

**Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund**

# 2022 Request for Proposal

## **General Information**

**Proposal ID:** 2022-029

**Proposal Title:** Increasing K-12 Student Learning to Achieve ENRTF's Goals

## **Project Manager Information**

**Name:** Bryan Wood

**Organization:** Osprey Wilds Environmental Learning Center

**Office Telephone:** (320) 245-2648

**Email:** wood@ospreywilds.org

## **Project Basic Information**

**Project Summary:** Minnesota's six accredited residential environmental learning centers (RELCs) will provide life-changing, immersive multi-day environmental learning experiences to a minimum statewide distribution of 25,000 K-12 students, achieving ENRTF's goals.

**Funds Requested:** $1,800,000

**Proposed Project Completion:** June 30 2025

**LCCMR Funding 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

## **Narrative**

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

Children today are increasingly deprived of time in nature (less than 30 minutes daily), resulting in a lack of awareness, understanding and contact with the environment. For students low on the socio-economic spectrum, this is compounded as there are typically no outdoor areas near where they live. Thirty-eight percent (over 323,000 children) of Minnesota's K-12 students qualify for free and reduced-price (FRP) meals, meaning a multi-day field trip is not financially feasible for tens of thousands of families. By offering scholarships for K-12 students who need support, we will provide meaningful hands-on nature experiences to children. Through our programs, the six renowned residential environmental learning centers of Minnesota (Deep Portage Learning Center, Eagle Bluff Environmental Learning Center, Laurentian Environmental Center, Long Lake Conservation Center, Osprey Wilds Environmental Learning Center, Wolf Ridge Environmental Learning Center) will provide more than 25,000 MN K-12 students with total immersion multi-day outdoor learning experiences. Minnesota's RELCs are uniquely positioned to make an incomparable impact on thousands of children through our accredited campuses across Minnesota. Every student experience will include multiple courses that are directly focused upon the learning outcomes of the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund's (ENRTF) constitutionally declared goals and objectives.

**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.**

We will provide scholarship assistance for student tuition fees as needed, with each K-12 student spending a minimum of three days (48 hours) at an RELC, including a minimum of 15 instruction hours. We will reach a statewide population of K-12 students and schools geographically and demographically, with eligible schools showing a clear financial need through our scholarship application process including determination via percentages of free and reduced-price (FRP) lunch program students. There is an urgent demand for financial support for these learning experiences, with COVID-19 only increasing this need. Without scholarship support, Minnesota will not reach its ENRTF goals with our younger citizens. These funds will supplement, not substitute school funding for trips to Minnesota’s RELCs. The RELCs as accredited schools provide evidence-based, hands-on outdoor programs that increase the number of children recreating and learning outdoors. Due to the nature of these multi-day intense learning experiences where the level of engagement is very high, student learning is such that it creates lifelong memories, which are the basis for developing the outdoor ethic Minnesotans are famous for. Minnesota's RELCs' reach for this remarkably expansive project is unmatched. All RELC staff are subject to and have passed criminal background checks.

**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?**

Provide a minimum of 25,000 K-12 Minnesota students multi-day learning experiences at Minnesota's RELCs, totaling a minimum of 375,000 instruction hours and 1.2 million hours onsite.

By giving K-12 students extended time in nature, we help Minnesota achieve ENRTF’s goals and help students develop environmental awareness, appreciation and interest, crafting a future where environmental protection, conservation and stewardship are recognized, valued and implemented.

Through financial support to underserved student populations, we address social, economic, and physical barriers to outdoor recreation.

More individuals will go into environmental careers, like the former K-12 student-participants now employed at RELCs.

## **Activities and Milestones**

### **Activity 1: Increasing K-12 Student Residential Environmental Learning Experiences**

**Activity Budget:** $1,800,000

**Activity Description:**Provide scholarship funds for student tuition fees for visits to Minnesota’s RELCs on a needs-basis through scholarship application review for multi-day residential environmental learning experiences at one of Minnesota's six accredited residential environmental learning centers to a minimum of 25,000 Minnesota K-12 students. This Activity Budget is scalable.

**Activity Milestones:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Description** | **Completion Date** |
| Begin Contacting Prospective Schools & Awarding Scholarships | July 31 2022 |
| Complete Year One of Providing K-12 Residential Environmental Learning Experiences | June 30 2023 |
| Complete Year Two of Providing K-12 Residential Environmental Learning Experiences | June 30 2024 |
| Complete Year Three of Providing K-12 Residential Environmental Learning Experiences | June 30 2025 |

## **Project Partners and Collaborators**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Name** | **Organization** | **Role** | **Receiving Funds** |
| Dale Yerger | Deep Portage Learning Center | Executive Director | Yes |
| Colleen Foehrenbacher | Eagle Bluff Environmental Learning Center | Executive Director | Yes |
| Karl Brown | Laurentian Environmental Center | Director of Community Education, Mounds View Public Schools | Yes |
| David McMillan | Long Lake Conservation Center | Manager | Yes |
| Bryan Wood | Osprey Wilds Environmental Learning Center | Executive Director | Yes |
| Peter Smerud | Wolf Ridge Environmental Learning Center | Executive Director | 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?**The RELCs establish relationships with the attending schools helping them plan and schedule their experiences, and regularly providing them with fundraising support. The provided scholarships will not be for 100% of the experience, rather the respective RELC will work with each school to help them build a diverse fundraising strategy that creates long term stability. As each RELC works with dozens of different schools, lessons learned will be shared for community-based fundraising ideas to create fundraising campaigns that achieve 100% of their need. RELCS are economic drivers in their communities, collectively employing over 200 individuals annually across our six sites.

## **Other ENRTF Appropriations Awarded in the Last Six Years**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Name** | **Appropriation** | **Amount Awarded** |
| Increasing Residential Environmental Learning Center Opportunities | M.L. 2017, Chp. 96, Sec. 2, Subd. 05g | $130,000 |

## **Project Manager and Organization Qualifications**

**Project Manager Name:** Bryan Wood

**Job Title:** Executive Director

**Provide description of the project manager’s qualifications to manage the proposed project.**Bryan Wood has served as Executive Director for Osprey Wilds Environmental Learning Center (formerly Audubon Center of the North Woods) since 2009. During that time, Bryan has managed over $2 million in grant projects including a $1,500,000 National Energy & Technology Laboratory (NETL) grant in 2010 among Minnesota residential environmental learning centers for energy improvements and demonstrations, and a $130,000 ENRTF grant in 2017 for K-12 residential environmental learning opportunities at Osprey Wilds.

**Organization:** Osprey Wilds Environmental Learning Center

**Organization Description:**Osprey Wilds Environmental Learning Center (formerly Audubon Center of the North Woods) is a private, 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization located on 783 acres near Sandstone in Pine County, MN whose mission is "to instill a connection and commitment to the environment in people of all communities through experiential learning". Since 1969, this has been accomplished with a wide variety of environmental learning programs for audiences K-12 to seniors. Each year more than 4,000 K-12 students attend Osprey Wilds for residential environmental learning experiences, participating in outdoor learning on our 783-acre campus.

## **Budget Summary**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Category / Name** | **Subcategory or Type** | **Description** | **Purpose** | **Gen. Ineli gible** | **% Bene fits** | **# FTE** | **Class ified Staff?** | **$ Amount** |
| **Personnel** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  | **Sub Total** | **-** |
| **Contracts and Services** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  | **Sub Total** | **-** |
| **Equipment, Tools, and Supplies** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  | **Sub Total** | **-** |
| **Capital Expenditures** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  | **Sub Total** | **-** |
| **Acquisitions and Stewardship** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  | **Sub Total** | **-** |
| **Travel In Minnesota** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  | **Sub Total** | **-** |
| **Travel Outside Minnesota** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  | **Sub Total** | **-** |
| **Printing and Publication** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  | **Sub Total** | **-** |
| **Other Expenses** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | K-12 Participant Tuition Scholarships | Funding Support for K-12 students to attend Minnesota's RELCs |  |  |  |  | $1,800,000 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  | **Sub Total** | **$1,800,000** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  | **Grand Total** | **$1,800,000** |

### **Classified Staff or Generally Ineligible Expenses**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Category/Name** | **Subcategory or Type** | **Description** | **Justification Ineligible Expense or Classified Staff Request** |

### **Non ENRTF Funds**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Category** | **Specific Source** | **Use** | **Status** | **Amount** |
| **State** |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  | **State Sub Total** | **-** |
| **Non-State** |  |  |  |  |
| Cash | Wolf Ridge Environmental Learning Center | K-12 Scholarship Support | Secured | $180,000 |
| Cash | Deep Portage Learning Center | K-12 Scholarship Support | Secured | $120,000 |
| Cash | Aitkin County | Long Lake Conservation Center Support | Secured | $75,000 |
| Cash | Osprey Wilds Environmental Learning Center | K-12 Scholarship Support | Secured | $60,000 |
| Cash | Eagle Bluff Environmental Learning Center | K-12 Scholarship Support | Secured | $60,000 |
| Cash | Long Lake Conservation Center Foundation | K-12 Scholarship Support | Secured | $15,000 |
| Cash | Ecolab Foundation | K-12 Scholarship Support for St. Paul Schools | Potential | $30,000 |
| Cash | Mayo Clinic Community Contribution Foundation | K-12 Scholarship Support for Olmsted County Schools | Potential | $15,000 |
| Cash | Onan Family Foundation | K-12 Scholarship Support for Minneapolis & St. Paul Schools | Potential | $8,000 |
| Cash | St. Paul Audubon Society | K-12 Scholarship Support for St. Paul Schools | Potential | $4,000 |
| Cash | Minneapolis Audubon Society | K-12 Scholarship Support for Minneapolis Schools | Potential | $3,000 |
| Cash | Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis | K-12 Scholarship Support for Minneapolis Schools | Potential | $3,000 |
| Cash | Minnesota River Valley Audubon Chapter | K-12 Scholarship Support for South Metro Schools | Potential | $3,000 |
|  |  |  | **Non State Sub Total** | **$576,000** |
|  |  |  | **Funds Total** | **$576,000** |

## **Attachments**

### **Required Attachments**

#### ***Visual Component***

File: [06892960-f53.pdf](https://lccmrprojectmgmt.leg.mn/media/map/06892960-f53.pdf)

#### ***Alternate Text for Visual Component***

This map shows the vast reach and impact that Minnesota's residential environmental learning centers currently have with Minnesota's K-12 schools....

#### ***Financial Capacity***

File: [a6c10e6c-69b.pdf](https://lccmrprojectmgmt.leg.mn/media/financial_capacity/a6c10e6c-69b.pdf)

#### ***Board Resolution or Letter***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Title** | **File** |
| Osprey Wilds Board Minutes 02.25 - LCCMR Board Resolution on Page 3 Highlighted in Yellow | [9dc64734-ace.pdf](https://lccmrprojectmgmt.leg.mn/media/attachments/9dc64734-ace.pdf) |

### **Optional Attachments**

#### ***Support Letter or Other***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Title** | **File** |
| MN Department of Education Letter of Support | [48cd0f7e-326.pdf](https://lccmrprojectmgmt.leg.mn/media/attachments/48cd0f7e-326.pdf) |
| Senator Rarick Letter of Support | [164dc1f6-f0a.pdf](https://lccmrprojectmgmt.leg.mn/media/attachments/164dc1f6-f0a.pdf) |
| Representative Davids Letter of Support | [ac49a35a-02e.pdf](https://lccmrprojectmgmt.leg.mn/media/attachments/ac49a35a-02e.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?**
 No

**Does the organization have a fiscal agent for this project?**
 No