatives and organic farming practices. O'Connell is Crookston's Sustainable Community Outreach Coordinator and shared her work in getting Crookston recognized as a Green Step city.



Mark Seeley spoke about the particular changes Northwest Minnesota had seen to its climate.



CG's Jothna Harris, RSDP's Linda Kingery and Crookston Mayor Gary Willhite share a laugh.

Participants then attended one of five workshops, ranging from an RSDP-led workshop on planning and implementing community-based climate adaptation projects to a workshop on renewable energy and energy efficiency options for homes and businesses run by the Rural Renewable Energy Alliance (RREAL) and Otter Tail Power. Presenters supplied resources to help attendees continue their work after the event, and attendees pledged to continue to work toward climate change solutions by filling out postcards that will be mailed to them later.



Climate Minnesota: Crookston attendees hold up cards on which they've written one word that describes what they most valued about their community.

Both the panel and the workshops included climate change adaptation solutions in order to meet the goals of RSDP's MPCA project. For example, one adaptation project that may come out of the convening is a ground water protection project in the Hubbard county area related to irrigation of potatoes competing for ground water with a growing population. Other potential projects include designing and implement a rain garden at the Shooting Star casino in Mahnomen to treat stormwater from large roof and parking lot, developing a regional "fibershed" akin to a foodshed in order to build economic development among fiber farmers, weavers, knitters, etc., and a demonstration project for remote/rural communities' emergency management systems. Other potential projects were broader than adaptation alone: a bike lending program for college students, trainings about how to implement solar gardens in the Otter Tail Power and Minnkota service areas, a project to increase walkability in Crookston ("open streets", perhaps on Sundays).



The Green Step Cities workshop group at Crookston discusses what local governments can do to lessen their climate impact.

Duluth

The Duluth convening was held the evening of May 18. Mayor Don Ness welcomed approximately 130 attendees to the Duluth Depot and highlighted the city's work to rebuild after the city's devastating 2012 flood. The Duluth convening highlighted the current and future effects of climate change in Northeast Minnesota, and provided tangible opportunities to build community resilience in the face of those effects.

In his presentation, Mark Seeley gave a science-based overview of how the climate has changed in the Duluth area in recent decades, laying the foundation for discussions about how climate change affects what Duluth residents value about living in the Northland. "Our data are flashing lights at us: 'It's changing, it's changing.' It's blinding...our climate is changing and it's already having consequences" said Seeley.

During a storytelling panel, three community leaders presented the work they were doing to engage in local climate change solutions. Jesse Schomberg, Interim Director of Minnesota Sea Grant, spoke about building resiliency in the aftermath of the Duluth flood; Boisse Johnson of St. Mark's African Methodist Episcopal Church discussed how community engagement helped his church land a grant from Minnesota Power to improve the building's energy efficiency; and Shannon Judd, staff of the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, shared the story of the tribe's efforts to advance sustainability and climate solutions, both on their land and across broader treaty land in the Upper Midwest.



Boissey Johnson describes energy improvements to his church supported by a grant from a local utility.



Climate Minnesota: Duluth attendees discuss what they value about their community.

Attendees chose from a selection of five solutions workshops, including a climate storytelling workshop presented by Climate Generation, an RSDP-led workshop on planning and implementing community-based climate adaptation projects, and an aquaponics workshop led by UMD Victus Farms in Silver Bay. Individuals at each workshop pledged to continue to work toward climate change solutions by filling out postcards that will be mailed to them later, and presenters offered resources and connections to facilitate future involvement. At least 20 people stayed long past the event's end time to talk with Jesse Schomberg of Sea Grant about household and neighborhood scale adaptations, especially those related to flooding and pooling of water, such as rain barrels, rain gardens and landscaping.

At the RSDP workshop, attendees talked about potential projects aimed at setting up a hydrogen fueling station in Duluth, emphasizing the importance of pollinators, and local energy production.

Loll Designs provided additional funding for the Duluth convening. Funders, including MPCA, were represented from the podium, in presentations, invitations and handouts.



In Duluth, RSDP's Okey Ukaga explains how community ideas can become projects with support from his organization.



Jesse Schomberg of Sea Grant leads a workshop on how neighbors can manage water runoff in Duluth.

News Coverage: Organizers distributed news releases publicizing and recapping events through the University of Minnesota Extension's regional news distribution system, University of Minnesota Crookston, and event notices (including paid Facebook ads) and real-time posts through social media also helped raise awareness of the event (see examples in the appendix).

Marshall Independent: Climate has changed, farmers have adapted, March 17, 2015
<<http://marshallindependent.com/page/content.detail/id/566786/-Bipolar-weather---Climate-has-changed--farmers-have-adapted.html?nav=5015>>

Worthington Daily Globe: Farmers lead the way, March 16, 2015
<<http://www.dglobe.com/news/3701239-farmers-lead-way>>

David Benson receives U of M Outstanding Community Partner Service Award, May 5, 2015
<<http://www.dglobe.com/news/3738472-david-benson-receives-u-m-outstanding-community-partner-service-award>>

Agrinews: Weather is changing dramatically, March 30, 2015
<http://www.agrinews.com/news/minnesota_news/weather-is-changing-dramatically/article_921acc1f-3c35-5abd-9ff2-9566d8a00c24.html>

Climate shift, crop shift, April 10, 2015
<http://www.agrinews.com/news/minnesota_news/climate-shift-crop-shift/article_a9c63b43-9a34-52ef-aa8f-835cb8c81676.html>

The Land: Hatfield: Climate change will force ag diversity, April 10, 2015
<http://www.thelandonline.com/news/hatfield-climate-change-will-force-ag-diversity/article_38980598-dfb2-11e4-ac75-d7102f3b9d00.html?utm_content=bufferb1ee0&utm_medium=social&utm_source=twitter.com&utm_campaign=buffer>

Climatologist: Subsoil moisture will be recharged, April 10, 2015

<http://www.thelandonline.com/news/climatologist-subsoil-moisture-will-be-recharged/article_ab9018f2-dfb1-11e4-ac56-872237207a6a.html>

Tracy Headlight Herald (paywall)

Morris Sun Tribune: Agriculture and climate change to be discussed on April 30 broadcast, April 27, 2015

<<http://www.morrisuntribune.com/news/3732279-agriculture-and-climate-change-be-discussed-april-30-broadcast>>

Crookston Times: Conversation on climate change, local impacts and community-based solutions in Crookston April 15, April 6, 2015

<<http://www.crookstontimes.com/article/20150406/NEWS/150409754/-1/news?rssfeed=true>>

Climate event in Crookston (photos), April 16, 2015

<<http://www.crookstontimes.com/apps/pbcs.dll/gallery?Site=MN&Date=20150416&Category=PHOTOGALLERY&ArtNo=416009999&Ref=PH>>

Will Steger Foundation - Climate change -Right here, right now

<<http://www.crookstontimes.com/article/20150416/NEWS/150419684/?Start=1>>

KROX Radio, Crookston: Mark Seeley interview April 15, 2015

Duluth News Tribune: Climate change forum tonight at Duluth Depot, May 18, 2015

<<http://www.duluthnewtribune.com/news/3747468-climate-change-forum-tonight-duluth-depot>>

Fox21 TV (Duluth): Climate Change Campaign Begins in Minnesota, May 18, 2015

<<http://www.fox21online.com/news/local-news/Climate-Change-Campaign-Begins-In-MN/33095760>>

Northland News TV (Duluth): Climate Minnesota storytelling encourages easy conversation, May 18, 2015

<<http://www.northlandsnewscenter.com/news/local/Climate-Minnesota-storytelling--304195101.html>>

Final Expenditures: **Grant \$** _____ **Match: \$** _____ **Total Expenditures:** _____

Date: _____ **Progress Update/Lessons Learned:** <insert narrative>

Objective 2 of 2: Compile, document and disseminate convenings' results, and complete Interim and Final Report.

Task 2A. Compile, document and disseminate results from convenings and post-convenings surveys from regional convenings. Findings from the convenings will be documented and shared through statewide, regional and local news outlets, social media, and agencies and organizations that reach Greater Minnesota constituencies and public officials.

Task 2B: Reporting - RSDP will submit an Interim Report roughly halfway through the grant period by December 2015. RSDP will submit a Final Report 1 month prior to the end of the grant agreement or at 100% project completion, whichever occurs first.

Timeframe: March 2015 – May 2016

Title of Persons Responsible: Statewide Director Kathryn Draeger, Statewide Assistant Director Dan Gilchrist, Statewide Associate Director Greg Schweser, Student Worker

Objective 2 Total: **Grant: \$2,390.00** **Match: \$796.89** **Total:**
\$3,186.89

Interim - Expenditures: **Grant \$ _____** **Match: \$ _____** **Total**
Expenditures: _____

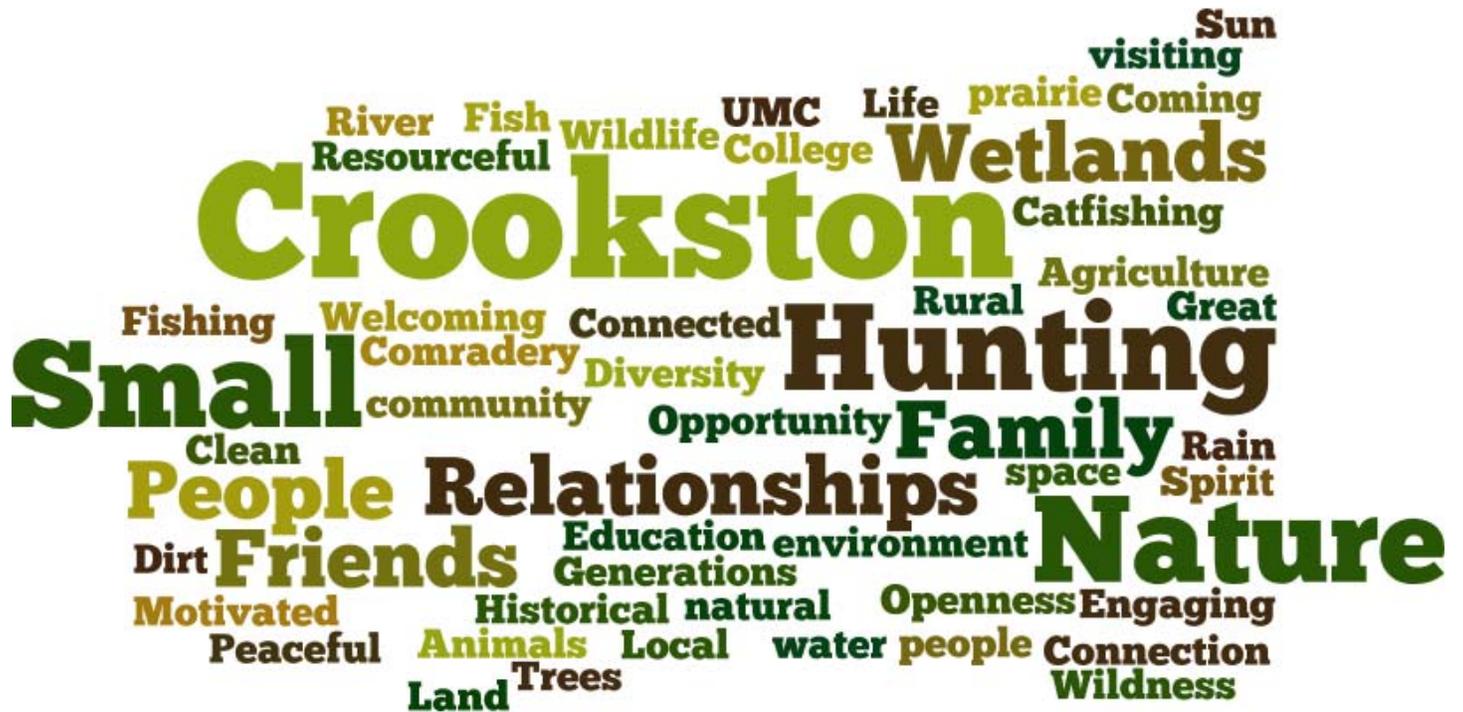
Date: _____ Progress Update/Lessons Learned:

Documentation: RSDP and partners developed a google site where all of the project planning and documentation is organized and shared among all the project partners. It is [accessible here](#).

Evaluation: Registrants completed a pre-event survey after registering for the event, including demographic information and attitudes toward climate change modeled on the "Six Americas" research published by the Yale Project on Climate Change Communication, which classifies Americans in six categories of climate change attitudes based on a national survey: the Alarmed (13% of the US population), Concerned (31%), Cautious (23%), Disengaged (7%), Doubtful (13%), and Dismissive (13%). Organizers worked with an evaluation consultant to strike a balance between finding useful information and overburdening the respondent with questions. In keeping with the adaptation theme, registrants were asked about what kinds of climate-related mitigation action they were already taking. A post-event survey with analysis of the impact/change related to each event is planned for roughly two months after the event.

In Crookston (and still being created in for Duluth), several immediate feedback methods were used to gauge participants' moods and attitudes:

- Attendees were asked from the podium what they valued about their community, and those words were compiled into a word cloud chart and posted on the recap page.



- Midway through the event, attendees were asked to provide a word that summed up their feelings about climate change and the event, and then asked to indicate their feelings using a scale of faces from happy to sad. The results were tabulated and posted on the event recap page.

Crookston Climate Convening

Circle how you feel about tackling climate change!



- To help gauge attendees' immediate sense of what worked and what didn't at the event, attendees at Duluth and Crookston were also allowed to vote on what they found to be the best part of the event by placing a dot sticker next to their preferred section of the agenda posted on the door on their way out.

As a normative evaluation practice, RSDP and Climate Generation organizers have taken time after each event to reflect on ways to improve future convenings to ensure the cohesiveness of the evening and adequate chance for attendees to interact and find areas for continued action. Some of those changes included allowing more time for the resource fair, asking presenters to be present earlier in the evening, asking science-oriented presenters to simplify their slides for a general audience, and giving participants more time to interact with plenary presenters.

Final Expenditures: Grant \$ _____ Match: \$ _____ Total Expenditures: _____

Date: _____ Progress Update/Lessons Learned:

Final Project Costs

Estimated Objectives 1-2 Costs: **Grant: \$ 30,000.00** **Match: \$ 10,000.98**
Total: \$ 40,000.98

Final Objectives 1-2 Costs: **Grant: \$ _____** **Match: \$ _____**
Total: \$ _____

DRAFT

GRANT AGREEMENT

Attachment B (continued)

Change Orders/Amendments

No, there have been no formal or informal changes/amendments to the Agreement or the Project Work Plan and Budget as outlined in Attachment A.

Yes, there have been formal and/or informal changes/amendments to the Agreement and/or the Project Work Plan and Budget as outlined in Attachment A.

If yes, complete the following record of change orders/amendments. In addition to being electronically submitted as part of the Report, this page must be signed and faxed (651-215-0246) or mailed to the MPCA Authorized Representative.

#	Date Requested	Requested By	Date Approved	Approved By	Objective Impacted	Description of and Reason for the change/amendment
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						

Signatures:

The signatures below authorized the Grantee to proceed with the items identified above:

Grantee's Authorized Representative: _____ Date _____

MPCA's Authorized Representative: _____ Date _____

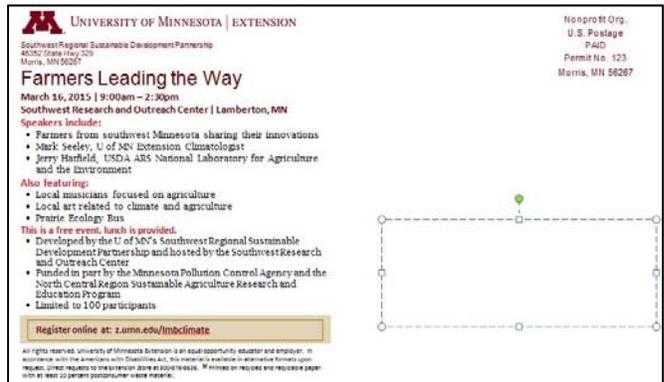
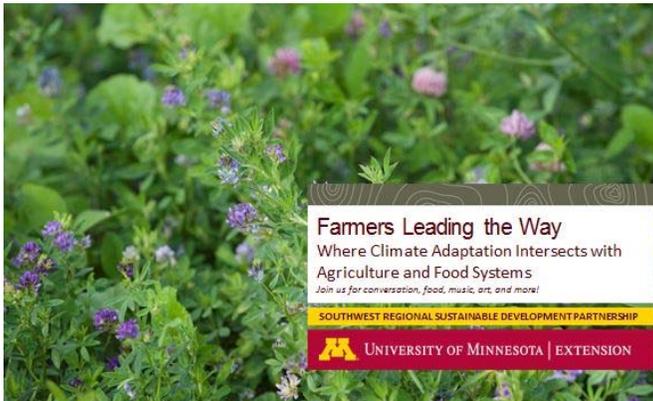
Any major change to the Agreement (i.e., project scope, timeline beyond Agreement expiration date, etc.) must be requested and executed as a formal Amendment (requiring execution by all parties). Formal Amendments are prepared

for processing by the MPCA's Authorized Representative and must be executed prior to implementation of requested changes.

DRAFT

Appendix: Selected Publicity and convening materials

Postcards:



Appendix: Selected Publicity and convening materials

Appendix: Selected Publicity and convening materials

Email invitations:

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MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN MINNESOTA | ENVIRONMENT • FOOD & AGRICULTURE • COMMUNITIES • FAMILIES • YOUTH

Regional Sustainable Development Partnerships
Southwest

"Farmers Lead the Way" event March 16:
a forum for innovative ag adaptation strategies

We all know that erratic and extreme weather plays havoc with farmers' plans and bottom lines. That's why growers and others in the southwest Minnesota ag community are invited to hear about weather and climate trends and innovative agriculture practices to adapt to them at an event on **Monday, March 16** at the [U of M Southwest Research and Outreach Center](#) in Lamberton.



The event, titled **Farmers Lead the Way**, will feature [Extension Climatologist Mark Seeley](#) overviewing changes he has seen in rainfall events, drought and heat waves in Southwest Minnesota over the past three decades, and [Jerry Hatfield](#) from the USDA National Laboratory for Agriculture and the Environment in Ames, Iowa, who will kick-off discussions about innovative ag practices designed to adapt to the changing weather.

In this highly interactive convening, participants will have the chance to share innovations they have created or are contemplating, with an emphasis on adaptations at the home, farmstead and community levels. There is no charge for attending the convening, which includes lunch, but registration is limited to 100 people.

Farmers Lead the Way
Monday, March 16, 2015
9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.
U of M SW Research and Outreach Center
22650, 125th Street, Lamberton, MN 56152 ([directions](#))
Event is free; advanced registration is requested at z.umn.edu/adpt
or call David Fluegel, 320.349.0498

Farmers Lead the Way is organized by the [Southwest Regional Sustainable Development Partnership](#), one of five partnerships that connect communities with the resources of the University of Minnesota to drive sustainability in Greater Minnesota, and hosted by SWROC. The Lamberton event is one of five planned Greater Minnesota climate change adaptation convenings to be held by the [Regional Sustainable Development Partnerships](#) (RSDP) with support from the [Minnesota Pollution Control Agency](#) and [NCR-SARE](#).



Regional Sustainable Development Partnerships
Southwest

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WILL STEGER FOUNDATION 

Regional Sustainable Development Partnerships
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
EXTENSION

Climate Minnesota: Local Stories, Community Solutions is coming to Northwest Minnesota! RSVP now for a public convening in [Bemidji](#) on April 14 or [Crookston](#) on April 15.

**What do you value most about your community?
How is climate change impacting what you value most?
How can you join with neighbors to implement community solutions?**

Join us for a convening of experts, community members and storytellers, including **Mark Seeley** and **Mayors Rita Albrecht** and **Gary Willhite**. Learn about local impacts and commit to real solutions:

[Climate Minnesota: Bemidji](#)
Tuesday, April 14th, 5:30 – 8:00 pm
Bemidji State University

[Climate Minnesota: Crookston](#)
Tuesday, April 15th, 5:30 – 8:00 pm
University of Minnesota Crookston

All ages are welcome – these events are free and food is provided. RSVP for the Bemidji convening [here](#) and for Crookston [here](#).

Invite your friends! Share the [Bemidji](#) and [Crookston](#) Facebook events with our networks.



CLIMATE MINNESOTA
LOCAL STORIES, COMMUNITY SOLUTIONS

Funding Provided by:

 Minnesota Pollution Control Agency

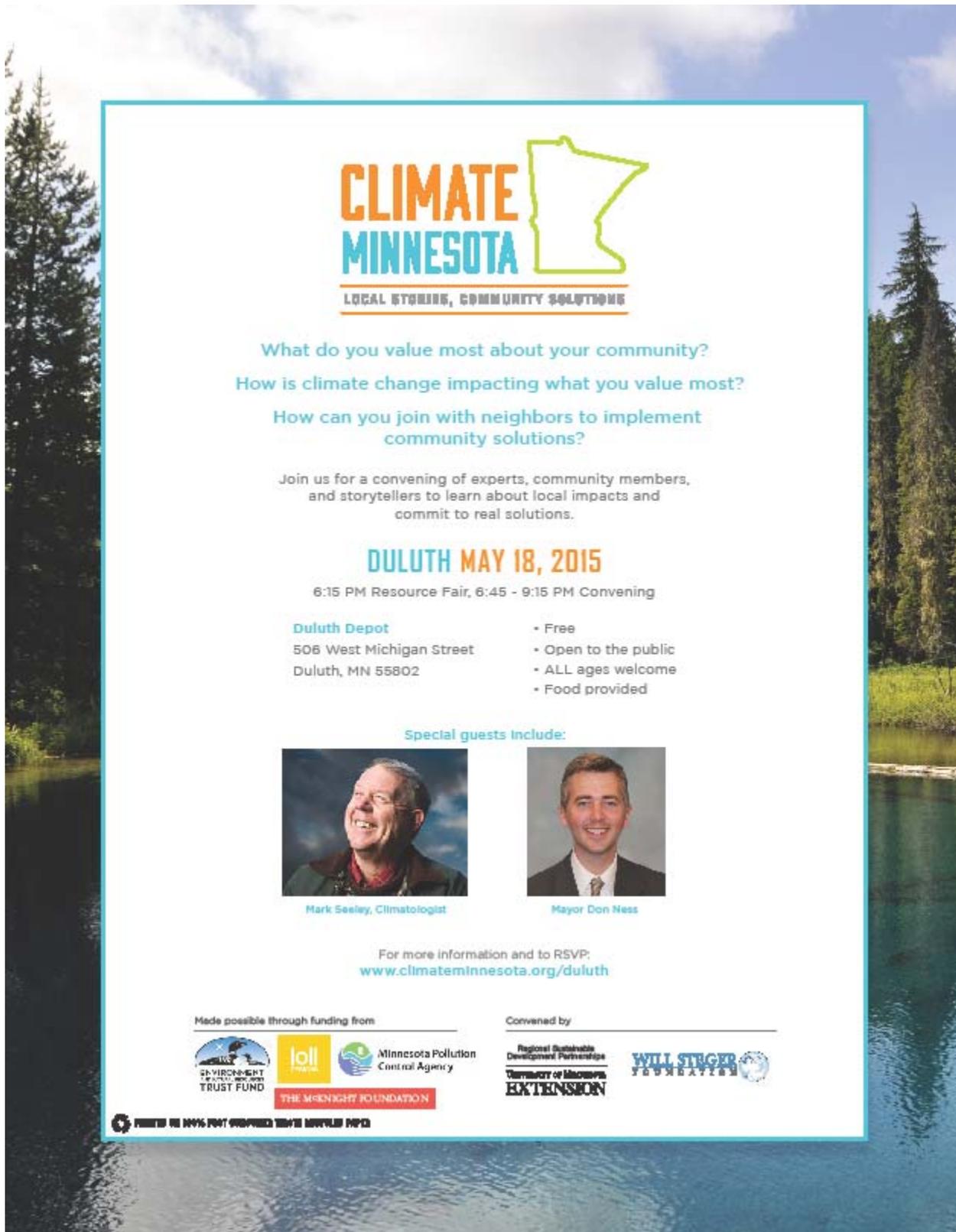
 THE MCKNIGHT FOUNDATION



ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND

Appendix: Selected Publicity and convening materials

Poster:



CLIMATE MINNESOTA

LOCAL STORIES, COMMUNITY SOLUTIONS

What do you value most about your community?
How is climate change impacting what you value most?
How can you join with neighbors to implement community solutions?

Join us for a convening of experts, community members, and storytellers to learn about local impacts and commit to real solutions.

DULUTH MAY 18, 2015

6:15 PM Resource Fair, 6:45 - 9:15 PM Convening

Duluth Depot

506 West Michigan Street
Duluth, MN 55802

- Free
- Open to the public
- ALL ages welcome
- Food provided

Special guests include:



Mark Seeley, Climatologist



Mayor Don Ness

For more information and to RSVP:
www.climateminnesota.org/duluth

Made possible through funding from



Minnesota Pollution Control Agency

THE MCKENIGHT FOUNDATION

Convened by

Regional Sustainable Development Partnerships
University of Minnesota
EXTENSION



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Appendix: Selected Publicity and convening materials

News release:

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: MAY 18, 2015

MEDIA CONTACTS:

Katie Siegner, Climate Generation
301-943-9389; katie@climategen.org

Okey Ukaga, U of M Regional Sustainable Development Partnerships
218-341-6029; ukaga001@umn.edu



Climate Minnesota: Duluth Connects Community to Local Climate Impacts, Solutions

Duluth, Minn. – On the evening of May 18, Duluth community members attended a public convening about local climate change impacts and solutions hosted by Climate Generation: A Will Steger Legacy (formerly the Will Steger Foundation) and the University of Minnesota Regional Sustainable Development Partnerships (RSDP). Climate Minnesota: Duluth highlighted the current and future effects of climate change in Northeast Minnesota, and provided tangible opportunities to build community resilience in the face of those effects.

Throughout the evening, participants found wide agreement that Minnesotans are experiencing climate change impacts in their own backyards, that people’s stories about those changes are powerful motivators for community change, and that community-based actions to address climate change can be effective and lead to broader transformation. The convening was part of Climate Generation’s two-year public education project, Climate Minnesota: Local Stories, Community Solutions, which is supported by the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund and the McKnight Foundation, and was coordinated in partnership with RSDP with support from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA). Loll Designs provided additional funding for the Duluth convening.

Speakers such as Mayor Don Ness and University of Minnesota Extension Climatologist Mark Seeley drew on the power of stories to connect with the audience on this often complex issue. “Stories touch on people’s emotional intelligence, value systems, and community relationships,” said Seeley. “In doing so they provoke more interaction by bringing scientific knowledge into conversations about what is important, what we value most, and what we should preserve and protect for future generations.” In his presentation, Seeley gave a science-based overview of how the climate has changed in the Duluth area in recent decades, laying the foundation for discussions about how climate change affects what Duluth residents value about living in the Northwoods region.

During a storytelling panel, three community leaders presented the work they were doing to engage in local climate change solutions. Jesse Schomberg, Interim Director of Minnesota Sea Grant, spoke about building resiliency in the aftermath of the Duluth flood; Boissey Johnson of St. Mark’s Episcopal Church discussed how community engagement helped his church land a grant from Minnesota Power to improve the building’s energy efficiency; and Shannon Judd from Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa shared the story of their tribe’s efforts to advance sustainability and climate solutions.

“The storytelling panelists were selected to demonstrate the broad range of place-specific climate impacts and community-oriented solutions work taking place in the Duluth community,” said Jothsna Harris, Climate Generation’s Education Coordinator.

Appendix: Selected Publicity and convening materials

News release (continued):

Attendees chose from a selection of five solutions workshops, including a climate storytelling workshop presented by Climate Generation, an RSDP-led workshop on planning and implementing community-based climate adaptation projects, and an aquaponics workshop led by Victus Farms. Individuals at each workshop pledged to continue participating in their group's climate solution into the future, and presenters offered resources and connections to facilitate future involvement. Convening organizers expressed a strong interest in maintaining the new relationships formed at the event through follow-up outreach and on-the-ground support.

“So much of what people love about living in Northeastern Minnesota is tied to the outdoors, and what we saw tonight was proof that our natural environment in this region is already changing,” said Okey Ukaga, RSDP’s executive director for Northeast Minnesota. “It was gratifying to see people go from concerned, to motivated, to engaged in climate change-related ideas – initiatives that concerned citizens in the Northland have been working on already and new ones as well.”

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Climate Generation: A Will Steger Legacy educates and empowers people to engage in solutions to climate change. Building on the experience of our founder, polar explorer, educator and climate advocate Will Steger, Climate Generation works with educators, youth and the general public to build climate literacy and promote a solutions-oriented approach to addressing climate change. For more information, visit <http://www.climategen.org/>. For more on the Climate Minnesota project, visit www.climateminnesota.org.

RSDP brings together local talent with University of Minnesota resources to drive sustainability in the areas of agriculture and food systems, tourism and resilient communities, natural resources, and clean energy in Greater Minnesota. The organization is composed of a statewide office and five regions, and is part of the University of Minnesota Extension. <http://www.extension.umn.edu/rsdp/>.

Appendix: Selected Publicity and convening materials

Agenda:



CLIMATE MINNESOTA 
LOCAL STORIES, COMMUNITY SOLUTIONS

Wednesday April 15th, 2015
5 pm, Resource Fair
5:30 pm - 8:00 pm Convening

University of Crookston
Bede Ballroom
2900 University Ave
225 Sargeant Student Center
Crookston, MN 56716
climateminnesota.org

Keep the #ClimateMN conversation going on Twitter

The Will Steger Foundation and the University of Minnesota's Regional Sustainable Development Partnerships are excited to launch Climate Minnesota: Local Stories, Community Solutions, a project funded through the Minnesota Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund, McKnight Foundation and the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. Climate Minnesota responds to the urgent need to increase climate literacy and promote place-based solutions among Minnesotans by sharing credible information on local impacts, along with stories of individuals. The project builds on the power of media for sharing stories and the importance of personal contact to reach a broader, more diverse audience.

AGENDA

<p>WELCOME</p> <p>Mayor Gary Willhite</p> <p>CLIMATE CHANGE AND THE CROOKSTON COMMUNITY</p> <p>Mark Seeley, University of Minnesota, Climatologist</p> <p>STORYTELLING PANEL</p> <p>Organic Farming as a Climate Change Solution Robin Brekken, Robin Brekken Farms, Inc.</p> <p>UMC Campus Community Garden: A Case Study Dan Svedarsky, Director, Center for Sustainability, UMC</p> <p>Crookston as an Official GreenStep City! DeAndra O'Connell, Sustainable Community Outreach Coordinator, UMC and City of Crookston</p>	<p>SOLUTIONS WORKSHOPS</p> <p>Climate Storytelling Workshop Will Steger Foundation</p> <p>Idea Brief: Climate Adaptation and Innovation Development Regional Sustainable Development Partnerships, University of Minnesota</p> <p>Energy Efficiency & Solar Opportunities Otter Tail Power and Rural Renewable Energy Alliance (RREAL)</p> <p>Green Step as a Solution UMC, City of Crookston, & Regional Sustainable Development Partnerships</p> <p>Agricultural Solutions in a Changing Climate Forever Green Initiative & USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)</p>
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Appendix: Selected Publicity and convening materials

Agenda (continued):

RESOURCE FAIR PARTICIPANTS

4-H www.extension.umn.edu/youth/mn4-H
Agassiz Environmental Learning Center www.aelc.fertile.org
Children Discovering Nature in NW Minnesota www.cura.umn.edu/projects/children-discovering-nature-northwest-minnesota
Environmental Quality Board/Minnesota Department of Commerce www.eqb.state.mn.us & mn.gov/commerce/energy
GreenStep City www.greenstep.pca.state.mn.us
MICAHA Retreat Center www.micahprays.org/first.php
Regional Sustainable Development Partnerships, University of Minnesota www.extension.umn.edu/rsdp/northwest
Rural Renewable Energy Alliance (RREAL) www.rreal.org
UMC Sustainability Department www3.crk.umn.edu/committees/sustainability

SOLUTIONS WORKSHOPS

I pledge to join with my neighbors to work towards climate change solutions

CLIMATE STORYTELLING WORKSHOP

We all have a story to tell. What is your climate story? Learn how personal stories can build confidence in talking to peers about this seemingly complex issue, and begin to develop your own climate story. Presented by the Will Steger Foundation.

IDEA BRIEF: CLIMATE ADAPTATION AND INNOVATION DEVELOPMENT

Be a part of innovative initiatives that are community identified and led, and leverage University of Minnesota research, education and outreach. We can help connect your idea for local climate change solutions with U of M people and resources. So, submit your idea today! Presented by the University of Minnesota's Regional Sustainable Development Partnerships.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY & SOLAR OPPORTUNITIES

Learn about energy efficiency and solar technologies that are appropriate for your home or business. We'll also share about an opportunity available for income eligible homes to install solar furnaces. Presented by Otter Tail Power and the Rural Renewable Energy Alliance (RREAL).

GREEN STEP AS A SOLUTION

The City of Crookston has officially become a GreenSteps City! Find out about the steps Crookston is taking to fight climate change, and improve community resilience as a part of this program. Participants will learn about how they can support these efforts. Presented by DeAndrea O'Connell, Sustainable Community Outreach Coordinator, University of Minnesota and City of Crookston.

AGRICULTURAL SOLUTIONS IN A CHANGING CLIMATE

Agriculture is one of the most vulnerable industries to climate change, and climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies need to be economically efficient and reduce farmer risk. Agricultural research and solutions presented by the University of Minnesota's Forever Green Initiative and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

Continue to connect with us, share your climate story, and learn more about climate change solutions at www.climateminnesota.org/crookston

Made possible through funding from



THE M'KENIGHT FOUNDATION

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