

**Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund  
2017 Request for Proposals (RFP)**

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**Project Title:**

**ENRTF ID: 080-C**

Diversifying Involvement in the Natural Resources Community II

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**Category:** C. Environmental Education

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**Total Project Budget:** \$ 791,825

**Proposed Project Time Period for the Funding Requested:** 3 years, July 2017 - June 2020

**Summary:**

540 diverse high school-aged youth and families throughout the state participate in outdoor recreation and natural resource experiences and youth are provided with intensive college and career guidance.

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**Sponsoring Organization:** MN DNR

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**Location**

**Region:** Central, Metro, Northwest, Southeast

**County Name:** Beltrami, Blue Earth, Hennepin, Olmsted, Ramsey, Stearns

**City / Township:**

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**Alternate Text for Visual:**

The visual is photos, a map and logos of the partner organizations. The first column entitled Intro to Outdoor Recreation shows families and youth trying out new activities such as archery, canoeing and career exploration. The second column shows photos of high school aged youth working on outdoor projects with natural resource professionals. The third column shows youth getting academic and career guidance. The map depicts the state of Minnesota with cities highlighted where the youth crews and or outdoor events will take place: Bemidji, St. Cloud, Minneapolis, St. Paul, Mankato and Rochester. The logos are of the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, University of Minnesota, Conservation Corps of Minnesota, Urban Roots and the US Forest Service.

_____ 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)**

**2017 Main Proposal**

**Project Title:** Diversifying Involvement in the Natural Resources Community II

**PROJECT TITLE:** Diversifying Involvement in the Natural Resources Community II

**I. PROJECT STATEMENT**

Despite increased diversity of Minnesota’s population, participation of racial and ethnic minorities in the natural resource workforce remains low. This proposal is for Phase II of ENTRF-funded *Diversifying Involvement in the Natural Resources Community* 2015-2017, a program that helps reverse this trend by bridging barriers in the high school years. Experience gained in Phase I supports research that youth and families in diverse communities have little awareness and acceptance of natural resources as a career path. This project continues funding three activities in Phase I that have successfully engaged youth and families:

*Community Outreach.* In Phase I, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) increased the diversity of participation of youth and families in introductory outdoor recreation events in the Twin Cities and St Cloud and developed new activities about natural resource careers. Phase II will continue these efforts and expand to Mankato, Bemidji and Rochester for a total of at least 6 events each year reaching over 2000 people per year.

*Employment.* Midway of Phase I, Conservation Corps of Minnesota and Iowa (CCMI) has recruited, hired and led 140 diverse high schoolers on natural resource projects in the Twin Cities. Of that group, 12 youth participated in more intensive summer field experiences set up by DNR, University of Minnesota (UMN) and the US Forest Service (USFS). By June 2017, 260 youth will have participated. Phase II reaches 540 youth, adding CCMI crews in Mankato and Bemidji and youth hired by another non-profit, Urban Roots of St Paul. New in Phase II: a week residency at the UMN’s Cloquet Forestry Station, providing access of CCMI summer youth to faculty.

*College and Career Guidance.* In Phase II, the CCMI and UMN will continue to provide youth with college/career events and counseling that has resulted in successful applications for college coursework during high school. Once in college, interested youth continue to receive assistance, for example help seeking internships.

**II. PROJECT ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES**

**Activity 1:** Support for 18 outdoor and natural resource community events over 3 years. **Budget: \$57,587**

DNR student workers will provide project support including work on existing and develop new outdoor events that introduce youth and families to activities such as archery and fishing. Targeted outreach will include event transportation to nearby diverse communities. Activities and exhibits will be developed to highlight natural resource careers. These events or activities will be in metro regions of the Twin Cities, Mankato, Bemidji, St Cloud and Rochester and are in collaboration with other organizations, such as city and county parks and Soil and Water Conservation Districts. The events attract a range of 100 to 800 people, dependent on location.

Outcome	Completion Date
1. 1 Student worker per year will support project and event outreach and implementation	May 2020
2. Transportation of youth and families will be provided for a minimum of 6 events/year	May 2020
3. Exhibits and hand-out materials on natural resource careers will be created for 18 events	May 2020

**Activity 2:** Over 500 diverse high-school aged students will be recruited, hired and trained to conduct natural resource projects. **Budget: \$622,993**

High school youth, recruited from under-represented communities, work on natural resource projects and learn about natural resource education and career paths. CCMI youth crews accepted into summer programs in Twin Cities, Bemidji and Mankato receive more in-depth, science-based projects and interaction with DNR and other professionals and research faculty. Urban Roots crews will design and build environmental learning stations for a DNR facility, including items such as benches, boardwalks and docks, guided by professional mentors.

Outcome	Completion Date
1. Urban Roots leaders and youth crews design and build one small construction project	Dec 2019



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per year, guided by professional mentors in 2017, 2018 and 2019. (30 youth total)	
2. CCMI hires and trains 4 crew leaders; recruits, hires and trains cohorts of 80 youth in the fall and spring of each year (2017-2020) to conduct introductory natural resource projects. (480 youth total)	May 2020
3. To provide advanced projects and training, CCMI retains two youth crews of 8 in the Twin Cities (summer 2017, 18, 19), and hires 4 more crew leaders; recruits and hires 8 youth in Bemidji, and 8 youth in Mankato (summer 2018, 2019). (32 youth total)	August 2019
4. CCMI provides a week in residence for summer youth crews to work with researchers at the U of M Cloquet Forestry Center in 2018 and 2019. Possible additional 3 week experience in Superior National Forest (depends on annual funding from USFS).	Aug 2019
5. UMN faculty and staff provide content for the Cloquet experience.	
6. DNR sets up and facilitates youth projects, connecting crews with DNR staff.	May 2020

**Activity 3:** Academic and career guidance that leads to natural resource fields.

**Budget: \$ 111,245**

A CCMI college/career coordinator and U of M teaching assistants guide youth on academic pathways. This team coordinates college and career activities at CFANS and provides academic guidance and support with dual credit enrollment applications, such as post-secondary enrollment options (PSEO) at local colleges and universities, with an emphasis on choices that could lead to a career in the field. USFS, CFANS and MN DNR host field project and career days through the summer.

<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Completion Date</b>
1. CCMI will provide one college and career coordinator to learn each youth’s college and career goals, implement career/college activities with UMN teaching assistants.	May 2020
2. UMN will supervise and hire a teaching assistant to plan and coordinate college/career activities at UMN; provide academic guidance and assistance.	May 2020
3. DNR and USFS will host career days with a variety of natural resource researchers and professionals.	May 2020

**III. PROJECT STRATEGY**

**A. Project Team/Partners**

- CCMI – Provides crew leaders and college/career coordinator, recruits and manages youth crews (recipient)
- CFANS – Connects youth with UMN researchers and mentors youth on education pathways (recipient)
- DNR – Coordinates outreach events and career and natural resource activities (recipient and contributor)
- Urban Roots – Recruits and manages high school crews and project guides (recipient)
- US Forest Service (USFS) – Participates in planning, USFS field days, potential program funding (contributor)
- Wilderness Inquiry – Collaborative work on community events (reciprocal in-kind staff time)

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

Natural resource government and non-profits will benefit from this effort by increasing the number of interested and qualified candidates from diverse backgrounds. Youth participating in our events and programs like Wilderness Inquiry’s water classes will have an outlet to pursue their interest in the outdoors. Youth participating in the initial phase of this project will gain continued mentoring as they enter college programs and will be guided to apply for college-credit internships and scholarships. Based upon the success of this project after this second phase, project team members will seek support from private and federal programs interested in youth employment, STEM education and the natural resource field.

**C. Timeline Requirements**

Three years. We’ll have had three years to initiate and refine the program. Funding for the next three years will develop a robust program, with demonstrable results from the initial years.

## 2017 Detailed Project Budget

**Project Title:** Diversifying Involvement in the Natural Resources Community II

**Project Manager:** Gina Bonsignore

**Budget Component:** Combined Budget Detail

### IV. TOTAL ENRTF REQUEST BUDGET FOR 3 YEARS: \$ 791,825

BUDGET ITEM	AMOUNT
<b>MNDNR Personnel:</b>	
Student Workers for project, 1 ea for 3 Yrs @ .25 FTE (100% salary)	\$ 22,620
<b>MNDNR Professional/Technical/Service Contracts:</b>	
CCMI Personnel - 3 Yrs each, 80/20 Salary/Ben: Prog Dir, @.1 FTE (\$26,870); Prog Man. @ .3 FTE (\$56,540); Asst Prog Man @.3 FTE (\$43,245); Colleg/Career Coordinator @ .3 FTE (\$41,245) 3 yrs, 85/15 Salary/Benefits: Crew leader @ 4 FTE (\$210,155)	\$ 378,055
CCMI Youth - 3 yrs, 512 youth @\$9.50/hr (1/3 total cost - others sources provide 2/3 of cost)	\$ 114,380
CCMI Equipment/Tools/Supplies - 3 Yrs worth: Personal protective and service supplies (\$13,405); Meals and Snacks (\$14,440); Natural resource project supplies (\$4,000); hand tools and equipment (\$3,500); Environmental education materials (\$1,800)	\$ 37,145
CCMI Travel (3 years, leased vehicle for each crew)	\$ 27,000
CCMI Add'l Items: 3 years: Orientation and training for crew leaders and youth (\$13,420); Cloquet Science Field Station accommodations, 1 week, 2 years (\$35,000)	\$ 48,420
Urban Roots Projects: For each of 3 years: 1 senior crew leader, 48 hrs @ \$20/hr; 1 crew leader 48 hrs @ \$15/hr; youth crew hours of 360 @ \$9.50/hr (10 youth/yr); 1 Professional mentor, 48 hrs @\$60/hr; materials, tools and supplies, \$2400.	\$ 29,238
Tranportation (bus companies) providers for communiy event shuttles \$300-600 per event, at least 6/year	\$ 12,600
<b>MNDNR Equipment/Tools/Supplies:</b>	
Community outdoor event activity station materials (min 6/yr, 3 years)	\$ 16,288
<b>MNDNR Additional Budget Items:</b>	
Direct and Necessary for Student Worker(s), support for HR (\$1,103), Saftey (\$309), Financial (\$644), Communications (\$1,316), IT (\$2,228), Planning (\$912), Procurement (\$197)	\$ 6,079
<b>UMN Personnel:</b>	
U of M Personnel: 3 yrs. each Faculty project supervisor .05 FTE, 75/25salary/fringe (\$24,250); Teaching Assistant 50% time (or 2 25% time) positions for 6 academic semesters, 49/51 tuition/fringe and 2 summers 81/19 salary/fringe (\$68,250)	\$ 92,500
<b>UMN Equipment/Tools/Supplies:</b>	
U of M Equipment/Tools/Supplies: Field supplies and eductional materials.	\$ 1,050
<b>UMN Travel:</b>	
U of M To meetings and schools during academic year, to field sites and Cloquet for summer (includes travel for guest faculty)	\$ 1,850
<b>UMN Additional Budget Items:</b>	
U of M : Staff room and board at Cloquet, 3 persons for 7 days each of two summers (\$2800), St. Paul campus room rental and parking fees (\$1800)	\$ 4,600
<b>TOTAL ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND \$ REQUEST =</b>	<b>\$ 791,825</b>

### V. OTHER FUNDS

SOURCE OF FUNDS	AMOUNT	Status
<b>Other Non-State \$ To Be Applied To Project During Project Period:</b>		
Federal education awards leveraged by the Corps for 4 leaders for 3 years. (\$69,030) Youth wages leveraged from foundations, donations and local government. (\$225,00)	\$ 294,030	Pending
US Forest Service: For Superior Forest Experience, extra weeks, annually competitive	\$ 90,000	Pending
<b>Other State \$ To Be Applied To Project During Project Period:</b>		
DNR Operations Services Funding for additional student worker and event support	\$ 132,600	Pending
<b>In-kind Services To Be Applied To Project During Project Period:</b>		
MNDNR Central Regional Planner, .2 FTE 3 yrs, NW and SW Regional Planners, .1 FTE, 2 yrs.	\$ 108,000	Secured
<b>Funding History:</b>		
\$419,000 - ENRTF for ML 2014-9d"Diversifying Involvement in Natural Resources Community \$44,990 - 2015 US Forest Service - 3 weeks, Superior Natl Forest (same pending for 2016) In Kind: \$49,191 - DNR, \$5000 - USFS, \$20,000 - U of M CFANS	\$ 538,181	
<b>Remaining \$ From Current ENRTF Appropriation:</b> M.L. 2014, Chp. 226, Sec. 2, Subd. 09d-1. Appropriation amount of \$416,000. Remaining unspent balance of\$273,583 will be spent by June 30, 2017.		
	\$ 273,583	Unspent

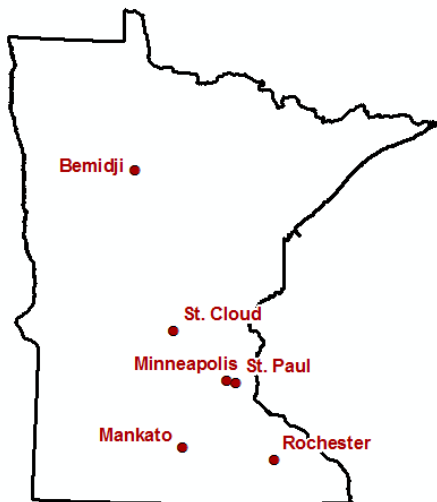
### Intro to Outdoor Recreation

Family and youth try out new activities and learn about natural resources careers.



### Natural Resource Jobs for Youth

High school aged youth work on projects and learn from professionals.



### Academic and Career Guidance

Youth crew members receive ongoing, targeted college and career planning.





**Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF)**

**2017 Main Proposal**

**Project Title:** Bridges to Diversity in Natural Resources: Youth to College

**Project Manager Qualifications**

Project Manager: Gina Bonsignore, Regional Planner, Central Region

Affiliation: Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

Mailing Address: 1200 Warner Road, St Paul, MN 55116

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Email: [regina.bonsignore@state.mn.us](mailto:regina.bonsignore@state.mn.us)

Gina Bonsignore has over 20 years of project planning and management experience, with a focus on working with urban neighborhoods and communities. She has been Regional Planner for the Central Region for the past two years. She has been project manager for *Diversifying Involvement in the Natural Resources Community* (M.L. 2014, Chp. 226, Sec. 2, Subd. 09d-1) since the project began. This three year project funded by the Minnesota Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund is the initial phase of the current project proposal. As project manager, she has demonstrated the ability to successfully coordinate the efforts of partners and provide timely reports. She has directly engaged with diverse communities and youth organizations to bring about the desired results of the project.

**Work Experience**

- 2014 – present Regional Planner, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources  
Project planning and implementation, community engagement, natural resource management of Regional Headquarters campus, coordination of Regional Invasive Species Team
- 2004 – 2014 Owner, Gina Bonsignore Landscape Architecture, LLC  
Landscape design – residential, commercial, public space, greenways
- 2001 – 2004 Senior Research Fellow, Metropolitan Design Center, University of Minnesota  
Grant project management; staff hiring and supervision
- 1993 – 2001 Research Fellow, Metropolitan Design Center (AKA Design Center for American Urban Landscape), University of Minnesota  
Team leader of natural resource ecosystem-based urban design projects

**Education**

- 1992 Bachelor and Masters of Landscape Architecture, University of Minnesota  
Thesis topic: restoration of stream corridors
- 1982 Bachelor of Arts, English and Studio Arts, Trinity College, Hartford CT

**Project Responsibilities**

Gina Bonsignore will coordinate the work of project team members. She will provide oversight and guidance to project contractors, CCMI and Urban Roots. She will manage DNR student workers hired to work on this project. and coordinate internal DNR efforts to link staff to youth crew participants. She will plan and implement events that introduce new audiences to outdoor recreation and natural resources and careers. She will continue to forge new partnerships with diverse community groups, local agencies and non-profits seeking to engage youth in natural resource experiences and careers.

**Organization Mission**

The mission of the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is to work with citizens to conserve and manage the state's natural resources, to provide outdoor recreation opportunities, and to provide for commercial uses of natural resources in a way that creates a sustainable quality of life. The agency has a priority goal of increasing the inclusion and diversity of participants in DNR programs and our work force.