

**Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund
2010 Request for Proposals (RFP)**

LCCMR ID: 200-F

Project Title:

Project Get Outdoors Toolkit Activities

LCCMR 2010 Funding Priority:

F. Environmental Education

Total Project Budget: \$ \$10,000

Proposed Project Time Period for the Funding Requested: 1 year, 2010 - 2011

Other Non-State Funds: \$ \$0

Summary:

Project GO is a non-profit organization working to complete a program toolkit that will help communities throughout Minnesota develop practical out-of-school programs that connect children to local nature experiences.

Name: Sara Grover

Sponsoring Organization: Project Get Outdoors, Inc.

Address: Whitewater State Park, 19041 Hwy 74
Altura MN 55910

Telephone Number: (507) 951-5885

Email: sara.grover@yahoo.com

Fax: (507) 932-5938

Web Address: www.projectgetoutdoors.org

Location:

Region: SE

County Name: Fillmore, Freeborn, Goodhue, Houston, Mower, Olmsted, Steele, Wabasha, Winona

City / Township:

_____ Knowledge Base	_____ Broad App.	_____ Innovation
_____ Leverage	_____ Outcomes	
_____ Partnerships	_____ Urgency	_____ TOTAL

MAIN PROPOSAL

PROJECT TITLE: Project Get Outdoors Toolkit Activities

I. PROJECT STATEMENT

In response to the decreasing outdoor recreation trends among Minnesota children and families, Project Get Outdoors, Inc., based out of Whitewater State Park in Winona County, was founded to develop an innovative and practical after-school/out-of-school program model that would reverse these trends. Our mission is “to link youth and caring adult volunteers to exploration, play and reflection in nature near local communities so that children will grow to be healthy, comfortable outdoors, and knowledgeable and passionate about their land and community throughout life”.

After four years of piloting and evaluating programs in Southeast MN, a Project GO model centered on collaboration with state and local agencies and organizations including 4-H, Scouts, Minnesota State Parks, the University of Minnesota and the US Fish & Wildlife Service, has been developed to help communities design local programs that meet weekly, year round to introduce kids in grades K-8 to nature exploration and outdoor recreation activities while utilizing parks, trails, wildlife management areas and other public green spaces within 30 miles of each community; special places where Minnesotans may experience nature throughout life.

A growing number of communities in the Se region have requested more information on how to start up their own Project GO programs. Therefore, Project GO has designed a toolkit that will be available free-of-charge to interested communities throughout the State. As part of the toolkit, Start Up Trunks containing miscellaneous outdoor activity supplies, as well as an Activity Ideas Booklet, will be provided to communities to aid them in program planning. Equipment Trunks for various outdoor activities such as geo-caching, outdoor photography, nature art, aquatic habitat studies, bird watching, camping, and fishing will also be made available for Project GO clubs to borrow.

II. DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT RESULTS

Result 1: Accessible & Practical Activity Planning Resources Budget: \$ 10,000

The resources available through the Start Up Trunks, Activity Ideas Booklet, and Equipment Trunks will facilitate Project GO program start up and activity planning for a minimum of 26 communities located in Se Minnesota, serving a minimum of 1300 registered participants and implementing a minimum of 936 separate nature activities.

Deliverable

1. Start Up Trunks with basic supplies (blindfolds, rope, magnifying glasses, bug boxes, trail cards, animal calls, clipboards, balls, etc.) to initiate over 100 simple outdoor activities within a community.

Completion Date

June 2011

2. Equipment Trunks with resources for Project GO clubs to experience a greater variety of outdoor recreation activities (binoculars, fishing poles, GPS units, digital cameras, tents, aquatic nets, art supplies, etc.)

June 2011

III. PROJECT STRATEGY

A. Project Team/Partners

The Project GO Board of Directors will be overseeing the project. The Board is composed of individuals who represent various agencies and organizations that share an interest in connecting kids to the outdoors. Members include; Maria Acosta – Wabasha County Social Services, John DeStazio – Boys Scouts of America, Larry Gates – Farmer & retired DNR Watershed Coordinator, Sara Grover – MN State Parks, Jon Holger – Fillmore County Social Services & MN State Parks, Samantha Grant – U of MN Extension Service, Kate O’Grady – MN State Parks & WSU Assistant Professor, Andrea Lorek Strauss – U of MN Extension Service, Dave Palmquist – MN State Parks, Ann Rethlefsen – Winona State University, Ellen Rollie – St. Charles Public Schools, Cindy Samples – US Fish & Wildlife Service (board liaison). Sara Grover serves as the lead project manager and will be assisted by the board and their partner agencies.

B. Timeline Requirements

We propose a twelve-month grant beginning July, 2010 and ending on June 30, 2011.

C. Long-Term Strategy

We plan to continue to partner with government and non-government agencies that share in our mission and to identify ways that partnering organizations can help contribute funds or other resources to aide in this effort.

Project GO received 501c3 tax-exempt status in February 2009. Since then, our Board of Directors has begun to move forward on developing a sustainable funding strategy. Prior to this, we operated under the fiscal sponsorship of the Parks and Trails Council of Minnesota.

Project Budget

INSTRUCTIONS AND TEMPLATE (1 PAGE LIMIT)

Attach budget, in MS-EXCEL format, to your "2010 LCCMR Proposal Submit Form".

IV. TOTAL PROJECT REQUEST BUDGET ([Insert # of years for project] years)

BUDGET ITEM	AMOUNT
Personnel:	\$ -
	\$ -
	\$ -
Contracts:	\$ -
	\$ -
Equipment/Tools/Supplies: Activity Ideas Booklet development and printing, Start Up Trunk supplies and assembly, Equipment Trunk supplies and assembly	\$ 10,000
Acquisition (Fee Title or Permanent Easements):	\$ -
Travel:	\$ -
Additional Budget Items: /	\$ -
TOTAL PROJECT BUDGET REQUEST TO LCCMR	\$ 10,000

V. OTHER FUNDS

SOURCE OF FUNDS	AMOUNT	Status
Other Non-State \$ Being Applied to Project During Project Period: EPA Environmental Education Capacity Building	\$ 50,000	<i>secured</i>
Other State \$ Being Applied to Project During Project Period: MN DNR Gateway Initiative funding for Project GO statewide expansion	\$ 150,000	<i>pending</i>
In-kind Services During Project Period: Volunteer hours for activity planning and implementation expected to be around 9360 hours valued at \$10 per hour	\$ 93,600	<i>pending</i>
Remaining \$ from Current Trust Fund Appropriation (if applicable):		<i>/</i>
Funding History: National Fish & Wildlife Foundation (\$10,000 for fieldtrips to Upper Mississippi River National Refuge), Mayo Clinic (\$5,000), U of MN	\$ 20,000	<i>secured</i>

Project Manager Qualifications and Organization Description

Project Get Outdoors, Inc. is a Minnesota-based non-profit organization working since 2005 to implement free after-school/out-of-school programs that introduce children in grades K-8 to nature exploration and outdoor recreation in their local communities and regions. Our mission is, “to link youth and caring adult volunteers to exploration, play and reflection in nature near local communities so that children grow to be healthy, comfortable outdoors, and knowledgeable and passionate about their land and community throughout life.”

The project manager for this LCCMR proposal is Sara Grover, founder of Project Get Outdoors, Inc. Sara is a proud mother of two girls ages 8 and 6. She has extensive experience in the environmental education field, working as an environmental educator and naturalist since 1994. Sara is a graduate of the University of MN with a degree in Natural Resources and Environmental Studies. Over the course of the past 15 years, Sara has worked with thousands of children, introducing them to nature through outdoor activities. Notable past employers include the US Forest Service, MN DNR Fisheries MinnAqua Program, Bell Museum of Natural History, Eagle Bluff Environmental Learning Center, Olmsted County Parks and MN State Parks. In the past, Sara served as a board member for the National Eagle Center, Plainview Youth Center, and U of MN Regional Sustainable Development Partnership for SE MN known as the Experiment in Rural Cooperation. For 10 years she served as a 4-H Natural Resources Project Judge at the MN State Fair.

Sara’s ability to network, grant write, problem solve, articulate her vision and inspire others to support this effort are powerful skills that have allowed her to accomplish many great feats, including establishing Project Get Outdoors, Inc.

