



# Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

2022 Request for Proposal

## General Information

**Proposal ID:** 2022-041

**Proposal Title:** Environmental Learning Classroom with Trails

## Project Manager Information

**Name:** Reggie Engebritson

**Organization:** Independent School District #712 - Mountain Iron Buhl Public Schools

**Office Telephone:** (218) 735-8271

**Email:** renebritson@isd712.org

## Project Basic Information

**Project Summary:** We will build an outdoor classroom and an additional 2.5+ miles of accessible trails, including a foot bridge connecting the School Forest Trail System.

**Funds Requested:** \$82,000

**Proposed Project Completion:** December 31 2023

**LCCMR Funding Category:** Small Projects (H)

**Secondary Category:** Land Acquisition, Habitat, and Recreation (G)

## Project Location

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

Region(s): NE

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

Region(s): NE

**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.**

In the heart of the city, adjacent to the school, lies acres of forest, streams, wetlands, and interconnecting trails which form the MIB Environmental Learning Laboratory. We are fortunate and proud to share this with our students, faculty, and the community to enhance their knowledge and support of the environment. Climate change education has become a focus of our educational efforts. MIB provides students with hands-on exploratory outdoor learning year-round. Students explore different parts of the ecosystem in the forest: trees-plants, mammals, the watershed, birds, amphibians, and reptiles. Exploratory teaching is achieved through nature hikes, guest speakers, arts-based projects, and experiential learning. Students spend time outside in all types of weather. We seek to enhance this outdoor teaching environment through the construction of an outdoor classroom and pavilion, bog walk learning deck and shade shack. We will also expand the School Forest Trail System. It is important that we construct these structures and trails to be accessible to all students so that they can have a hands-on outdoor learning experience. MIB created this Environmental Learning Center in 1983 and much of the development has been led by students, teachers, and volunteers under the direction of local DNR and County staff.

### **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.**

Since 1983, the city of Mountain Iron, the Mountain Iron-Buhl School District, Boy Scouts of America, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, the Army Corp of Engineers, St. Louis County and others have partnered to create this outdoor learning area in a forest located next to the school. A system of trails exists, as well as benches, a campfire ring and privy along with environmental laboratory experiments and research. This proposal would create a permanent outdoor learning classroom and bog walk learning deck, as well as accessible forest trails for use by all learners. This school forest is also large enough for student athletes in cross country to utilize it for trail running practices and the community for skiing, snowshoeing, and forest hiking. With wetlands, a winding stream, bridges, berry patches, and forests, student achievement flourishes in a dynamic outdoor laboratory enhanced by dedicated teachers and volunteers. With a little investment, we can create an even better learning center for our kids. Our goal is to continue to make smart investments in our school forest to promote the learning environment for students.

### **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?**

This project will enhance the environmental education of students in the district. It will increase the knowledge and skills of students to cultivate a sustainable lifestyle, improve and maintain water quality, reduce and monitor energy and water consumption, restore and maintain a healthy and biodiverse natural environment. This project will help provide outdoor experiences for learners and build within them a long-lasting and action-based conservation ethic. Enhancements of this outdoor area with help with efforts that deliver and implement existing environmental education. It will provide recreational opportunities for athletes and community members.

## Activities and Milestones

### Activity 1: Outdoor Learning Classroom

**Activity Budget:** \$50,000

**Activity Description:**

We will build a 20'x20' outdoor learning classroom pavilion in our outdoor learning area.

**Activity Milestones:**

Description	Completion Date
Planning, engineering and design.	October 31 2022
Construction	September 30 2023

### Activity 2: Bridge Construction

**Activity Budget:** \$7,000

**Activity Description:**

We will construct an accessible foot bridge to connect the School Forest Trail System.

**Activity Milestones:**

Description	Completion Date
Planning, engineering and design.	September 30 2022
Construction	September 30 2023

### Activity 3: Trail Construction

**Activity Budget:** \$25,000

**Activity Description:**

2.5-3.5 miles of trail construction.

**Activity Milestones:**

Description	Completion Date
Planning, engineering and design.	October 31 2022
Construction	October 31 2023

## Project Partners and Collaborators

Name	Organization	Role	Receiving Funds
Craig Wainio	Mountain Iron Economic Development Authority	MIEDA has worked in partnership with ISD#712 on the outdoor lab and trails.	No

## 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?**

The school district, in cooperation with the City of Mountain Iron, will maintain the forest, trails and structures.

## Project Manager and Organization Qualifications

**Project Manager Name:** Reggie Engebritson

**Job Title:** Superintendent

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

Reggie Engebritson is Superintendent of the Mountain Iron-Buhl Schools, ISD#712. As superintendent she has had oversight of projects as the district completed the construction of a new high school in 2018. She is also the Superintendent for St. Louis County Schools, ISD 2142, and has had oversight of recent renovation and expansion projects in two PreK-12 schools. She oversees over 500 employees from both districts.

**Organization:** Independent School District #712 - Mountain Iron Buhl Public Schools

**Organization Description:**

Mountain Iron-Buhl Schools are located on Minnesota's Iron Range. Home to 533 students grades K-12, the new Mountain Iron-Buhl school provides a quality, small school learning environment for our group of students. The MIB schools are the consolidated former Mt. Iron school district and the Buhl school district. Proudly they teamed to build a new school campus with Pre-K-6 facilities along with a new grades 7-12 school to serve a geographically large area. For a small school system, MIB has been innovative in many ways, offering the region's first Chinese language program and sharing it through a telepresence system with other school systems. MIB also created the region's first archery program and is proud of its development of the girls' athletic offerings—including 10 trips to the state girls' basketball tournament over the last 11 years. The leadership of the school has focused on resources into the classroom by cutting other expenses, including sharing a superintendent, business office, transportation, school nurse system, sports, and curriculum director with neighboring systems. The MIB system is proud of their nearly forty-year support of the school's Environmental Learning Laboratory and respectfully asks you to join our efforts to enhance opportunities for

## Budget Summary

Category / Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Purpose	Gen. Ineligible	% Benefits	# FTE	Classified Staff?	\$ Amount
<b>Personnel</b>								
							Sub Total	-
<b>Contracts and Services</b>								
TBD	Professional or Technical Service Contract	Planning, engineering and design of outdoor classroom/pavilion, bridge and trail.				-		\$10,000
TBD	Sub award	Construction of outdoor classroom/pavilion, trail and bridge.				0		\$72,000
							Sub Total	\$82,000
<b>Equipment, Tools, and Supplies</b>								
							Sub Total	-
<b>Capital Expenditures</b>								
							Sub Total	-
<b>Acquisitions and Stewardship</b>								
							Sub Total	-
<b>Travel In Minnesota</b>								
							Sub Total	-
<b>Travel Outside Minnesota</b>								
							Sub Total	-

<b>Printing and Publication</b>								
							<b>Sub Total</b>	-
<b>Other Expenses</b>								
							<b>Sub Total</b>	-
							<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$82,000</b>

Classified Staff or Generally Ineligible Expenses

Category/Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Justification Ineligible Expense or Classified Staff Request
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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: [742788fb-ae5.pdf](#)

#### *Alternate Text for Visual Component*

Map of school forest....

#### *Board Resolution or Letter*

Title	File
Resolution of Support from MIB School Board	<a href="#">74bd4309-6f0.docx</a>

## Administrative Use

**Does your project include restoration or acquisition of land rights?**

No

**Does your project have potential for royalties, copyrights, patents, or sale of products and assets?**

No

**Do you understand and acknowledge IP and revenue-return and sharing requirements in 116P.10?**

N/A

**Do you wish to request reinvestment of any revenues into your project instead of returning revenue to the ENRTF?**

N/A

**Does your project include original, hypothesis-driven research?**

No

**Does the organization have a fiscal agent for this project?**

No

# Mountain Iron-Buhl School Forest

