Please complete the project summary and return the completed form to April Snyder, Associate Administrator for the Institute on the Environment at aprilsnyder@umn.edu. Paper copies will not be accepted. Please also attach any photos, publications, brochures, event agendas or other materials that were a result of the mini grant summary.

**Date of Report Submission:** 11/13/13

**Project Title:** Environmental Hackathon

**Project Context & Purpose**

*Please include the original project purpose statement and revise for any changes that occurred in the project after the start date with a short explanation of the changes.*

The goal of Environmental Hackathon (EHD) is to get a group of highly motivated people together from across the Twin Cities to hack together rough solutions to environmental problems in just 72 hours. We are planning EHD based on the highly successful independently organized Science Hack Day events that have occurred across the world. Participants will include the Co-Pis and members of the University of Minnesota community. The end products may include web applications, art, sensors, curriculum, or even drafts of articles for publication that advance practical solutions to environmental issues.

We made the following changes: renamed to Environmental Hackathon, increased the length of the event to 72 hours from 48, made the event exclusive to the University of Minnesota undergraduate and graduate community, and paid cash prizes.
Please provide a summary of the work that was completed for the mini grant project.

We organized a one-day workshop followed two days later by a presentation and awards ceremony. We ran parts of the workshop ourselves, and invited local community members to provide guidance to student projects. The project concluded with a project presentation and judging session, followed by an awards ceremony.

Approximately 12 students signed-up for the event, of which half actually attended. During the workshop day we led participants through several design thinking exercises. After the exercises we ran a group brainstorming session before students split into small groups to refine their project ideas. Students received feedback from two community leaders before the day ended. Participants returned on Monday when we led a presentation and judging session before awarding prizes.
Partnerships & Collaborations

Please provide a summary of the project personnel, partnerships and collaborations that worked directly on the project or were started as a direct result of the mini grant project.

The hackathon leadership consisted of two graduate students (Joseph Reid & Charlotte Riggs) and one former IonE post-doc (Stephen Hawley). We drew on our training in the Boreas Integrative Leadership workshop and the Presentations workshop.

We worked with Fred Rose of the Acara Institute to help develop the design thinking components of the workshop. Fred Rose and Leo Sharkey served as mentors during the workshop. We worked with Beth Mercer-Taylor to try to develop strategic connections with relevant faculty, student groups and University locations. We worked with Molly Buss to plan catering and facilities. We also worked with the Institute on the Environment Communications team to develop brochures, posters and a website to promote the event and engage with students. Barrett Columbo helped advertise through the Sustainability list-serve.

Charlotte recruited the judges for the project and found an excellent mix of artists, scientists and experts. One of the highlights of the event was the interaction between participants, mentors and judges. The judges were: Jenny Edwards, Colin Kloecker, Tim Smith and Mary Spivey.

A student representative from the Graduate and Professional Student Assembly volunteered to help support a future version of the project. A number of potential mentors and judges that we contacted expressed regret that circumstances prevented their participation this round, but hoped to be involved in the future, including Maggie Koerth-Baker, science editor for BoingBoing.net; Craig Wilson of Sustology; and Peter Seive of the band Rogue Valley and Place.
Project Outcomes

*Please provide a summary of the outcomes of the mini grant project including future plans for the project.*

Of the six participants, two groups presented projects. Both groups received excellent feedback from the judges and we awarded $100 seed prizes to both groups.

Both Joseph Reid and Charlotte Riggs earned credit toward a Boreas Certificate and gained immeasurable leadership experience through the process of planning, organizing and executing this project.

Joseph Reid gave an invited Ignite talk at the 2013 Ecological Society of America conference on the hackathon titled, “Finding win-win in less than three days”. In addition, Joseph Reid was interviewed about the project for WTIP Grand Marais.

Several participants expressed interest in helping plan and advertise for future hackathons, including an offer of support from the Graduate and Professional Student Assembly. As a result of Joseph’s ESA talk, at least one person expressed interest in taking over leadership of the project.