

**APPLICATION NUMBER 16-
Tracy Aviary
Project Title: Riparian Corridor Enhancement**

On behalf of Tracy Aviary, please consider the following proposal for funding from the Red Butte Creek Restoration.

Project Summary: Tracy Aviary respectfully requests \$300,000 to be used to enhance a 300' riparian corridor within the grounds of Tracy Aviary making a model riparian corridor that can be used to educate more than 80,000 annual Tracy Aviary visitors. Additionally, because this area is contained within the boundaries of Tracy Aviary, it is managed. Human traffic is restricted to certain paths and there are no dogs, raccoons, cats or other predators. As such, this section of riparian habitat can be used to capture baseline data on vegetation and neo-tropical bird activity, which can then be used to monitor the progress of other restoration efforts funded through this program.

Project Description:

1. Proposed project must enhance or relate to a section or course of waterway that was affected by either the June or December 2010 Red Butte oil spills.

The riparian area that will be enhanced as a result of funding from this proposal is made possible through underground water associated with the Red Butte waterway. Year-round water is present and is assumed to come from an aquifer that was directly connected to Red Butte Creek. Decades ago, when Liberty Park Pond was renovated, a liner and several layers of separation were installed along with a pipe as a means of separating surface water and ground water. The ground water was diverted into Tracy Aviary, making this waterway. Interestingly, the remoteness of this riparian area is such that neither tamarisk nor Russian olive have ever been present.

2. Proposed project must enhance the natural environment by improving conditions for one or more of the following: wildlife, habitat, native vegetation, water quality or emergency response.

This enhancement project will improve habitat for wildlife, while also adding native vegetation and ultimately improving water quality.

3. Proposer must have an interest in any land directly involved in the project (e.g., fee title, easement, or other legal agreement that gives all needed rights to enhance the land involved in the project).

For almost 75 years Tracy Aviary has occupied the southwest corner of Liberty Park. The riparian area that is the focus of this project has been under Tracy Aviary management since 2006 and is now an integral part of Tracy Aviary.

4. Proposed project must be capable of being completed within 3 years.

Tracy Aviary is in the midst of a \$20 million capital improvement project that includes construction of major facilities as well as landscape modifications. Major projects completed to date include renovation of the South American Pavilion (\$3,000,000), complete renovation of infrastructure (\$1,500,000), and new Education/Guest Service facility (\$3,000,000). Currently in design are two other components that will complete the work by 2014.

Tracy Aviary is valued for its bird collection as well as its landscape, and the organization is not only proud of the landscape that has been created, but also conscious of how the landscape provides habitat, serves an educational purpose, and provides space for native plants.

If awarded funding, design of the riparian enhancement would be done during the summer of 2012 and actual work during the fall of 2012. Education programming would begin during the Spring of 2013.

5. Proposer must be capable of implementing the proposed project.

As described above, Tracy Aviary is in the midst of a \$20,000, 000 renovation. The project for which funding is now being sought is relatively small in comparison. In addition to having an Owners Representative who can work directly with contractors, Tracy Aviary also has a professional relationship with a landscape architect as well as numerous experts who can and will provide guidance.

Strength of the Project

1. Project benefits the areas impacted by the Red Butte spill. Tracy Aviary is located due West of Liberty Park Pond, approximately 100' from the pond. Though there was little actual oil that entered Tracy Aviary's water ways – the little that did came through oiled ducks and geese flying into our ponds – Tracy Aviary was significantly impacted. Tracy Aviary's Curator brought the correct players to the table to manage cleaning of the oiled birds, and more than 30 Tracy Aviary staff were involved in capturing and cleaning birds. Tracy Aviary was closed for two days and then suffered low visitation throughout the summer despite opening a new multi-million exhibit. Even today members of the public ask whether Tracy Aviary is still open, or if it closed as a result of the oil spill.

This project directly benefits Tracy Aviary by enhancing an existing riparian area. It also benefits all other projects supported by this grant by educating the public about riparian areas and how to be better stewards. Money spent on this project will have benefits for many years to come.

2. Project benefits the natural environment. The area to be enhanced is relatively small, and the existing condition is good. The benefit of this project lies in education and

creating an area to collect baseline data.

3. Project increases the ecosystem services being provided by the enhanced waterway. Water going through this riparian area ultimately enters the Jordan River and then the Great Salt Lake. The vegetation in this area will certainly contribute to high quality water. The vegetation itself will provide good habitat to neo-tropical birds.

4. Project has social benefits. This project will result in a model riparian habitat with interpretive elements that can be used to educate more than 80,000 annual visitors. Furthermore, because the habitat is within a controlled environment, the amount of human and non-bird related interference is either contained or non-existent. As such, it's possible that the enhanced area can be used to collect baseline data about plants and birds to be expected in other areas that will benefit from this grant program.

5. Project size – how large is the total area that will be directly enhanced by the proposed project? The area to be enhanced is approximately 300' in length, and 75' wide.

6. Project connectivity – how does the proposed enhanced project area connect to other natural areas or projects. Tracy Aviary is increasingly becoming known for it's habitat. In part, this is due to urbanization and holds true of cemeteries and other large green spaces. But in part, this is also intentional and part of a plan to educate the general public about birds, the habitats upon which they depend, and the role humans play as stewards. Tracy Aviary is an educational institution with a purpose to serve as a launching point for visitor's personal conservation journey, not an ending point. In other words, Tracy Aviary strives to inspire visitors about nature, and in so doing, inspire them to take a next step on their conservation journey whether that's visiting another facility or installing a bird feeder in their yard. With more than 80,000 annual visitors, the impact of Tracy Aviary on the environmental consciousness of the public is growing.

Considered alone, this proposal has limited connectivity. But if Tracy Aviary is seen as a venue where visitors learn about birds, habitat and stewardship, then lessons learned at Tracy Aviary can have lasting impacts on other areas that will receive support through this grant.

7. Project proposer can leverage additional funds. Though Tracy Aviary is not offering additional funds for construction, the organization will provide the long term maintenance and support needed to ensure money spent today has a lasting impact over a long period of time.

8. Project cost-effectiveness. Doing things right the first time is among the most cost-effective tools that exist. Tracy Aviary has extensive recent experience in landscape projects and has the team in place that can create excellent designs and facilitate their implementation in a timely manner. In addition to stream-lined construction, Tracy Aviary has the capacity to steward the enhanced area over the long haul, ensuring that plants and soil are monitored appropriately. Furthermore, the controlled access limits the

destruction that is often associated with human and other animal activity in riparian areas.

9. Administrative expenses. Tracy Aviary has a 10% administrative fee.

Strength of the project team

10. The proposer has the ability to carry out the project as shown by successful past experience in carrying out similar projects. As described previously, Tracy Aviary has successfully managed more than \$6 million of construction projects including building restoration and landscape restoration. Tracy Aviary has a Horticulture and Facilities Department responsible for maintaining our 8 acres, including the riparian area for which funds are now being sought. While contractors will be used to install the enhancements, Tracy Aviary has the existing infrastructure to provide long term care.

11. The proposer can provide long term maintenance that sustains the project into the future. As explained above, Tracy Aviary has staff that already take care of the riparian area targeted for enhancement. In addition to staff, Tracy Aviary's Horticulture team works with a large group of volunteers, many of whom are Master Gardeners.

12. The project has multi-agency support and collaboration. If using this site to collect baseline data is desired, then Tracy Aviary will use an existing partnership with Division of Wildlife Resources to train a cadre of citizen scientist for data collection. This partnership has worked on a project in City Creek Canyon. In addition to collecting bird data, vegetation data can also be collected using these volunteers.