

**Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund**

# M.L. 2025 Final 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**

**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. Ineli gible** | **% Bene fits** | **# FTE** | **Class ified 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 materials/program or event for three-four raptor education programs) |  |  |  |  | $4,473 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  | **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** |

### **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](https://lccmrprojectmgmt.leg.mn/media/map/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](https://lccmrprojectmgmt.leg.mn/media/attachments/51615354-45d.pdf) |
| Good Standing | [55929f00-fed.pdf](https://lccmrprojectmgmt.leg.mn/media/attachments/55929f00-fed.pdf) |
| Tax Exempt | [adf4a9dd-562.pdf](https://lccmrprojectmgmt.leg.mn/media/attachments/adf4a9dd-562.pdf) |
| UMN Annual Audit | [93f53723-b84.pdf](https://lccmrprojectmgmt.leg.mn/media/attachments/93f53723-b84.pdf) |
| UMN Board Reviewed Financials | [ac0186e6-8ba.pdf](https://lccmrprojectmgmt.leg.mn/media/attachments/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