VOLUNTEER HABITAT GRANTS PLANNING GUIDE

P&TC and the MnDNR developed this discussion guide to assist in applying for the habitat restoration grant program. It is meant to be used as a planning tool to determine suitable projects and sites, maximize the positive impact on natural communities, and navigate the DNR resource review process. Many of these discussion questions are still applicable to sites that are not DNR-managed.

Project Type

- **Keep in mind these DNR resource management priorities:**
  - *Priority 1: Protecting, maintaining, and restoring high-quality or rare natural communities*
  - *Priority 2: Protecting Rare Species and their Habitats*
  - *Priority 4: Controlling the spread of harmful invasive species and preventing new invasives.*
  - *Priority 6: Maintaining and improving water quality and quantity by protecting wetlands and public waters*
- **Are there plant or animal communities that are rare or threatened at this park or trail?** *Encourage projects that are truer habitat restoration rather than use area enhancement.*
- **Different project types may require different types of resource reviews.** *For example, planting seedlings using planting bars would require less review than planting large, potted trees.*

Site Selection

- **Are there known cultural resource sites?** *The resource specialist can check for this. Projects within known sites may not be allowed or may be much more challenging to implement, so it may be best to avoid them.*
- **Are there areas that have recently been developed?** *These areas had an archeological review, maybe even shovel testing, so an archeologist site visit may not be necessary if a project falls within that area.*
- **Are there sites that would not require a site visit by archeologists?** *Typically, these would be places with low archaeological potential, such as away from shorelines or high areas.*
- **A project location map is required.** *A DNR staff person will need to create a shape file for the Division's resource assessment review and potentially to obtain an archeological license.*

Supplies and Materials

- **What tools and materials are needed to make this project happen?**
  - *What tools or equipment does the DNR or Friends Group already have that could support this project?*
  - *Are there tools needed that could help ongoing restoration efforts beyond this grant project?*
- **Where would plants, seeds, or trees be sourced from?** *The DNR likely has a list of recommended vendors.*

Volunteers

- **Which activities could volunteers do vs. what staff needs to do?**
- **Do volunteers need any specific training to work on this project?** *For example., planting trees with a planting bar or identifying species for seed collection.*
- **What volunteer forms or requirements would be needed for a project like this?** *E.g., background checks.*