

Final Abstract

Final Report Approved on April 13, 2026

M.L. 2022 Project Abstract

For the Period Ending June 30, 2025

Project Title: Diversity and Access to Wildlife-Related Opportunities

Project Manager: Kyle Smith

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Funding Source:

Fiscal Year:

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

Appropriation Amount: \$199,000

Amount Spent: \$148,880

Amount Remaining: \$50,120

Sound bite of Project Outcomes and Results

This project identified Black and African American Minnesotans' outdoor recreation preferences, barriers, and experiences. Findings revealed interest in accessible, low-cost activities and gaps in cultural programming. Results inform equitable resource management strategies that enhance inclusive access to Minnesota's parks, wildlife areas, and natural spaces for underserved communities.

Overall Project Outcome and Results

Despite growing outdoor recreation participation nationally, Black and African American Minnesotans remain significantly underrepresented in nature and wildlife-based activities due to historical, socioeconomic, and cultural barriers. As Minnesota's population diversifies, understanding these communities' experiences is essential for creating equitable access to the state's natural resources.

This study surveyed Black and African American adults in Minnesota to examine participation patterns, identify desired experiences, and uncover engagement barriers. Using a mixed-mode approach, researchers contacted 7,500 targeted households, generating a statistically robust dataset representing community perspectives on recreational participation,

satisfaction, constraints, and preferences. The research generated comprehensive data from Black and African American Minnesota residents documenting participation in nature-based recreation. Results showed that 88% of respondents visit local parks at least annually, with two-thirds participating in park walks monthly. The study documented that one-third of respondents face barriers including time constraints, lack of information, distance to sites, and costs. Notably, one-third expressed dissatisfaction with connections between local recreational options and their history and culture. The survey established strong interest in beach visits, hiking, outdoor education, and biking, representing areas with current participation gaps. Respondents reported feeling more comfortable visiting state and national parks with family and friends (75%) compared to visiting alone (42%).

This research provides Minnesota's DNR, parks departments, and recreational agencies with the first comprehensive, community-specific dataset on Black and African American outdoor recreation preferences. Results directly inform policies prioritizing mobile programming in underserved neighborhoods, free or reduced-cost activities, culturally relevant interpretive programming, and partnerships with community organizations. By documenting barriers preventing equitable access to Minnesota's natural spaces, this research advances environmental justice principles. The findings enable managers to design inclusive programming that expands the constituency engaged in stewardship of Minnesota's air, water, land, fish, and wildlife. When diverse populations feel welcomed in outdoor spaces, they become invested

Project Results Use and Dissemination

The project team has produced a comprehensive public report documenting survey findings and recommendations for Minnesota's natural resource agencies and recreational managers. This report provides actionable, evidence-based guidance for creating equitable outdoor recreation opportunities for Black and African American communities. The research team is currently drafting academic publications to share findings with the broader scholarly community focused on outdoor recreation, environmental justice, and natural resource management. Additionally, team members have presented research talks at conferences and seminars hosted by the University of Minnesota.



Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

M.L. 2022 Approved Final Report

General Information

Date: April 13, 2026

ID Number: 2022-279

Staff Lead: Noah Fribley

Project Title: Diversity and Access to Wildlife-Related Opportunities

Project Budget: \$199,000

Project Manager Information

Name: Kyle Smith

Organization: U of MN - College of Food, Agricultural and Natural Resource Sciences

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Project Reporting

Final Report Approved: April 13, 2026

Reporting Status: Project Completed

Date of Last Action: April 13, 2026

Project Completion: June 30, 2025

Legal Information

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

Appropriation Language: \$199,000 the second year is from the trust fund to the Board of Regents of the University of Minnesota to broaden the state's conservation constituency by researching diverse communities' values about nature and wildlife experiences and identifying barriers to engagement.

Appropriation End Date: June 30, 2025

Narrative

Project Summary: We will research : 1) interest in and preferences for experiences with nature and wildlife among diverse communities, and 2) barriers to more robust engagement with wildlife resources and activities.

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

Profound changes with how the American public values and relates to nature and wildlife are occurring. Participation rates in traditional activities associated with fish and wildlife have dropped dramatically putting into jeopardy the funding mechanisms for fish and wildlife conservation and potentially motivations to sustain these resources. In addition, there is an apparent broader disconnection of the American public to the outdoors and wildlife that could lead to substantive negative impacts on human health and well-being which depend on beneficial contact with nature. In response to this challenge, a variety of programs targeting the recruitment, reactivation, and retention (R3) of fish and wildlife-based recreationists have been developed. Because of the fundamental social and demographic changes in America that are driving much of the disconnection with nature and wildlife, however, the success of such programs is very uncertain. There is growing recognition that continuation of the conservation enterprise which oversees stewardship of our fish and wildlife resources will likely require more fundamental changes in agency culture, governance, and accessibility in opportunity for diverse communities. A fundamental problem and opportunity in this endeavor is how to engage the communities that have not been active historically in participating in nature- and wildlife-based activities.

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.

Extremely limited information exists concerning value of and desire for experiences with nature and wildlife from Black/African-American communities. The proposed project will collect information from members of these communities concerning their values, attitudes, experiences, awareness of, and preferences for learning about, experiencing, or conserving nature and wildlife. This information will be collected during a two-year period in two phases. The first year we will conduct focus groups and indepth interviews with members of the communities to develop a deep and nuanced understanding of their awareness of and connections to nature and wildlife. In the second phase, we will collect more broadly generalizable information from these communities through multi-modal social surveys using established psychometric approaches for measuring values, beliefs, attitudes, motivations, and experience preferences. This information will serve as foundational information across Minnesota for better engaging and understanding these communities. In addition, the information will assist natural resource managers at the local, state, and federal in designing programming, experiences, and services that match to the motivations and desired experiences of members of these communities. Doing so could increase their participation in nature- and wildlife-based activities and conservation behaviors.

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?

We will develop foundational information in Minnesota that will assist local and state agencies to engage diverse communities in cultivating a connection with nature and wildlife and encourage the conservation of a healthy and biological diverse natural environment. We will develop outreach materials to assist natural research agencies throughout Minnesota to design programming that matches to the desired opportunities and experiences of diverse communities within Minnesota. Long-term this project could not only help develop a broadened constituency focused on the conservation of wildlife and their natural habitats throughout Minnesota, but also develop key social and wildlife-based benefits to diverse communities.

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 and In the Future

Activities and Milestones

Activity 1: Focus groups and indepth interviews with community members focused on awareness of and relationship with nature and wildlife

Activity Budget: \$107,593

Activity Description:

We will conduct up to 60 personal interviews and 12 focus groups to develop an indepth and robust knowledge of how members of Black/African-American communities perceive nature and wildlife, their perceptions of opportunities and barriers to engage with nature and wildlife, and their preferences for experiences with nature and wildlife throughout Minnesota. While there are previous studies focused on recruitment into nature- and wildlife-based activities, these studies often purposely target the proverbially “low hanging fruit” which maintains a participant base that strongly resembles the participants of the past. While there have been previous attempts to understand the potential interests of diverse communities in nature and activities such as fishing (e.g., Fishing in the Neighborhood), the proposed effort is the first in Minnesota to build from indepth qualitative research through social surveys with robust samples (n = 1200) to allow generalization back to these communities in Minnesota statewide. With the proposed project we will engage Black/African-American communities in Minnesota which represent the largest non-white communities in Minnesota. We plan to work closely with non-profits whose missions focus on increasing inclusion and access to green and blue spaces. (such as, but not limited to Outdoor Afro).

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Design interview and focus groups	October 31, 2022
Recruit indepth interview participants via in-person and virtual networking & community engagement following snowball methodology	August 31, 2023
Conduct and analyze indepth interviews	December 31, 2023
Recruitment of focus group participants via in-person and virtual networking & community engagement	December 31, 2023
Conduct and analyze focus groups	June 30, 2024

Activity 2: Conduct survey with members of Black/African-American communities in Minnesota.

Activity Budget: \$91,407

Activity Description:

We will collect data via an online survey using a multi-modal contact approach. We will target a total of 1200 completed survey participants statewide. We will use results of the indepth interviews and focus groups to assist in designing the content of the survey. The survey topics will focus on relationships to nature and wildlife, values related to wildlife, community norms associated with nature and wildlife, awareness of nature- and wildlife-based activities, motivations to engage with nature and wildlife, preferred experiences in nature and with wildlife, and barriers to engaging nature and wildlife. Information will be collected for both close to home experiences as well as statewide interest. We will develop reports (pdf and digital) that summarize study findings for each community, summary presentations (pdf and digital), summary fact sheets (pdf and digital), and host outreach workshops with the study communities and natural resource and outdoor recreation agencies throughout Minnesota (e.g., Minnesota DNR, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, National Park Service, Minneapolis Parks & Recreation, Three Rivers Park District).

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
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Design survey	June 30, 2024
Implement survey and collect data	June 30, 2024
Analyze data and develop final report outreach deliverables	June 30, 2024

Project Partners and Collaborators

Name	Organization	Role	Receiving Funds
Dr. Alexandria Safiq	University of Minnesota	Dr. Safiq will serve as Co-PI on the project and provide assistance in project design, implementation, reporting and outreach of findings to the management community in Minnesota.	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.

Research findings will be presented to partners throughout Minnesota responsible for fisheries, wildlife, and outdoor recreation management at the local and state level. This will include relevant divisions of the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources responsible for managing fisheries, wildlife, forests, ecosystems, parks, and trails; city, county and regional parks and open space districts; and federal agencies such as the National Park Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Refuges; and the U.S. Forest Service. The dissemination of this information will include distribution of the deliverables identified in section 6 of this proposal. In addition, we will provide presentations of the study findings through webinars, outreach workshops, and conferences within Minnesota directed at recreation and fisheries/wildlife managers with relevant agencies and organizations. All publications, presentations, surveys, deliverables, and outreach efforts will include acknowledgments that funding came from ENRTF.

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 project will provide findings reports for the focus groups and social surveys (pdf and digital), along with summary fact sheets and presentations (pdf and digital), and outreach materials to provide natural resource managers with information that can help them with focused communications and programming to engage members of the study communities. We anticipate that this first of its kind indepth study of these communities' interests in and desired experiences with nature and wildlife will lead to more systematic efforts among local, state, and federal agencies to enhance the accessibility of opportunities with nature and wildlife for these communities.

Budget Summary

Category / Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Purpose	Gen. Ineligible	% Benefits	# FTE	Classified Staff?	\$ Amount	\$ Amount Spent	\$ Amount Remaining
Personnel										
Post-doctoral research fellow		Supporting researcher for implementing and reporting interviews, focus groups, and surveys, and organizing and hosting outreach workshops.			25.4%	0.54		\$41,694	-	-
Graduate research assistant		Help with facilitating focus groups and connecting with communities			42%	1		\$126,587	-	-
							Sub Total	\$168,281	\$129,667	\$38,614
Contracts and Services										
							Sub Total	-	-	-
Equipment, Tools, and Supplies										
	Tools and Supplies	Sample of respondents in target communities (n = 6400)	The sample is necessary to contact respondents to participate in the survey. The supplies include the purchase of commercially available panels and samples of potential survey participants to ensure a representative sample of respondents for the study.					\$6,100	\$6,100	-
							Sub Total	\$6,100	\$6,100	-
Capital Equipment										
							Sub Total	-	-	-
Acquisitions and Stewardship										

							Sub Total	-	-	-
Travel In Minnesota										
	Miles/ Meals/ Lodging	We estimated a total of 1081 miles charged at 0.665 using MN Coop Unit Fleet vehicles. This will involve a total of 20 trips within the Twin Cities averaging 25 miles each and 5 trips outside the Twin Cities averaging 116 miles/trip.	Mileage for meetings to conduct interviews and focus groups.					\$719	-	\$719
							Sub Total	\$719	-	\$719
Travel Outside Minnesota										
							Sub Total	-	-	-
Printing and Publication										
	Printing	survey and mailing materials	used to contact survey participants					\$6,000	\$6,000	-
							Sub Total	\$6,000	\$6,000	-
Other Expenses										
		Mailing services at University of Minnesota	Mailout contact to recruit survey participants. Survey and mailing materials refers to printing of surveys, envelopes, and contact letters. Mailing services refers to charges for processing and mailing these materials. They are separate line item charges within the University system.	X				\$12,000	\$7,113	\$4,887
		Transcription services for interviews and focus groups (200hrs @15.00/hr)	The qualitative interviews and focus groups will be transcribed using a professional service					\$2,900	-	\$2,900
		Honoraria for interviewees and focus group participants (60 @\$50)	Honoraria will be used to encourage and reimburse					\$3,000	-	\$3,000

			time for participation of focus group and interviewees							
							Sub Total	\$17,900	\$7,113	\$10,787
							Grand Total	\$199,000	\$148,880	\$50,120

Classified Staff or Generally Ineligible Expenses

Category/Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Justification Ineligible Expense or Classified Staff Request
Other Expenses		Mailing services at University of Minnesota	This project involves data collection using a mailed out survey and these are not ordinary postage charges. Such charges represent a substantive research expense for the project and are necessary for data collection in the project.

Non ENRTF Funds

Category	Specific Source	Use	Status	\$ Amount	\$ Amount Spent	\$ Amount Remaining
State						
			State Sub Total	-	-	-
Non-State						
In-Kind	U.S. Geological Survey--Minnesota Cooperative Fish & Wildlife Research Unit	David Fulton will contribute 10% of his time for two years toward the project. His current salary + fringe = \$200,000/year providing a \$40,000 in-kind contribution from U.S. Geological Survey in the form of technical assistance.	Secured	\$40,000	\$30,000	\$10,000
In-Kind	University of Minnesota	The waived overhead from University of Minnesota.	Secured	\$109,450	\$82,089	\$27,361
			Non State Sub Total	\$149,450	\$112,089	\$37,361
			Funds Total	\$149,450	\$112,089	\$37,361

Attachments

Required Attachments

Visual Component

File: [7a099e09-21d.pdf](#)

Alternate Text for Visual Component

Image of Black people/African Americans on county based map of Minnesota....

Supplemental Attachments

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

Title	File
UMN Approval Letter Safiq signed	cc20e894-d96.pdf
Safiq_ ApprovedAddendum	6acd0399-593.pdf
Safiq_ BackgroundLetter	a1095ae5-780.pdf
Interview plan	55bcfd98-a25.docx
Survey draft	bf7c3d7a-5e9.docx
Survey Summary of Findings	64ae65ff-1e0.docx
Literature review (draft)	053e715b-3e3.docx

Difference between Proposal and Work Plan

Describe changes from Proposal to Work Plan Stage

Comments from 6/16/22 have been addressed.

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 UMN Policy on travel 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?

Yes

Does the organization have a fiscal agent for this project?

Yes, Sponsored Projects Administration

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: Alexandria Safiq (safiq001@umn.edu) New Manager: David Fulton (dcfulton@umn.edu)	I (Dr. Alex Safiq) have accepted a full-time permanent appointment at Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife and can no longer serve as the project manager given the requirements of my new appointment.	February 22, 2023	Yes	February 22, 2023
2	Amendment Request	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Collaborators - Project Manager Info • Narrative • Project Collaborators - Project Partner Info • Activities and Milestones • Budget - Personnel • Budget - Travel and Conferences • Budget - Other 	We are requesting a change the changes because Dr. Alex Safiq can no longer work on the project full-time. We plan to hire a graduate research assistant and have requested a rebudgt and altered timelines to reflect those changes with a new end date of June 30, 2025.	March 23, 2023	Yes	March 24, 2023
3	Completion Date	Previous Completion Date: 06/30/2024 New Completion Date: 06/30/2025	The original PI has taken a position with Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife effective Feb 27, 2023. We will be recruiting a graduate research assistant at the University of Minnesota to assist with the project beginning Fall 2023.	March 21, 2023	Yes	March 23, 2023
4	Project Manager	Previous Manager: David Fulton (dcfulton@umn.edu) New Manager: Kyle Smith (smi01220@umn.edu)	By Presidential Executive Order, David Fulton, as a federal employee of USGS cannot lead research that can be construed as supporting DEI	January 28, 2025	Yes	February 4, 2025
5	Amendment Request	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Collaborators - Project Manager Info • Other • Budget - Personnel • Budget - Capital, Equipment, Tools, and Supplies • Budget - Other 	Updating the listing of personnel from 'undergraduate' to 'graduate' to accurately reflect collaborators on the project. This will now accurately reflect the work that was done and in line with our report.	March 18, 2026	Yes	March 23, 2026

Status Update Reporting

Final Status Update August 14, 2025

Date Submitted: December 22, 2025

Date Approved: March 23, 2026

Overall Update

Since our last update, we have completed survey data collection and analysis. Responses were collected from a statewide survey of 5,000 households. We worked with a third party (MSG) to ensure the sample was significantly representative and for printing-mailing. Data was collected through a mailed push-to-web invitation. This effort secured 320 useable responses. Respondents provided vital information on past and future recreational participation, satisfaction with local opportunities, psychological and social experiences, constraints to engagement, and community involvement. We have synthesized these results into an executive summary and a draft literature review (attached), which are currently being finalized for publication. Findings suggest that respondents most frequently participated in local, lower-cost, and easily accessible activities, including walking in parks, visiting sports fields, gardening, and biking. Conversely, participation and future interest in activities such as hunting, motorized boating, and camping were relatively rare. Common barriers included time constraints, lack of information, distance, and costs. Additionally, while overt harassment was rarely reported, subtle forms of discrimination—such as being treated with less respect, feeling others acted superior, or sensing social exclusion—were reported by a notable proportion of respondents. These subtle forms of exclusion highlight significant ongoing challenges for future management efforts.

Activity 1

While the original work planned for the project was to complete a series of focus groups and interviews, challenges faced by the original PI in getting federal approval for the activities severely delayed the ability of the research team to conduct this work. Following the change of PIs to the project, we instead shifted to having the graduate student conduct a literature review of current and previous literature that have investigated constraints, barriers, and perceptions of outdoor recreation among Black households in the US (attached) which will soon be submitted as a research note publication. The study found that despite recent growth in participation, Black and African American individuals remain underrepresented and are often "casual" participants facing constraints like safety concerns, lack of representation, and subtle discrimination. Our graduate student analyzed 11 studies and identified themes including: perceptions of outdoor recreation as occurring in "white spaces," the necessity of social connection to facilitate recreation, and lack of inclusive marketing as important findings from the literature. Findings suggest agencies must transition toward inclusive, representative leadership and culturally relevant outreach to ensure equitable access. We plan to have the research note submitted for publication by Spring 2026.

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

Activity 2

Responses were collected from a statewide survey of 5,000 individuals; we worked with a third party to ensure the sample was robust and representative. Data was collected through a mailed elicitation letter that linked to Qualtrics, an online survey platform. This effort secured approximately 320 responses. Results suggest Black communities routinely participate and desire future participation in local forms of outdoor recreation, such as beach visits, hiking, and biking. Many of these activities are overlooked by others as not sufficiently "outdoors." Primary obstacles include high costs, insufficient transportation, and distant locations, alongside a lack of cultural connection to existing options. We suggest a couple of important takeaways. Agencies must examine their own narratives about what constitutes true "outdoor recreation" and ensure plans and programs meet the interests and needs of all constituents. Successful participation requires fostering trust through partnerships with neighborhood groups and churches to ensure programming aligns with local traditions. Our results also suggest that subtle forms of exclusion, like other recreationalists acting both better

or afraid of Black participants, is a major constraining factor and that agencies could intervene by ensuring their staff and volunteers receive adequate training and focus.

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

Dissemination

Since our last update, we have completed a project report (attached), the grad student has prepared a literature review of recent literature investigating perceptions of outdoor recreation among the Black and African American community (attached), and we will be presenting our research findings at an hosted by University of Minnesota College of Biological Sciences. We have attached the report and draft publication in the attachments page. Once approved, the project report will be made publically available through the online archive ResearchGate. Findings from the survey will be presented as part of the graduate student's thesis defense and in future publications. We plan to have the research note submitted for publication by Spring 2026.

Status Update Reporting

Status Update March 1, 2025

Date Submitted: December 22, 2025

Date Approved: March 23, 2026

Overall Update

The research team is on track to carry out interviews and survey efforts that will investigate perceptions, barriers, and interests among the Black/African-American communities. Kyle Smith has joined the research team as the lead PI.

Activity 1

The research team has submitted the workshop data collection plan to the institutional IRB for approval and has set up a series of interviews and workshops to be conducted once approved. The research team has begun putting together a literature review report with the objective of gathering and analyzing previous findings, discussing their implications, and making a series of recommendations for future management based on the findings. We have attached the interview plan.

Activity 2

The research team has submitted the survey work plan to the institutional IRB for approval. The multi-modal survey has been moved to final draft. Once approved, the research team plans to disseminate the survey in April and May 2025, with data collection ending at the end of May. Analysis will be conducted in June with key findings identified by the end of June 2025. We have attached a questionnaire example.

Dissemination

No activities have occurred.

Status Update Reporting

Status Update September 1, 2024

Date Submitted: November 14, 2024

Date Approved: November 19, 2024

Overall Update

A MS student Lucas Paschal has designed and pretested interview scripts and is designing a survey instrument. We will be conducting the survey and interviews concurrently over the next few months.

Activity 1

An interview script has been developed and interviewees identified. We are waiting for final approval from IRB to conduct the interviews.

Activity 2

We have adapted our time schedule so that the survey data and qualitative data will be collected concurrently. The MS student has designed a draft survey instrument and we will seek approval from IRB for administration this month.

Dissemination

No dissemination activities have occurred

Status Update Reporting

Status Update March 1, 2024

Date Submitted: March 1, 2024

Date Approved: April 26, 2024

Overall Update

A graduate student, Lucas Paschal, was recruited to conduct activities (interviews, focus groups, survey data collection) that Dr. Safiq was originally going to lead. Mr. Paschal received training in qualitative research methods during Fall 2023 and has revised the interview/focus group protocol. We are awaiting approval from the UofM IRB for these changes and anticipated data collection this spring and summer.

Activity 1

Mr. Paschal received training in qualitative research methods during Fall 2023 and has revised the interview/focus group protocol. We are awaiting approval from the UofM IRB for these changes and anticipated data collection this spring and summer.

Activity 2

Not yet initiated.

Dissemination

Nothing to report

Status Update Reporting

Status Update September 1, 2023

Date Submitted: September 2, 2023

Date Approved: September 27, 2023

Overall Update

We have recruited a new graduate student, Lucas Paschal, who is beginning to work on this project. We are seeking approval for Human Subjects approval and identifying individuals to participate in interviews and focus groups during the fall and winter of 2023/24.

Activity 1

We are seeking Human Subjects approval and beginning the process of identifying participants for interviews and focus groups.

Activity 2

Activity not begun

Dissemination

No information to disseminate at this point in time.

Status Update Reporting

Status Update March 1, 2023

Date Submitted: March 23, 2023

Date Approved: March 24, 2023

Overall Update

Protocols for IRB review were changed by the University of Minnesota in October 2022. Neither adjunct faculty or post docs can be PI for IRB purposes and a special request must be made for an exception. We have initiated the project with the design of the interview protocols for the focus groups and indepth interviews completed and have started the exception to serve as a PI request for Human Subjects review at the University of Minnesota. Dr. Alex Safiq also accepted full-time employment with the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife beginning Feb. 27, 2023. For this reason, David Fulton has become the project manager at the University of Minnesota. The change in project manager required that I restart the IRB exception request with me as the PI. In addition we are requesting a no cost extension until June 30, 2025. We have rebudgeted the project to include 2 years of funding for a graduate research assistant and reduced Dr. Safiq's to approximately 10% during 2023/24 and 2024/25. We are targeted to hire GRA by Fall Semester 2023.

Activity 1

Activity 1 involves designing and conducting focus groups and indepth interviews with members of African-American/Black communities in Minnesota to develop a deep and nuanced understanding of their awareness of and connections to nature and wildlife. We have designed our interview scripts for conducting the focus groups and interviews and have initiated the human subjects review process through the University of Minnesota Institutional Review Board. We plan to recruit a graduate research assistant to implement the interviews and focus groups upon approval from the IRB.

Activity 2

We have not started Activity 2 as it is dependent upon completion of Activity 1 to facilitate the design of the survey instrument..

Dissemination

Nothing to report.