



Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF) M.L. 2017 LCCMR Work Plan

Date of Submission: September 14, 2016
Date of Next Status Update Report: January 1, 2018
Date of Work Plan Approval: 06/07/2017
Project Completion Date: June 30, 2020
Does this submission include an amendment request? No

PROJECT TITLE: Providing Residential Environmental Learning Experiences to Under-Served Students

Project Manager: Bryan Wood
Organization: Audubon Center of the North Woods
Mailing Address: PO Box 530
City/State/Zip Code: Sandstone, MN 55072
Telephone Number: (320) 245-2648
Email Address: bwood@audubon-center.org
Web Address: www.audubon-center.org

Location: Activities will take place at our campus in Pine County, but the impact will be statewide as students will come from schools across Minnesota to our site.

Total ENRTF Project Budget:	ENRTF Appropriation:	\$130,000
	Amount Spent:	\$0
	Balance:	\$130,000

Legal Citation: M.L. 2017, Chp. xx, Sec. xx, Subd. xx

Appropriation Language:

[To be inserted following the MN Legislative Session in Spring 2017. This will be blank for the initial submission and will be provided to you at a later date.]

I. PROJECT TITLE: Providing Residential Environmental Learning Experiences to Under-Served Students

II. PROJECT STATEMENT:

1. We wish to provide scholarships to under-served schools for 2-night, 3-day residential environmental learning experiences at the Audubon Center of the North Woods.

- Today's students are increasingly being left out of nature learning experiences with children today spending far less time outdoors than previous generations. For students low on the socio-economic spectrum, this is compounded as there are typically no outdoor areas near where they live, or adults who spend time with them in natural areas.
- Many schools do not have the financial resources to make environmental field trips possible. Additional factors impeding their participation are the cultural and language barriers increasingly seen with immigrant populations. Parents do not understand what the experience is, and are wary of sending their child away on an overnight field trip. Students coming from low economic families cannot afford to pay the student fee, or buy winter outerwear or a sleeping bag for use in the dormitory.
- We as a society have a responsibility to foster environmentally literate citizens from all backgrounds and it starts with our children. They will make the decisions for our society's future.

2. We want to engage with the diverse and changing demographics of MN's schools by offering scholarships to financially strained schools to come to the Audubon Center of the North Woods for 2-night, 3-day residential environmental learning experiences.

- Through our residential environmental education programs, students will experience six 2-hour classes, two evening programs, receive seven meals and two nights lodging.
- Teachers select from their choice of approximately fifty class options during their stay in the fields of biological, earth and physical sciences, adventure, energy, food, cultural history and team building.
- We will make lasting impacts and open students' eyes and minds to a world larger than they previously knew, and awareness that their actions have environmental consequences. Studies show that most people who develop a love of nature trace it back to a positive childhood experience with a caring adult.

3. We would offer scholarship assistance of up to 100% of the \$115/student cost.

- We want to improve the environmental literacy of Minnesota students and share with them the joy of being immersed in nature.
- We would serve student populations in the Twin Cities metro area, as well Minnesota state-wide.
- Eligible schools would have free and reduced lunch student percentages of over 25%.
- This will provide funding for a minimum of 1,000 students to participate in a residential environmental learning experience. Our student capacity is 150 at one time. Most schools we work with tend to average 50-120 students.
- We will reach out to superintendents, principals, executive directors and teachers of Minnesota schools not currently attending an RELC (residential environmental learning center) to inform them of this opportunity and work with them to bring their students to the Audubon Center of the North Woods.
- We would translate our school forms including our K-12 Trip Planner, Student Health, Adult Health, Liability Release, Packing list and Parent Information forms into Somali, Hmong and Spanish for better understanding of students and parents.
- We would purchase 100 pairs of winter gear including jackets, boots, snow pants, hats, mittens neck gaiters and sleeping bags to be lent out to students attending so they will be safe and comfortable outside and sleeping in the dormitories.

III. OVERALL PROJECT STATUS UPDATES:

Project Status as of Dec. 1, 2017:

Project Status as of July 1, 2018:

Project Status as of Dec. 1, 2018:

Project Status as of July 1, 2019:

Overall Project Outcomes and Results:

IV. PROJECT ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES:

ACTIVITY 1: Provide Residential Environmental Learning Experiences to K-12 MN Students

Description: Provide scholarship funds of up to 100% cost of \$115/student experience on a needs-basis through scholarship application review for 2-night, 3-day residential environmental learning experience at the Audubon Center of the North Woods to a minimum of 1,000 Minnesota K-12 students. Schools eligible would be Minnesota public schools with free and reduced lunch percentages above 25%. Special consideration will be given to schools with high numbers of minority and immigrant populations.

Summary Budget Information for Activity 1:

ENRTF Budget: \$115,000

Amount Spent: \$0

Balance: \$115,000

Outcome	Completion Date
1. Provide minimum of 1,000 K-12 student residential environmental learning experiences at the Audubon Center of the North Woods.	June 30, 2020

Activity 1 Status as of Dec. 30, 2017:

Activity 1 Status as of July 1, 2018:

Activity 1 Status as of Dec. 30, 2018:

Activity 1 Status as of July 1, 2019:

ACTIVITY 2: School Forms Translation & Acquisition of Sleeping and Winter Gear to Enable Students to Participate in Residential Environmental Learning Experiences

Description: We will hire a language translation company to translate our six K-12 school forms including our K-12 Trip Planner, Student Health, Adult Health, Liability Release, Packing List, and Parent Information forms into the three languages we see the highest need: Spanish, Hmong and Somali. We will purchase outdoor winter clothing as well as sleeping bags for K-12 students, many of whom cannot afford the appropriate clothing or a sleeping bag for the experience. The gear will be permanently kept at the Audubon Center of the North Woods and lent out to any students in need during their visit. Students will return them at the end of their visit.

Summary Budget Information for Activity 2:

ENRTF Budget: \$15,000

Amount Spent: \$0

Balance: \$15,000

Outcome	Completion Date
1. Translate K-12 forms into Spanish, Hmong and Somali	Aug. 1, 2018
2. Upload translated forms onto our website for download	Sep. 1, 2018
3. Purchase 100 pairs of winter boots, snow pants, jackets, mittens, hats, neck gaiters and 50 sleeping bags	Oct. 1, 2018

Activity 2 Status as of Dec. 30, 2017:

Activity 2 Status as of July 1, 2018:

Activity 2 Status as of Dec. 30, 2018:

Activity 2 Status as of July 1, 2019:

Final Report Summary:

Copy and paste the above structure for each additional project activity (e.g., Activity 2, Activity 3, etc.), starting at the activity title through the activity "Final Report Summary" entry.

V. DISSEMINATION:

Description: We plan to share information about this project through our bi-annual printed newsletter "News from the North Woods" that is sent to our mailing list of approximately 3,000 subscribers. We also plan to share it through our periodic E-Newsletter that goes out to our several hundred electronic subscribers. We will share via our Facebook page: Audubon Center of the North Woods, as well as our Twitter account: Audubon Center of the North Woods. We will be contacting K-12 schools beginning July 1, 2017 about the project and scholarship opportunities and will include language appropriately recognized LCCMR and the ENRTF.

Status as of Dec. 30, 2017:

Status as of July 1, 2018:

Status as of Dec. 30, 2018:

Status as of July 1, 2019:

Final Report Summary:

VI. PROJECT BUDGET SUMMARY:

A. Preliminary ENRTF Budget Overview:

***This section represents an overview of the preliminary budget at the start of the project. It will be reconciled with actual expenditures at the time of the final report.**

Budget Category	\$ Amount	Overview Explanation
Professional/Technical/Service Contracts:	\$7,000	We will hire a language translator contractor to translate 6 school forms into Spanish, Hmong and Somali
Equipment/Tools/Supplies:	\$8,000	Purchase 100 units/pairs of winter jackets, boots, snow pants, stocking hats, mittens, neck gaiters and 50 sleeping bags from thrift, second-hand stores and outdoor clothing companies. All items will be sanitized prior to use.
Other:	\$115,000	Scholarships of up to 100% student fee (\$115/student) for minimum of 1,000 students to attend Audubon Center of the North Woods 2-night, 3-day residential environmental

		learning experience. ACNW can accommodate up to 150 students at a time, with 50-120 being the average size school attending.
TOTAL ENRTF BUDGET:	\$130,000	

Explanation of Use of Classified Staff: N/A

Explanation of Capital Expenditures Greater Than \$5,000: None

Total Number of Full-time Equivalents (FTE) Directly Funded with this ENRTF Appropriation: 2.5

Total Number of Full-time Equivalents (FTE) Estimated to Be Funded through Contracts with this ENRTF Appropriation: N/A

B. Other Funds:

Source of Funds	\$ Amount Proposed	\$ Amount Spent	Use of Other Funds
Non-state			
Ecolab	\$7,500		K-12 Scholarships for St. Paul schools
Onan Family Foundation	\$4,000		K-12 Scholarships for St. Paul & Minneapolis schools
School Buses from individual schools	\$10,565		This figure is based off the cost of a school bus round trip from Minneapolis to the Audubon Center. A bus holds 80 students, so this is based off 12.5 round trip bus visits for the minimum 1,000 students this will impact.
Non-State Total:	\$11,500	\$	
TOTAL OTHER FUNDS:	\$22,065	\$	

VII. PROJECT STRATEGY:

A. Project Team/Partners

- The project team would consist of the Audubon Center of the North Woods staff.
- Executive Director Bryan Wood would secure a translation company for translating forms, as well as visit thrift stores and work with vendors to purchase sleeping bags and winter outerwear for students.
- Mr. Wood and Program Director Connie Haugen would reach out to schools that have expressed interest in the past, but had financial limitations, as well as reach out to prospective schools in under-served areas of the Twin Cities and Greater Minnesota. School visits and public sessions for parents and students would occur at attending schools.
- Mr. Wood and Ms. Haugen would review and award scholarships on a needs-basis.
- Audubon Center administrators, educators, food service and facilities staff would all work with program delivery for each school attending.

B. Project Impact and Long-Term Strategy

- This project's impact would be significant in the lives of hundreds of Minnesota K-12 students.
- The chance for students to be immersed in nature for multiple days, spend time outside with their classmates and teachers, and learn in the environment is a powerful experience. For many, they have never done anything like this, let alone spent a night away from home.

- We have seen many schools enact environmental projects and activities at their schools after a visit to our site. Schools realize and embrace the value of the experience and work to keep the trip an annual experience through fundraising. We meet with the schools to give them ideas for how to do this.
- Getting the schools here initially is the largest hurdle, when parents, teachers and faculty are unfamiliar to the process. Once here, it is much easier to work with them to continue returning.
- Studies show that students who have nature experiences report higher academic scores, improved focus, lower stress levels, and fewer behavior problems.
- The benefits to society of this project are also many. This project would foster environmentally literate students, helping shape their decision making process individually and their collective impact on society.
- If we are successful with this grant and find an increasing need for financial assistance to connect more diverse and changing student demographics to residential environmental learning experiences, we may come back to LCCMR with future funding requests.

C. Funding History:

Funding Source and Use of Funds	Funding Timeframe	\$ Amount
Ecolab – St. Paul K-12 school scholarships	July 1, 2012 – June 30, 2013	\$7,500
Ecolab – St. Paul K-12 school scholarships	July 1, 2013 – June 30, 2014	\$7,500
Ecolab – St. Paul K-12 school scholarships	July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2015	\$7,500
Ecolab – St. Paul K-12 school scholarships	July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2016	\$7,500
Ecolab – St. Paul K-12 school scholarships	July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017	\$7,500
Onan Family Foundation - St. Paul & Minneapolis K-12 scholarships	July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017	\$4,000
		\$41,500

VIII. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS:

- The project is for 3 years, will begin on 07/01/17, and end on 06/30/20.
- Periodic project status update reports will be submitted *[January/1]* and *[June/30]* of each year.
- A final report and associated products will be submitted between June 30 and August 15, 2020.

IX. VISUAL COMPONENT or MAP(S):

Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund
M.L. 2017 Project Budget



Project Title: Increasing Residential Environmental Learning Center Opportunities
Legal Citation: M.L. 2017, Chp. 96, Sec. 2, Subd. 05g
Project Manager: Bryan Wood
Organization: Audubon Center of the North Woods
M.L. 2017 ENRTF Appropriation: \$130,000
Project Length and Completion Date: 3 Years, June 30, 2020
Date of Report: September 14, 2016

ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND BUDGET	Activity 1 Budget	Amount Spent	Activity 1 Balance	Activity 2 Budget	Amount Spent	Activity 2 Balance	Activity 3 Budget	Amount Spent	Activity 3 Balance	TOTAL BUDGET	TOTAL BALANCE
BUDGET ITEM	K-12 Schools Scholarship Funds			School Forms Translation			Acquire Winter and Sleeping Gear				
Professional/Technical/Service Contracts				\$7,000	\$0	\$7,000				\$7,000	\$7,000
We will hire a language translation company to translate our six K-12 school forms including our K-12 Trip Planner, Student Health, Adult Health, Liability Release, Packing List, and Parent Information forms into the three languages we see the highest need: Spanish, Hmong and Somali.											
Equipment/Tools/Supplies							\$8,000	\$0	\$8,000	\$8,000	\$8,000
Purchase 100 sets of winter jackets, snow pants, winter boots, mittens, stocking caps, neck gaiters and 50 sleeping bags											
Other	\$115,000		\$115,000							\$115,000	\$115,000
Provide minimum of 1,000 K-12 student residential environmental learning experiences at the Audubon Center of the North Woods.											
COLUMN TOTAL	\$115,000	\$0	\$115,000	\$7,000	\$0	\$7,000	\$8,000	\$0	\$8,000	\$130,000	\$130,000

There has been a dramatic decrease in state funding to Minnesota public schools over the last 12+ years. State funding has dropped by more than \$1,000 per pupil from FY 2003 to FY 2015 (MN2020.org). This makes field trips to places like the Audubon Center of the North Woods much harder for schools. We request scholarship funds to provide the necessary financial support to make experiences like those below possible for more than 1,000 of Minnesota's K-12 students.

