

**Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund  
2018 Request for Proposals (RFP)**

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**Project Title:**

Get Outdoors After School!

**ENRTF ID: 112-C**

**Category:** C. Environmental Education

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**Total Project Budget:** \$ 30,000

**Proposed Project Time Period for the Funding Requested:** 1 year, July 2018 to June 2019

**Summary:**

This project will equip out-of-school youth organizations across Minnesota with knowledge, skills and resources to incorporate outdoor nature activities into after-school programs and engage under-privileged children with the outdoors.

**Name:** Sara Holger

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**Location**

**Region:** Statewide

**County Name:** Statewide

**City / Township:**

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**Alternate Text for Visual:**

N/A

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



**PROJECT TITLE: Get Outdoors After School!**

**I. PROJECT STATEMENT**

1. **Why this project needs to be done .** This project will connect low-income children and children of color to the outdoors. Research shows that low-income and under-served populations generally do not have as much access to or comfort with nature and the outdoors as white middle-class people. Communities across Minnesota and throughout the nation are in dire need of accessible programs and services that introduce children and families to information, resources and activities that promote healthy outdoor fitness in a fun and engaging way. In this era of broad-based support for building more parks and trails that encourage health and wellbeing within our communities, we are seeing many parks and trails void of people. This is not a model of “If you build it, they will come”. In our society, where kids spend an average of 10 minutes a day outdoors and 8 to 10 hours each day in front of electronic screens, successful outdoor programs must introduce people to the outdoors slowly, by helping them develop awareness of their local parks, trails and nature areas and introducing them to seasonal skills and activities they can enjoy at those locations. We learn to love the outdoors as children through our regular interactions that take place outside in our back yards, neighborhoods and nearby parks and trails. We must work to rebuild these connections to the outdoors if we truly hope to foster a healthy society that appreciates our natural resources.
  
2. **Overall goals of the project.** The goals of this project include; 1. Training youth program providers who work with low-income children and under-served children across the state to incorporate nature into their existing after school and out of school programs, 2. Providing access to information, resources and equipment to facilitate outdoor program planning for youth program providers, and 3. Increasing outdoor participation among low-income and under-served populations in Minnesota.
  
3. **How the project will achieve those goals.** By providing the Project GO Leader Certification training in each region of Minnesota, as well as access to equipment and other program planning resources, community action groups and after school program providers will be empowered and equipped to incorporate after school and out of school activities that connect low-income and vulnerable children, including immigrant, refugee and migrant children, and communities of color to the outdoors near to where they live. This is a critical issue as the demographics of our state continue to shift and diversify, we must invest in innovative programs and initiatives that work to reduce the barriers for people of color to experience the natural world so that they grow to appreciate our natural resources and increase participation in conservation and stewardship activities. Project GO has developed an 8-hour certification course/training that is being piloted and evaluated spring of 2017 with funding through the National Park Service and with planning support from Holly Larson, Recreation Planner for the National Park Service. This training has been developed based on 11 years of Project GO program experimentation across Minnesota.

**II. PROJECT ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES**

**Activity 1: Project GO Training**

**Budget: \$30,000**

*Offer one 8-hour Project GO Training in each region of Minnesota (NW, NE, Metro, SW and SE).*

<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Completion Date</b>
1. 5 trainings completed	December 31, 2018
2. 125 youth program staff trained	December 31, 2018



3. <i>At least 6000 youth participate in outdoor activities during first year</i>	<i>June 31, 2019</i>
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**III. PROJECT STRATEGY**

**A. Project Team/Partners**

Project Get Outdoors, Inc. will be the Project Lead, receiving the project funds and overseeing purchasing and assembly of the equipment and supplies and coordinating with the other partners to schedule the Leader trainings and to coordinate the Trainers. The Project Get Outdoors Board, including Founder Sara Holger, will be involved in the various aspects of this project. Erin Meier of the University of Minnesota Southeast Regional Sustainable Development Partnership (RSDP) will help promote the regional trainings through RSDP offices across the state. Erin and other RSDP staff will communicate through their networks to help recruit youth program workers and identify locations in each region to house the equipment kits that trained program leaders will be able to check out for use at their sites. Niall Murton of the Burnsville YMCA will assist with networking to Minnesota YMCA sites to recruit program staff to participate in the trainings. YMCA will likely be ideal training sites in each region. Our US Fish and Wildlife Service partners with both the MN Valley and the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife Refuges will help with outreach to other FWS refuge staff across the state to recruit program staff and interns to participate in the trainings. Fergus Woolley and the Jeffer’s Foundation will help supply some of the training resources (GO Activity Cards, Parent’s Guide to Nature Play, phenology calendars, etc.). Letters of support from partner organizations have been obtained and can be provided upon request.

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

The long-term strategy is to continue to offer these trainings around the state but to begin charging a fee for youth organizations and community action groups to participate in these trainings. In the future, trained program leaders could purchase, possibly at a whole-sale or discounted rate, the Project GO equipment kits to implement outdoor programs. Ideally, we hope to work with community groups to submit grants to local community foundations that would fund these training opportunities.

Long-term impacts of this project include increased participation in outdoor recreation activities by communities of color and low-income youth which will lead to increased participation in stewardship activities and increased wellbeing and health for all Minnesota residents. This project will also help spark interest among young adults of color to explore and pursue natural resource degrees and career fields.

**C. Timeline Requirements**

July – Mid-August 2018	Purchase supplies and assemble backpacks and equipment trunks.
Mid-August – October 2018	Offer one training in each region of Minnesota (NW, NE, Metro, SW and SE).
October – Mid June 2018	Provide guidance and program planning assistance to help trained program leaders implement outdoor activities at their sites.
Mid-June - End of June 2018	Implement surveys and site interviews to gather feedback and evaluation from program leaders and youth participants.

## 2018 Detailed Project Budget

**Project Title: Get Outdoors After School!**

**IV. TOTAL ENRTF REQUEST BUDGET** *[Insert # of years for project] years*

<b>BUDGET ITEM</b> <i>(See "Guidance on Allowable Expenses", p. 13)</i>	<b>AMOUNT</b>
<b>Personnel:</b> N/A	
<b>Professional/Technical/Service Contracts:</b> Project GO Trainers (Independent Contractors in each region who have been trained by Project GO). \$25/hour X 10 hours per training session.	\$ 1,500
<b>Equipment/Tools/Supplies:</b> Activity Backpacks for each participants (25 participants for each of the 5 training sessions = 155 backpacks), Outdoor Equipment Kits for 3 regions (NE, NW and SW will including birdwatching, fishing, camping, insect collecting and nature journals).	\$ 26,000
<b>Acquisition (Fee Title or Permanent Easements):</b> N/A	
<b>Travel:</b> Mileage reimbursement for Trainers to travel to and from training sessions. 5 sessions (one in each region of MN) at approximately. At \$.50/mile.	\$ 1,000
<b>Additional Budget Items:</b> Printing of Leader Handbooks and other training materials	\$ 1,500
<b>TOTAL ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND \$ REQUEST =</b>	<b>\$ 30,000</b>

**V. OTHER FUNDS** *(This entire section must be filled out. Do not delete rows. Indicate "N/A" if row is not applicable.)*

<b>SOURCE OF FUNDS</b>	<b>AMOUNT</b>	<b>Status</b>
<b>Other Non-State \$ To Be Applied To Project During Project Period:</b> N/A		
<b>Other State \$ To Be Applied To Project During Project Period:</b> N/A		
<b>In-kind Services To Be Applied To Project During Project Period:</b> Staff with the U of MN Regional Sustainable Development Partnership and with the YMCA of the Greater Twin Cities time helping with outreach, coordination and training sessions. Estimated time and value of their services is approximately 100 hours at \$25/hour. Minnesota Master Naturalist volunteers and other community volunteers will help lead outdoor activities at after school sites around the state. Time and value of these in-kind services are expected to exceed 500 hours at \$15/hour.	\$ 10,000	<i>Pending</i>
<b>Past and Current ENRTF Appropriation:</b> N/A		
<b>Other Funding History:</b> N/A		

**Alternate map or visual**

We do not have any documentation to submit for this field.

## **Get Outdoors After School!**

### **Project Manager Qualifications:**

Sara Holger, Founder and Board President, will act as the Project Manager on this project.

Sara holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Natural Resources and Environmental Studies from the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities. Sara has worked as an environmental educator since 1994 for various agencies including the U.S. Forest Service, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources MinnAqua program, Bell Museum of Natural History, Eagle Bluff Environmental Learning Center, Olmsted County Parks and Minnesota State Parks and Trails.

Sara has extensive experience in community outreach and youth programming through her time volunteering at the Plainview Area Community Center, the Plainview Area Migrant Council, the Rochester Area YMCA, Winona County 4-H and as a Boy Scout Leader for the Gamehaven Scout Council.

Sara is passionate about reaching under-served audiences and has a strong affection for working with the Latino migrant community in the Plainview area of southeast Minnesota. She has developed an impressive network of community partners over the past 13 years throughout her time working with community action groups in the Rochester area and has been very successful sharing the Project Get Outdoors message with community organizations that serve people of color.

### **Project Get Outdoors Description**

Project Get Outdoors (GO) is a small non-profit organization headquartered in Wabasha, Minnesota. The mission of Project GO is to facilitate outdoor experiences that develop healthy kids and increase environmental stewardship behaviors. We do this by providing training, resources and equipment to community organizations that offer after-school and out-of-school programming. Our goal is to provide more opportunities for under-served children to experience nature and outdoor learning near to where they live. We want children of all cultures and income classes to grow up having close relationships with the natural world.

Project GO was founded in 2006 and officially recognized as a 501c3 in 2009. The Parks and Trails Council of Minnesota and the University of Minnesota Regional Sustainable Development Partnership played key roles in helping Project GO get established. Since the inception of Project GO, we have served over 10,000 children through after school programs and outreach events. We operate on a budget that is typically under \$30,000 each year and with little to no paid staff. Community volunteers and partner organizations such as the Minnesota Master Naturalist program, National Park Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, YMCAs and local school districts have been critical allies in our movement to reach and engage low-income youth and children of color.