



Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

M.L. 2022 Approved Work Plan

General Information

ID Number: 2022-041

Staff Lead: LCCMR General Universal Staff User

Date this document submitted to LCCMR: June 28, 2022

Project Title: Environmental Learning Classroom with Trails

Project Budget: \$82,000

Project Manager Information

Name: Reggie Engebritson

Organization: Independent School District #712 - Mountain Iron Buhl Public Schools

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Project Reporting

Date Work Plan Approved by LCCMR: July 27, 2022

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

Project Completion: December 31, 2023

Final Report Due Date: February 14, 2024

Legal Information

Legal Citation: M.L. 2022, Chp. 94, Sec. 2, Subd. 09b

Appropriation Language: \$82,000 the second year is from the trust fund to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with Mountain Iron-Buhl Public Schools to build an outdoor classroom pavilion, accessible trails, and a footbridge within the Mountain Iron-Buhl School Forest to conduct environmental education that cultivates a lasting conservation ethic.

Appropriation End Date: June 30, 2025

Narrative

Project Summary: We will build an outdoor classroom and an additional 2.5+ miles of accessible trails, including a foot bridge connecting the School Forest Trail System.

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

In the heart of the city, adjacent to the school, lies acres of forest, streams, wetlands, and interconnecting trails which form the MIB Environmental Learning Laboratory. We are fortunate and proud to share this with our students, faculty, and the community to enhance their knowledge and support of the environment. Climate change education has become a focus of our educational efforts. MIB provides students with hands-on exploratory outdoor learning year-round. Students explore different parts of the ecosystem in the forest: trees-plants, mammals, the watershed, birds, amphibians, and reptiles. Exploratory teaching is achieved through nature hikes, guest speakers, arts-based projects, and experiential learning. Students spend time outside in all types of weather. We seek to enhance this outdoor teaching environment through the construction of an outdoor classroom and pavilion, bog walk learning deck and shade shack. We will also expand the School Forest Trail System. It is important that we construct these structures and trails to be accessible to all students so that they can have a hands-on outdoor learning experience. MIB created this Environmental Learning Center in 1983 and much of the development has been led by students, teachers, and volunteers under the direction of local DNR and County staff.

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.

Since 1983, the city of Mountain Iron, the Mountain Iron-Buhl School District, Boy Scouts of America, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, the Army Corp of Engineers, St. Louis County and others have partnered to create this outdoor learning area in a forest located next to the school. A system of trails exists, as well as benches, a campfire ring and privy along with environmental laboratory experiments and research. This proposal would create a permanent outdoor learning classroom and bog walk learning deck, as well as accessible forest trails for use by all learners. This school forest is also large enough for student athletes in cross country to utilize it for trail running practices and the community for skiing, snowshoeing, and forest hiking. With wetlands, a winding stream, bridges, berry patches, and forests, student achievement flourishes in a dynamic outdoor laboratory enhanced by dedicated teachers and volunteers. With a little investment, we can create an even better learning center for our kids. Our goal is to continue to make smart investments in our school forest to promote the learning environment for students.

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?

This project will enhance the environmental education of students in the district. It will increase the knowledge and skills of students to cultivate a sustainable lifestyle, improve and maintain water quality, reduce and monitor energy and water consumption, restore and maintain a healthy and biodiverse natural environment. This project will help provide outdoor experiences for learners and build within them a long-lasting and action-based conservation ethic. Enhancements of this outdoor area with help with efforts that deliver and implement existing environmental education. It will provide recreational opportunities for athletes and community members.

Project Location

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

Region(s): NE

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

Region(s): NE

When will the work impact occur?

During the Project

Activities and Milestones

Activity 1: Outdoor Learning Classroom

Activity Budget: \$50,000

Activity Description:

We will build a 20'x20' outdoor learning classroom pavilion in our outdoor learning area. This will allow our students to be able to have an outdoor classroom area as they learn more about our school forest and the environment around them. The pavilion will have tables and benches so students can sit and complete paper/pencil tasks or hands-on projects. While the pavilion will not provide protection for all types of weather, it will allow some protection. The plan is to put in a concrete slab as the floor and then the pavilion. Having this outdoor classroom will also allow community members a place to sit and have meetings or discussions as they enjoy the school forest or participate on the trails. This is an open pavilion so anyone can use it at any time. It will also be big enough to allow more than one classroom of students to come out to the school forest at the same time and do projects.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Planning, engineering and design.	October 31, 2022
Construction	September 30, 2023

Activity 2: Bridge Construction

Activity Budget: \$7,000

Activity Description:

We will construct an accessible foot bridge to connect the School Forest Trail System. This bridge will allow equal access for all to enjoy the trails and the school forest. Connecting the trails is important for not only students at the school, but also for our cross-country team who uses the trails to run and for community members to enjoy the trails for walking, running, and to go snow shoeing in the winter.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Planning, engineering and design.	September 30, 2022
Construction	September 30, 2023

Activity 3: Trail Construction and Trail restoration

Activity Budget: \$25,000

Activity Description:

Our plan is to add to the school forest trails by building up to a mile of additional trails and upgrade the current trail system so that it is accessible for all. There are parts of the trails that go underwater in the spring and take weeks to dry out which does not allow our classes to participate to the fullest extent possible. These dollars will upgrade and restore the trail system so that the trails can be used more in the spring and also add additional trails for both the school students and community to enjoy.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Planning, engineering and design.	October 31, 2022
Construction	October 31, 2023

Project Partners and Collaborators

Name	Organization	Role	Receiving Funds
Craig Wainio	Mountain Iron Economic Development Authority	MIEDA has worked in partnership with ISD#712 on the outdoor lab and trails.	No
Karen Harrison	MN DNR	They are a partner with the our School Forest. They are on board with adding a pavilion and doing work on the trails.	No

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.

Quarterly updates to the school board about the progress of the project; update school parents about the school forest; give teachers at the school the opportunity to use the outdoor classroom and expose all students to the school forest. Update community members about the final project through a presentation to the City Council and through the local newspaper.

We will be adding signage to both entrances of the School Forest acknowledging the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund funding to making our School Forest more accessible to both students and the community.

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 school district, in cooperation with the City of Mountain Iron, will maintain the forest, trails and structures.

Budget Summary

Category / Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Purpose	Gen. Ineligible	% Benefits	# FTE	Classified Staff?	\$ Amount
Personnel								
							Sub Total	-
Contracts and Services								
TBD	Professional or Technical Service Contract	Planning, engineering and design of outdoor classroom/pavilion, bridge and trail.				0		\$4,888
TBD	Professional or Technical Service Contract	Construction of outdoor classroom/pavilion, trail and bridge. Make the trails accessible to all and provide classroom space for students to learn.				0		\$70,000
Mountain Iron-Buhl	Professional or Technical Service Contract	Project Manager - our teacher, Louis Parenteau, has been in charge of the School Forest for many years. He has construction experience and is able to lead the project to the specifications within the grant. Looking at 100 hours at \$51.12; his hourly rate as a teacher.				0		\$5,112
TBD	Professional or Technical Service Contract	Build a 10' x 12' wood shed to store wood for the campfire and tools for the work in the school forest. A fire pit currently exists. This wood shed would go near the fire pit. The firepit teaches students how to cook outdoors.				0		\$2,000
							Sub Total	\$82,000
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								
							Sub Total	-
							Grand Total	\$82,000

Classified Staff or Generally Ineligible Expenses

Category/Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Justification Ineligible Expense or Classified Staff Request
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Non ENRTF Funds

Category	Specific Source	Use	Status	\$ Amount
State				
			State Sub Total	-
Non-State				
			Non State Sub Total	-
			Funds Total	-

Attachments

Required Attachments

Visual Component

File: [5b6729f3-ac3.pdf](#)

Alternate Text for Visual Component

This is an updated map showing where North is and where the pavilion will go. I have attached a picture of the pavilion we would like to build. We would also like to build a wood shed to store wood for the campfire and tools used for the work....

Optional Attachments

Support Letter or Other

Title	File
Resolution of Support from MIB School Board	4acf3df0-652.pdf
Example of Proposed Pavilion	1708d18d-d2e.pdf
Background Check	029f66da-56d.pdf

Difference between Proposal and Work Plan

Describe changes from Proposal to Work Plan Stage

We added building a 10 x 12 wood shed to store cut wood and tools used to work in the forest rather than haul tools from the school and back again. We expanded the description of the work on the trails. Not only will the trails be expanded, but also upgraded so they can be accessible for all.

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

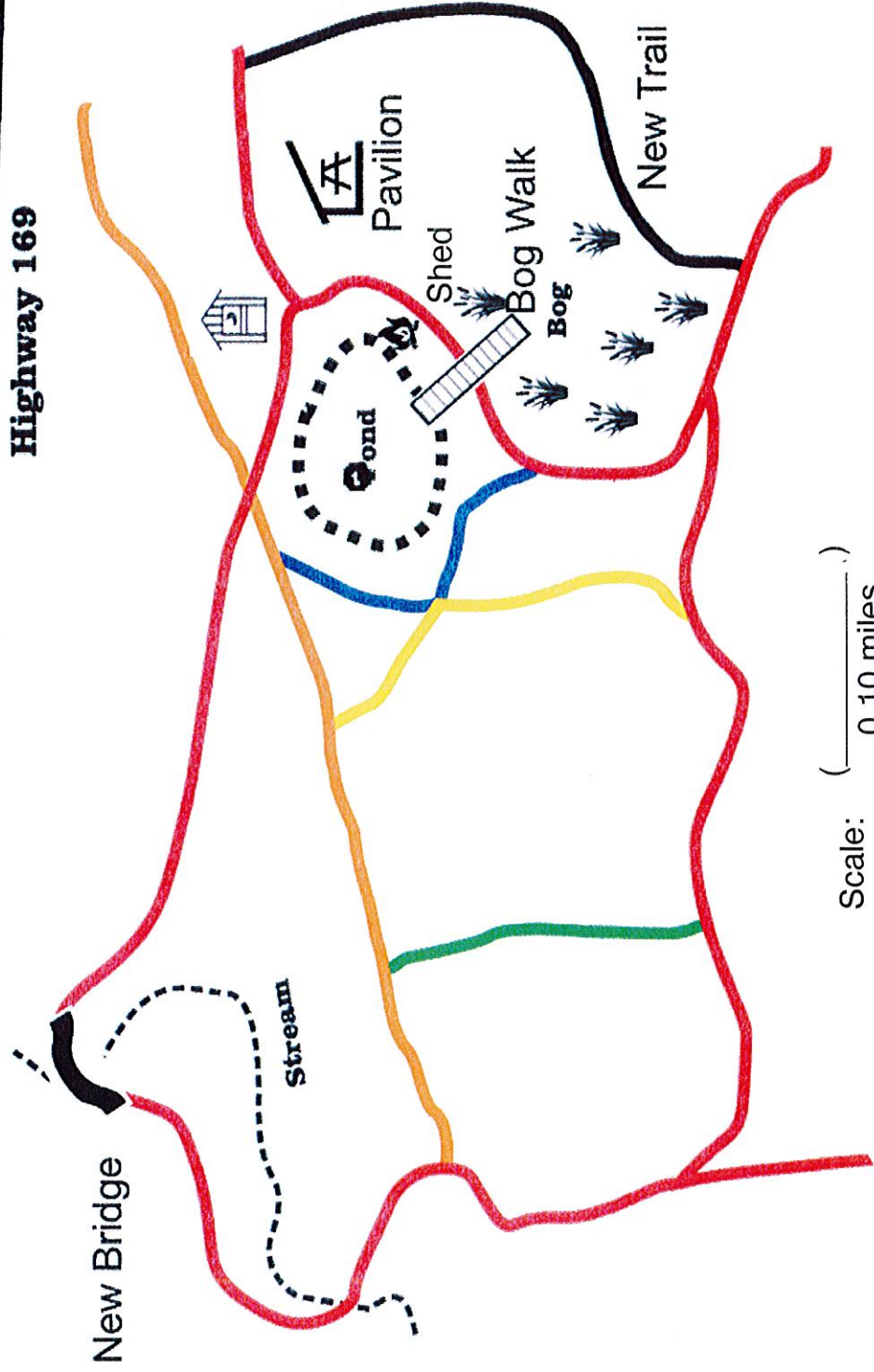
Does your project include original, hypothesis-driven research?

No

Does the organization have a fiscal agent for this project?

No

Mountain Iron-Buhl School Forest



Highway 169

New Bridge

Stream

Pond

Pavilion

Shed

Bog Walk

Bog

New Trail

Scale: (0.10 miles)

Unity Drive

North

Key:

Items created using ENRTF funding include:

- The black (New Trail) trail distance of 0.20 miles
- Bog walk distance of approx. 75 - 100 yards
- New Bridge either wooden or a culvert approx. 25 feet
- 20' x 20' Pavilion w/ slab
- 8' x 12' storage shed
- all other colored trails could use some fill or maintenance to become more accessible

