



Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

M.L. 2025 Approved Work Plan

General Information

ID Number: 2025-254

Staff Lead: Tom Dietrich

Date this document submitted to LCCMR: June 17, 2025

Project Title: Activating Youth and Family Environmental Stewardship through Raptors

Project Budget: \$228,000

Project Manager Information

Name: Lori Arent

Organization: U of MN - Raptor Center

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Web Address: <https://www.raptor.umn.edu/>

Project Reporting

Date Work Plan Approved by LCCMR: June 24, 2025

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

Project Completion: June 30, 2028

Final Report Due Date: August 14, 2028

Legal Information

Legal Citation: M.L. 2025, First Special Session, Chp. 1, Art. 2, Sec. 2, Subd. 05q

Appropriation Language: \$228,000 the first year is from the trust fund to the Board of Regents of the University of Minnesota for the Raptor Center to deliver standards-based environmental education featuring live raptors through school programs and community events across Minnesota.

Appropriation End Date: June 30, 2028

Narrative

Project Summary: The Raptor Center proposes to provide holistic student and community engagement in environmental education, inspiring and activating both youth in under-resourced schools and their families through community events.

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

Students in under-resourced schools have diminished access to engaging STEM content that educates and inspires participation in environmental conservation. Additionally, all too often, existing education programs focus primarily on students, leaving out the vital component of family and community engagement to facilitate lasting impact in Minnesota youth. With environmental challenges more pressing than ever before, it's essential we holistically engage both students, expanding access to effective education, and their families and communities in the mission to protect the future of Minnesota's environment.

The Raptor Center has worked diligently for 50 years fostering long-lasting environmental stewardship and literacy in under-resourced schools. However, efforts are limited without acknowledging and fostering the crucial role families play in supporting students' interests in environmental education and conservation. We propose expanding efforts to pair engaging live raptor presentations and curriculum in schools, with community events so families can participate in interactive activities alongside their children, fostering a shared appreciation for nature and building a long-lasting and action-based conservation ethic. The combination of school programming and community engagement seeks to bridge the connection between families and environmental education, thus strengthening family bonds while inspiring a collective commitment to protecting Minnesota's natural resources for future generations.

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.

To educate and excite students and connect back to families and communities, we propose to deliver 210 education programs utilizing live raptors and science standards to under-resourced schools across Minnesota and partner with 20 community events near the schools to bring families into the conversation.

Through past support of the ENRTF, we have refined school visits to consist of education programming that builds upon science concepts and ignites curiosity and excitement in students over STEM topics and the natural world. We propose utilizing similar content for engagement booths at education-related community events to create opportunities for students and their families to learn and share experiences together. Further, TRC will have print and digital resources that both teachers and families can use to continue exploring and learning beyond in-person visits.

By providing engaging and accessible educational opportunities up to three different times in the classroom and additionally in the community, we aim to foster a sense of shared responsibility for protecting our natural resources among Minnesota students and their families. This holistic approach not only addresses the immediate need for environmental education, but also cultivates a lasting commitment to conservation within communities.

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?

The Raptor Center will visit 35 under-resourced schools annually delivering 210 education programs to over 2,000 students and participate in 20 community events engaging over 4,000 community members. Content will focus on environmental/STEM curriculum, connecting students and families with nature, fostering a long-lasting conservation ethic. Additional education resources from TRC will amplify learnings beyond events. Program evaluation will guide continuous improvement of offerings to maximize effectiveness. Ultimately, TRC hopes to bring students and families together to increase awareness and understanding of the importance of protecting Minnesota's environment-empowering future generations to protect, preserve, and enhance state natural

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: In-School Environmental Programs with Live Raptors

Activity Budget: \$145,249

Activity Description:

Utilize The Raptor Center's live raptors and existing standards-based programming to deliver up to three engaging presentations in a total of 35 under-resourced schools annually. Of these schools annually, 25 will be in the seven county Twin Cities Metropolitan area and 10 will be outside of the Twin Cities Metropolitan area. Eligible schools will be identified as under-resourced and eligible for programs through evaluation of factors including: historic free/reduced lunch data, participation in federal title programs, lack of access to other nature-based programming. These education programs will highlight the critical role of raptors in ecosystems and promote conservation awareness among students in under-resourced schools throughout Minnesota. They will be delivered during both regular school time and in after school programs- utilizing in person and virtual strategies. They will inspire students and spark an interest in environmental education. Program evaluation will be performed mid-program, as well as at the conclusion of the program to help improve effectiveness of content and delivery.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
2025-2026 School Year: deliver 105 education programs to 35 schools	June 30, 2026
2026-2027 School Year: deliver 105 education programs to 35 schools.	June 30, 2027
Complete comprehensive evaluation of school programming to assess effectiveness in achieving educational objectives/engaging students	June 30, 2027

Activity 2: Family Community Events

Activity Budget: \$60,378

Activity Description:

The Raptor Center will host family-friendly booths and programs at community events and at The Raptor Center featuring hands-on activities and live raptor demonstrations. We will participate in a total of 20 community events of varied types, including 12 in the seven-county Twin Cities Metropolitan Area and 8 outside of the seven-county Twin Cities Metropolitan Area. These events will provide families with an opportunity to experience environmental education together, that aligns with content delivered during school programs, and inspire them to become environmental advocates. Program evaluation will be used throughout the grant period to evaluate effectiveness of booth and program activities and strive towards continual improvement of impact.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Participate in ten community events (six in seven-county metro area, four outside seven-county metro area)	June 30, 2026
Participate in additional ten community events (six in seven-county metro, four outside seven-county metro area)	June 30, 2027
Conduct and complete comprehensive evaluation of family community events to evaluate and enhance effectiveness/impact	June 30, 2027

Activity 3: Expansion of Print and Online Resource Offerings for Families

Activity Budget: \$22,373

Activity Description:

Develop and expand resources offered for families. This includes two main categories: 1) designing and generating a diverse collection of printed materials, including an activity booklet, for families and students to supplement their learning and encourage continued exploration of environmental education topics and 2) expanding upon an existing collection of digital educational materials on an online platform to include accessible extension activities specifically for families. These extension activities on an online resource portal will include: STEM fact sheets, field guides for outdoor exploration, and instructions for outdoor recreational games and/or activities. This expansion to an existing resource library aims to ensure inclusivity and accessibility while fostering continuous learning and engagement beyond in-person events and in-school programs.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Design and generate a diverse collection of printed materials	December 31, 2025
Expand existing collection of digital educational materials to include accessible extension activities specifically for families	June 30, 2026
Distribute printed materials to approximately 1,000 families throughout Minnesota at community events	June 30, 2027

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.

The conclusion and results of the evaluation of this program will be shared in a presentation offered to TRC's staff and 300+ volunteers. The results of our grant will be utilized to further innovate our environmental education efforts, provide data/citation for future educational grants, and create a platform for more sustainable local partnerships in the community.

As the program progresses through the 2025 and 2026 academic school year we will be documenting our progress to our 40,000 followers across multiple social media platforms. These updates will assist with marketing this opportunity to schools that wish to partake in the program and raise community awareness of ENRTF's role in funding this program.

All of our dissemination efforts will attribute the Environmental and Natural Resources Trust Fund through language as instructed in the ENRTF Acknowledgement Guidelines.

Long-Term Implementation and Funding

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

During this grant period, we will leverage existing relationships with schools that we would not be able to serve due to funding, and establish new relationships with community partners and organizations around these schools to engage community members. Comprehensive evaluation of both school programming and community events will be performed to measure impact of activities and then shared back with community partners and teachers to shape and refine efforts. By the end of this program, we will have well validated approaches to engaging students and family/community members that will allow us to seek additional philanthropic support to continue efforts.

Other ENRTF Appropriations Awarded in the Last Six Years

Name	Appropriation	Amount Awarded
Expanding Access To Environmental Education For Underserved Communities	M.L. 2021, First Special Session, Chp. 6, Art. 6, Sec. 2, Subd. 05g	\$178,000
Reducing Biophobia & Fostering Environmental Stewardship in Underserved Schools	M.L. 2023, , Chp. 60, Art. 2, Sec. 2, Subd. 05d	\$180,000

Budget Summary

Category / Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Purpose	Gen. Ineligible	% Benefits	# FTE	Classified Staff?	\$ Amount
Personnel								
Project Manager		Project oversight, coordination, reporting			37.1%	0.1		\$21,958
Project and Partner Coordinator		Educational program content and adaptation for classes and events, program evaluation, partner/school communications			33.5%	0.4		\$28,894
Animal and Resource Manager		Raptor ambassador bird care and training, supervisory oversight of staff and travel			37.1%	0.1		\$8,928
Interpretive Naturalist		Conducting classroom programs: scheduling, delivering, and follow through work with teachers and students, as well as presenting at community events			33.5%	1.7		\$106,505
Communications and Outreach Specialist		Community event content support			33.5%	0.1		\$4,262
Program Admin		Administrative support for booking of programs and planning communication			33%	0.2		\$13,300
							Sub Total	\$183,847
Contracts and Services								
Evaluation Studies Program Consultant	Service Contract	Development and implementation of program evaluation for school and community event programs				0.1		\$16,000
Graphic Designer	Service Contract	Designer to create engaging printed materials, including posters for use in classrooms, activity books to give out at community events, and table banners.				0.1		\$6,000
							Sub Total	\$22,000
Equipment, Tools, and Supplies								
	Tools and Supplies	Animal food	Raptor food for live bird programming visits to schools and community events (estimated averaging approximately \$20 food					\$4,473

			materials/program or event for three-four raptor education programs)					
							Sub Total	\$4,473
Capital Expenditures								
							Sub Total	-
Acquisitions and Stewardship								
							Sub Total	-
Travel In Minnesota								
	Miles/ Meals/ Lodging	Mileage: Traveling to 70 schools, up to three times total (total of 210 trips), and 20 community events to deliver education programming. Estimated at 14000 miles of overall travel at \$0.67/mile	Travel mileage to schools and community events to deliver education programs					\$9,380
	Miles/ Meals/ Lodging	Per diem and hotels: Hotels and meals for overnight trips to areas in greater Minnesota (approximately 30 overnight trips will be required)	Per diem and hotels so we can do trips to the greater Minnesota areas that (due to distance) require an overnight stay					\$3,000
							Sub Total	\$12,380
Travel Outside Minnesota								
							Sub Total	-
Printing and Publication								
	Printing	Activity books for community events (1500 copies)	Printed books to hand out to family units so they can take home and continue activities after the event					\$4,500
	Printing	Posters (5 large, high durability posters to use at each classroom)	Posters to print and use during classroom activities and presentations					\$500
	Printing	Table banners (2 banners)	Banners to use for visibility at community events to engage and educate community members					\$300
							Sub Total	\$5,300
Other Expenses								

							Sub Total	-
							Grand Total	\$228,000

Classified Staff or Generally Ineligible Expenses

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

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

Total Project Cost: \$228,000

This amount accurately reflects total project cost?

Yes

Attachments

Required Attachments

Visual Component

File: [ff9d5311-f58.pdf](#)

Alternate Text for Visual Component

Photos of raptor education ambassador birds, bridging the connection between families and environmental education...

Supplemental Attachments

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

Title	File
UMN SPA Approval Letter	51615354-45d.pdf
Good Standing	55929f00-fed.pdf
Tax Exempt	adf4a9dd-562.pdf
UMN Annual Audit	93f53723-b84.pdf
UMN Board Reviewed Financials	ac0186e6-8ba.pdf

Difference between Proposal and Work Plan

Describe changes from Proposal to Work Plan Stage

Tweaked the work plan to account for lessons learned on current LCCMR grant, while still maintaining impact of numbers of students, public, schools reached. This included adjusting language about programs to allow teachers to choose up to a series of three programs to best fit their classroom, adjust budget to better reflect reality of travel amounts/costs since we can often do multiple schools in one trip (reducing costs), added our program admin to help with intensive activities around booking programs with teachers to better serve teachers.

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?

No

Does the organization have a fiscal agent for this project?

No

Does your project include the pre-design, design, construction, or renovation of a building, trail, campground, or other fixed capital asset costing \$10,000 or more or large-scale stream or wetland restoration?

No

Do you propose using an appropriation from the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund to conduct a project that provides children's services (as defined in Minnesota Statutes section 299C.61 Subd.7 as "the provision of care, treatment, education, training, instruction, or recreation to children")?

Yes

Do you certify that background checks are performed for background check crimes, as defined in Minnesota Statutes, section 299C.61, Subd. 2, on all employees, contractors, and volunteers who have or may have access to a child to whom children's services are provided by your organization?

Yes

Provide the name(s) and organization(s) of additional individuals assisting in the completion of this project:

Lori Arent (UMN-TRC)

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

Yes, I understand