



Request for Proposals Announcement

Are you a Farmer or farming-inclined and just wish you had a plot of land in Traverse City to grow and experiment with? Do you have a vision and capacity for an agricultural or horticultural installation that invites visitors and the public to look and learn? SEEDS is seeking proposals for the 2022 growing season at Historic Barns Park!

Proposals Due By: February 1, 2022.

Interviews and Selections will be made during February, 2022

Summary: SEEDS Ecology & Education Centers manages just over 5 acres of the Historic Barns Park. This 56-acre parkland is part of the Grand Traverse Commons and the old State Asylum complex and is now owned by the residents of Traverse City and Garfield Township. It is being redeveloped into a one-of-a-kind regional hub for public recreation, community events, agriculture, horticulture, and environmental design. Since 2010 SEEDS has operated a farmer residency program on portions of its management area.

Eligible Activities: All entities including individuals, small businesses, and nonprofits are welcome to apply. Activities can include small-scale farming, enterprises creating value-added products such as natural fiber textiles and natural dyes, installations incorporating and demonstrating regenerative land use concepts native plant installation or nursery, wetland restoration, enhancement, and management and other related ideas.

Activities must use landscape management methods and amendments that are considered acceptable under the rules governing Organic Certification, including no petrochemical fertilizers or pesticides. No animal husbandry/livestock activities may be conducted on the property.

Responsibilities: SEEDS will provide access to land. Fee structures, access to utilities (e.g. soil amendments, water), and communications or outreach support shall be negotiated on a case-by-case basis. Access to additional SEEDS EcoCorps labor can also be negotiated.

Resident Farmers will be solely responsible for their specified activities, maintaining a safe and inviting aesthetic, appropriate insurance coverage, and reporting progress regularly throughout the year. In accordance with SEEDS' desire to not unfairly compete, any produce or items produced on the Farm intended to be sold must be disclosed and sold at the upper end of local market pricing.

Qualifications: All entities including individuals, small businesses, and nonprofits are welcome to apply. Proof of appropriate insurance coverages will be required. Applicants with more experience related to their proposal concept will be given priority.

Sites available: Three different management areas are available for proposed projects. These include: 1) SEEDS Farm area fenced, currently farmed for annual vegetables and flowers, garlic, grapes, raspberries, and other perennial fruits and vegetables. Some fallow meadowland also exists here. 2) Meadowland area to the West of the SEEDS Farm (unfenced). 3) Wetland area bordering Red Drive in the NE corner.

The below map indicates SEEDS management areas in light purple.



Irrigation is currently available only on portions of the SEEDS Farm area within the fenceline. Additional irrigation needs may be considered though it is not the intention of SEEDS to install irrigation beyond the fenceline nor in the wetland area. Proposed projects in these areas must address strategies to manage within this constraint.

Proposal Components: Submit all proposal documents to jennifer@ecoseeds.org as attachments. Include “Historic Barns Park Proposal” in the subject line.

Strong proposals will clearly describe proposed activities to take place on SEEDS management area and indicate which portion and amount of acreage needed for proposed activities. Include,

- Detail on past land management/farming/artistic experience and any other experience relevant to the proposed activity (MAXIMUM 2 PAGES)
- Narrative description of proposed activity (MAXIMUM 5 PAGES)
 - Any additional experience you wish to communicate
 - Any planned business activities (this is not required, but must be disclosed) including means of bringing any produce or product to market
 - Description of strategies to manage waste and enhance the land including composting, soil amendments, pest management, public safety
 - Description of any interest in public engagement and a draft calendar of activities
 - Description of planned or desired marketing activities/outreach
 - Equipment planned or desired to be utilized
 - Description of required or desired storage space or other structures
- Budget and description of financial sustainability (1-2 PAGES)
- Artistic/conceptual projects should include a sketch and images of prior works

Proposal Evaluation: Proposals will be evaluated based on the following considerations,

- Demonstrated experience in proposed activities
- Alignment with SEEDS mission to implement carbon drawdown strategies and regenerative food solutions at Historic Barns Park
- Collaborative elements that engage the public, SEEDS, and Park partners
- Ability to creatively address a unique problem in the community or demonstrate a unique concept not incorporated elsewhere at the Park
- Financial capacity and sustainability for duration of activities

Any selected Resident Farmers will be expected to complete a contractual land management agreement with SEEDS and acquire the necessary licenses and insurance by April 1, 2021.

Contact for Questions: Jennifer Flynn jennifer@ecoseeds.org or 828.380.9541