



## Lumberjack Grant Application

### PROJECT TITLE: TOWN OF CRESCENT NEIGHBORHOOD POLLINATOR & NATURALIZATION PROJECT

Submitted by (name):	<b>Joel Knutson: Chair, Town of Crescent</b>
Organization:	<b>Town of Crescent, Wisconsin</b>
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Counties:	<b>Oneida</b>

**Mission Statement:** *Lumberjack Resource Conservation & Development Council, Inc., a multi-county, nonprofit in Northeastern WI, strives to enhance area natural resources, promote a higher standard of living and improve the quality of life for area citizens by fostering partnerships between public and private sectors and strategically investing in area natural resources.*

**SUMMARY:** Review the Lumberjack Mission Statement above. How does your project align with Lumberjack's mission? Be specific. The more alignment points, the better your project is viewed.

Answer:

The Crescent town board, its town crew, and pollinator-hosting residents have a strong connection to local conservation and wish to place value on projects that protect natural resources. Residents expressed interest in creating natural preserves where insect pollinators will be protected from leading dangers such as habitat loss and roadside mortality; in response, in 2021 the Town experimented with "no-mow" and "reduced mow" areas on town roads to conserve milkweed growth and emerging wildflower populations. During the summer Town chair Joel Knutson and volunteers monitored newly-conserved milkweed patches for monarch activity, and through June and August seven "foster" families collectively reared and released over 200 monarchs from roadside-adjacent plots. Having identified areas conducive to pollinator success, in 2022 the Town continued its selective mowing practices, investing in specialized "boom" mowers that allow for specific targeting of brush and grasses; although monarch populations declined in 2022, the areas identified for protection continued to thrive and expand, generating additional local interest in expanding the concept and integrating the concept of naturalization to additional town spaces, including high profile sites at the town hall along Highway 8. The Town's goal in 2023 and beyond is to expand community interest by committing to creating at minimum six native planting zones throughout Crescent neighborhoods in the rights-of-way that will provide refuge for important pollinator species in decline and provide a boost to the walkability and interest of our residential areas with destination gardens for families to learn and be inspired to include natives in their landscapes. In 2023, we look to include a 7<sup>th</sup> "flagship" site at the town hall that will also serve as the anchor to a memorial garden, a high visibility site where the Town will include a public workshop for residents and families at the town hall to learn about the project and how they can participate.

Overall, Crescent's project aligns with the Lumberjack mission by committing to protect natural resources in a rural town, and includes both environmental and educational benefits:

- The project proposes to directly enhance area natural resources by creating planting zones that will encourage native flowering plants to grow, while benefitting pollinator insects
- The project will improve the quality of life for area citizens in this small rural town, by engaging town residents through volunteering, gardening, monitoring, and also offering a town public workshop about native plants and the benefits of land restoration
- We are directly engaging in partnerships between public and private sectors, by working with local businesses stressing native plantings, County Conservationist (and staff), and the local cooperative invasive species management (WHIP).

**OBJECTIVES:** What problems, concerns or opportunities will this project address? You will be asked to show how your objectives were met when you present your follow-up presentation to the Council.

Crescent has 58 miles of town roads, which provides both opportunities in the Right-of-ways but also leads to splintering and losses of habitat and heightened risk of spreading invasives in traditional unrestricted mowing. (Our crew has already identified problematic thistle areas ensnaring our bird populations.) Further, there is a well-known problematic agricultural legacy in Crescent. As our Town grows, newer residents have expressed a concern to protect the natural resources and expand recreational opportunities, especially in largely undeveloped rural areas with significant potential for conservation. One of the simplest and most effective contributions Towns can make is the protection and creation of natural areas to protect native vegetation species, which will allow sensitive pollinator insects a safe space while simultaneously increasing the "walking" value of our emerging residential areas. Therefore the Town of Crescent plans to commit to create a network of natural preserves where insect pollinators will be protected from both habitat loss and roadside mortality not just at high-profile areas but specifically targeted among our low-thru-traffic, denser residential clusters.

Pollinators are known to be declining globally, as a result of multiple harmful factors such as habitat loss, overuse of pesticides, and shifting conditions due to climate change, all of which can be observed in real time in Crescent. A key indicator species is the Monarch butterfly, known to many communities and schoolchildren, which is now in need of habitat protection on its migration from North America through to Mexico each year. The Town of Crescent is currently working to establish itself among statewide and national monarch tracking and advocacy organizations as an "highlight project" to further actively encourages local governments to get involved in planting native species as both a providing safe refuge for butterflies and similar pollinator species and means to create healthy, livable walking communities.

**Objectives:**

- Create (at least) six roadside native planting zones in the Town of Crescent that will provide refuge for important pollinator species, primarily the Monarch Butterfly. Planting zones will be an average of 100 feet x 5 feet = 500 square feet and will consist of a variety of native flowering plants in each zone.
- Monitor native planting zones for Monarch butterfly eggs and chrysalis that might need to be relocated and reared to adulthood (at homes of volunteers).
- Report Monarch reproduction data via volunteer monitoring for tracking databases.
- Work in partnership with the Oneida County Land and Water Conservation Department for consultation and recommendations throughout the grant cycle.
- Ensure that any invasive plant species are detected and controlled before native plantings are installed, and monitor the zones for regrowth.

- Hold a public workshop at the Crescent Town Hall in early summer 2022 to engage as many volunteers and town residents as possible, and provide outreach on native gardening and the ways we can help Monarch butterflies and other species on our own land.
- Distribute a brochure to Town residents about the project.
- Show our neighboring Towns an example of citizen science and encourage them to participate

**FORMULATION & EVALUATION:** Why is this project the best way to address the issues described above? How will the outcome be evaluated? Be specific – outcomes that can be measured are viewed more favorably.

Answer:

This is “phase II” of what the Town hopes will be a long-term commitment to encouraging native restorations; as a work-in-progress, the Town expects to serve as a model (what works/what doesn’t) for peer towns and villages. As such, the Town is fully committed to making all its work available and be guided in future efforts by researchers and professionals – for example, our first efforts at monitoring suggested the Town’s agricultural-adjacent milkweed plots did not produce nearly the volume of monarch caterpillars as non-agricultural, forest-adjacent sites. As a town-wide project, we expect to engage in ongoing conversations with residents about the possibility of protecting native species not just by decreasing the amount of mowing done in our Town but supporting efforts with examples and seed giveaways to further encourage native plantings on private property. As chair, I am personally very familiar with the plight of the Monarch butterfly having reared them in concert with other area volunteers for several years. The Town is well prepared to host fun, engaging workshops to not just “share information” with residents but to generate long-term permanent positive activity.

Outcomes will be evaluated by (but not limited to!):

- Tracking the native plantings (number and species diversity) and rate of growth success
- Monitoring Monarch butterfly numbers by sighting, using volunteers and town chair
- Holding a successful workshop to engage Town residents
- Successful completion of invasive species management and surveying
- Working with partners: County Land & Water, WHIP, North American Butterfly Association

**ASSISTANCE NEEDED:** Why is assistance needed from Lumberjack? Who within your organization will run the project? Describe the assistance you are receiving from other partners. Include Letters of Support as outlined in Lumberjack’s Granting Policy.

Answer:

The Town is requesting assistance from Lumberjack in recognition that our goals and missions align. We feel that the Town commitment to improve the natural resources of our area is a good and supportive example of Lumberjack’s work in Oneida County, and will build on what the county conservation department has accomplished to date. The Project will be spearheaded by Joel Knutson, Town Chair, with input and oversight from the Town board, clerk, and crew. Volunteers will be recruited at Town meetings, community group meetings (e.g., lake associations) and other online community platforms such as NextDoor and Facebook. **The Town is requesting \$10,000.** This will enable the Town of Crescent to work with a landscape and plant cultivating company as a consultant, purchase appropriate varieties of native plants for planting and growth in 2023, secure supplies such as topsoil, and would include hours for a professional to survey and control any invasive species that may be present in the planting zones.

The Town will commit a large amount of match in the regular budget for the project (\$5000) including significant in-kind hours from the Town Chair and the Town Road Crew members (for assistance planting, transporting plants, disposing of brush and waste, etc). Other matches include volunteer time as well as securing potential secondary grants for further expansion. Details on budget page.

**PROJECT OUTLINE & TIMETABLE:** List the project steps and expected completion dates. Could there be any possible roadblocks? If so, list them here.

Answer:

<b>Projected Activities to include:</b>	<b>Completion Date</b>
<b>Creation of project details for bid; meetings with contractor to begin site selection</b>	Fall 2022 into winter 23
<b>Invasive species surveying</b>	Early spring 23
<b>Invasive species control</b>	April-May 2023
<b>Preparation of soil</b>	May 2023
<b>Planting of native species (plugs)</b>	June 2023
<b>Monitoring, growth, watering</b>	Summer 2023
<b>Public workshop held at Town Hall</b>	July 2023
<b>Rearing of Monarch butterflies (eggs, chrysalis, adult, release)</b>	Summer 2023
<b>Fall visits, continued monitoring for invasives</b>	September 2023
<b>Sharing information</b>	Fall into winter 2023
<b>Report and presentation to Lumberjack</b>	Before Dec 2023

**BUDGET:** Complete the attached Budget Form. Remember the 50% match value requirement with 15% of the match being cash. List each match donor in the 'Match' column and submit a corresponding Letter of Support with specific value of in-kind/services or cash for the project for which funds are being asked. Note: This form is available in excel online at: <https://lumberjackrcd.org/projects>

# LUMBERJACK BUDGET FORM

**Project Name: Town of Crescent Pollinator Planting Project**

Starting Project Date

Ending Project Date **1**

2/1/2023 00/00/0000

Income (SPECIFY)	Cash	Match (Cash & In-Kind) <b>2,3</b>
YOUR Request of Lumberjack RC&D	\$ 10,000.00	
Town of Crescent Budget (cash)		\$ 1,000.00
Town Chair in-kind time (as volunteer, 80 hours over grant cycle)		\$ 1,200.00
Town Road Crew in-kind time (2 @ 40 hours)		\$ 2,000.00
Volunteer resident donated time (100 hours)		\$ 1,500.00
Committed private cash donation match		\$ 1,000.00
<b>Total Income</b>	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 6,700.00

Percent of Match=Match Total/Lumberjack Request **67%**

LJ Percent of Total = YOUR LJ Request/Total Expenses **60%**

General Expenses (SPECIFY & include Match expenses)		
Site consultant/plant contractor time (Est.)	\$	1,000.00
Native Plant Plugs and Pots (7 sites)	\$	7,000.00
Sedge seeding	\$	200.00
Sod cutter rental (one week), site prep	\$	400.00
Topsoil, fertilizer, mulch	\$	1,575.00
Town chair volunteer time, oversight, labor	\$	1,200.00
Town Road Crew time: transport of supplies, prep, plantings, watering (estimated 80 hours over grant cycle at \$23 & \$26/hr + ins.)	\$	2,000.00
Oneida County Land/Water Conservation staff time (10 hours consulting @\$30/hr)	\$	300.00
Invasive species management: Survey of roadside stretches, control before plantings, monitoring after plantings (25 hours WHIP time at \$25/hr)	\$	625.00
Planting, weeding, watering, monitoring time from volunteers (estimated 100 hours)	\$	1,500.00
Outreach brochure printing	\$	300.00
Signage + posts	\$	300.00
Website/drone/social media contractor	\$	300.00
<b>Total Expenses</b>	\$	16,700.00
<b>NET <b>4</b></b>	\$	-

- 1 Lumberjack Project funds are available for one year from the date of the approval notice
- 2 Match Value must equal at least 50% of the Lumberjack Request and 15% must be in cash