



Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

2022 Request for Proposal

General Information

Proposal ID: 2022-279

Proposal Title: Diversity and Access to Wildlife Related Opportunities

Project Manager Information

Name: Alexandria Safiq

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

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Project Basic Information

Project Summary: We will research : 1) interest in and preferences for experiences with nature and wildlife among diverse communities, and 2) barriers to more robust engagement with wildlife resources and activities.

Funds Requested: \$199,000

Proposed Project Completion: June 30 2024

LCCMR Funding Category: Small Projects (H)

Secondary Category: Environmental Education (C)

Project Location

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

Statewide

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

Statewide

When will the work impact occur?

During the Project and In the Future

Narrative

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

Profound changes with how the American public values and relates to nature and wildlife are occurring. Participation rates in traditional activities associated with fish and wildlife have dropped dramatically putting into jeopardy the funding mechanisms for fish and wildlife conservation and potentially motivations to sustain these resources. In addition, there is an apparent broader disconnection of the American public to the outdoors and wildlife that could lead to substantive negative impacts on human health and well-being which depend on beneficial contact with nature. In response to this challenge, a variety of programs targeting the recruitment, reactivation, and retention (R3) of fish and wildlife-based recreationists have been developed. Because of the fundamental social and demographic changes in America that are driving much of the disconnection with nature and wildlife, however, the success of such programs is very uncertain. There is growing recognition that continuation of the conservation enterprise which oversees stewardship of our fish and wildlife resources will likely require more fundamental changes in agency culture, governance, and accessibility in opportunity for diverse communities. A fundamental problem and opportunity in this endeavor is how to engage the communities that have not been active historically in participating in nature- and wildlife-based activities.

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.

Extremely limited information exists concerning value of and desire for experiences with nature and wildlife from Black/African-American communities. The proposed project will collect information from members of these communities concerning their values, attitudes, experiences, awareness of, and preferences for learning about, experiencing, or conserving nature and wildlife. This information will be collected during a two-year period in two phases. The first year we will conduct focus groups and indepth interviews with members of the communities to develop a deep and nuanced understanding of their awareness of and connections to nature and wildlife. In the second phase, we will collect more broadly generalizable information from these communities through multi-modal social surveys using established psychometric approaches for measuring values, beliefs, attitudes, motivations, and experience preferences. This information will serve as foundational information across Minnesota for better engaging and understanding these communities. In addition, the information will assist natural resource managers at the local, state, and federal in designing programming, experiences, and services that match to the motivations and desired experiences of members of these communities. Doing so could increase their participation in nature- and wildlife-based activities and conservation behaviors.

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?

We will develop foundational information in Minnesota that will assist local and state agencies to engage diverse communities in cultivating a connection with nature and wildlife and encourage the conservation of a healthy and biological diverse natural environment. We will develop outreach materials to assist natural research agencies throughout Minnesota to design programming that matches to the desired opportunities and experiences of diverse communities within Minnesota. Long-term this project could not only help develop a broadened constituency focused on the conservation of wildlife and their natural habitats throughout Minnesota, but also develop key social and wildlife-based benefits to diverse communities.

Activities and Milestones

Activity 1: Focus groups and indepth interviews with community members focused on awareness of and relationship with nature and wildlife

Activity Budget: \$87,170

Activity Description:

We will conduct up to 60 personal interviews and 12 focus groups to develop an indepth and robust knowledge of how members of Black/African-American communities perceive nature and wildlife, their perceptions of opportunities and barriers to engage with nature and wildlife, and their preferences for experiences with nature and wildlife throughout Minnesota. While there are previous studies focused on recruitment into nature- and wildlife-based activities, these studies often purposely target the proverbially “low hanging fruit” which maintains a participant base that strongly resembles the participants of the past. While there have been previous attempts to understand the potential interests of diverse communities in nature and activities such as fishing (e.g., Fishing in the Neighborhood), the proposed effort is the first in Minnesota to build from indepth qualitative research through social surveys with robust samples (n = 1200) to allow generalization back to these communities in Minnesota statewide. With the proposed project we will engage Black/African-American communities in Minnesota which represent the largest non-white communities in Minnesota. We plan to work closely with non-profits whose missions focus on increasing inclusion and access to green and blue spaces. (such as, but not limited to Outdoor Afro).

Activity Milestones:

Description	Completion Date
Design interview and focus groups	October 31 2022
Conduct and analyze indepth interviews	January 31 2023
Conduct and analyze focus groups	June 30 2023

Activity 2: Conduct survey with members of Black/African-American communities in Minnesota.

Activity Budget: \$111,830

Activity Description:

We will collect data via an online survey using a multi-modal contact approach. We will target a total of 1200 completed survey participants statewide. We will use results of the indepth interviews and focus groups to assist in designing the content of the survey. The survey topics will focus on relationships to nature and wildlife, values related to wildlife, community norms associated with nature and wildlife, awareness of nature- and wildlife-based activities, motivations to engage with nature and wildlife, preferred experiences in nature and with wildlife, and barriers to engaging nature and wildlife. Information will be collected for both close to home experiences as well as statewide interest. We will develop reports (pdf and digital) that summarize study findings for each community, summary presentations (pdf and digital), summary fact sheets (pdf and digital), and host outreach workshops with the study communities and natural resource and outdoor recreation agencies throughout Minnesota (e.g., Minnesota DNR, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, National Park Service, Minneapolis Parks & Recreation, Three Rivers Park District).

Activity Milestones:

Description	Completion Date
Design survey	August 31 2023
Implement survey and collect data	November 30 2023
Analyze data and develop final report outreach deliverables	April 30 2024

Project Partners and Collaborators

Name	Organization	Role	Receiving Funds
Dr. David C. Fulton	US Geological Survey, Minnesota Cooperative Fish & Wildlife Research Unit	Dr. Fulton will serve as Co-PI on the project and provide assistance in project design, implementation, reporting and outreach of findings to the management community in Minnesota.	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 project will provide findings reports for the focus groups and social surveys (pdf and digital), along with summary fact sheets and presentations (pdf and digital), and outreach materials to provide natural resource managers with information that can help them with focused communications and programming to engage members of the study communities. We anticipate that this first of its kind indepth study of these communities' interests in and desired experiences with nature and wildlife will lead to more systematic efforts among local, state, and federal agencies to enhance the accessibility of opportunities with nature and wildlife for these communities.

Project Manager and Organization Qualifications

Project Manager Name: Alexandria Safiq

Job Title: Post-Doctoral Diversity Research Fellow

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

Dr. Safiq completed a PhD in Ecology and Evolution at Rutgers University (2019) and was awarded the CFANS Diversity Postdoctoral Fellowship (2019 – current). Her research focuses on incorporating human-dimensions of natural resource use and wildlife protection into ecosystem-based management frameworks. Dr. Safiq works in Dr. David Fulton's lab where she has expanded her research to include conservation psychology and social science approaches to measure spiritual and cultural values of nature. Most of her research is done in collaboration with state and regional natural resource agencies although, Dr. Safiq hopes to expand her network to include federal agencies as well. In addition to Dr. Safiq's peer-reviewed publications, she has published several OP-ed pieces in Scientific American on the intersection of social justice and wildlife protection. In collaboration with Dr. Fulton, Dr. Safiq has worked on projects examining the dynamics between wild-life value orientations and identity (personal, political, and social) of fish and game hunters as they relate to behaviors and attitudes towards species management. Results of this research are far reaching from advancing the academic literature on the dynamics of socio-ecological systems to informing state lead initiatives on wild-life management. Aside from her research, Dr. Safiq has taught several college and graduate level courses spanning several disciplines from ecology, ornithology, invasive species management, and human dimensions of conservation biology.

Dr. Safiq will work closely with Co-PI Dr. David Fulton who is her faculty adviser for her post-doctoral fellowship. Dr. Fulton joined the USGS's Minnesota Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit as the assistant unit leader in 1998. He is an adjunct professor in FWCB, and a leading international expert on the human dimensions of wildlife and conservation social sciences who has led dozens of applied research projects and published over 75 peer-reviewed manuscripts.

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

Organization Description:

The Department of Fisheries, Wildlife, and Conservation Biology (CFANS, University of Minnesota) comprises a multidisciplinary group of scholars working on applied and fundamental problems related to the ecology of free-ranging wild animals, management of harvested and invasive species, and documentation and conservation of biodiversity. The mission of FWCB is to foster a high-quality natural environment by contributing to the management, protection, and sustainable use of fisheries and wildlife resources through teaching, research, and outreach. Our goals are to respond to societal needs for information and education pertaining to the conservation of our natural resources and to ensure excellent teaching, research, and outreach programs. The department is home to the Minnesota Cooperative Fisheries and Wildlife Research Unit (Coop Unit), a partnership of the U.S. Geological Survey, the University of Minnesota, the Minnesota DNR, and the Wildlife Management Institute. The Coop Unit emphasizes research on impacts of human activities on aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems that are of state, regional, and national significance. The research program addresses not only the biological, but also social and economic aspects of both game and nongame fisheries and wildlife management in the context of maintenance of biological diversity, and integrity and sustainability of ecosystems.

Budget Summary

Category / Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Purpose	Gen. Ineligible	% Benefits	# FTE	Classified Staff?	\$ Amount
Personnel								
Post-doctoral research fellow		Lead researcher for implementing and reporting interviews, focus groups, and surveys, and organizing and hosting outreach workshops.			25.4%	2		\$173,102
Undergraduate research assistant		Help with facilitating focus groups and connecting with communities			0%	0.06		\$1,898
							Sub Total	\$175,000
Contracts and Services								
							Sub Total	-
Equipment, Tools, and Supplies								
	Tools and Supplies	Sample of respondents in target communities (n = 6400)	The sample is necessary to contact respondents to participate in the survey					\$6,000
							Sub Total	\$6,000
Capital Expenditures								
							Sub Total	-
Acquisitions and Stewardship								
							Sub Total	-
Travel In Minnesota								
							Sub Total	-
Travel Outside Minnesota								

							Sub Total	-
Printing and Publication								
	Printing	survey and mailing materials	used to contact survey participants					\$6,000
							Sub Total	\$6,000
Other Expenses								
		Mailing services at University of Minnesota	mailout contact to recruit survey participants					\$12,000
							Sub Total	\$12,000
							Grand Total	\$199,000

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				
In-Kind	U.S. Geological Survey--Minnesota Cooperative Fish & Wildlife Research Unit	David Fulton will contribute 10% of his time for two years toward the project. Hi current salary + fringe = \$200,000/year providing a \$40,000 in-kind contribution from U.S. Geological Survey in the form of technical assistance.	Secured	\$40,000
			Non State Sub Total	\$40,000
			Funds Total	\$40,000

Attachments

Required Attachments

Visual Component

File: [7a099e09-21d.pdf](#)

Alternate Text for Visual Component

Image of Black people/African Americans on county based map of Minnesota....

Optional Attachments

Support Letter or Other

Title	File
UMN Approval Letter Safiq signed	cc20e894-d96.pdf

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?

Yes

Does the organization have a fiscal agent for this project?

Yes, Sponsored Projects Administration

