



Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

M.L. 2022 Approved Work Plan

General Information

ID Number: 2022-029

Staff Lead: Mike Campana

Date this document submitted to LCCMR: October 10, 2022

Project Title: Increasing K-12 Student Learning to Achieve ENRTF's Goals

Project Budget: \$1,602,000

Project Manager Information

Name: Bryan Wood

Organization: Osprey Wilds Environmental Learning Center

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Project Reporting

Date Work Plan Approved by LCCMR: October 27, 2022

Reporting Schedule: March 1 / September 1 of each year.

Project Completion: June 30, 2025

Final Report Due Date: August 14, 2025

Legal Information

Legal Citation: M.L. 2022, Chp. 94, Sec. 2, Subd. 05b

Appropriation Language: \$1,602,000 the second year is from the trust fund to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with Osprey Wilds Environmental Learning Center to partner with Minnesota's five other accredited residential environmental learning centers to provide needs-based scholarships to at least 25,000 K-12 students statewide for immersive multiday environmental learning experiences.

Appropriation End Date: June 30, 2025

Narrative

Project Summary: Minnesota's six accredited residential environmental learning centers (RELCs) will provide life-changing, immersive multi-day environmental learning experiences to a minimum statewide distribution of 20,000 K-12 students, achieving ENRTF's goals.

Describe the opportunity or problem your proposal seeks to address. Include any relevant background information.

Children today are increasingly deprived of time in nature (less than 30 minutes daily), resulting in a lack of awareness, understanding and contact with the environment. For students low on the socio-economic spectrum, this is compounded as there are typically no outdoor areas near where they live. Thirty-eight percent (over 323,000 children) of Minnesota's K-12 students qualify for free and reduced-price (FRP) meals, meaning a multi-day field trip is not financially feasible for tens of thousands of families. By offering scholarships for K-12 students who need support, we will provide meaningful hands-on nature experiences to children. Through our programs, the six renowned residential environmental learning centers of Minnesota (Deep Portage Learning Center, Eagle Bluff Environmental Learning Center, Laurentian Environmental Center, Long Lake Conservation Center, Osprey Wilds Environmental Learning Center, Wolf Ridge Environmental Learning Center) will provide more than 20,000 MN K-12 students with total immersion multi-day outdoor learning experiences. Minnesota's RELCs are uniquely positioned to make an incomparable impact on thousands of children through our accredited campuses across Minnesota. Every student experience will include multiple courses that are directly focused upon the learning outcomes of the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund's (ENRTF) constitutionally declared goals and objectives.

What is your proposed solution to the problem or opportunity discussed above? Introduce us to the work you are seeking funding to do. You will be asked to expand on this proposed solution in Activities & Milestones.

We will provide scholarship assistance for student tuition fees as needed, with each K-12 student spending a minimum of three days (48 hours) at an RELC, including a minimum of 15 instruction hours. We will reach a statewide population of K-12 students and schools geographically and demographically, with eligible schools showing a clear financial need through our scholarship application process including determination via percentages of free and reduced-price (FRP) lunch program students. There is an urgent demand for financial support for these learning experiences, with COVID-19 only increasing this need. Without scholarship support, Minnesota will not reach its ENRTF goals with our younger citizens. These funds will supplement, not substitute school funding for trips to Minnesota's RELCs. The RELCs as accredited schools provide evidence-based, hands-on outdoor programs that increase the number of children recreating and learning outdoors. Due to the nature of these multi-day intense learning experiences where the level of engagement is very high, student learning is such that it creates lifelong memories, which are the basis for developing the outdoor ethic Minnesotans are famous for. Minnesota's RELCs' reach for this remarkably expansive project is unmatched. All RELC staff are subject to and have passed criminal background checks.

What are the specific project outcomes as they relate to the public purpose of protection, conservation, preservation, and enhancement of the state's natural resources?

Provide a minimum of 20,000 K-12 Minnesota students multi-day learning experiences at Minnesota's RELCs, totaling a minimum of 300,000 instruction hours and 960,00 hours onsite.

By giving K-12 students extended time in nature, we help Minnesota achieve ENRTF's goals and help students develop environmental awareness, appreciation and interest, crafting a future where environmental protection, conservation and stewardship are recognized, valued and implemented.

Through financial support to underserved student populations, we address social, economic, and physical barriers to outdoor recreation.

More individuals will go into environmental careers, like the former K-12 student-participants now employed at RELCs.

Project Location

What is the best scale for describing where your work will take place?

Statewide

What is the best scale to describe the area impacted by your work?

Statewide

When will the work impact occur?

During the Project

Activities and Milestones

Activity 1: Increasing K-12 Student Residential Environmental Learning Experiences

Activity Budget: \$1,602,000

Activity Description:

Provide scholarship funds for student tuition fees for visits to Minnesota’s RELCs on a needs-basis through scholarship application review for multi-day residential environmental learning experiences at one of Minnesota's six accredited residential environmental learning centers to a minimum of 20,000 Minnesota K-12 students. To measure the development of environmental awareness, appreciation, and interest in K-12 students, each RELC will conduct on-site student and teacher surveys and evaluations before each school departs to gather information on how their awareness, appreciation and interest in the environment has changed. Each RELC will have a chance to use \$267,000 (\$1,602,000 divided equally) starting out. If one RELC cannot distribute this amount in scholarships, they will open up their funds to the other RELCs to use for K-12 scholarships. Each RELC will have a scholarship application that a school will fill out and submit. It will vary based on each request what the amount funded is for each school, based on the school's requested need, and funds available.

Activity Milestones:

| Description | Approximate Completion Date |
|--|-----------------------------|
| Reach out to Minnesota's Schools about the scholarship opportunities through print, electronic and verbal communications | December 31, 2022 |
| Serve minimum of 5,000 K-12 students through awarded scholarships by end of year one. | June 30, 2023 |
| Serve minimum of 5,000 K-12 students through awarded scholarships by end of year two. | June 30, 2024 |
| Serve >10,000 K-12 students through awarded scholarships by end of year three. | June 30, 2025 |

Project Partners and Collaborators

| Name | Organization | Role | Receiving Funds |
|----------------------|---|---|-----------------|
| Dale Yerger | Deep Portage Learning Center | Executive Director | Yes |
| Colleen Fohrenbacher | Eagle Bluff Environmental Learning Center | Executive Director | Yes |
| Karl Brown | Laurentian Environmental Center | Director of Community Education, Mounds View Public Schools | Yes |
| David McMillan | Long Lake Conservation Center | Manager | Yes |
| Peter Smerud | Wolf Ridge Environmental Learning Center | Executive Director | Yes |

Dissemination

Describe your plans for dissemination, presentation, documentation, or sharing of data, results, samples, physical collections, and other products and how they will follow ENRTF Acknowledgement Requirements and Guidelines.

Each RELC will disseminate information about this grant opportunity through multiple outlets including: printed and electronic promotional materials to Minnesota's public and private schools, advertisements and promotion on our accounts with various social media platforms, print and electronic newsletters to our individual organization's mailing and emailing lists, annual reports, and in-person promotion and acknowledgements at our onsite programs and offsite programs. Acknowledgement of the ENRTF will be included in all project communications and outreach – including press releases, media interactions, signs, publications, event advertisements & invitations, websites, newsletters, printed materials, presentations, and social media. All written communication will use at minimum the following wording "Funding for this project was provided by the Minnesota Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund as recommended by the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR)." For each school visiting an RELC, staff will state verbally to the entire group that their visit had "Funding provided by the Minnesota Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund.". The Acknowledgement Guidelines document has been shared with each RELC and they are aware that all communications need to be in accordance with the Acknowledgement Guidelines.

Long-Term Implementation and Funding

Describe how the results will be implemented and how any ongoing effort will be funded. If not already addressed as part of the project, how will findings, results, and products developed be implemented after project completion? If additional work is needed, how will this work be funded?

The RELCs establish relationships with the attending schools helping them plan and schedule their experiences, and regularly providing them with fundraising support. The provided scholarships will not be for 100% of the experience, rather the respective RELC will work with each school to help them build a diverse fundraising strategy that creates long term stability. As each RELC works with dozens of different schools, lessons learned will be shared for community-based fundraising ideas to create fundraising campaigns that achieve 100% of their need. RELCS are economic drivers in their communities, collectively employing over 200 individuals annually across our six sites.

Other ENRTF Appropriations Awarded in the Last Six Years

| Name | Appropriation | Amount Awarded |
|--|---------------------------------------|----------------|
| Increasing Residential Environmental Learning Center Opportunities | M.L. 2017, Chp. 96, Sec. 2, Subd. 05g | \$130,000 |

Budget Summary

| Category / Name | Subcategory or Type | Description | Purpose | Gen. Ineligible | % Benefits | # FTE | Classified Staff? | \$ Amount |
|---|---------------------|---|---------|-----------------|------------|-------|-------------------|-----------|
| Personnel | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | Sub Total | - |
| Contracts and Services | | | | | | | | |
| Deep Portage Learning Center | Sub award | Award approximately 3,333 scholarships for a multi-day residential environmental learning experience of at least three days (48 hours), including a minimum of 15 instruction hours. Each school will submit a completed scholarship application. The scholarship amount will vary based on each school's need and funds available. | | | | 0 | | \$267,000 |
| Eagle Bluff Environmental Learning Center | Sub award | Award approximately 3,333 scholarships for a multi-day residential environmental learning experience of at least three days (48 hours), including a minimum of 15 instruction hours. Each school will submit a completed scholarship application. The scholarship amount will vary based on each school's need and funds available. | | | | 0 | | \$267,000 |
| Laurentian Environmental Center | Sub award | Award approximately 3,333 scholarships for a multi-day residential environmental learning experience of at least three days (48 hours), including a minimum of 15 instruction hours. Each school will submit a completed scholarship application. The scholarship amount will vary based on each school's need and funds available. | | | | 0 | | \$267,000 |
| Long Lake Conservation Center | Sub award | Award approximately 3,333 scholarships for a multi-day residential environmental learning experience of at least three days (48 hours), including a minimum of 15 instruction hours. Each school will submit a completed scholarship application. The scholarship amount will vary based on each school's need and funds available. | | | | 0 | | \$267,000 |
| Wolf Ridge Environmental Learning Center | Sub award | Award approximately 3,333 scholarships for a multi-day residential environmental learning experience of at least three days (48 hours), including a minimum of 15 instruction hours. Each school will submit a | | | | 0 | | \$267,000 |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|--|---|--|--|--|------------------|--------------------|
| | | completed scholarship application. The scholarship amount will vary based on each school's need and funds available. | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | Sub Total | \$1,335,000 |
| Equipment, Tools, and Supplies | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | Sub Total | - |
| Capital Expenditures | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | Sub Total | - |
| Acquisitions and Stewardship | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | Sub Total | - |
| Travel In Minnesota | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | Sub Total | - |
| Travel Outside Minnesota | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | Sub Total | - |
| Printing and Publication | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | Sub Total | - |
| Other Expenses | | | | | | | | |
| | | K-12 Scholarships | Award approximately 3,333 scholarships for a multi-day residential environmental learning experience of at least three days (48 hours), including a minimum of 15 instruction hours. Each school will submit a completed scholarship application. The | | | | | \$267,000 |

| | | | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|---|--|--|--|--------------------|--------------------|
| | | | scholarship amount will vary based on each school's need and funds available. | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | Sub Total | \$267,000 |
| | | | | | | | Grand Total | \$1,602,000 |

Classified Staff or Generally Ineligible Expenses

| Category/Name | Subcategory or Type | Description | Justification Ineligible Expense or Classified Staff Request |
|---------------|---------------------|-------------|--|
|---------------|---------------------|-------------|--|

Non ENRTF Funds

| Category | Specific Source | Use | Status | \$ Amount |
|------------------|---|---|----------------------------|------------------|
| State | | | | |
| | | | State Sub Total | - |
| Non-State | | | | |
| Cash | Wolf Ridge Environmental Learning Center | K-12 Scholarship Support | Secured | \$180,000 |
| Cash | Deep Portage Learning Center | K-12 Scholarship Support | Secured | \$120,000 |
| Cash | Aitkin County | Long Lake Conservation Center Support | Secured | \$75,000 |
| Cash | Osprey Wilds Environmental Learning Center | K-12 Scholarship Support | Secured | \$60,000 |
| Cash | Eagle Bluff Environmental Learning Center | K-12 Scholarship Support | Secured | \$60,000 |
| Cash | Long Lake Conservation Center Foundation | K-12 Scholarship Support | Secured | \$15,000 |
| Cash | Ecolab Foundation | K-12 Scholarship Support for St. Paul Schools | Potential | \$30,000 |
| Cash | Mayo Clinic Community Contribution Foundation | K-12 Scholarship Support for Olmsted County Schools | Potential | \$15,000 |
| Cash | Onan Family Foundation | K-12 Scholarship Support for Minneapolis & St. Paul Schools | Potential | \$8,000 |
| Cash | St. Paul Audubon Society | K-12 Scholarship Support for St. Paul Schools | Potential | \$4,000 |
| Cash | Minneapolis Audubon Society | K-12 Scholarship Support for Minneapolis Schools | Potential | \$3,000 |
| Cash | Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis | K-12 Scholarship Support for Minneapolis Schools | Potential | \$3,000 |
| Cash | Minnesota River Valley Audubon Chapter | K-12 Scholarship Support for South Metro Schools | Potential | \$3,000 |
| | | | Non State Sub Total | \$576,000 |
| | | | Funds Total | \$576,000 |

Attachments

Required Attachments

Visual Component

File: [06892960-f53.pdf](#)

Alternate Text for Visual Component

This map shows the vast reach and impact that Minnesota's residential environmental learning centers currently have with Minnesota's K-12 schools....

Financial Capacity

File: [a6c10e6c-69b.pdf](#)

Board Resolution or Letter

| Title | File |
|---|----------------------------------|
| Osprey Wilds Board Minutes 02.25 - LCCMR Board Resolution on Page 3 Highlighted in Yellow | 9dc64734-ace.pdf |

Optional Attachments

Support Letter or Other

| Title | File |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| Representative Davids Letter of Support | ac49a35a-02e.pdf |
| Senator Rarick Letter of Support | 164dc1f6-f0a.pdf |
| MN Department of Education Letter of Support | 48cd0f7e-326.pdf |
| Background Check Form | cddeac68-eb6.pdf |
| Resolution of Support | d0722409-bae.docx |

Difference between Proposal and Work Plan

Describe changes from Proposal to Work Plan Stage

Due to the project being reduced from the initial request of \$1,800,000 to \$1,602,000, as well as the rising cost of inflation, we have reduced our minimum number of students served from 25,000 to 20,000, and the corresponding minimum number of instruction hours from 375,000 to 300,000, and time onsite from 1.2 million hours to 960,000 hours.

Additional Acknowledgements and Conditions:

The following are acknowledgements and conditions beyond those already included in the above workplan:

Do you understand and acknowledge the ENRTF repayment requirements if the use of capital equipment changes?

N/A

Do you agree travel expenses must follow the "Commissioner's Plan" promulgated by the Commissioner of Management of Budget or, for University of Minnesota projects, the University of Minnesota plan?

N/A

Does your project have potential for royalties, copyrights, patents, or sale of products and assets?

No

Do you understand and acknowledge IP and revenue-return and sharing requirements in 116P.10?

N/A

Do you wish to request reinvestment of any revenues into your project instead of returning revenue to the ENRTF?

N/A

Does your project include original, hypothesis-driven research?

No

Does the organization have a fiscal agent for this project?

No