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| 1. **Please provide a description of what was accomplished using the grant funds, highlighting progress made towards achieving the goals of the project.** |
| *The campus natural areas saw an incredible transformation thanks to ICECF funding. At the Red Oak Rain Garden 3,845 plants, 15 trees and shrubs were installed and hydraulic maintenance occurred with a pipe clean out. Dorner Drive Retention Pond was treated to make way for the habitat establishment and 1,253 plugs were installed. Illini Grove/Woods had 554 plants installed.* |
| 1. **Were you able to complete the proposed stewardship work? If not, why?** |
| *We are happy to report that most everything is completed or in the process of being completed (such as seeding Dorner Drive Retention Pond scheduled for late November for best success). Exceptions are plants that were not available, the interpretive sign, and treatment for the oak. All are scheduled for 2022.* |
| 1. **Community and Media Outreach:** Describe how your organization was able to reach out and engage new members of the community. Please highlight any outreach to press on social media, or other campaigns to build your volunteer stewardship community and/or raise funds for this project. Please provide any numbers you can obtain about the reach of those traditional and social media reports/posts that mention this project. Additionally, please provide links to any applicable media. |
| *Our team reached new members of the communities with a combination of virtual and in-person strategies. During the pandemic only virtual outlets were available and we leveraged our website, blog, webinars, and social media to reach people and we began a newsletter. In 2021, the university was able to welcome students back and we were able to engage with the community via in-person events such as service-learning stewardship events and educational tours.*  ***VIRTUAL:*** ***Television: WCIA ciLiving*** [*https://www.wcia.com/ciliving-tv/uiuc-red-oak-rain-garden-nears-completion-awarded-grants/?fbclid=IwAR1K53ZaVZWFYKKynfN3gyFdhtfR592HJ7ozhAQpsiSVdYFdaT9FOBWBKuc*](https://www.wcia.com/ciliving-tv/uiuc-red-oak-rain-garden-nears-completion-awarded-grants/?fbclid=IwAR1K53ZaVZWFYKKynfN3gyFdhtfR592HJ7ozhAQpsiSVdYFdaT9FOBWBKuc) ***Webinars: Live attendance numbers (many are available on YouTube; see*** [***https://redoakraingarden.org/events***](https://redoakraingarden.org/events)***)*** *Montgomery County, MD Master Gardeners: 236* *Vermillion County Master Gardener Garden Day Workshop: 38* *Think Spring Gardening Series: 56* *Allerton Park and Retreat Center Rain Garden Workshop: 42* *Leadership Illinois: 5* *Master Watershed Steward Program: 12* *DuPage County Stormwater Management: 109* *Wild Ones, Illinois Prairie Chapter: 40* *State Master Gardner Conference: 38* *Green Drinks: 10*  ***Blogs:*** *2020: 58 posts with 3,461 visitors* *2021: 26 posts with 3,699 visitors*  ***Newsletter:*** *221 subscribed*  ***Social Media:*** *See* [*https://redoakraingarden.org/2020/12/23/rorgs-2020-year-in-review/*](https://redoakraingarden.org/2020/12/23/rorgs-2020-year-in-review/) *for some examples. If needed, a comprehensive list of all relevant social media links can be provided.*  ***IN PERSON:***  ***Tours (some with service-learning stewardship activities)*** *Urbana Natural Areas Group: 10* *Faith group: 12* *Allen Hall Tour: 3* *Champaign County Master Gardener Class of 2021: 15* *Macoupin County Master Gardeners: 8* *UIUC Child Development Lab: 10* *Unit One/Allen Hall and Sustainability LLC: 60* *Urban Planning Class: 20* *Girl Scout Troop 2915: 8* *American Society of Landscape Architects: 15* *Society of Women Engineers: 10* |
| 1. **Was the community involved at the level you expected? Describe.** |
| *Yes! We were heartened to see a positive response from campus and community – especially as the university welcomed back students fall 2021. Many of these students saw the garden for the first time and several reached out to become volunteers. Further, we now have a newsletter than reaches 221 people.* |
| 1. **Stewardship Data:** Please fill in the table below to the best of your ability. |
| |  |  | | --- | --- | | ***Stewardship Data to Date:*** | | | *Total acres improved by grant project\** | *10* | | *Workdays/stewardship events held\** | *68* | | *Acres of invasive control* | *2* | | *Acres of land seeded or planted* |  | | *LBS of seed dispersed* | *Will be 25.2 lbs.* | | *Plugs planted* | *5,652 (includes bulbs)* | | *LBS of seed collected* | *5* | | *Native Trees/shrubs planted* | *15* | | *Acres burned* | *0* |   *Required data is indicated with an asterisk\** |
| 1. **Stewardship Narrative:** *Please provide a narrative of the stewardship work accomplished at the site by contractors and, if applicable, staff. (You will be asked to provide information on work accomplished by volunteers below)* |
| *We work closely with the university Grounds staff to help manage the natural areas. They did two major functions: 1. cleaned out the rain garden’s pipe and 2. treated the pond’s banks to prepare for habitat restoration.*  *Country Arbors staff planted the 15 new trees and shrubs.* |
| 1. **Volunteers Data:** |
| |  |  | | --- | --- | | **Volunteer Hours:** | | | Total Number of Volunteer Hours\* | *500* | | Number of Hours Logged on Habitat Care | *400* | | Number of Hours Logged on Social Media | *104* | | How many individual volunteers over the life of the grant?\* | *11 community volunteers* *63 student volunteers* | | How many new volunteers came to the site over the life of the grant?\* | *72* | | How many new volunteer leaders were Identified during the grant? |  |   *Required data is indicated with an asterisk\** |
| 1. **Volunteer Narrative:** *Please provide a narrative of the volunteer work accomplished on site. Please share any stories about old or new volunteers working at the site. Please also share if the social media hours proved helpful to your project.* |
| *Our natural areas enjoy a combination of two major volunteer groups: community members (Champaign County Master Gardeners and East Central Illinois Master Naturalists) for steady stewardship every Friday morning 9-11am punctuated by students (university classes and student organizations) in one-off installations/stewardship events.*  *Master Naturalists Karen Folk and Linda Bailey are our longest running, most steady volunteers. They were experienced gardeners prior to working with us. Through the stewardship work they are doing with us and education it provides, they report that their knowledge has been expanded greatly.*  *Some of our student volunteers comment that the natural areas are influencing their choice of majors. One student in particular attributes the project to his decision to switch from Animal Science to Natural Resources and Environmental Sciences.*  *The social media hours were essential to have volunteer momentum for our nascent project during the pandemic. Thank you for making that available!* |
| 1. **Fundraising Data:** |
| |  |  | | --- | --- | | **Fundraising:** | | | Total $$ raised during the grant\* | *$7000* | | How many individual donors did your project attract?\* | *47* | | How many corporate or business owners did your project attract? | *3* | | How many donors were first time donors to your organization? | *46* |   *Required data is indicated with an asterisk\** |
| 1. **Fundraising Narrative:**  Describe your efforts to raise matching funds for this program. What was your most successful campaign? Please share any interesting stories about fundraising efforts. |
| *Fundraising efforts were on several fronts: 1. Individual appeals (friends and relatives) 2. Appeals during outreach presentations. 3. Giving Tuesday and 4. Physical letters to CCDC network.*  *While we needed every one of these approaches to reach the goal, the letters to the CCDC network by board member Bev Friese was our most successful campaign. Bev is a retired staff member from the university Foundation. She wrote a compelling letter sent to her network of friends that care about the environment. Many of them are not on social media and could only have been reached by this method. I learned valuable lessons from Bev on how to ask for contributions and the follow up needed to create a robust donor base.* |
| 1. **Describe your long-term goals for the Eligible Property and how the grant project has contributed to these goals.** |
| *The long-term goals are to 1. establish a Maintenance Endowment that covers the costs of upkeep into perpetuity and 2. continue providing service-learning opportunities for volunteers. The grant helped us on both fronts: to establish a donor base and build momentum for volunteers to be excited about stewardship with us.* |
| 1. **Please share any interesting stories about the grant project from your organization’s perspective or based on the experience of the volunteers.** For example, were there specific challenges your organization faced in carrying out the fundraising or stewardship, and/or were there any specific achievements that were acknowledged and celebrated during the grant period. |
| *These natural areas on campus are setting the standard for sustainable landscaping at the University of Illinois. The university’s Institute for Sustainability, Energy, Environment (iSEE) recognizes this work and includes it in their Climate Action Portal:*  <https://icap.sustainability.illinois.edu/project/red-oak-rain-garden><https://icap.sustainability.illinois.edu/project/plantings-dorner-drive-retention-pond> |
| 1. **We would like to learn more about the stewardship work that your organization may have completed on the Eligible Property outside of the grant project. What Other Funds (not related to this grant or required matching funds) have you spent on the Eligible Property in the last 18-months?** |
| *None at this time but we’re working with the UIUC Foundation to establish a Maintenance Endowment.* |
| 1. **How does the stewardship work under this grant project compare to the stewardship work your organization is doing across all the properties you own and/or manage?** |
| *We are similar to other Extension stewardship work by utilizing Master Gardeners and Master Naturalists. However, we are unique by also having service-learning opportunities for students. Further, we are capturing our techniques and translating these to outreach products/technology transfer for the benefit of Illinois residents.* |
| 1. **If you have unspent funds at the end of the grant period (a balance in column D of your CSBudgetandExpense Form), please describe how those funds will be isolated and restricted to support the care of habitat at the Project Site.**   **Your final expense statement (created by filling in your final numbers in the CSBudgetandExpense form) should indicate how the funds remaining will be allocated among the main project tasks. Provide a timeline for completing those tasks by describing it in narrative form below and/or by providing a graph or chart separately and upload it under “Other” on the Attachments Tab of your Final Report Requirement.** |
| *The unspent funds (total = $4,778) will be spent on: the interpretive sign, tree support, hand tools, and any remaining costs to restore Dorner Drive Retention Pond and/or purchase additional plants. See the spreadsheets for amounts. These funds will all be spent by the end of 2022, with one caveat. We intend to purchase ephemerals that were unavailable in 2021. It’s possible that we’ll have to wait until 2023 to obtain the ones we want. We are working with nurseries now to preclude that situation.* |

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| **Grantee Contact Name, Title and Email Address** |
| *C. Eliana Brown, CCDC Vice-President brown12@illinois.edu* |
| **Date of Report Completion** |
| *10/20/2021* |