

**Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund  
2016 Request for Proposals (RFP)**

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**Project Title:**

**ENRTF ID: 092-C**

Youth-Led Energy Action Projects in 50 Minnesota Communities

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**Category:** C. Environmental Education

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**Total Project Budget: \$** 450,500

**Proposed Project Time Period for the Funding Requested:** 2 years, July 2016 to June 2018

**Summary:**

Youth Energy Summit (YES!) expands state-wide to complete over 200 new youth-led climate change mitigation and adaptation projects in over 50 Minnesota communities, culminating in a state-wide competition.

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**Location**

**Region:** Statewide

**County Name:** Statewide

**City / Township:**

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**Alternate Text for Visual:**

Map of existing teams and proposed expansion. Highlights of the YES! programs impact from M.L. 2011 and 2014 funding. Overall program impact, partner recognition and participant quotes.

_____ Funding Priorities	_____ Multiple Benefits	_____ Outcomes	_____ Knowledge Base
_____ Extent of Impact	_____ Innovation	_____ Scientific/Tech Basis	_____ Urgency
_____ Capacity Readiness	_____ Leverage	_____ TOTAL	_____ %



## Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF)

### 2016 Main Proposal

**Project Title:** Youth-led Energy Action Projects in 50 Minnesota Communities

#### **PROJECT TITLE: Youth-led Energy Action Projects in 50 Minnesota Communities**

##### **I. PROJECT STATEMENT**

Previous support for the Youth Energy Summit (YES) program from the M.L. 2011 & 2014 resulted in over 500 energy action projects in 108 communities, impacting over 53,000 youth and 56,000 community members. With this 3rd and final phase of funding, YES! will expand this award-winning model state-wide to complete over 200 new youth-led climate change mitigation and adaptation projects, impacting an additional 40,000 students and community members in over 50 MN communities. Working with our partners, YES! plans to fully transition from ENRTF funds to private and public sector partnerships. YES! has proven to be successful in engaging youth and mobilizing over 10,000 hours of volunteer time yearly while building strong and resilient communities. In addition, YES! will launch its first ever state-wide competition .

YES! engages tomorrow's leaders in seeking sustainable solutions to today's environmental and economic challenges through youth-led energy conservation, waste reduction, renewable energy installations and other environmental stewardship projects. Examples of YES! outcomes include: Within 1 year from our Deep Winter Greenhouse Workshop Lac qui Parle and New London- Spicer YES! teams had their own Greenhouses, providing local/organic produce for their schools; The Atwater-Cosmos Grove City YES! team reduced their school's annual electricity costs by \$5,000; Royalton's YES! team presented at the MN School Board Association and received the Lieutenant Governor's Red Wagon Award for Outstanding Leadership. YES! projects have generated volunteer, in-kind and cash investments in sustainability projects far exceeding the total ENRTF funds invested in the projects for both M.L.2011 and M.L.2014 funding.

##### **Specific goals for YES! Project 2016-18:**

- Over 50 communities will be served by up to 50 YES! teams
- 200 new youth-led climate change mitigation and adaption projects will be completed over 2 years
- Expand the YES! model state-wide
- Finalists from 4 regional competitions will advance to first ever state-wide YES! competition

ENRTF funding will support coordinator involvement with teams, provide assistance to cover team expenses for attendance at events, and provide matching funds for energy projects.

##### **II. PROJECT ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES**

###### **Activity 1: Recruit and retain up to 50 YES! teams in Minnesota**

**Budget: \$ 54,075**

YES! Coordinators recruit & secure new teams; develop local support for team success and work with school to successfully implement program. Each .5 FTE coordinator supports 10 - 13 teams regionally by in-person meetings, weekly updates e & website.

Outcome	Completion Date
1. Recruit and retain up to 50 teams throughout Minnesota	Nov 2016,2017
2. Educate youth on climate change, while providing regional relevance to the importance of their action projects on their community	May 2016,2017
3. Identify up to 3 additional schools to add a team at the middle school	Oct 2016,2017

**Activity 2:** Educate students on climate literacy through all team youth gatherings (Fall Summits), workshops and tours with local, regional and state-wide experts to design projects promoting a sustainable lifestyle in the school, home and community.

**Budget: \$ 148,150**



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#### Project Title: Youth-led Energy Action Projects in 50 Minnesota Communities

YES! Coordinators organize annual gatherings, 8- 10 tours and workshops per year which are specific to team project goals. Topics include: energy conservation, climate adaptation strategies, composting recycling, renewable energy, visits to solar and wind farms and local food initiatives.

Outcome	Completion Date
1. Over 800 (total for 2 years) YES! students attend YES! Summits, customized workshops and tours and participate in an annual regional competition	May 2017 2018
2. Each team demonstrates connections with over 5 experts and allies who can assist them with completing energy related community projects	June 2017, 2018
3. Pilot and implement first state-wide YES! competition	May 2017, 2018

#### Activity 3: Complete 200+ new sustainability projects in over 50 communities Minnesota **Budget: \$ 248,275**

Based on previous experience, teams will complete projects in a variety of areas including; energy efficiency upgrades, energy audits, waste reduction, composting, recycling, renewable energy installations, school gardens, habitat restoration and climate educational events for k-12 students and the community.

Outcome	Completion Date
1. YES! teams identify local sustainability challenges, formulate goals and action plans	Nov 2016,2017
2. YES! teams complete over 200 new energy and climate change projects in 2 years	May 2016,2017
3. YES! teams provide over 10,000 volunteer hours per year to complete projects and educational events engaging and educating over 40,000 students, 50,000 community members and over 500 businesses in 2 years	May 2016,2017
4. Project accomplishments are recognized and publicized via website, newsletters, conference presentations and local, regional and state-wide news media	On-going

### III. PROJECT STRATEGY

#### A. Project Team/Partners

The project partners Prairie Woods Environmental Learning Center, Laurentian Environmental Center, Ney Nature Center and Saint John's Outdoor University(SJOU) will actively collaborate with Climate Generation, U of M Extension, Clean Energy Resource Teams (CERTs), rural electric power cooperatives, private business, conservation groups and others to ensure project success of youth-led action projects. Prairie Woods ELC will serve as the fiscal host for this grant with Laurentian ELC and SJOU providing contract services.

#### B. Project Impact and Long-Term Strategy

With major assistance from ENRTF, YES! has developed a solid network of partners and a proven model for mobilizing youth-led environmental stewardship projects. The current proposal will expand a successful model and establish a state-wide network which, over the next three years, will fully transition from ENRTF funding to local, regional and statewide public and private sector partnerships, earned income, grants and fundraising. This is the 3<sup>rd</sup> and final phase of funding requests from ENRTF and many current efforts to provide sustainability are paying off such as YES! teams have started raising funds through sustainable best practices efforts which are also profitable including: waste oil, metal, shoe and e-waste collections, reducing school utility and waste hauling bills, and growing local foods. Discussions are underway with Great River Energy and other utility providers to partner with YES! teams to meet Conservation Improvement Goals (CIP) goals. YES! is working with GreenStep Cities and the MN Department of Education on ways YES! can fulfill Service Learning Requirements.

**C. Timeline Requirements:** July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2018. This time frame allows YES! to support teams across Minnesota for 2 consecutive school years. Staff time in the summer is used to revise Coordinator and Coach manuals, promotion, recruitment and gearing up for the next school season.

## 2016 Detailed Project Budget

**Project Title:** Youth-led Energy Action Projects in 50 Minnesota Communities

### IV. TOTAL ENRTF REQUEST BUDGET 2 years (2016-2018)

<b>BUDGET ITEM</b>	<b>AMOUNT</b>
<b>Personnel:</b> (1) 1.0 FTE Program Manager \$104,000 total for two years (2) 0.5 FTE Team Coordinators \$25,000/yr total \$100,000 for two years (Note: each 0.5 Coordinator supports up to 10 teams in each of two regions) (1) 0.25 FTE Data & Communications Specialist/Administrative Assistant \$13,000/yr total \$26,000 for two years (75% salary, %25 benefits for each position for 2 years)	\$ 230,000
<b>Professional/Technical/Service Contracts:</b> Saint John's Outdoor University( ( SJOU) Program of Saint John's University) (1) 0.5 FTE Team Coordinator \$25,000/yr total \$50,00 for two years (Note: position supports up to 10 teams in the north-central region of Minnesota) SJOU will serve as fiscal host for the contract.	\$ 50,000
<b>Professional/Technical/Service Contracts:</b> Laurentian Environmental Learning Center (LEC) (1) 0.5 FTE Team Coordinator \$25,000/yr total \$50,00 for two years (Note: position supports up to 10 teams in the northeast region of Minnesota) LEC will serve as fiscal host for the contract.	\$ 50,000
<b>Travel:</b> Coordinator travel: 400 miles/month x 4 coordinators = 1,600 miles/month x 12 months = 19,200 miles/yr x 2 years = 38,400 miles total x \$0.56 = \$21,504 Program Manager travel: 300 miles/month x 12 Months = 3,600 miles x 2 years = 7,200 miles total x \$0.56 = \$4,032 Total Mileage= \$25,536 Meals: \$500 /year x 5 staff = \$2,500/yr x 2 years =\$5,000 Travel & Meals total = \$25,536+\$5,000=\$30,536 (Round down to 30,500) (Note: Travel required to support and meet with teams and partners and to coordinate activities in rural regions across the state of Minnesota)	\$ 30,500
<b>Other: District Allowances</b> Allows for school district to submit for reimbursement for substitute teachers ad transportation costs to attend YESI events and tours. \$400/team x 50 teams= \$20,000 x 2 years = \$40,000	\$ 40,000
<b>Other: Project Seed Funds</b> Allows for teams to purchase materials and services necessary to initiate projects for energy efficiency upgrades, waste recdution, solar projects, wind projects, and local foods projects. \$500/team x 50 teams = \$25,000 x 2 years = \$50,000	\$ 50,000
<b>TOTAL ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND \$ REQUEST =</b>	<b>\$ 450,500</b>

### V. OTHER FUNDS

<b>SOURCE OF FUNDS</b>	<b>AMOUNT</b>	<b>Status</b>
<b>Other Non-State \$ To Be Applied To Project During Project Period:</b> Southwest Initiative Foundation \$30,000 (Pending) Initiative Foundation \$12,000 (Pending) NE Regional Sustainable Development Partnership \$10,000 (Pending) Center Point Energy \$1,000 (Pending) East Side Oil Company \$2,000 (Pending) Team Registrations 50 teams \$500/team = \$25,000 x 2 years = \$50,000 (Secured) Cliffs Foundation \$5,000 (Pending)	\$ 110,000	6 Pending 1 Secured
<b>In-kind Services To Be Applied To Project During Project Period:</b> Adult expert volunteer in-kind is estimated at \$100,000 / Year = \$200,000 (based on previous years) \$55,000 from Prairie Woods ELC \$10,000 Laurentian Environmental Center \$12,000 Nye Nature Center \$10,000 South Central Service Cooperative	\$ 280,000	Secured
<b>Funding History:</b> Southwest Initiative Foundation \$292,657; Minnesota Renewable Energy Marketplace \$202,000; McKnight Foundation \$75,000; AgStar \$25,000; Southern MN Initiative Foundation \$33,530; SW Private Industry Council \$7,500; Great River Energy \$3,000; CEE \$1,500; Ney Nature Center \$5,000; Prairie Ecology Bus \$1,500; Central Regional Sustainable Development Partnership (RSDP) \$11,000; Northeast RSDP \$10,000; \$5,500 from other contributors; MPCA GreenCorps member; M.L. 2011 08a \$249,000; M.L. 2014 09b \$350,000	\$ 1,265,687	Spent
<b>Remaining \$ From Current ENRTF Appropriation:</b> As of May 8,2015 PWELC has approx. \$225,000 remaining from M.L. 2014, Chp. 226, Art. 3, Sec. 2, Subd. 09b. Funds expected expended by June 30, 2016	\$ 225,000	



[www.youthenergysummit.org](http://www.youthenergysummit.org)

## Project Title: Youth-led Energy Action Projects in 50 Minnesota Communities

Over 400 projects were completed from 2011 to 2015 including: inspiring school districts to support solar gardens and green design elements, planting pollinator and produce gardens, building outdoor nature classrooms, hosting energy education events for all ages, collecting shoes, e-waste, jeans, and more, cutting school lunch waste by 75% and saving schools and communities money through energy retrofits.

Since 2007, YES! has engaged more than 2,000 students, 2,300 businesses and organizations, and 107,000 community members



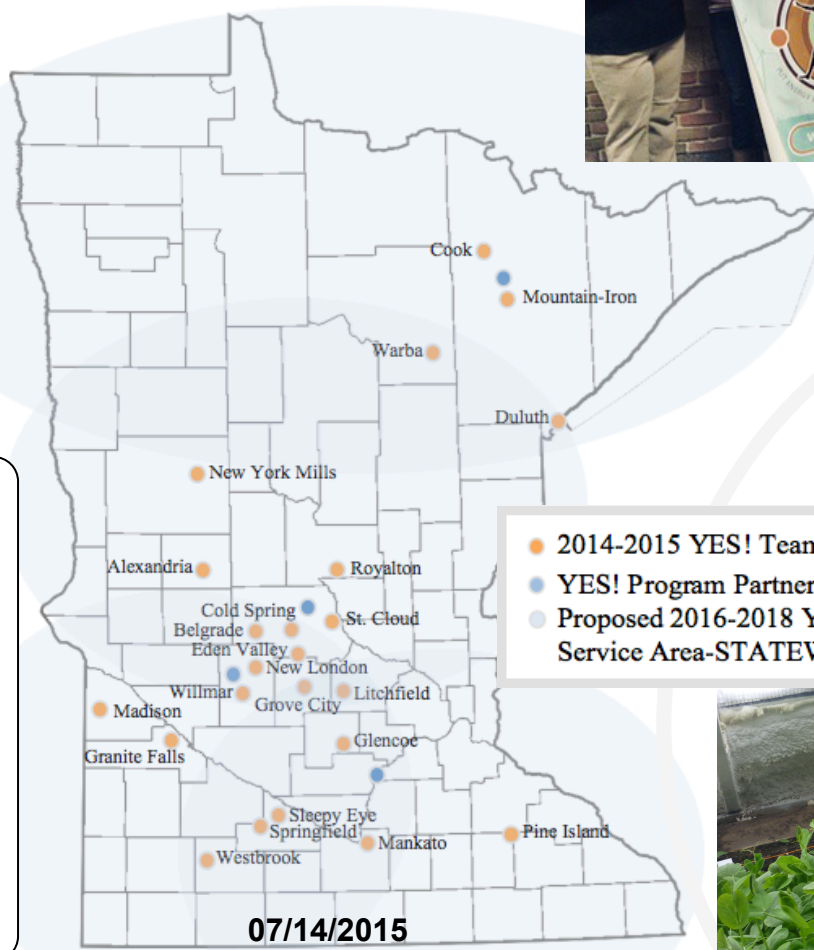
*"You can think about saving energy or you can talk about it, but you really need to just get out and do something to protect the environment...YES! is a great way to do that"*

YES! student



*"The YES! model is a perfect fit for our [school] because it offers hands-on active learning projects that get our students out in the community"*

Alexandria YES! coach



## Current YES! Program Partners



ENRTF ID: 092-C

## **2016-18 ORGANIZATION DESCRIPTION**

**PROJECT TITLE:** Youth-led Energy Action Projects in 50 Minnesota Communities

### **Organization Description:**

Prairie Woods Environmental Learning Center (PWELC) is a regional center for environmental education and outdoor recreation located 11 miles north of Willmar, MN in Kandiyohi County. The mission of Prairie Woods is to promote an individual and shared commitment to the responsible use, management and preservation of our natural resources. PWELC began offering programs in 1995 and now serves over 25,000 people annually from over 60 schools and many youth organizations and conservation groups within a 100 mile radius.

PWELC is a 501c3 non-profit organization, with an annual budget of approximately \$605,000, which operates day-use and outreach programs from a beautiful 500 acre facility owned by Kandiyohi County. Multi-day programs are conducted in collaboration with two local residential camps. PWELC enjoys strong partnerships with local and state government agencies, schools districts, camps, youth service agencies, conservation groups, initiative foundations and private businesses throughout the region.

PWELC has been recognized by CERTs as a leader in renewable energy in west central Minnesota and has operated with 100% net renewable energy since 2010. Since 2007, PWELC has expanded its outreach capacity through the Youth Energy Summit (YES!) and Project Eco-Voyageur. PWELC's outreach programs provide unique learning and service experiences to students within their own communities. Eco-Voyageur, focusing on water quality and conservation, introduces students to local lakes or rivers from the seats of a 34 foot voyageur canoe. The YES! program will serve 40 communities in 2014-2016 operating with four regional partners with the assistance of an ENRTF grant and received recognition as the outstanding environmental education initiative in 2010 and 2013 from the Minnesota Environmental Initiative.

### **Project Manager Qualifications:**

Shelli-Kae S. Foster serves as the YES! Program Manager. She has a master of business administration (MBA) in sustainable business and undergraduate degree in communications from Gustavus Adolphus College. For the last 4 years Foster has managed the ENRTF grant reporting, managed the YES! staff and worked towards program sustainability. As a former YES! coordinator, Foster developed the central region to include 10 teams and helped the program earn the Environmental Initiative Award for Environmental Education in 2013.

Previous to working with Prairie Woods Environmental Learning Center and the YES! program, Foster worked as Energy Manager for School District 206/Alexandria, MN, managed the Green Team at Tastefully Simple, Inc, produced "Minnesota's Environment and You" (LCMR grant) for Twin Cities Public Television and produced programming for major corporations including American Express, Carlson Marketing Group, Securities Training Corporation and Blue Zones (formally Earth Treks).