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**Name of Organization:** Wildlife Habitat Council

**Type of Organization:** Other

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**Project Title:** Biodiversity Atlas of the Lake Huron-Erie Corridor

**Project Category:** Habitat (Ecological) Protection and Rest

**Rank by Organization (if applicable):** 0

**Total Funding Requested (\$):** 85,023 **Project Duration:** 2 Years

**Abstract:**

The atlas will focus on the watersheds of the St. Clair River, Lake St. Clair and Detroit River. Specifically, it will address the area from Port Huron, Michigan to Pt. Mouille State Game Area in Millville Beach, Michigan. In Canada, it will include Sarnia, Ontario and follow past Amherstburg, Ontario to the mouth of the Detroit River at Lake Erie. The atlas will describe the geology of the area, and delve into the various plant communities, including wetlands, prairies, woodlands and riparian and upland zones. The atlas will describe pre-settlement vegetation, give examples of those remnant plant communities still existing, and outline steps we can take to protect and restore the resource for the future. It will highlight how these areas serve as important habitat for wildlife, and describe how they are an essential convergence point for hundreds of thousands of waterfowl during their annual migration along both the Atlantic and Mississippi flyways. It will educate the public about the natural heritage of the area by providing a visually exciting format that will be accessible at many levels. A combination of pictures, maps and figures with captions, highlighted boxes, information tables and text will converge to provide an illuminating guidebook to the area. The target audience would be both the general public and students.

**Geographic Areas Affected by the Project**

**States:**

- |  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Illinois            | <input type="checkbox"/> New York     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Indiana             | <input type="checkbox"/> Pennsylvania |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Michigan | <input type="checkbox"/> Wisconsin    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Minnesota           | <input type="checkbox"/> Ohio         |

**Lakes:**

- |                                   |                                    |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Superior | <input type="checkbox"/> Erie      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Huron    | <input type="checkbox"/> Ontario   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Michigan | <input type="checkbox"/> All Lakes |

**Geographic Initiatives:**

- |  |                                  |                                     |   |  |
|--|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Greater Chicago | <input type="checkbox"/> NE Ohio | <input type="checkbox"/> NW Indiana | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SE Michigan | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lake St. Clair |
|--|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|--|

**Primary Affected Area of Concern:** St. Clair River, MI

**Other Affected Areas of Concern:** Detroit River, MI

***For Habitat Projects Only:***

**Primary Affected Biodiversity Investment Area:** Lake St. Clair/Detroit River

**Other Affected Biodiversity Investment Areas:** St. Clair River

**Problem Statement:**

Over the years the St. Clair River, Lake St. Clair and Detroit River have become a heavily developed corridor where heavy and light industries, residential development and agricultural production have combined to fragment habitat and dramatically reduce the overall quality of the ecosystem. For example in the St. Clair River area, while over 750,000 waterfowl continue to migrate through the area each year, they are relegated to the remaining three percent of original wetlands. In general, the population of this area lack understanding of the qualities which make it a unique place on earth. Although many excellent scientific studies and ecological profiles have been completed, much of the information is in a technical format; therefore, it is inaccessible to the general public. The atlas will interpret the area in an enterable way and describe the pressures on the resource. It will thereby provide a conscious link for the public between their activities and the health of this very special ecosystem.

**Proposed Work Outcome:**

The proposed project will involve the formation of a working and an advisory committee. Each committee will have representatives from the USA and Canada and will consist of no more than seven people. The advisory committee will guide the overall content of the atlas, and will meet monthly the first six months, and bi-monthly thereafter. The working committee will make decisions about actual content and will meet bi-weekly for the duration of the project. The project coordinator will organize and track information collected, organize meetings, and arrange to have experts from various fields give presentations to the working committee. The coordinator will track the development of the project and update the advisory committee each time it meets. The coordinator will deliver the necessary information to the graphic arts contractor for formatting.

The publication will be a full color soft cover book approximately 100 pages, 9" x 12" size, and will contain approximately 200 photos and 100 graphs and charts. It will be modeled after the successful Chicago Wilderness: An Atlas of Biodiversity. Funds to print and distribute the book will need to be procured separately.

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<b>Project Milestones:</b>	<b>Dates:</b>
Project Start	09/2000
Establish Advisory and Working Committee	12/2000
Outline and Content of Atlas Complete	04/2000
Query for Information Complete	04/2001
Graphics Accumulation Complete	09/2001
Final Informational Content Achieved	03/2002
Draft Given to Contractor for Formatting	04/2002
Ready for Printing and Distribution	09/2002

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Project Addresses Environmental Justice

**If So, Description of How:**

The atlas through its narratives will define the pressures on a resource, but will not target any groups specifically as the cause of that pollution. The ecological focus of the atlas will limit its scope in addressing pollution issues, such as contaminated sediments. The atlas will be fair when describing how different stakeholders put pressure on a resource. It will outline a problem, not make a judgement. The atlas will challenge the notions of the reader through suggesting ideas such as soft engineering of shorelines, riparian buffers, greenways and sustainable development. It will suggest community involvement as a primary way to catalyze change, for instance through the 4-H/MSU Extension Adopt-A-Stream Project. The atlas will include stakeholder views when appropriate to habitat issues. For example, the St. Clair River, Lake St. Clair and the Detroit River system supports more boats per nautical mile than anywhere else in the world. Given this pressure of recreational boat use, the atlas will touch upon what practices boat owners can employ to assure the health of the lake and rivers for years to come. Land use demographics will illustrate how the area has changed since pre-settlement days. The Native Americans have occupied this land for 5,000 years, through highlighting their historical interaction with the landscape and we will enrich our understanding of the area's natural history. The atlas will interweave the Native American viewpoint into the descriptions of various plant communities and the fisheries resource.

Project Addresses Education/Outreach

**If So, Description of How:**

The project will fund a teacher to research and gather curricula applicable to the concepts presented in the biodiversity atlas that will correspond to MEAP and MEGOSE standards. Also, a list of sites appropriate for field trips will be compiled to reflect the diversity of plant communities for use as a reference by teachers. In addition, a corresponding powerpoint/slide presentation will be developed for conservation professionals to share the ideas of the biodiversity atlas with the general public. It will be made available for checkout through the WHC Great Lakes Regional Office. The hard material including, the biodiversity atlas, curriculum resources, and field trip sites will be made available to the public through the St. Clair River Waterways for Wildlife Project Web Page.

**Project Budget:**

	<b>Federal Share Requested (\$)</b>	<b>Applicant's Share (\$)</b>
<b>Personnel:</b>	47,923	0
<b>Fringe:</b>	11,100	0
<b>Travel:</b>	2,000	2,000
<b>Equipment:</b>	0	0
<b>Supplies:</b>	2,000	0
<b>Contracts:</b>	18,000	0
<b>Construction:</b>	0	0
<b>Other:</b>	0	0
<b>Total Direct Costs:</b>	81,023	2,000
<b>Indirect Costs:</b>	4,000	0
<b>Total:</b>	85,023	2,000
<b>Projected Income:</b>	0	0

**Funding by Other Organizations (Names, Amounts, Description of Commitments):**

- The Grosse Isle Land Conservancy - 3,840
- The Open Space and Greenway Committee - 3,840
- The Belle Isle Nature Center - 3,840
- Detroit Recreation Department - 3,840
- MDEQ- Surface Water Quality Division - 3,840
- Detroit Zoo - 1,920
- Belle Isle Aquarium - 1,920
- MDNR-Fisheries - 3,840
- SmithgroupJJR - 3,840
- MDEQ Land and Water Management Division - 3,840
- MDNR- Wildlife Division - 3,840
- Detroit Edison - 10,000
- Clinton River Watershed Council - 3,840
- Detroit American Heritage River Initiative - 3,840
- University of Michigan-Dearborn - 3,840
- Total - \$ 59,920

These are "in-kind" services, and will cover time spent on the committees gathering and organizing information, and are not being listed in the budget (These are estimated figures at an average of 4 hours per month over 24 months at \$40.00/hour).

**Description of Collaboration/Community Based Support:**

Support at this time for this project is pledged from the Detroit River Rap Habitat Sub-committee and the Greater Detroit American Heritage River Initiative. At this stage, support is expected yet not secured from the Rouge River RAP Habitat and Headwaters Sub-committee, Southeast Michigan Greenways Initiative, Friends of the Rouge, St. Clair River RAP, St. Clair County Conservation District, US Fish and Wildlife Service, and the St. Clair River Channelkeepers. Possible Canadian participants at this time include the Lambton Industrial Society, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority. We will also try to secure support from the Walpole Island First Nation and other tribal organizations.

Detroit Edison has already made a firm commitment to the project. There is potential involvement from several corporations we work with in southeast Michigan, namely Ford Motor Co., Consumer's Energy, B.P. Amoco and National Steel.