



Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

2021 Request for Proposal

General Information

Proposal ID: 2021-175

Proposal Title: Minnesota Master Naturalist: Nature for New Minnesotans

Project Manager Information

Name: Robert Blair

Organization: U of MN - College of Food, Agricultural and Natural Resource Sciences

Office Telephone: (651) 644-1591

Email: blairrb@umn.edu

Project Basic Information

Project Summary: Nature for New Minnesotans will introduce English language learners to Minnesota's great outdoors using materials from Minnesota Master Naturalist and implemented in partnership with English learning programs that serve immigrants.

Funds Requested: \$345,000

Proposed Project Completion: 2024-06-30

LCCMR Funding Category: Environmental Education (C)

Project Location

What is the best scale for describing where your work will take place?

Region(s): Metro

What is the best scale to describe the area impacted by your work?

Region(s): Metro

When will the work impact occur?

During the Project

Narrative

Describe the opportunity or problem your proposal seeks to address. Include any relevant background information.

Immigrants and ethnic minority groups participate in outdoor recreation at lower rates than their white counterparts. This can be for many reasons including cost, distance, time, perception of safety, familiarity, and knowledge. Avoiding outdoor spaces means these communities do not get the benefits of being out in nature including physical activity, relief from stress, and connection to natural communities. Unfamiliarity with local natural areas and regulations can also result in foraging in locations that are unsafe due to herbicide application, fishing and hunting out of season, or overharvesting plants.

New immigrants often participate in English Language Learning (ELL) classes to gain and practice life skills, such as grocery shopping, but these classes do not typically include ways to safely participate in and enjoy outdoor activities. Learning a new language, city, and culture is difficult and new residents typically do not have time to attend classes that seem purely recreational. Additionally, signs in parks and published materials may not be available in students' native languages or at their literacy levels.

All of these barriers lead to less time spent outdoors, less enjoyment of natural areas, and underappreciation of Minnesota's natural resources, which leads to less support for conservation and stewardship.

What is your proposed solution to the problem or opportunity discussed above? i.e. What are you seeking funding to do? You will be asked to expand on this in Activities and Milestones.

The Minnesota Master Naturalist program will partner with established programs that offer English Language classes in Minneapolis and St. Paul to meet these learners where they already gather. Nature for New Minnesotans will present a modified version of the Master Naturalist program's Big Woods, Big Rivers written curriculum and activities that will be selected to introduce new residents to the natural history of their new home.

Staff at the community organizations will guide the adaptation of the Big Woods, Big Rivers curriculum to ensure cultural relevance and that materials are appropriate for students' language skills. Classes will be co-led by an ELL professional and a Master Naturalist staff member. They will include a combination of in-class time discussing the readings, activities to explore and learn about nature, and visits to nearby parks. These activities will introduce students to local green spaces as well as demonstrate the ways to access these natural areas on their own either by walking or taking the city bus. This will give the students the skills, knowledge, and confidence to return to these areas with their family and friends after the class is completed.

What are the specific project outcomes as they relate to the public purpose of protection, conservation, preservation, and enhancement of the state's natural resources?

Nature for New Minnesotans will introduce immigrants to one of Minnesota's greatest assets – the great outdoors. It will take the well-developed Minnesota Master Naturalist program and tailor it to the needs of the immigrant community. The motto of Master Naturalist is "Explore! Teach! Conserve!" The program aims to do this by educating the public about Minnesota's natural history and building a community that explores Minnesota's natural areas and actively conserves them. Nature for New Minnesotans will adjust this approach by educating immigrants about their new home; focusing, in particular, on the natural world near where they live.

Activities and Milestones

Activity 1: Adapt, pilot, and revise Minnesota Master Naturalist materials and instructional texts.

Activity Budget: \$112,353

Activity Description:

The first year of Nature for New Minnesotans will center on adapting the Minnesota Master Naturalist instructional model and texts to be used in programs that teach English to adult immigrants in Minnesota. Specifically, we will work closely with staff from our partner English language programs (the English Learning Center, Pillsbury United Communities, the International Institute, and the Neighborhood House). The first six months will be spent analyzing the existing Minnesota Master Naturalist program and implementing changes that would make it work better for immigrants and ethnic minority groups in the state. This would be paired with adapting the texts used in the Master Naturalist program for a variety of reading levels. We will pilot these materials with an English Language Learners (ELL) class for immigrants at the English Learning Center (ELC). Finally, we will revise all materials with feedback from staff members from our partner ELL programs and the ELC pilot class participants.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Completion Date
Adapt instructional texts of Minnesota Master Naturalist program in consultation with ELL staff.	2021-12-31
Adapt Minnesota Master Naturalist program model to make it more accessible for immigrant populations.	2021-12-31
Revise instructional model and texts based on the pilot in consultation with ELL staff.	2022-06-30
Pilot program with adult students enrolled in ELL class and receive feedback.	2022-06-30

Activity 2: Implement Nature for New Minnesotans in courses offered by ELL program partners.

Activity Budget: \$231,137

Activity Description:

The second and third years of Nature for New Minnesotans will be devoted to using the updated and revised materials with immigrants enrolled in ELL classes at our partner centers around the Twin Cities. Typically, these centers, such as the English Learning Center, hold 15-week-long, four-days-a-week classes in the spring, summer, and fall with 15 - 20 participants. We will offer Nature for New Minnesotans during these classes at a minimum of three different centers during each season for two years. With this effort, we will reach approximately 3 seasons x 2 years x 3 centers x ~17 students = 306 adult learners and their families.

Specifically, we will use one class period per week to focus on the Nature for New Minnesotan materials. The objectives for this class period will be to:

1. Use texts about the natural history of Minnesota to teach English.
2. Introduce the students to Minnesota's outdoors.
3. Help the adult learners develop a sense of place in their community..
4. Show them places to visit and things to do outdoors by themselves and with their families.
5. Encourage the adult learners to participate in public conservation and citizen science projects in their communities.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Completion Date
Offer Nature for New Minnesotans three locations per season: fall 2022, spring and summer 2023.	2023-06-30
Offer Nature for New Minnesotans three locations per season: fall 2023, spring and summer 2024.	2024-06-30

Activity 3: Develop and offer professional development for ELL instructors in Nature for New Minnesotans curriculum and materials.

Activity Budget: \$1,510

Activity Description:

The final stage of Nature for New Minnesotans is to create and offer a professional development workshop for ELL instructors who want to implement the Nature for New Minnesotans program in their teaching. Specifically, we will create a day-long workshop that introduces the ELL teachers to the adapted curriculum materials and shows them how to work with them within their existing program structure. The Minnesota Master Naturalist staff specializes in teaching adults how to teach about the environment and this will be an extension of that expertise. Depending on future demand, the Master Naturalist program will be able to train instructors using this workshop model well beyond the length of this grant.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Completion Date
Offer professional development training for one cohort of 25 ELL teachers.	2024-06-30
Develop professional development training model for ELL teachers.	2024-06-30

Project Partners and Collaborators

Name	Organization	Role	Receiving Funds
Kaija Bergen	Neighborhood House	Host organization that works with immigrant groups and teaches English for language learner classes.	Yes
Andrea Echelberger	Literacy Minnesota	Host organization that works with immigrant groups and teaches English for language learner classes.	Yes
Stacy Dietrich	International Institute of Minnesota	Host organization that works with immigrant groups and teaches English for language learner classes.	Yes
Jenne Nelson	English Learning Center at Our Savior's	Host organization that works with immigrant groups and teaches English for language learner classes. Will assist in adapting and piloting initial materials.	Yes
Tsega Tamene	Pillsbury United Communities	Host organization that works with immigrant groups and teaches English for language learner classes.	Yes

Long-Term Implementation and Funding

Describe how the results will be implemented and how any ongoing effort will be funded. If not already addressed as part of the project, how will findings, results, and products developed be implemented after project completion? If additional work is needed, how will this be funded?

Year 1 of Nature for New Minnesotans focuses on adapting the Master Naturalist program and its instructional texts for immigrants who are enrolled in programs that teach English as a second language. This year includes piloting the materials at the English Learning Center and revising them based on feedback from students and instructors. Years 2 – 3 involve implementing the materials in at least 18 courses at our three additional partner ELL centers. The materials and curriculum will be available to ELL teachers and, if warranted, the Master Naturalist program will continue to offer annual training to ELL teachers.

Other ENRTF Appropriations Awarded in the Last Six Years

Name	Appropriation	Amount Awarded
Minnesota Native Bee Atlas	M.L. 2015, Chp. 76, Sec. 2, Subd. 03g	\$790,000

Project Manager and Organization Qualifications

Project Manager Name: Robert Blair

Job Title: Professor

Provide description of the project manager's qualifications to manage the proposed project.

Dr. Rob Blair is a Professor of Fisheries, Wildlife, and Conservation Biology at the University of Minnesota. He started the Minnesota Master Naturalist program in 2005 with a grant from the National Science Foundation. Currently, he works with three Extension educators and one administrative assistant to offer the program throughout the state. He also directs the Minnesota Wild Bee Atlas, an LCCMR-funded project. In this role, he oversees a full-time citizen-science coordinator, a research scientist, a laboratory technician, and a data specialist. This project is determining the presence and distributions of stem-nesting and bumble bee species throughout Minnesota.

Blair will combine his knowledge of Minnesota's natural history with his skill in managing research and outreach projects

to lead Nature for New Minnesotans. He will supervise a full-time UMN Extension educator (Forsberg, see below) who will build and deliver the program. Also, he will oversee adaptation of the Master Naturalist curriculum for new Minnesotans who are English language learners, maintain budgets, implement teaching, and evaluate the program. Coordination with partners will be the responsibility of both Blair and Forsberg.

Britt Forsberg is an educator with UMN Extension. Currently, she coordinates the Minnesota Wild Bee Atlas where she recruits, trains, and supports citizen-scientists throughout the state in their efforts to collect stem-nesting bees. Previously, she was the Inquiry Specialist Instructor for six years at Crossroads Elementary in St. Paul, through a partnership with the Bell Museum. She taught science inquiry for students in grades PreK-6 – over half of whom were students of color, 75% free and reduced lunch, and 25% English Language Learners.

Organization: U of MN - College of Food, Agriculture and Natural Resource Sciences

Organization Description:

This project is a collaboration of entities with expertise in outreach and education (UMN Extension); community building through environmental stewardship (Minnesota Master Naturalist); supporting urban communities (UMN UROC), and programs that teach English as a second language to adults (see below).

The Minnesota Master Naturalist Program is a UMN Extension program that promotes understanding and stewardship of Minnesota's natural environment by developing a corps of citizens dedicated to conservation education and service within their communities. More than 2000 Minnesotans have graduated from its forty-hour introductory classes on Minnesota's natural history and have gone on to provide forty hours of service per year for environmental organizations and natural areas. Nature for New Minnesotans will be a targeted program within Master Naturalist tailored to immigrants learning English.

The University of Minnesota's Urban Research and Outreach Center will house the Nature for New Minnesotans educator.

We will partner with several programs that teach English to new Minnesotans, including the English Learning Center at Our Savior's (Minneapolis), Pillsbury United Communities (Minneapolis), the International Institute (St. Paul), and the Neighborhood House (St. Paul).

Budget Summary

Category / Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Purpose	Gen. Ineligible	% Benefits	# FTE	Classified Staff?	\$ Amount
Personnel								
Project Director, Robert Blair		Manages project and personnel, adapts material			36.5%	0.45		\$91,470
Project Coordinator, Britt Forsberg		Adapts materials, works with ELL centers and staff, teaches classes			31.8%	3		\$199,445
Web Support		Manages project web site.			31.8%	0.12		\$7,675
							Sub Total	\$298,590
Contracts and Services								
English Learning Center at Our Savior's	Professional or Technical Service Contract	Staff will assist in adapting program and written materials; piloting course, and revising materials in the first year. Staff will work with project to deliver materials in second and third years.		X		0.3		\$6,000
Pillsbury United Communities	Professional or Technical Service Contract	Staff will review adapted materials in first year. Staff will work with project to deliver materials in second and third years.		X		0.15		\$3,000
International Institute of Minnesota	Professional or Technical Service Contract	Staff will review adapted materials in first year. Staff will work with project to deliver materials in second and third years.		X		0.15		\$3,000
Neighborhood House	Professional or Technical Service Contract	Staff will review adapted materials in first year. Staff will work with project to deliver materials in second and third years.		X		0.15		\$3,000
Literacy Minnesota	Professional or Technical Service Contract	Staff will review adapted materials in first year. Staff will work with project to deliver materials in second and third years.		X		0.15		\$3,000
Graphic Designer	Professional or Technical Service Contract	Graphic designer for design and layout of adapted instructional texts to be used with adult English language learners.				0.1		\$4,500

							Sub Total	\$22,500
Equipment, Tools, and Supplies								
							Sub Total	-
Capital Expenditures								
							Sub Total	-
Acquisitions and Stewardship								
							Sub Total	-
Travel In Minnesota								
	Miles/ Meals/ Lodging	Mileage for coordinator to work and teach with partner programs.	The coordinator will be working with and teaching with staff at organizations dispersed throughout the Twin Cities region. (2,000 miles per year at \$0.575 per mile)					\$3,450
	Other	Bus tickets for adult learners to participate in two field trips per course.	Each three-month course will include two field trips to nearby natural areas. (\$2.50 per ticket x 2 per participant x 470 participants)					\$2,350
							Sub Total	\$5,800
Travel Outside Minnesota								
							Sub Total	-
Printing and Publication								
	Printing	Instructional materials.	Adapted materials for adult English language learners. (\$20 per participant X 470 participants)					\$5,700
							Sub Total	\$5,700

Other Expenses								
		Teaching Supplies	Supplies used to teach courses (markers, post-its, demonstration materials, flip charts) (\$50 per course * 19 courses)					\$950
		Participant Materials	Supplies used by adult learners for nature-based activities (hand lenses, field guides, field notebooks) ((\$20 per participant x 470 participants)					\$9,500
		ELL Instructor Workshop Materials	Materials for ELL Instructors including sample participant materials and instructor guides (\$60 per ELL Instructor X 25 Instructors + 10 to round off total LCCMR request)					\$1,510
		Printer Toner	For printing instructional materials during pilot year and limited materials for courses offered in Years 2 and 3.					\$450
							Sub Total	\$12,410
							Grand Total	\$345,000

Classified Staff or Generally Ineligible Expenses

Category/Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Justification Ineligible Expense or Classified Staff Request
Contracts and Services - English Learning Center at Our Savior's	Professional or Technical Service Contract	Staff will assist in adapting program and written materials; piloting course, and revising materials in the first year. Staff will work with project to deliver materials in second and third years.	The English Learning Center at Our Savior's is a program that teaches English and life skills to immigrants with regular courses. Staff (Jenne Nelson) will assist in adapting and piloting the Minnesota Master Naturalist materials for adult ELL students in the first year and hosting the Nature for New Minnesotans in the second and third years. The cost is based on an estimated 200 hours of effort the first year and 67 hours each in the second and third years, which works out to \$15 per hour. The center will also recruit and enroll adult learners as well as offer classroom space in kind. This is a single-source contract because we needed to ascertain that we would be able to work within the program's existing structure prior to applying for this grant. This is a single source contract.
Contracts and Services - Pillsbury United Communities	Professional or Technical Service Contract	Staff will review adapted materials in first year. Staff will work with project to deliver materials in second and third years.	Pillsbury United Communities offers English classes and life skills to immigrants with regular courses. Staff will review adapted instructional materials for adult ELL students in the first year and host the Nature for New Minnesotans in the second and third years. The cost is based on an estimated 67 hours of effort each year, which works out to \$15 per hour. The center will also recruit and enroll adult learners as well as offer classroom space in kind in Years 2 and 3. This is a single-source contract because we needed to ascertain that we would be able to work within the program's existing structure prior to applying for this grant. This is a single source contract.
Contracts and Services - International Institute of Minnesota	Professional or Technical Service Contract	Staff will review adapted materials in first year. Staff will work with project to deliver materials in second and third years.	The International Institute of Minnesota offers English classes and life skills to immigrants with regular courses. Staff will review adapted instructional materials for adult ELL students in the first year and host the Nature for New Minnesotans in the second and third years. The cost is based on an estimated 67 hours of effort each year, which works out to \$15 per hour. The center will also recruit and enroll adult learners as well as offer classroom space in kind in Years 2 and 3. This is a single-source contract because we needed to ascertain that we would be able to work within the program's existing structure prior to applying for this grant. This is a single source contract.
Contracts and Services - Neighborhood House	Professional or Technical Service Contract	Staff will review adapted materials in first year. Staff will work with project to deliver materials in second and third years.	Neighborhood House offers English classes and life skills to immigrants with regular courses. Staff will review adapted instructional materials for adult ELL students in the first year and host the Nature for New Minnesotans in the second and third years. The cost is based on an estimated 67 hours of effort each year, which works out to \$15 per hour. The center will also recruit and enroll adult learners as well as offer classroom space in kind in Years 2 and 3. This is a single-source contract because we needed to ascertain that we would be able to work within the program's existing structure prior to applying for this

5/18/2020

			grant. This is a single source contract.
Contracts and Services - Literacy Minnesota	Professional or Technical Service Contract	Staff will review adapted materials in first year. Staff will work with project to deliver materials in second and third years.	Literacy Minnesota offers English classes and life skills to immigrants with regular courses. Staff will review adapted instructional materials for adult ELL students in the first year and host the Nature for New Minnesotans in the second and third years. The cost is based on an estimated 67 hours of effort each year, which works out to \$15 per hour. The center will also recruit and enroll adult learners as well as offer classroom space in kind in Years 2 and 3. This is a single-source contract because we needed to ascertain that we would be able to work within the program's existing structure prior to applying for this grant. This is a single source contract.

Non ENRTF Funds

Category	Specific Source	Use	Status	Amount
State				
			State Sub Total	-
Non-State				
			Non State Sub Total	-
			Funds Total	-

Attachments

Required Attachments

Visual Component

File: [c09d122f-bc9.pdf](#)

Alternate Text for Visual Component

The graphic outlines the three major phases of the Nature for New Minnesotans project:

Step 1: Minnesota Master Naturalist and community partners adapt lessons and reading materials on Minnesota natural history for adult English Language Learners.

Step 2: Materials are piloted and then revised based on ideas from adult English Language Learners and their instructors.

Step 3: Hundreds of new Minnesotans learn about the natural history of their state in their English classes and, with their families, become part of a community that explores Minnesota's natural areas & actively conserves them.

Administrative Use

Does your project include restoration or acquisition of land rights?

No

Does your project have patent, royalties, or revenue potential?

No

Does your project include research?

No

Does the organization have a fiscal agent for this project?

Yes, Sponsored Projects Administration

Nature for New Minnesotans

Nature for New Minnesotans will introduce English language learners to Minnesota's great outdoors using materials from Minnesota Master Naturalist and implemented in partnership with English learning programs that serve immigrants.

Step 1: Minnesota Master Naturalist and community partners adapt lessons and reading materials on Minnesota natural history for adult English Language Learners.



Step 2: Materials are piloted and then revised based on ideas from adult English Language Learners and their instructors.



Step 3: Hundreds of new Minnesotans learn about the natural history of their state in their English classes and, with their families, become part of a community that explores Minnesota's natural areas & actively conserves them.

