

Final Abstract

Final Report Approved on October 17, 2025

M.L. 2022 Project Abstract

For the Period Ending June 30, 2025

Project Title: Expanding Access to Wildlife Learning Bird by Bird

Project Manager: Jessica Ruthenberg

Affiliation: MN DNR - Ecological and Water Resources Division

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Funding Source:

Fiscal Year:

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

Appropriation Amount: \$276,000

Amount Spent: \$239,194

Amount Remaining: \$36,806

Sound bite of Project Outcomes and Results

The DNR's Bird by Bird program introduced over 400 students at three Twin Cities elementary schools to the exciting world of birdwatching. Fifty young adults in the BOLD program developed leadership skills and explored bird conservation careers. Over 600 community members were reached through bird-themed events and public programs.

Overall Project Outcome and Results

Repeated exposure to nature during childhood can have enduring positive effects on well-being, academic achievement, environmental stewardship, and career choice as adults. Unfortunately, many people do not have opportunities to connect with nature, and the demographics of Minnesotans enjoying the outdoors and choosing natural resources careers do not reflect the racial and ethnic diversity in our communities.

The DNR Nongame Wildlife Program crafted Bird by Bird, a youth program integrating environmental education and outdoor leadership training, focusing on birds, bird conservation, and the engagement of underrepresented demographics. Three activities were planned: bird watching in schools, young adult outdoor leadership development, and community bird walks.

A total of 413 students in grades three-six, plus eight teachers, at three metro area schools underserved in

environmental education participated in Bird by Bird. During multiple classroom visits from conservation educators and volunteers, students learned about bird ecology, engaged in birdwatching, and attended a field trip to a nature center. A total of thirteen volunteers supported this effort and a bilingual English-Spanish pocket field guide was produced for use with the program.

A total of fifty young adults, recruited via two organizations serving underrepresented communities, participated in BOLD (Birding and Outdoor Leadership Development). A total of twenty-one activities were delivered, providing immersive exposure to wildlife professions and the outdoors. Participants received mentorship, training in bird field skills, and experience co-leading community events. This equated to 830.75 hours of youth time invested in bird and conservation learning. About 30 percent of these youth received stipends, enabling their participation in the program. Twelve community engagement efforts were implemented, cumulatively reaching over 600 people. These included bird walks led by Bird by Bird volunteers and/or co-led by BOLD participants, presentations to organizations, support for Citywide Park Clean Up, and youth activities at Twin Cities Bird Festival.

Project Results Use and Dissemination

Through the past three years, Bird by Bird and BOLD were promoted and shared periodically through the Nongame Wildlife Program's communication channels, including our Facebook page and e-newsletter. Presentations on the program were also given to numerous organizations, including the Minnesota Ornithologist's Union, DNR's Parks and Trails Division, Minnesota State University's Social Justice Speaker Series, and an internal agency-wide DNR webinar on equity and inclusion. Participation in future years of the program was also promoted directly to teachers at St. Paul and Minneapolis Public schools, as well as on the Nongame Wildlife Program's Facebook Page.



Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

M.L. 2022 Approved Final Report

General Information

Date: November 12, 2025

ID Number: 2022-066

Staff Lead: Tiffany Schaufler

Project Title: Expanding Access to Wildlife Learning Bird by Bird

Project Budget: \$276,000

Project Manager Information

Name: Jessica Ruthenberg

Organization: MN DNR - Ecological and Water Resources Division

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Email: jessica.ruthenberg@state.mn.us

Web Address: <https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/ewr/index.html>

Project Reporting

Final Report Approved: October 17, 2025

Reporting Status: Project Completed

Date of Last Action: October 17, 2025

Project Completion: June 30, 2025

Legal Information

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

Appropriation Language: \$276,000 the second year is from the trust fund to the commissioner of natural resources to engage young people from diverse communities in wildlife conservation through bird-watching in schools, outdoor leadership training, and participating in neighborhood bird walks.

Appropriation End Date: June 30, 2025

Narrative

Project Summary: Bird by Bird engages young people in wildlife conservation with three approaches:

1. Bird watching in schools,
2. Young adult outdoor leadership training,
3. Neighborhood bird walks inspiring community engagement.

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

Experiences in nature provide enduring physical and emotional health benefits, as reflected in numerous initiatives for getting outside and nature prescription. Unfortunately, many people do not have regular opportunities to connect with nature, and the demographics of Minnesotans enjoying the outdoors and choosing natural resources careers do not reflect the racial and ethnic diversity in our communities. Trends in Minnesota indicate that population growth is greatest in urban areas, and populations of color are projected to make up one-third of our population by 2053, yet in a recent survey of State Park visitors only 5% of respondents identified as non-white.

Nature is especially important for young people. Repeated exposure during childhood can have lasting positive effects on academic achievement, environmental stewardship, and career choice as adults. College students from underrepresented groups have reported that lack of access to nature as youth and lack of representative role models are barriers to entering natural resources fields. Educational programs rooted in local place-based learning can engage young people in conservation, serve as a bridge between underrepresented communities and nature, enhance representation in environmental careers, and provide multigenerational opportunities for students and their families to enjoy nature and develop a community-based conservation ethic.

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.

The DNR Nongame Wildlife Program, in broad partnership (including US Fish and Wildlife Service, Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis, additional partners) proposes a new program, Bird by Bird, that integrates environmental education and leadership training for young Minnesotans. The Program will engage diverse demographics currently underrepresented in natural resources through three activities:

1. Students at 10 schools underserved in environmental education will engage in active learning; caring for bird feeders, learning about bird ecology, and entering scientific data into a community science program like eBird. Bird by Bird Volunteers will visit classes to teach bird identification, highlight conservation issues, and lead birding walks. Students will also participate in field trips to view birds up close at metro natural areas.
2. Young adults will gain leadership experience and exposure to natural resource professions through a Birding and Outdoor Leadership Development (BOLD) project. BOLD Leaders, recruited from underrepresented communities, will receive mentorship, training, and stipends to co-lead community events.
3. Community Bird Walks led by Bird by Bird Volunteers and BOLD Leaders will provide outdoor experiences for families near participating schools. These free educational programs in neighborhood parks and open spaces will be promoted through community centers such as schools, churches, and YMCAs.

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?

Students, teachers, and families will actively learn about Minnesota birds and their conservation issues. An estimated 500 students and 10 teachers will participate in experiential learning throughout the year, increasing their environmental literacy and preparing these youth to become caring stewards of our natural resources.

Through the BOLD mentorship project 10-20 young adults will gain invaluable leadership experience that may spark interest in pursuing natural resource careers and ultimately increase representation in our state's conservation workforce.

An estimated 50 families will engage in bird watching in their neighborhoods, increasing their knowledge of wildlife, environmental, and natural resource conservation issues.

Project Location

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

Region(s): Metro

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

Region(s): Metro

When will the work impact occur?

During the Project and In the Future

Activities and Milestones

Activity 1: Bird by Bird Classrooms: Birdwatching at School

Activity Budget: \$179,558

Activity Description:

Students in grades 5 – 8 at 10 schools identified as underserved in natural resource education (e.g., free/reduced lunch, Title 1, lacking other nature-based programming) will engage in active learning to increase knowledge of wild birds and enhance understanding of biodiversity and a healthy environment. Bird feeding stations at schools provide on-site bird watching opportunities, with an option to plant a wildlife garden. Students will care for bird feeders, observe and identify birds, and enter data into a community science program (ex: Cornell’s Feeder Watch or eBird).

Bird by Bird Volunteers will visit classes 3-5 times per year to assist in active learning, including bird walks around schools. Volunteers will be selected from an applicant pool, screened, and trained. Teachers will receive training in lesson plans and materials that meet Minnesota Academic Standards and draw from existing curricula, such as FlyingWild. Students and teachers will learn about conservation issues affecting birds, identifying birds, and collection of scientific data.

Each student will receive a pair of binoculars and field guide to use. Students will also participate in at least one special field trip to view birds up close, at one of several bird-banding stations or nearby nature,

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
3 or more meetings of the Advisory Team comprised of community partner organizations	September 30, 2023
Select curricula, prepare materials, and plan training sessions for teachers, students, volunteers, and BOLD participants	September 30, 2023
Recruitment, application reviews, screening, and selection of Bird by Bird Volunteers and Mentors	September 30, 2023
5 schools engaged and ready to begin programming	September 30, 2023
5 additional schools (for a total of 10 active schools) engaged and ready to begin programming	September 30, 2024

Activity 2: Birding and Outdoor Leadership Development (BOLD) Mentoring Project

Activity Budget: \$57,207

Activity Description:

We will engage 10-20 high school students or first year graduates who are curious about natural resources, outdoor leadership, or environmental stewardship to participate in a Birding and Outdoor Leadership Development (BOLD) Project, with focused recruitment in communities underrepresented in the conservation field.

BOLD young adults will work with Bird by Bird Mentors who will be selected from an applicant pool by the Advisory Team or its designees, screened, and trained. BOLD participants will learn about bird conservation and identification through lectures, study materials, and several birdwatching trips.

BOLD young adult leaders will gain experience and skills co-leading Bird by Bird sessions with their mentors and other BOLD Leaders. BOLD participants will co-lead community bird walks, co-host other bird-related outreach event, and teach students in Bird by Bird Classrooms if schedules permit.

BOLD participants will be provided with binoculars, bird field guides, and transportation stipends. BOLD Leaders will receive teaching stipends when leading field trips or classroom sessions as acknowledgement of their acquired skill and

time.

BOLD offers invaluable experience to young adults that may spark their interest in pursuing natural resource careers and ultimately may increase representation in our state’s natural resource workforce.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
10 BOLD participants are selected (entails advertising, reviewing applicants, selection)	September 30, 2023
10 BOLD participants receive initial training and mentorship	September 30, 2023
10 BOLD leaders co-lead at least two school or community bird events each (20 events)	September 30, 2024
10 BOLD leaders co-lead at least two school or community bird events each (20 events)	June 30, 2025

Activity 3: Community Bird Walks

Activity Budget: \$39,235

Activity Description:

Bird by Bird Volunteers, Mentors, and BOLD Leaders will lead bird watching opportunities for communities, focused primarily in diverse neighborhoods around participating schools. These free, family-friendly walks will take place in local places, such as city or county parks. Place-based experiences in neighborhoods underscore the accessibility of nature even within our urban communities.

Binoculars will be provided for participants. Alternative activities such as watching a bald eagle or osprey nest may be added. For younger participants, activities such as coloring, scavenger hunts, and interactive games may also be incorporated. Information in non-English languages will be provided as opportunity presents. Events will be announced and promoted through community centers such as schools, churches, libraries, and YMCAs.

Leadership by BOLD young adults provides a unique opportunity for ‘near-peer’ mentoring (where the mentor and mentee are from similar backgrounds and relatively close in age), which can create meaningful relationships and lasting benefits. Multi-generational programming enhances well-being for all and promotes a sense of shared community.

When families engage in bird watching in their neighborhoods, they gain health benefits from being outdoors, while also increasing environmental literacy and inspiring our youth to become caring stewards of our natural resources.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
10 community bird watching walks	September 30, 2024
An additional 10 community bird walks (for a total of 20)	June 30, 2025

Project Partners and Collaborators

Name	Organization	Role	Receiving Funds
Tom Cooper	United States Fish and Wildlife Service	USFWS Region 3 Migratory Bird Program and Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge have been working to increase and diversify participation in wildlife viewing and education in the metro area. The USFWS will support the program by providing Bird by Bird Volunteers and collaborating on bird walks and community programming.	No
Katie Burns and Irene Bueno Padilla	Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis	Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis (ACM) will support this program by sharing educational resources and providing volunteers for classroom and young adult mentoring. This program aligns with the ACM mission that includes engaging our diverse community in bird-related activities and their emphasis on engaging youth in community outreach and education.	No
Jennifer Vieth	Carpenter Nature Center	Carpenter Nature Center will support this Program by serving on its Advisory Team, assisting with BOLD youth leader trainings, and hosting field trips for students to see birds in the hand up close at their bird-banding station. (Minimal fees to cover field trip programming are included within the budget.)	Yes
Hayley Ball	Urban Roots	Urban Roots will support the Bird By Bird Program by advising and collaborating on the Birding and Outdoor Leadership Development (BOLD) Program. Urban Roots has partnered with DNR on a highly successful youth employment program providing high quality job training internships to underserved youth in conservation, agriculture, and culinary arts.	No
Victoria Hall	The Raptor Center	The Raptor Center will actively support this Program by serving on the Advisory Team, assisting with BOLD program trainings, and hosting classroom experiences. The Raptor Center offers extensive experience with bringing educational ambassador birds and STEM based curricula into Minnesota classrooms in underserved communities.	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.

We will describe this project and its accomplishments via media including, but not limited to, DNR website and DNR Nongame Wildlife Program Facebook page. We will utilize the networking capacity of the schools and collaborative partners to share information about the project and to spread the word regarding bird walks. We will comply with ENRTF acknowledgement guidelines during dissemination efforts.

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?

We request three years of funding for the Bird by Bird Program to ensure a strong base is built with buy-in and support from partners that will enable long-term success. We anticipate that schools will value the Bird by Bird Classrooms, Volunteers, Mentors, and BOLD Leaders will value their relationships, and most materials will roll over from year to year. Once launched, this Program will be sustainable with minimal financial inputs for bussing, replacement supplies such as binoculars, and Program coordination time. If this initial Program is successful, DNR will work with partners to cover these costs in the future.

Budget Summary

Category / Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Purpose	Gen. Ineligible	% Benefits	# FTE	Classified Staff?	\$ Amount	\$ Amount Spent	\$ Amount Remaining
Personnel										
Coordinator		Coordinates Program and all participants: schools, volunteers, mentors, BOLD leaders, sets up trainings, plans for school visits and community events			25%	1.5	X	\$141,155	-	-
							Sub Total	\$141,155	\$140,071	\$1,084
Contracts and Services										
Carpenter Nature Center	Subaward	Bird-banding Expertise and Facility for Field Trips - To use facilities and for avian expert to lead the events (estimated at \$200/event, 8 field trips). For 2025, the Director of Education and a Naturalist will provide scheduling services/ coordination with schools and deliver in-class bird programming to classrooms.				0		\$11,845	\$10,415	\$1,430
							Sub Total	\$11,845	\$10,415	\$1,430
Equipment, Tools, and Supplies										
	Tools and Supplies	Binoculars	for 9 participating schools with an estimate of 30 students and teachers per classroom (\$190/ea. *286 pair)					\$48,700	\$46,828	\$1,872
	Tools and Supplies	Field guide books	book on bird identification to be distributed 17 per participating classroom (1 per pair of students for 30 students per class plus 2 for teachers; \$16/book*170 books)					\$2,720	\$2,720	-

	Tools and Supplies	Bird feeders, hangars, baths, seed and native plants for bird feeding areas	Materials for bird feeding stations at participating schools for bird observation					\$11,950	\$1,696	\$10,254
	Tools and Supplies	BOLD Leader supplies	BOLD leaders (10): one pair of binoculars (\$200), field guide (\$16), and natural history guides or apps (\$22.50)					\$2,295	\$1,896	\$399
	Tools and Supplies	Community Bird Walk kit	For use in Community bird walks, 2 kits of each: 5 pairs of binoculars (\$200 each) and 5 field guides (\$16 each)					\$2,060	\$2,060	-
	Tools and Supplies	Community event supplies	Event supplies such as learning activity materials (\$50/event *30 events)					\$1,500	\$1,500	-
	Tools and Supplies	Storage bins	Large storage bins are needed to organize and transport the binoculars and field guides loaned to each school. These bins will help schools safely store, organize, and transport their binoculars and field guides wherever they intend to use them. (36 storage bins x \$18.00 each).					\$650	\$530	\$120
	Tools and Supplies	Bilingual Spanish/English folding pocket field guide to "Birds of the Twin Cities" by Waterford Press (1,436 copies at \$3.48 each))	These field guides will be distributed to participating Bird by Bird schools as part of their classroom kit of supplies to aid in bird identification while observing birds at their feeders, on bird walks, and on field trips. Additional copies will be used for BOLD Leader supplies, the community bird walk kit, and at community events.					\$5,000	\$4,997	\$3
							Sub Total	\$74,875	\$62,227	\$12,648
Capital Expenditures										
							Sub Total	-	-	-

Acquisitions and Stewardship										
							Sub Total	-	-	-
Travel In Minnesota										
	Miles/ Meals/ Lodging	Travel stipend for Volunteers to participate in school classroom sessions, field trips, BOLD mentoring sessions, or community events (\$0.56/mile*50 miles roundtrip*4 trips per year*5 schools in Year 2 and 10 schools in Year 3)	Travel for Volunteers for Class Visits, Field Trips, and Community Events					\$2,100	-	\$2,100
	Other	Bus trip for field trips to bring students to nature center for banding and hands on experience (\$500/bus*2 busses per school; one trip year per school, 5 schools in Year 2 and 10 schools in Year 3)	Bussing to field trips					\$5,400	\$5,394	\$6
	Miles/ Meals/ Lodging	Coordinator in-state travel to schools, advisory team meetings, trainings, community events, and field trips (\$0.56/mile*50 miles/trip*30 trips/yr*3 yrs)/ trip*20 trips)	Travel for Coordinator to schools, meetings, trainings, and community events					\$2,520	\$1,190	\$1,330
	Miles/ Meals/ Lodging	Travel stipend to cover transportation costs for BOLD young adult leaders to get to and from community events and/or school teaching sessions (\$30/ trip *4 trips*10 participants*2 years)	Travel for BOLD young adult leaders					\$2,400	-	\$2,400
							Sub Total	\$12,420	\$6,584	\$5,836
Travel Outside Minnesota										
							Sub Total	-	-	-
Printing and Publication										
	Printing	Community bird walk and Community event flyers and educational materials (\$80/event * 30 events)	To announce and invite people to neighborhood community bird walks and other community events					\$2,400	-	\$2,400

							Sub Total	\$2,400	-	\$2,400
Other Expenses										
		Training workshop including venue rental, avian expert speakers, hands-on birding sessions (two in each of years 2 and 3 for \$400 each)	Training for Volunteers, BOLD participants, and Teachers					\$1,600	\$270	\$1,330
		Leading Community bird walks and/or Classroom sessions (\$30 per bird walk, 3 per leader per year, 10 leaders for two years), two field experience/trainings per month (\$12.50/hour, up to 8 hours per month))	Stipend for BOLD young adult leaders					\$17,850	\$5,772	\$12,078
		MN DNR Direct and Necessary Costs	D&N calculation: People support (\$2,496), Safety support (\$387), Financial support (\$3,342), Communication support (\$1,311), IT support (\$5,311), Planning support (\$1,008)					\$13,855	\$13,855	-
							Sub Total	\$33,305	\$19,897	\$13,408
							Grand Total	\$276,000	\$239,194	\$36,806

Classified Staff or Generally Ineligible Expenses

Category/Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Justification Ineligible Expense or Classified Staff Request
Personnel - Coordinator		Coordinates Program and all participants: schools, volunteers, mentors, BOLD leaders, sets up trainings, plans for school visits and community events	<p>Classified : To rehire our Coordinator and address continuing needs for this role, we request changing this project-critical position from a temporary unclassified position to permanent, classified. For the short remainder of this grant period, this position will focus on these grant project-related responsibilities and the ENRTF funding dedicated towards this position will exclusively be used to pay project-associated costs. Currently, no other source of funding is available to replace this position's ENRTF funding and the project can not be completed without ENTRF funds to support it. Thus, these ENRTF funds will not reduce/ decrease the current non-ENRTF funds spent on it during the project period. When the grant period/ ENTRF funding ends, the ENTRF approved complement of the agency will be reduced accordingly. At which time, we will maintain it with a new mix of funds.</p>

Non ENRTF Funds

Category	Specific Source	Use	Status	\$ Amount	\$ Amount Spent	\$ Amount Remaining
State						
Cash	Nongame Wildlife Fund - donations	Salary for the Program coordinator position (1 FTE for 3 years) will be cost-shared 1:1 with Nongame Wildlife Fund donations.	Secured	\$150,000	\$27,392	\$122,608
In-Kind	Nongame Wildlife Fund	Staff time to supervise and guide the Program, including participation on the Advisory Team, serving as classroom volunteers or mentors and expenses such as computer equipment	Secured	\$20,000	\$7,364	\$12,636
			State Sub Total	\$170,000	\$34,756	\$135,244
Non-State						
In-Kind	Federal State Wildlife Grants	Staff time to supervise and guide the Program, including participation on the Advisory Team, serving as classroom volunteers or mentors	Secured	\$10,000	-	\$10,000
			Non State Sub Total	\$10,000	-	\$10,000
			Funds Total	\$180,000	\$34,756	\$145,244

Attachments

Required Attachments

Visual Component

File: [77dc58e5-dd4.pdf](#)

Alternate Text for Visual Component

The Bird by Bird Program acknowledges that nature is healthy for mind and body, yet not everyone has access to true wilderness. Bird by Bird operates in three areas: 1) In Schools, students in Bird by Bird Classrooms learn about and care for birds at school. 2) In Leadership, young adults develop experience and skills co-leading bird programs. 3) In Community, exposure to nature has lasting benefits and opens the door to new career opportunities....

Supplemental Attachments

Capital Project Questionnaire, Budget Supplements, Support Letter, Photos, Media, Other

Title	File
Support Letter from Carpenter Nature Center	9430c279-314.pdf
Support Letter from U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service	f7e12800-4a7.pdf
Support Letter from Urban Roots	017633d9-02e.pdf
Support Letter from The Raptor Center	bf471664-272.pdf
Support Letter from Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis	b4c6f7f1-839.pdf
Background Check Form	4528638d-2f2.pdf
Minnesota Ornithological Union Presentation April 1, 2023	53597173-cf6.pdf
DNR All Staff Newsletter Highlighting Bird by Bird Program	983f75b8-4c4.pdf
Minnesota State Mankato Speaker Series Presentation	ffa536b5-e1e.pdf
MN DNR Nongame Wildlife Facebook Post: BOLD field experience	cdb345b0-8a3.jpe
Bird by Bird Program Flyers	1c194f34-cea.pdf
BOLD Cohort with Urban Bird Collective (community partner)	62235a64-bb7.jpe
BOLD youth leaders at naturalist training	96c8e734-7bc.jpe
Students Participating in Bird by Bird Classroom Program	a98fbbf0-075.jpe
Students Participating in Bird by Bird Classroom Program	9bba7b62-89c.jpe
Bilingual Pocket Bird Guide	94435061-035.pdf
Presentation Slides on Bird by Bird 2023-2024 accomplishments and photos	4ad8b69e-fbd.pptx
BOLD Cohort 2025 on a field trip	5134d988-115.jpe
BOLD Kestrel Banding 2025	fbabfde5-1ce.jpe
Bird by Bird Red-Tailed Hawk Visit	ac42b92c-e64.jpe
Bird by Bird Learning About Adaptations	c9bf1562-9e8.jpe
Participant Tracking Log	27ef8d16-549.xlsx

Media Links

Title	Link
MN DNR Nongame Wildlife Facebook Post: BOLD field experience	https://www.facebook.com/MinnesotaNongameWildlifeProgram/posts/pfbid02X4reGrEAqPV4xjhU1whiyGSPdXiAcDcE67x6ov25LAn7choiJPwZBDGShwAJTAQpl

Bird by Bird Program Website	https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/eco/nongame/bird-by-bird.html
MPR News Article: Volunteer Director's Interview Highlighting Bird by Bird Program	https://www.mprnews.org/story/2023/12/16/calling-all-volunteers-minnesota-dnr-has-a-job-for-you
Nongame Wildlife Program newsletter, featuring article on Bird by Bird	https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/MNDNR/bulletins/38bc111

Difference between Proposal and Work Plan

Describe changes from Proposal to Work Plan Stage

1. To respond to staff comments, we added the words "recruit applicants, review, and select" to Activity 2, Milestone 1.
2. To respond to staff comments, added the words "(e.g., free/reduced lunch, Title 1, lacking other nature-based programming)" to Activity 1 narrative.
3. Changed these milestone dates from 6/30/2023 to 9/30/2023 due to late notice of selection and lead time needed to hire the project coordinator: Activity 1, Milestones 1-3 and Activity 2, Milestone 1.
4. I consolidated the budget items of bird feeders, hangars, baths, seeds and native plants into one line item of supplies for bird viewing stations.
5. I added proper ENTRF acknowledgement information in our Dissemination section.

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 understand that travel expenses are only approved if they follow the "Commissioner's Plan" promulgated by the Commissioner of Management of Budget or, for University of Minnesota projects, the University of Minnesota plan?

Yes, I understand the Commissioner's Plan applies.

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

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

Do you understand that a named service contract does not constitute a funder-designated subrecipient or approval of a sole-source contract? In other words, a service contract entity is only approved if it has been selected according to the contracting rules identified in state law and policy for organizations that receive ENRTF funds through direct appropriations, or in the DNR's reimbursement manual for non-state organizations. These rules may include competitive bidding and prevailing wage requirements

N/A

Work Plan Amendments

Amendment ID	Request Type	Changes made on the following pages	Explanation & justification for Amendment Request (word limit 75)	Date Submitted	Approved	Date of LCCMR Action
1	Project Manager	Previous Manager: Alison Cariveau (alison.cariveau@state.mn.us) New Manager: May Vang (may.vang@state.mn.us)	She is the newly hired Project Leader and should be Project Manager	February 22, 2023	Yes	February 24, 2023
2	Amendment Request	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Collaborators - Project Manager Info 	Contact information for the project manager is being updated from Alison Cariveau, the original project manager, to May Vang, the new project manager as 2/24/23, at the request of the LCCMR.	February 24, 2023	Yes	February 24, 2023
3	Amendment Request	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget - Capital, Equipment, Tools, and Supplies Budget - Other 	Youth in our program will receive a stipend for co-leading community events, which we budgeted \$1,800 for. We anticipated spending \$60,800 for program equipment but we didn't end up using that much. We underestimated our budget for youth stipends because we are now incorporating training and mentoring costs and would like to allocate \$6,450 from the equipment line for youth stipends, for a total of \$8,250, under the other expenses line.	June 5, 2023	Yes	June 6, 2023
4	Amendment Request	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget - Professional / Technical Contracts 	Two sub-awards under professional/technical contracts will need to be added. We've identified two organizations within reasonable distance from participating schools as field trip sites that can provide bird demonstrations and education programs.	June 26, 2023	Yes	June 26, 2023
5	Amendment Request	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget - Travel and Conferences Budget - Other 	Eliminating barriers for youth leaders is critical. Youth in our program received a stipend (amendment request on 6/05/23). We do not anticipate using all the bussing funds and would like to expand our reach to 10 additional high	May 29, 2024	Yes	June 5, 2024

			school youth for a total of 20 youth as stated in our activity 2 description. We would like to allocate \$9,600 from the Travel in Minnesota, Other budget line for youth stipends.			
6	Project Manager	Previous Manager: May Vang (may.vang@state.mn.us) New Manager: Jessica Ruthenberg (jessica.ruthenberg@state.mn.us)	May Vang has accepted a new position and will no longer be managing this project. Jessica Ruthenberg supervises the Bird by Bird Coordinator and will be re-hiring for this position and managing this project in the interim.	June 6, 2024	Yes	July 2, 2024
7	Amendment Request	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget • Project Collaborators - Project Manager Info • Other • Budget - Professional / Technical Contracts • Budget - Capital, Equipment, Tools, and Supplies • Budget - Travel and Conferences • Budget - Other • Budget - Non-ENRTF Funds Contributed 	<p>650 of the remaining \$32,128 binocular budget is needed to purchase storage bins for organizing the binoculars and field guides into sets for loaning to schools. Binocular budget has been reduced and a new budget line has been added.</p> <p>The \$1500 sub-award to the Raptor Center is not needed. Schools desire the field trip option over a classroom visit, so these funds were added to the Carpenter Nature sub-award to cover more field trips.</p>	September 27, 2024	Yes	October 4, 2024
8	Amendment Request	• Budget - Personnel	To rehire our Coordinator and address continuing needs, we request changing this project-critical position to permanent, classified. Currently, no other source of funding is available to replace its ENRTF funding; thus, ENRTF funds will not decrease the non-ENRTF funds spent on it during the project period. When the grant period/ ENTRF funding ends, the ENTRF approved complement of the agency will be reduced accordingly and we will maintain it with a new mix of funds.	October 10, 2024	Yes	October 15, 2024

9	Amendment Request	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget • Budget - Personnel • Budget - Professional / Technical Contracts • Budget - Capital, Equipment, Tools, and Supplies • Budget - Travel and Conferences 	<p>Due to the longer than anticipated vacancy in the coordinator, we request re-allocating \$8,845 from the personnel budget to the P/T contract for Carpenter Nature Center, increasing their budget to \$11,845. Carpenter will deliver the classroom programs and increase the number of field trips offered. \$5000 from the binocular budget is needed for printing bilingual pocket field guides to use in classroom kits. Binocular budget has been reduced and new line added.</p>	February 25, 2025	Yes	March 14, 2025
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Status Update Reporting

Final Status Update August 14, 2025

Date Submitted: August 6, 2025

Date Approved: September 26, 2025

Overall Update

The final year of Bird by Bird implementation was completed in spring of 2025. During this period the new program coordinator was hired and started on March 31st. For Activity One, the same three metro-area schools continued through the end of the school year with 215 students, bringing cumulative participation to 415 students and eight teachers. Because the coordinator position hiring process was on-going in early spring, program delivery was subcontracted to Carpenter Nature Center, who provided their own staff for classroom support, relying less so on volunteers, but about 5 existing volunteers continued to participate, with cumulative volunteer totals at 13. After the coordinator position was filled, Carpenter continued work on Bird by Bird while the new coordinator focused on the BOLD program, a community event, and administrative duties. For Activity Two, since last report, our new coordinator completed one two-hour field trip for youth from Minneapolis Park & Recreation's Green Team, teaching birdwatching to 14 youth. The cumulative grand total for BOLD is 37 youth participants who invested 770.75 hours in the program. For activity three, the new coordinator created and led educational activities at Twin Cities Bird festival for youth and families.

Activity 1

Three metro area schools (one in Minneapolis and two in Saint Paul) participated in Bird by Bird this spring, which encompassed eight classrooms (eight teachers and 215 students). Our cumulative total was 415 students served. The participating classrooms consisted of three fifth grade classes, three fourth grade classes, one third-fourth grade mixed class, and one fifth-sixth grade mixed class. Each school received 4-6 classroom visits from Carpenter Nature Center staff and volunteers who led interactive activities on bird natural history and ecology as well as a spring field trip to Carpenter to observe bird banding and go birdwatching. Carpenter also provided 2 live bird programs to each school (6 total presentations), including ambassador raptor (Barred Owl and Red-tailed Hawk) programs and homing pigeon releases. Because Carpenter provided their own staff support, volunteers were less of a need, and as such only five volunteers participated during this report period. Our cumulative volunteer participation was thirteen total volunteers contributing a total of 105.25 volunteer hours and one volunteer recognition event held. The bilingual pocket bird identification guides developed for this program were incorporated into the Bird by Bird classroom kits and utilized at Twin Cities Bird Festival for bird observation activities.

(This activity marked as complete as of this status update)

Activity 2

Due to the vacancy in the coordinator role, no ongoing activity was conducted with past BOLD cohorts. However, after hiring the new coordinator, one outreach activity to past participants from the Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board (MPRB) Green Team was conducted which had 14 youth attend the 2-hour activity which consisted of learning about birdwatching and the ecology of the Mississippi River and flyway. Attempts were made to conduct additional events however due to short notice, busy spring calendars, and the end of the school year, neither of our past partners (MPRB, Urban Roots) had significant availability.

A new cohort of BOLD youth was launched in June with 15 participants from MPRB. Activities during this time included an orientation to the program and a field trip to observe American kestrel banding.

The cumulative grand totals for BOLD over the entire project (all cohorts) are 21 bird and conservation-related activities delivered to 50 young adult participants from two partner organizations, equating to 830.75 hours of youth time

invested in bird and conservation learning, and \$5,772 in stipends paid to compensate them.

(This activity marked as complete as of this status update)

Activity 3

For community events, our new coordinator developed and implemented educational activities for the Twin Cities Bird Festival, held in May, that reached an estimated 200 children and their families.

We implemented a cumulative total of twelve community engagements efforts, reaching over 600 people total since our grant project began. Engagement efforts included events, presentations, and guided bird walks. These efforts have included working with BOLD youth to provide a bird walk at Urban Bird Festival (in partnership with Urban Bird Collective), a bird walk at Sunray Library, support for the Citywide Park Clean Up as a conservation action to help birds, and youth activities at Twin Cities Bird Festival. The other eight outreach efforts over the life of this project have included presentations for the Minnesota Ornithologist Union, Audubon Society Minneapolis, Minnesota State University as part of their Social Justice Series, and the Winter Parks and Trails Naturalist Meeting. We also provided bird-related activities at Urban Village, Frogtown Green Climate Carnival, and Cornerstone Montessori Family Night (one of the Bird by Bird schools). A bird watching and community science opportunity were provided at a Chimney Swift Sit to observe and count migrating swifts heading in to roost for the evening.

(This activity marked as complete as of this status update)

Dissemination

After hiring the program coordinator, outreach was conducted to Minneapolis and St. Paul Public Schools elementary school and science teachers to promote the Bird by Bird program for future program years. Posts were also made on the Nongame Wildlife program social media pages to promote Bird by Bird for future years.

Status Update Reporting

Status Update March 1, 2025

Date Submitted: February 25, 2025

Date Approved: March 14, 2025

Overall Update

With our Project Coordinator role vacant, program delivery has been on hold thus far during the 2024-2025 school year while we focused on re-hiring. We re-posted the position and have completed interviews for a new Project Coordinator to support program delivery through the end of the grant duration. For Activity One, participation numbers remain at 200 students, eight teachers, and three metro-area schools engaged during the 2023-2024 school year (previous reporting periods); and none engaged this report period. Thirteen of our thirty-five recruited volunteers participated in Bird by Bird last report period; none this period. For Activity Two, Cohort One (12 youth) completed the program last report period (investing 187 total hours of their time, bringing their cumulative total to 651.75 hours). Also last report period, we provided one field experience for Cohort Two (25 youth), from two partner organizations (91 total hours of their time). There was no BOLD program delivery this report period. The cumulative grand total for BOLD remains at 37 youth participants who invested 742.75 hours in the program. For Activity Three, community event delivery remains at 11 total. There was no new community outreach this period.

Activity 1

With program delivery on hold this period, due to the Program Coordinator vacancy, we have no new participation numbers to report and our cumulative totals remain the same. Three metro area schools (one in Minneapolis and two in Saint Paul) completed the Bird by Bird program last report period, which encompassed eight classrooms (eight teachers and 200 students). The participating classrooms consisted of three fifth grade classes, three fourth grade classes, one third-fourth grade mixed class, and one fifth-sixth grade mixed class. Each school received three classroom visits from DNR staff and volunteers who led interactive activities on bird natural history and ecology and a field trip to Carpenter Nature Center. Similarly, we have no new volunteer hours to report for this period, so our cumulative volunteer participation remains at thirteen total volunteers contributing a total of 90.25 volunteer hours and one volunteer recognition event held. New this period, we've coordinated with Carpenter Nature Center to support program delivery this spring while we complete our hiring and onboarding of the new Program Coordinator. We have confirmed two of the three schools will continue the program, but are awaiting word from the school that changed science leads.

Activity 2

With program delivery on hold this period, due to the Program Coordinator vacancy, we have no new participation numbers to report and our cumulative totals remain the same. Cumulatively, over the course of this grant project, Cohort One from the Urban Roots organization (12 total youth) participated in 14 activities (eleven field trips and 3 community events). Cumulatively, they worked 651.75 hours and were paid for their time with stipends. Cohort Two (25 youth-7 from Urban Roots and 18 from Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board's Green Team) received one field trip. Urban Roots youth were paid for their time. MPRB has other means to pay their youth. The cumulative grand totals for BOLD over the entire project (both cohorts) are 17 activities delivered to 35 young adult participants from two partner organizations, equating to 742.75 hours of youth time invested in conservation learning, and \$5,772 in stipends paid to compensate them.

Activity 3

With program delivery on hold this period, due to the Program Coordinator vacancy, we have no new participation numbers to report and our cumulative totals remain the same. We've held a cumulative total of eleven community engagements efforts (summer 2023-spring 2024), reaching over 403 people total since our grant project began. Engagement efforts included events, presentations, and guided bird walks. These efforts have included working with

BOLD youth to provide a bird walk at Urban Bird Festival (in partnership with Urban Bird Collective), a bird walk at Sunray Library, and support for the Citywide Park Clean Up as a conservation action to help birds. The other eight outreach efforts over the life of this project have included presentations for the Minnesota Ornithologist Union, Audubon Society Minneapolis, Minnesota State University as part of their Social Justice Series, and the Winter Parks and Trails Naturalist Meeting. We also provided bird-related activities at Urban Village, Frogtown Green Climate Carnival, and Cornerstone Montessori Family Night (one of the Bird by Bird schools). A bird watching and community science opportunity were provided at a Chimney Swift Sit to observe and count migrating swifts heading in to roost for the evening.

Dissemination

With program delivery on hold this period, due to the Program Coordinator vacancy, we have no new dissemination activities to report.

Status Update Reporting

Status Update September 1, 2024

Date Submitted: September 27, 2024

Date Approved: October 4, 2024

Overall Update

The first year of Bird by Bird implementation was completed summer 2023- summer 2024. For Activity One, since last report, participation held steady at 200 students, eight teachers, and three metro-area schools through the end of the school year. Thirteen of our thirty-five recruited volunteers participated in Bird by Bird this report period. For Activity Two, since last report, Cohort One (12 youth) completed the program. They implemented their previously designed activities at three community events in spring 2024 (investing 187 total hours of their time, bringing their cumulative total to 651.75 hours). In June 2024, we began Cohort Two (25 youth), by working with two partner organizations. Each organization's youth received one field experience (investing 91 total hours of their time). The cumulative grand total for BOLD is 37 youth participants who invested 742.75 hours in the program). For activity three, the three community events completed by BOLD, constituted our community outreach effort this report period (cumulative total 11 events). Unfortunately, our Bird by Bird Program Coordinator left in June 2024, which decreased the quantity of BOLD programming and community outreach that we could deliver during summer 2024. We are in the process of rehiring this position.

Activity 1

Three metro area schools (one in Minneapolis and one in Saint Paul) completed the Bird by Bird program this report period, which encompassed eight classrooms (eight teachers and 200 students). These numbers also represent our cumulative participation totals since the project began. The participating classrooms consisted of three fifth grade classes, three fourth grade classes, one third-fourth grade mixed class, and one fifth-sixth grade mixed class. Each school received three classroom visits from DNR staff and volunteers who led interactive activities on bird natural history and ecology as well as a spring field trip to Carpenter Nature Center. Additionally, we held a volunteer recognition event in May to thank our thirteen volunteers. They contributed 33 volunteer hours this period, for a cumulative total of 90.25 volunteer hours this first year of the project. Looking forward, two schools plan to continue in 2024-2025, but one school is uncertain because their science lead, our teacher contact, left. We do however, have a new contact for that school and are hopeful we can continue to engage the school.

Activity 2

This report period, we coordinated 10 BOLD youth (Cohort One) to work three spring community events, representing 187 hours of work. Community events included co-leading a bird walk for Urban Bird Festival, leading a bird walk at Sunray Library, and participating in Citywide Park clean up. Cumulatively, over the course of this grant project, Cohort One from the Urban Roots organization (12 total youth) participated in 14 activities (eleven field trips and 3 community events). Cumulatively, they worked 651.75 hours and were paid for their time with stipends. Also this period, Cohort Two (25 youth) began during summer 2024. Without a Program Coordinator, we organized one field trip for each partner organization. We provided 7 youth from Urban Roots with an American Kestrel banding experience and 18 youth from Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board's Green Team with two introductory bird walks led by DNR staff. Urban Roots youth were paid for their time. MPRB has other means to pay their youth. The cumulative grand totals for BOLD over the entire project (both cohorts) are 17 activities delivered, 35 young adult participants, 742.75 hours of youth time invested in conservation learning, and \$5,772 in stipends paid to compensate

Activity 3

We held a cumulative total of eleven community engagements efforts over the last year (summer 2023-spring 2024), reaching over 403 people total since our grant project began. Engagement efforts included events, presentations, and

guided bird walks. Three of these efforts occurred this reporting period (spring 2024), in which we worked with BOLD youth to provide the following outreach activities: a bird walk at Urban Bird Festival (in partnership with Urban Bird Collective), a bird walk at Sunray Library, and support for the Citywide Park Clean Up as a conservation action to help birds. The other eight outreach efforts over the life of this project have included presentations for the Minnesota Ornithologist Union, Audubon Society Minneapolis, Minnesota State University as part of their Social Justice Series, and the Winter Parks and Trails Naturalist Meeting. We also provided bird-related activities at Urban Village, Frogtown Green Climate Carnival, and Cornerstone Montessori Family Night (one of the Bird by Bird schools). A bird watching opportunity was provided at a Chimney Swift Sit to observe migrating swifts heading in to roost for the evening, which doubled as a community science experience with participants counting the swifts.

Dissemination

No new dissemination activities have occurred since our March 2024 update. However, before the Bird by Bird Program coordinator left in June, she delivered two presentations on the program's accomplishments during its first year: one at a recognition event for Bird by Bird volunteers and BOLD participants and one to colleagues in the DNR Nongame Wildlife Program.

Status Update Reporting

Status Update March 1, 2024

Date Submitted: February 29, 2024

Date Approved: March 7, 2024

Overall Update

Bird by Bird school programming began in October and currently serves eight teachers and 200 students from three schools in the metro area. Thirty-five volunteers were recruited to support students with outdoor and indoor exploration activities. A cohort of 10 BOLD leaders have engaged in 296 additional hours of field experiences, connected with six new conservation organizations, and developed four education activities inspired by their field experiences to engage community members at upcoming spring community events.

Since our last update, we've continued to share the program and its accomplishments via the MN DNR's Nongame Wildlife Program Facebook page, at the state-wide Ecological and Water Division meeting, other divisional meetings, and a Minneapolis Public Radio News article. Attached you will find links to our social media posts, news articles, presentation slides, and program flyers.

Activity 1

Three out of five schools are currently participating in the program. Bird feeding stations were installed at each school, and students are responsible for maintaining and filling the feeders.

Eight classrooms consisting of 8 teachers and 200 students have received two classroom visits since programming began in October 2023. There is one remaining visit and an end-of-year field trip to visit birds up close. Each classroom visit included a bird-themed education activity, and a bird walk to observe feeding stations and birds in their schoolyard. In addition, a volunteer grad student initiated the program's education resource library by developing four teacher-led education activities to enhance student learning further.

Thirty-five volunteers were recruited and completed background checks. Volunteers attended a three-hour orientation or a webinar to familiarize themselves with the DNR agency, participating schools, and culturally relevant programming best practices. Up to three volunteers were matched with each class to support education activities. Volunteers were requested to commit to all classroom visits throughout the school year to provide consistency and encourage relationship-building with students.

Internal staff meetings continue to provide insight and advise the development of the Bird by Bird program.

Activity 2

Since our last report, three additional youth were recruited in September to complete the Birding and Outdoor Leadership Development (BOLD) initiative's cohort of 10 youth leaders. BOLD leaders have participated in a total of 296 additional hours of field experience and connected with 6 new conservation organizations since our September report.

Field experiences included an eagle program and excursion with the National Eagle Center, in Wabasha, MN to learn how to identify Golden Eagles, an owl hike, and a Fall migratory paddle with the National Park Service along the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway.

In partnership with Urban Bird Collective and US Fish and Wildlife, BOLD leaders connected with falconer Shawn Hayes to learn about the art of falconry and his experience as a black falconer.

BOLD leaders have developed four education activities inspired by their field experiences to engage new communities to bird-watching at upcoming spring community events. The Bird by Bird program lead is currently working out the details of the spring community events.

Activity 3

BOLD leaders participated in a naturalist interpretation training with a park naturalist from Fort Snelling State Park. Training included a demonstration on how to use binoculars, how to prep for a public program, tips, and techniques to engage an audience, and DNR career and internship opportunities.

Leaders have developed four education activities inspired by their field experiences. Education activities will be used at upcoming spring community events. Spring community event dates and partners have been established for April and May.

The initial phase of a Spanish-translated bird identification field guide for classroom use and community events is underway through a partnership with the Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis. A list of common backyard birds was identified based on e-Bird lists in the metro area as well as seven action items an individual can take to protect birds. The anticipated print date of this field guide is Memorial Day.

Dissemination

We've continued to share the program and its accomplishments via the MN DNR's Nongame Wildlife Program Facebook page, at the state-wide Ecological and Water Division meeting, other divisional meetings, and a Minneapolis Public Radio News article. Attached you will find links to our social media posts, news articles, presentation slides, and program flyers.

A social media post was disseminated in October about youth leaders wrapping up summer field experiences. This post highlighted their training with a park naturalist from the MN DNR's Parks and Trails Division and a bird identification walk with Urban Bird Collective, one of our community partners. In December, the DNR's director of volunteer programs highlighted the Bird by Bird program in her interview with Minneapolis Public Radio. There were also multiple requests for presentations about the Bird by Bird Program including the DNR's Parks and Trails Division's winter meeting which 37 park naturalists and supervisors throughout the state attended, the Minnesota State University's Social Justice Speaker Series, and the DNR's Ecological and Water Division's state-wide meeting.

Status Update Reporting

Status Update September 1, 2023

Date Submitted: September 19, 2023

Date Approved: September 26, 2023

Overall Update

Since our last update, after hiring the program lead in January 2023, the Bird by Bird program launched on June 20th. Volunteers have been recruited and continue to be recruited to provide a more diverse pool of support. A cohort of 7 BOLD leaders have been identified and have participated in 24 hours of field experience with 6 different organizations. Seven teachers from 3 schools in the Minneapolis and St. Paul Public Schools have been identified and are ready to participate in the Bird by Bird program beginning October 2023. Volunteers and the program lead has engaged more than 180 community members at community partner events increasing their awareness and knowledge of wildlife, environmental, and natural resource conservation issues.

Activity 1

Schools have been identified from St. Paul and Minneapolis Public School districts. A total of 3 out of 5 schools have been engaged and are ready to begin programming beginning in October 2023. The three schools identify as a Title 1 elementary school. Seven teachers in grades 1-6 have been identified and classroom kits of binoculars and field guides have been assembled and are ready to be delivered to classrooms.

Curriculum themes and three activities have been selected and aligned with both Minnesota state science standards and National Science Standards. Additional curriculum to support classroom teachers are currently being developed in partnership with a graduate student from Unity College pursuing her master's degree in wildlife management with a focus on birds.

Volunteers have been selected but have not been matched with classrooms yet until program lead has had a discussion with classroom teachers. Volunteers attended a mandatory program orientation which included training on culturally relevant programming best practices.

An advisory team of six has met every other week since March 16 for a total of 8 meetings surpassing the 3 meetings listed in action item #1 of Activity 1.

Activity 2

Seven out of ten youth were selected with the help of an organization called Urban Roots. Urban Roots is a non-profit organization based in the east side of St. Paul, whose mission is to cultivate and empower youth through nature, healthy food, and community. 97% of their youth are from BIPOC (Black, indigenous, and people of color) communities and 100% of them qualify for free or reduced lunch. Youth leaders are primarily juniors and seniors in high school or recent graduates. BOLD leaders received a 4-hour program orientation and met every two weeks, up to 8 hours a month. Leaders participated in 6 field experiences for a total of 24 hours each of mentorship and field experience with 6 different conservation organizations. Conservation organizations include the MN DNR's Nongame Wildlife Program, the Raptor Center, Carpenter Nature Center, Dakota County Parks and Trail, Bird City Network/US Fish and Wildlife, and Three Rivers Park District. Youth leaders participated in bird banding, bird habitat exploration, raptor rehabilitation, and bird hikes to learn bird identification.

Leaders were provided with a pair of binoculars and field guides to encourage them to continue bird watching outside of the program.

Activity 3

BOLD leaders spent the summer participating in field experiences and engaging with conservation organizations to learn about bird conservation, identification, behavior, and ecology. Leaders will receive training in community engagement and naturalist interpretation in September to prepare them to lead community events in the spring and summer of 2024.

Volunteers and the program lead has engaged more than 180 community members in bird related environmental education at 3 different community partner events including a back-to-school family night at one of the schools participating in the Bird by Bird program this schoolyear.

Dissemination

We've shared the program and its accomplishments via the MN DNR's Nongame Wildlife Program Facebook page, an All-Staff newsletter, the MN DNR's website, and presented to Minnesota Ornithological Society. All posts complied with ENRTF's acknowledgment guidelines during dissemination efforts.

Attached you will find several links to social media, program website, and newsletter. A social media post was posted in August about BOLD youth leader's first field experience banding Kestrel chicks with MN DNR's Nongame Wildlife Program. In June, the program was highlighted in the Spotlight, a newsletter disseminated to all staff in MN DNR. The program lead also presented at the Minnesota Ornithological Society's Spring Primer in April 2023, where 100 members registered for the event.

We recently received the approval for program flyers to be shared with community organizations such as public libraries.

Additional Status Update Reporting

Additional Status Update May 26, 2023

Date Submitted: June 5, 2023

Date Approved: June 6, 2023

Overall Update

Will report on September 1st.

Activity 1

Will report on September 1st.

Activity 2

Will report on September 1st.

Activity 3

Will report on September 1st.

Dissemination

Will report on September 1st.

Status Update Reporting

Status Update March 1, 2023

Date Submitted: February 22, 2023

Date Approved: February 24, 2023

Overall Update

MN DNR wrote a project leader position description, posted the position, conducted interviews, and selected the Bird by Bird project leader who was hired in January. The new leader, May Vang, completed onboarding activities and has connected with partner organizations that will be supporting the project implementation.

Activity 1

Significant progress has not yet been achieved towards this Activity.

Activity 2

Significant progress has not yet been achieved towards this Activity.

Activity 3

Significant progress has not yet been achieved towards this Activity.

Dissemination

No information about the project has yet been disseminated.