



Living Lab

5508 South University Drive
Fargo, North Dakota

Goal: The Living Lab will demonstrate a variety of riparian restoration techniques, explore various restoration techniques, serve as an outdoor lab for students of all ages, exhibit wild-life habitat improvements and more.

History: The Living Lab is developed on riverfront property owned by the City of Fargo and leased to River Keepers. Prior to the City of Fargo's purchase of the property, Art Jensen owned and occupied the property. Although Art was a mail route carrier, the property was maintained as a hobby farm. Sheep were utilized to keep the grass controlled in the riverfront area where trees were removed.

There were numerous specimen trees and shrubs planted on the site. The site most notably had an extensive iris collection and North Dakota's largest Hop tree. The iris collection is currently being moved to North Dakota State University. Art's interest in horticulture is also noted with the greenhouse attached to the south side of the house.

Description: The land is on 1500 feet of riverfront and suffers from slumping and erosion resulting from the removal of trees and sheep grazing. There are three structures on the site - a house, a garage, and a small shed.

It will be a showcase for a wide variety of riparian restoration techniques. Various techniques will be utilized and evaluated for effectiveness, cost and installation technique. While other riverfront demonstration sites exist there are not any that we are aware of, that will display as many techniques of various complexities and types.

A professional landscape architect with input from the advisory committee has developed a master plan for the site. It will guide future development.

Objectives:

- * Too often individuals, particularly those in urban settings, are unaware of the importance of the riparian buffer and it's importance to the Red River and their communities adjacent to the river. The Living Lab will be an opportunity for visitors to observe and learn about the importance of and installation of riparian buffers. There will be numerous test and demonstration plots that will have interpretive signage. The visitor will be able to observe and monitor various restoration techniques that will be implemented in phases.



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For more information:

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Fargo, ND 58103
701-235-2895
info@riverkeepers.org
www.riverkeepers.org

Objectives continued:

- * The Living Lab will be an opportunity for academic research and professionals in the restoration field to test methods of implementation first through small scale plots then with large 'restoration strips'. Each of the plot areas will be isolated for ease of installation, maintenance and identification. Facilities will be on-site for storage of equipment and supplies. There is also the proposed re-use and expansion of the greenhouse for the establishment of seedlings for use on-site.
- * The project will encourage science classes to utilize the site as an outdoor laboratory with the focus of better understanding the biology, ecology and geology of the Red River. Active participation within the site would be greatly encouraged.
- * With the restoration of diverse riparian plant communities, wildlife habitat will improve. Wildlife that would be expected to benefit the most would be songbirds, insects and fish.

Funding: Current funding is coming from a variety of sources including agency and government in-kind, several small grants, and private donations. Some funders include the Cass Soil Conservation District, and Mid-America Steel through an agreement with the Environmental Protection Agency.

A multiyear development budget for the effort is projected to be in excess of \$700,000.

In addition to money, labor is provided through youth groups, corporate work days, Eagle Scout candidates, River Keepers staff and interns, and AmeriCorps members.

Donations of equipment have helped to conserve funds.

Advisory Committee Members:

Scott Bilben	Greenway on the Red/Red River Riparian Project
Mark Bittner	City of Fargo Engineering
Craig Brumbaugh	North Dakota Extension Forestry
Mark Chase	Fish and Wildlife Service
Joe Courtney	Red River Basin Institute
Helen Cozzetto	Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
Earl Erickson	Cass County Soil Conservation District
Richard Faught	Cass County Soil Conservation District
Chuck Fritz	Red River Basin Institute
Angela Hansen	North Dakota State University Landscape Architecture
Carole Harbeke-Lewis	Southeast Cass Water Resource District
Wade Kline	Fargo Moorhead Metropolitan Council of Governments
Kelly Krabbenhoft	Natural Resources Consultant
Doug Leier	North Dakota Game and Fish
Jessie Lisburg	Fish and Wildlife Service
Scott Liudahl	City of Fargo Forestry
Jay Mar	Natural Resources Conservation Service
Carrie Richards	Cass Soil Conservation District
Dave Rush	Red River Riparian Project
Donna Schneider	North Dakota Audubon and Greenway on the Red
Genevieve Thompson	North Dakota Audubon and Greenway on the Red
Darrick Weissenfluh	North Dakota State University Student Natural Resources
John Wesolowski	Fargo Park District Forestry
Joseph Zeleznik	North Dakota Extension Forestry.
Jim Hanson	Hanson Design Associates