

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

Project Title:

ENRTF ID: 110-C

"Real Wildlife, Real Conservation, Real Impact"

Category: C. Environmental Education

Total Project Budget: \$ 476,879

Proposed Project Time Period for the Funding Requested: 3.5 years, July 2016 to August 2019

Summary:

We will provide environmental education programs to over 14,000 metro students using ambassador wild animals to illustrate the interface between natural and human systems, and our impact upon these systems.

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Sponsoring Organization: Wildlife Science Center

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Location

Region: Statewide

County Name: Statewide

City / Township:

Alternate Text for Visual:

Wildlife Science Centers education program goals.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Funding Priorities	<input type="checkbox"/>	Multiple Benefits	<input type="checkbox"/>	Outcomes	<input type="checkbox"/>	Knowledge Base	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Extent of Impact	<input type="checkbox"/>	Innovation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Scientific/Tech Basis	<input type="checkbox"/>	Urgency	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Capacity Readiness	<input type="checkbox"/>	Leverage	<input type="checkbox"/>		TOTAL	<input type="checkbox"/>	%



PROJECT TITLE: “Real Wildlife, Real Conservation, Real Impact”

I. PROJECT STATEMENT

There is a growing disparity between the time kids spend indoors wired to technology and the time they spend outside experiencing and learning from the environment. The vast majority of today’s kids use a computer, watch TV, or play video games on a daily basis, but only about 10 percent say they are spending time outdoors every day, according to a nationwide poll conducted by the Nature Conservancy. The poll also showed youth that appreciated nature were those that had a personal experience in nature; clearly getting kids a meaningful experience outside is critical to getting them engaged in conversation about environmental issues.

Children are naturally drawn to animals – Wildlife Science Center programs foster this curiosity and wonder while teaching respect for all living things. Our approach to environmental education is a simple one, we use the natural world and all of its components to reinforce educational objectives set by the State of Minnesota. We reference state education standards when designing programs and strive to enhance what teachers are already covering in the classroom. Numerous studies have shown that when objectives are reinforced with real-life experiences, the students have a greater level of understanding and retention.

The Wildlife Science Center combines this ancient and well-documented affinity of children for wild animals and nature with environmental education by using live wild animals to generate interest, inspire participation, illustrate systems, and explore the interface between natural systems and humans systems in order to move toward the goal of informed environmental decision making by youth.

“There would be very little point...to protect animals and habitats if we weren’t at the same time raising young people to be better stewards.” Jane Goodall

II. PROJECT ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES

Activity 1: Introduce 7,500 students over a 3 year cycle to environmental education programming through outreach wildlife programs. **Budget: \$75,000**

Description: The focus of Wildlife Science Center outreach programs is connecting students to wildlife through living ambassadors of Minnesota biomes. Each 60 minute program will include live animals demonstrating the importance of biodiversity and how individual species are necessary for the health of the environment even the animals that may not be at the top of a list of favorite animals. Our living representatives include hawks and owls, snakes, spiders, and mammals. We strive to help students to develop positive attitudes toward science and environmental education.

Outcome	Completion Date
Approximately 7,500 students receive offsite place-based environmental learning at the Wildlife Science Center.	June 30, 2017 June 30, 2018
\$10 per student=2500 kids per year (for 3 years=total of 7500 students)	June 30, 2019

Activity 2: Introduce 7,500 students over a 3-year cycle to place-based environmental education outside the classroom. **Budget: \$112,500**

Description: Home to wolves, mountain lions, lynx, fox, bears, raptors and other Minnesota wildlife, the Wildlife Science Center provides a unique backdrop for learning about wildlife. These living representatives and our collection of wildlife artifacts provide the opportunity for learners to see live animals, touch study skins and skulls, hear animals howl, hoot, bark and growl.



Outcome	Completion Date
Approximately 7,500 students receive offsite place-based environmental learning at the Wildlife Science Center. \$15 per student=2500 kids per year (for 3 years=total of 7500 students)	June 30, 2017 June 30, 2018 June 30, 2019

Activity 3: Evaluate success, measure impact of the Wildlife Science Center program, and disseminate results **Budget: \$45,000**

Description: Oversee, track, and evaluate the success of the “Real Wildlife, Real Conservation, Real Impact” program and curricula providing place-based, experiential educational opportunities, in accordance with k-12 academic standards for youth throughout the metro and statewide. We will develop and implement evaluation strategies to measure the impact and effectiveness of the experiential programming and integrated curricula in achieving environmental education outcomes in science, social studies, and language arts, as well as impact on core personal skills and executive function development. We are allocating \$45,000 for data collection, evaluation, and dissemination (\$15,000/year).

Outcome	Completion Date	Budget
1. Evaluation process established and implemented; data collection, evaluation, and reporting	August 1, 2017	\$15,000
2. Data collection, evaluation, and reporting	August 1, 2018	\$15,000
3. Data collection, evaluation, and reporting; evaluation report summary, distribution, dissemination, and publication	August 30, 2019	\$15,000

III. PROJECT STRATEGY

A. Project Team/Partners

Schools and school districts – will provide extensive in-kind assistance.
 Wildlife Science Center staff and education volunteers-will provide assistance with programming.

B. Project Impact and Long-Term Strategy

We will enhance achievement in grades K-12 by combining outreach, classroom and offsite environmental education experiences so students may master state standards across a spectrum of subjects, develop skills necessary for making informed decisions about the wildlife management, create connections to the natural world, and think critically about their personal roles in the environment. This program will teach the next generation to appreciate the ecosystem in which they live, become active in the outdoors and stewards of the land and wildlife. Facebook, YouTube and other media will extend the reach and impact of the programs. Instilling a sense of stewardship in tomorrow’s leaders, which is the program’s ultimate goal, is vital to the long term health and protection of Minnesota’s natural resources.

C. Timeline Requirements

This is a three year program which will provide outreach programs using live animal ambassadors and experiential offsite programs impacting approximately 15,000 Minnesota K-12 students. By demonstrating success we plan to continue and expand the program through partnerships with schools and outside funding.

2016 Detailed Project Budget

Project Title: Real Animals. Real Conservation. Real Impact.

IV. TOTAL ENRTF REQUEST BUDGET for 3 years

<u>BUDGET ITEM</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
Personnel: Project Director - 50% FTE salary only; 36 months; (\$35,000 annually) Project Manager - 50% FTE salary only; 36 months; (\$30,000 annually) Coordinator - 75% FTE salary only; 36 months; (\$37,500 annually) and taxes - (15,375 annually) paid for by the Wildlife Science Center in-kind support.	\$ 252,375 Program Personnel benefits Additional benefits and taxes
Professional/Technical/Service Contracts: Marketing support; (\$5000 annually) data collection and evaluation (\$15,000 annually)	Project \$ 60,000
Equipment/Tools/Supplies: Lab supplies \$74,954 *See below Resource books for classrooms \$2800 Laptop and data storage \$1500 Cameras for student use \$1500	\$ 80,754
Acquisition (Fee Title or Permanent Easements): <i>In this column, indicate proposed number of acres and name of organization or entity who will hold title.</i>	N/A
Travel in MN: Vehicle, gas, maintenance, insurance to transport animals to outreach programs	\$ 65,000
Additional Budget Items: Liability insurance (\$6250 annually)	\$ 18,750
TOTAL ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND \$ REQUEST =	\$ 476,879

***Outreach Education Artifact Box:** Includes Wolf Fur \$600, Coyote Fur \$150, Grey Fox Fur \$105, Red Fox Fur \$150, Cougar Fur \$900, bobcat Fur \$190, Lynx Fur \$180, Bear Fur \$350, Beaver Fur \$200, Otter Fur \$300, Fisher Fur \$60, Skunk Fur \$70, Raccoon Fur \$85, Mink Fur \$70, Ermine Fur \$39.95, Muskrat \$25, Wolf Skull \$225, Coyote Skull \$25, Fox Skull \$25, Cougar Skull \$175, Bobcat Skull \$79, Black Bear Skull \$275, Deer Skull \$42.50, Raccoon Skull \$27.50, Beaver Skull \$27.50, Bin \$45

V. OTHER FUNDS

<u>SOURCE OF FUNDS</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>	<u>Status</u>
Other Non-State \$ To Be Applied To Project During Project Period: <i>Foundation Grant \$10,000 pending</i> <i>Member support \$5000 pending</i>	Pentair \$15,000	Pending
Other State \$ To Be Applied To Project During Project Period:	N/A	
In-kind Services To Be Applied To Project During Project Period: Staff and education volunteer time	N/A	
Funding History:	N/A	
Remaining \$ From Current ENRTF Appropriation:	N/A	

Wildlife Science Center

The Wildlife Science Center serves as an educational resource for all ages by providing exposure to a variety of wild animals; wolves, mountain lions, lynx, fox, bears, raptors and many others.



Engage your curiosity to inspire lifelong learning.



Experiential programs that teach students to appreciate the natural world, think critically about their personal roles in the environment, and help develop their sense of place.



Explore our living classroom, where students are encouraged to interpret what they see, hear, and feel.



Find your own meaningful connection with the natural environment as you learn about the center's resident wildlife.



Experience a connection with your environment.



The goal of our programs is to empower a sense of stewardship in tomorrow's leaders, which is vital to the long term health and protection of Minnesota's natural resources.

Wildlife Science Center Organization Description:

The Wildlife Science Center is a nationally recognized education facility, which is home to wolves, black bears, cougars, lynx, bobcats, raptors and more. For more than 20 years, the Wildlife Science Center has provided place-based experiential education opportunities for more than 14,000 people annually.



Pre-kindergarten to 12th grade environmental science school programs are presented using a multidisciplinary, inquiry based approach to teaching and focus on enhancing and illustrating classroom lessons while meeting the individual needs of teachers and students.

The Wildlife Science Center presents several outreach programs throughout the year around the Twin Cities providing unique programming with live animals and wildlife artifacts. Program venues include schools, nature centers, libraries, teacher meetings, public parks and campgrounds, festivals and other unique locations.

During the summer, the WSC offers summer camp programs for students including day camps and overnight camps. Programming utilizes hands-on, multidisciplinary curriculum focusing on environmental science, archery, and orienteering, while encouraging our campers to create an intimate relationship with the wild.

Throughout the year the Wildlife Science Center also sponsors events which increase public awareness about wildlife, the environment and their role in conservation. Every event provides educational opportunities including presentations by WSC staff and visiting speakers as well as displays and informational booths by local groups and organizations.

Project Manager Qualifications:

Danielle O'Neill, Assistant Education Director, received her Bachelor's of Science degree in Secondary Science Education from the University of Maine and went on to become a public high school teacher for 11 years. After receiving her Master's of Science degree in Ecological Teaching and Learning, from Lesley University, she discovered that her true passion was in outdoor environmental education-that is what brought her to Minnesota and the Wildlife Science Center.

Other Wildlife Science Staff Involved:

Bob Ebsen, Education Director, came to WSC after serving Long Lake Conservation Center in the same capacity. He is a licensed science teacher with many years of experience teaching and writing curriculum.

Peggy Callahan, Executive Director and Founder, was a research assistant for the original wolf research project and developed the Center into the nonprofit educational organization that it is today. She is a graduate of Carleton College with a B.A. in Biology, and has several peer-reviewed scientific publications to her credit.