



Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

M.L. 2023 Approved Work Plan

General Information

ID Number: 2023-008

Staff Lead: Becca Nash

Date this document submitted to LCCMR: May 30, 2023

Project Title: Fostering Conservation by Connecting Students to the BWCA

Project Budget: \$1,080,000

Project Manager Information

Name: Alison Nyenhuis

Organization: Friends of the Boundary Waters Wilderness

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Project Reporting

Date Work Plan Approved by LCCMR: June 22, 2023

Reporting Schedule: February 1 / August 1 of each year.

Project Completion: June 30, 2026

Final Report Due Date: August 14, 2026

Legal Information

Legal Citation: M.L. 2023, Chp. 60, Art. 2, Sec. 2, Subd. 05a

Appropriation Language: \$1,080,000 the first year is from the trust fund to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with the Friends of the Boundary Waters Wilderness to connect Minnesota youth to the Boundary Waters through environmental education, experiential learning, and wilderness canoe trips.

Appropriation End Date: June 30, 2026

Narrative

Project Summary: Friends of the Boundary Water Wilderness will connect over 10,000 Minnesota youth to the Boundary Waters through state standards-aligned environmental education, experiential learning, and multi-day wilderness canoe trips.

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

While Minnesota is home to Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness, many youth are unaware of what the Boundary Waters is or are unable to visit the area. Reasons are complex, but barriers range from factors such as the financial means, lack of trusted adults able and willing to lead a trip, lack of skill, fear of the wilderness, among others which prevent young people from exploring this natural gem.

Additionally, recent research shows that younger populations are spending less time in nature. Common Sense Media found “that teenagers (ages 13-18) use an average of nine hours of entertainment media per day and that tweens (ages 8-12) use an average of six hours a day, not including time spent using media for school or homework.” Again, the reasons are complex for the increased screen time and include some of the previously named.

Our No Boundaries program aims to change these factors and the nature deficit experienced by youth by fostering curiosity and engaging youth of all backgrounds in nature throughout all geographic regions of Minnesota while building leadership skills, confidence, and resilience.

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

We engage diverse and/or underserved students, grades 6 - 12, throughout Minnesota to foster curiosity, resilience, and other skills by connecting them with nature and the BWCA. We introduce students to the BWCA through partnerships with schools and youth organizations to:

- present environmental education centered on this wilderness gem,
- foster character-building skills,
- offer BWCA trip experiences.

We’ve successfully carried out programming throughout the state and we propose to continue this work - expanding our reach while strengthening current relationships. To do this while maintaining a community focus which fosters deep relationships with organizations and schools, we will hire regional coordinators. These staff will connect directly with schools and organizations in the area, provide programming, and host local events with students and their families which build on a connection to the BWCA.

Students will benefit from events and trips which foster character development and skill building in a safe environment. They will discover an emotional connection as they enjoy time in nature, and reap the documented benefits. The repeat experiences we will offer will create opportunities for personal connections to the wilderness, making individuals more likely to engage in future conservation, protection, and preservation.

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?

- Connecting at least 10,000 Minnesota students, grades 6-12, to standards-aligned environmental education focused on the BWCA, providing the foundation for connection to our wild spaces and places which, in turn, leads to further conservation.
- Fostering connections between diverse and underserved students and nature through repeat experiences and skill building exercises to motivate long-term relationships. At least 300 students will participate in BWCA Paddle Days and/or Wilderness Trips.

- Cultivating leadership qualities in at least 16 students while developing deeper connectedness to the BWCA through extension activities to develop and stimulate future generations of environmental stewards.

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: Building Boundary Waters Awareness

Activity Budget: \$317,850

Activity Description:

Since the beginning of our program, we've brought BWCA-focused education to thousands of students statewide via virtual and in-person lessons and events. As we approach a new phase, we will continue this work while expanding our reach and strengthening relationships.

We will build awareness of the BWCA through resources and events for teachers and students, and in some cases, students' families. Events and programming will be community-informed based on unique assets, needs, feedback, or barriers.

Strategies, tactics and budget implications:

- Connect with teachers throughout MN to engage teachers to "join" the No Boundaries Educator Network. This network connects teachers to our online lessons and resources to use on their own.
- Staff will utilize marketing strategies such as in-person meetings, emails, social media, educational expos, and current relationships to identify school partners across program areas.
- Implement local programming including virtual and in-person, hands-on classroom presentations and activities. These activities are aligned with MN State Standards and focused on the Boundary Waters ecosystem. The milestones below describe how many individuals will be provided these program experiences each year.

Associated budget items include personnel, language translations, kit supplies, travel, brochures, online GIS work and video editing, and BWCA Paddle Days.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Materials translated into Spanish and Hmong, and any future language needs are identified.	March 31, 2024
400 No Boundaries Educator Network teachers, 2500 virtual or in-person experiences provided, 2 paddle days	August 31, 2024
650 No Boundaries Educator Network teachers, 3500 virtual or in-person experiences provided, 2 paddle days	August 31, 2025
700 No Boundaries Educator Network teachers, 4500 virtual or in-person experiences provided, 3 paddle days	June 30, 2026

Activity 2: BWCA Trip Experiences

Activity Budget: \$470,000

Activity Description:

For many years, the Friends has provided scholarships to students for multi-day canoe trips in the BWCA. But there are barriers besides money that prevent diverse and underserved students from exploring public lands, specifically the Boundary Waters.

For students to participate in a wilderness trip, they must first feel safe and confident. To foster this, we hold skill-building days before wilderness trips at local community parks. These will serve as a community-informed strategy to build skills and confidence while informing expectations through low-risk activities.

Strategies, tactics and budget implications:

- Engage school and youth organizations interested in a group BWCA trip. These partners are mainly recruited through

the Educator Network and in-person school visits.

-Coordinate and liaise between trip participants and partner trip guides/outfitters (ex: Camp Menogyn, Big City Mountaineers, Wilderness Inquiry)

-Provide scholarship funds for participants, paid to partners such as listed above, according to metrics such as the school's Free and Reduced Lunch percentage.

-Provide pre-trip sessions to inform participants and families while building skills and confidence

Associated budget items include personnel, travel, canoes, trip journals, scholarship funds for participants.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
10 partner schools/organizations, 75 student trip participants, 10 pre-trip program sessions	August 31, 2024
13 partner schools/organizations, 100 student trip participants, 13 pre-trip program sessions	August 31, 2025
15 partner schools/organizations, 125 student trip participants, 15 pre-trip program sessions.	June 30, 2026

Activity 3: Fostering Leadership and Conservation through Repeat Wilderness Experiences

Activity Budget: \$292,150

Activity Description:

In year two, we include a student leadership component. We will offer opportunities for past program participants to engage further for a deeper connection to the BWCA through multiple opportunities to practice wilderness skills, explore conservation topics, and eventually acting as student leaders for peers on BWCA trips.

Regional Coordinators will lead leadership experiences 5/ year for students: 1 winter BWCA experience, 3 local outdoor experiences, 1 local overnight to prepare them to be a BWCA student leader, and acting as a student leader on their school's BWCA trip.

Strategies, tactics and budget implications:

-Enroll students interested in the leadership program.

-Plan and coordinate programming which enhances students' skills and knowledge related to the outdoors, conservation, and/or outdoor recreation.

-Staff leading students on 5 outdoor experiences a year.

-Surveys to demonstrate student growth in skill development, confidence, stewardship, and interest in further learning in topics related to environmental conservation or wilderness exploration.

Associated budget items include personnel, rental fees, and/or other fees to carry out the 5 outdoors experiences each year (ex: fees paid to partner organizations with capacity and equipment to lead/guide local and BWCA experiences, such as a winter BWCA experience at Camp Menogyn).

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
At least 6 students experience BWCA in winter, 3 local nature experiences, overnight leadership trip.	August 31, 2025
At least 10 students experience BWCA in winter, 3 local nature experiences, overnight leadership trip.	June 30, 2026

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 share any data, and results with school and community partners as well as in LCCMR reports. Content may include but is not limited to progress made toward metrics, hiring of project staff, feedback from participants, trip chaperones, and/or school staff, and inclusion in local media or news outlets. In our own materials, such as our course catalogs, the education page of the website, brochures, and online units, the LCCMR logo and ENRTF attribution language will be present according to the ENRTF Acknowledgement guidelines. Additionally, we will share with partners and news/media outlets that our work is made possible through funding from the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund, and also share with them the logo and attribution language mentioned above.

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?

Results from this project, including student engagement in our program, relationships with schools and community organizations, and feedback from participants from all backgrounds will inform and support the broader implementation of our No Boundaries to the Boundary Waters programming for years to come, resulting in future engagement and stewardship in Minnesota's public lands, specifically the Boundary Waters

We will fund complementary and ongoing work beyond this project through sources such as, but not limited to individual donors, corporate and foundation grants, and/or event income.

Other ENRTF Appropriations Awarded in the Last Six Years

Name	Appropriation	Amount Awarded
Connecting Students to the Boundary Waters	M.L. 2019, First Special Session, Chp. 4, Art. 2, Sec. 2, Subd. 05b	\$450,000

Budget Summary

Category / Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Purpose	Gen. Ineligible	% Benefits	# FTE	Classified Staff?	\$ Amount
Personnel								
Education Director (.5 FTE) = 41,000 X 25% Benefits X 3 years = 153,750		Project Manager			25%	1.5		\$153,750
Education Coordinator (Twin Cities) Salary (\$50,000) + 25% Benefits (\$12,500) = \$62,500/FTE x 3 years, plus a 5% pay raise years 2 and 3 = \$192,625		Coordinates and carries out project activities in/around Twin Cities Metro & portions of Greater Minnesota			25%	3		\$192,625
Education Coordinator (Twin Cities) Salary (\$50,000) + 25% Benefits (\$12,500) = \$62,500/FTE x 3 years, plus a 5% pay raise years 2 and 3 = \$192,625		Coordinates and carries out project activities in/around Twin Cities Metro & portions of Greater Minnesota			25%	3		\$192,625
Education Coordinator (Greater MN) Salary (\$50,000) + 25% Benefits (\$12,500) = \$62,500/FTE x 2 years, plus a 5% pay raise years 2 and 3 = \$127,500		Coordinates and carries out project activities in Greater Minnesota location 1			25%	2		\$127,500

- location 1) Salary (\$50,000) + 25% Benefits (\$12,500) = \$62,500/FTE x 2 years = 125,000, plus a 5% pay raise in year 2 = 127,500								
Education Coordinator (Greater MN - location 2) Salary (\$50,000) + 25% Benefits (\$12,500) = \$62,500/FTE x 1 year = 62,500		Coordinates and carries out project activities in Greater Minnesota location 2			25%	1		\$62,500
Education Interns (Twin Cities) - 2 per year		Carry out project activities. \$17/hour, 20 hours a week, 25 weeks. =\$8,500X2 = 17,000 x 3 years = \$51,000			0%	0.72		\$51,000
Education Intern (Greater MN - location 1)		Carry out project activities in Greater MN - 1 per year, \$17/hour, 20 hours a week, 25 weeks. =\$8,500X2 years = 17,000			0%	0.48		\$17,000
Education Intern (Greater MN - location 2)		Carry out project activities in Greater MN area not covered by other Intern - 1 per year, \$17/hour, 20 hours a week, 25 weeks. =\$8,500X1 year = 8,500			0%	0.24		\$8,500
							Sub Total	\$805,500
Contracts and Services								
TBD	Professional or Technical Service Contract	Translation services (\$800/year) = \$2400				0		\$2,400

TBD	Professional or Technical Service Contract	Online curriculum GIS work and video editing				0.06		\$2,450
							Sub Total	\$4,850
Equipment, Tools, and Supplies								
	Tools and Supplies	Curriculum kit supplies	Curriculum kit supplies - one additional set for Twin Cities (Materials for course like map and compass, skull investigation, biomes, ecosystems, campsite skills, Leave No Trace). Each set of supplies costs \$2,000.					\$2,000
	Tools and Supplies	Curriculum kit supplies	Curriculum kit supplies - one set for Greater MN, first location (Materials for course like map and compass, skull investigation, biomes, ecosystems, campsite skills, Leave No Trace). Each set of supplies costs \$2,000.					\$2,000
	Tools and Supplies	Curriculum kit supplies	Curriculum kit supplies - one set for Greater MN, second location (Materials for course like map and compass, skull investigation, biomes, ecosystems, campsite skills, Leave No Trace). Each set of supplies costs \$2,000.					\$2,000
	Equipment	2 Canoes	2 Canoes for paddle demonstration. (\$1,500 each)					\$3,000
	Tools and Supplies	Food & Beverages for BWCA "local" day trip experiences (Generally Ineligible)	Food, and beverages to serve at BWCA Paddle Days. \$262 for each event: 2 event days in year one, 3 in year two, 3 in year three = \$2,100. Food and refreshments will be reasonable and proportionate to the type of event being held. Some examples of refreshments for past programs have included family-friendly items like smores, water and juice, hot dogs, sandwiches, tacos, or other reasonable food items for a family, outdoor event.					\$2,100

							Sub Total	\$11,100
Capital Expenditures								
							Sub Total	-
Acquisitions and Stewardship								
							Sub Total	-
Travel In Minnesota								
	Miles/ Meals/ Lodging	Mileage, food and lodging for staff visits to schools. 175 average food and lodging, 10 times per year per coordinator. Year 1: 175 x20 =3500. Year 2: 175X30 = 5,250 Year 3: 7,000 20 visits per coordinator per year at an average of 78 miles per visit. 180 visits X 78 miles X .585 per mile = 8,250 . \$8250 + \$15,750 = 24,000	Mileage, food and lodging for Coordinators to visit schools throughout the state.					\$24,000
	Miles/ Meals/ Lodging	Transportation for leadership program: Rental passenger van (\$250/ day, 4 days a year per cohort) Year 1 - \$1000, Year 2 \$2000	Staff will carry out leadership program activities/outings & will rent a passenger van to transport students.					\$3,000
							Sub Total	\$27,000
Travel Outside Minnesota								
							Sub Total	-
Printing and Publication								
	Printing	Brochures for School Programming (\$2.50 per brochure X 200 = 500 X 3 years = 1,500	Brochures to give to schools/teachers/youth organizations with information about our programming					\$1,500
	Printing	Trip journals for students on Boundary Waters canoe trips (\$3.83/student on trips = 100 X 3.83 X 3 years)	Trip journals for students to use on their BWCAW trips					\$1,150
							Sub Total	\$2,650

Other Expenses								
		BWCA "local" day trip experiences-paid to complementary partners	Space, equipment, and activity instructors from organizations such as Minneapolis Park Board, Three rivers, UMD, and Wilderness Inquiry to host specific activities at BWCA Paddle Day events alongside Friends of the BWCA programming (such as fishing, paddling, wheelchair-adaptive programming) for larger paddling programs in local school partner areas. (700 per event, 2 events year one, 3 events year two, 3 events year three = \$5,600					\$4,900
		Wilderness canoe trip scholarship / trip fees	Scholarships / trip fees for student groups to experience multiday trips in the boundary waters, paid to the camp/outfitting organization providing the trip (such as Camp Menogyn or Wilderness Inquiry) costing an average \$800 / person. 250x800 = 200,000 (remaining 50 individual trip fees in match)					\$200,000
		Wilderness canoe trips for students in leadership program	Trip fees for leadership program - paid to camp/outfitting partners in the BWCA or local outdoor partners for use of space, equipment, food (included in the rate), rentals, and any instruction fees. \$1500 per student for overnight BWCA trip, local leadership overnight, BWCA winter retreat, and local programming. 16 students x \$1500 = \$24,000					\$24,000
							Sub Total	\$228,900
							Grand Total	\$1,080,000

Classified Staff or Generally Ineligible Expenses

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

Category	Specific Source	Use	Status	\$ Amount
State				
			State Sub Total	-
Non-State				
Cash	Individual donations and foundation grants to support the multi-day Boundary Waters canoe wilderness trips.	scholarships for multi-day Boundary Waters canoe wilderness trips	Secured	\$60,000
In-Kind	Individual donations and foundation grants which support general operations	Additional staff support from the Executive Director, Operations Director, Community Coordinator, and Grants Manager (\$8,000/year x 3 years = \$24,000; .15 FTE)	Secured	\$24,000
Cash	Individual donations and foundation grants	Individual donations and foundation grants to support additional materials, and supplies for program (such as canoes and trailers for bringing paddle programs to greater MN)	Secured	\$19,350
Cash	Individual donations and foundation grants	Teacher stipend for chaperoning trip (500/teacher/trip)	Secured	\$21,000
			Non State Sub Total	\$124,350
			Funds Total	\$124,350

Attachments

Required Attachments

Visual Component

File: [3b2202d4-6fc.pdf](#)

Alternate Text for Visual Component

1-page document with short project description and photos...

Financial Capacity

File: [75d58b6d-8db.pdf](#)

Board Resolution or Letter

Title	File
Signed Board Resolution_Friends of BW	edb6bfb2-149.pdf
Background Check Certification	29cecdb8-68e.pdf

Optional Attachments

Support Letter, Photos, Media, Other

Title	File
Letter of Support_CLUES-YA	51dbdf85-a95.pdf
Project Success_Letter of Support	8065a075-23a.pdf
Barnum Public Schools_Letter of Support	a466e098-24d.pdf
Prairie Seeds Academy Letter of Support	47488c36-46c.pdf

Difference between Proposal and Work Plan

Describe changes from Proposal to Work Plan Stage

September 2022: To fit the new recommended budget, we reduced outcomes for the number of paddle days and the number of students in the leadership program. We removed several other items from the budget such as teacher stipends for trips, a trailer, additional canoes, and paddles, which will be funded through other sources. We added the requested dissemination description and requested an update schedule change from April/October to February/August.

November 2022: Added clarification based on LCCMR staff comments (specifics in the comments and revisions page).

May 2023: Added clarification to one budget item based on LCCMR staff comments this spring.

Additional Acknowledgements and Conditions:

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

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

N/A

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

Yes, I agree to the Commissioner's Plan.

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

No

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

N/A

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

N/A

Does your project include original, hypothesis-driven research?

No

Does the organization have a fiscal agent for this project?

No