



# Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

2023 Request for Proposal

## General Information

**Proposal ID:** 2023-040

**Proposal Title:** IWLA Green Crew Education, Service and Leadership Program

## Project Manager Information

**Name:** Joseph Barisonzi

**Organization:** Izaak Walton League of America - Minnesota Division

**Office Telephone:** (952) 944-1423

**Email:** jbarisonzi@gmail.com

## Project Basic Information

**Project Summary:** Expand the Green Crew's existing youth environmental education, service, and leadership program to reach and serve traditionally underrepresented communities by partnering and supplementing existing youth programs.

**Funds Requested:** \$200,000

**Proposed Project Completion:** June 30, 2025

**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?**

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.**

It is well understood that environmental degradation and climate change have a significant negative impact on each of us and our communities. The list of impacts on our health and communities -- both human and nonhuman is well documented. Direct action is needed to defend and restore our soil, air, woods, water, and wildlife. What is less appreciated is that the climate crisis disproportionately affects youth mental health. In their developmental years, youth experience significant stress and anxiety about their future in the context of climate change. A recent study by Bath University surveyed youth across ten different countries and found that nearly 60% of youth were worried about climate change and 45% reported that their fear of climate change affected their daily lives (Harrabin 2021). The literature shows that youth are incredibly concerned and vulnerable to the changing climate combined with feelings that are unable to create meaningful change leads to these feelings of depression and hopelessness. This is called "Climate Anxiety," and it undermines the primary resource for addressing environmental degradation and climate change -- youth. Climate Anxiety drains youth's creative power. Climate Anxiety drains the energy needed for leading change.

### **What is your proposed solution to the problem or opportunity discussed above? Introduce us to the work you are seeking funding to do. You will be asked to expand on this proposed solution in Activities & Milestones.**

Scholars say that the best antidote to Climate Anxiety is direct action. Action mitigates feelings of depression and anxiety. Getting involved in making the world a better place provides youth with feelings of hope (Sanson et al., 2021). Access to education and hands-on environmental action increases feelings of connectedness to the environment and hope for the future. This hope and connectedness will unleash youth leadership to develop, design, invent, create, and lead the solutions our communities need.

To meet the dual challenges of environmental degradation and youth climate anxiety, the Minnesota Valley Chapter of the Izaak Walton League launch the Green Crew, a youth-led environmental leadership program. Green Crew fosters connection and passion for the outdoors by engaging youth outside, engaging them with their local environment in the context of direct service. Green Crew provides youth the tools, training, and resources to lead hands-on environmental science-based service-learning projects.

Current youth-led projects include water quality testing, trail restoration, invasive species removal, equitable tree planting, Fungis diversity surveying, Leave No Trace Awareness training, and more.

With LCCMR support, Green Crew will expand our environmental education, service, and leadership development programming to youth who have not traditionally had access to such opportunities.

### **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?**

- 1) Partner with five community organizations to develop environmental awareness, education, and training materials rooted in their cultural tradition.
- 2) Provide education to over 500 youth on best practices to conserve and protect our environment.
- 3) Establish a pipeline of youth environmental leaders trained in designing, developing, and implementing complex environmental service projects.
- 4) To unleash over 5,000 volunteer hours working on youth-led sustainable science-based conservation service projects which preserve and enhance our natural spaces.
- 5) Provide hope to 500 youth who care about the environment about their ability to make a positive difference.

## Activities and Milestones

### Activity 1: Engage Community Partners

**Activity Budget:** \$72,500

**Activity Description:**

The Green Crew’s existing environmental education, service, and leadership program will be revisited and reimagined within the context of engaging members of communities traditionally underrepresented in environmental service and action.

Building on established community relationships, the Green Crew will formally engage organizations and community leaders from five underrepresented communities. Our goal is to work with an organization from the Native, Somali, Latinx, African-American and Hmong communities. In addition, we will work with organizations that have programs serving youth 14-21. Target organizations include churches, scout units, and schools.

In collaboration with our new partner, a community-identified expert will be engaged to support the cultural transliteration of the environmental education, training, and service material to reflect the communities’ cultural heritage, traditions, and experience. For example, the Center for Outdoor Ethics’ Leave No Trace curriculum will be designed to reflect the Anishinabe experience as environmental stewards.

Led by our program liaison, we will identify, recruit, and engage a young adult intern from each community. This intern will be integrated into the Green Crew leadership and provide support, mentorship, and training. They will be the Green Crew youth lead in delivering culturally appropriate environmental education, service, and leadership development programming.

**Activity Milestones:**

Description	Completion Date
Formally Engage Community Partners	September 30, 2023
Cultural Transliteration of Program Material	November 30, 2023
Train Community-based Youth Intern	January 31, 2024

### Activity 2: Deliver Environmental Education, Service and Leadership Program

**Activity Budget:** \$112,500

**Activity Description:**

Each community youth group will supplement its existing program with visits to the Green Crew’s home adjacent to the 14,000 acres of the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge. There will be a bi-monthly immersive day experience and a bi-annual weekend retreat experience. The day program will include culturally specific environmental education, Leave No Trace training, and a citizen science project. The youth-led Citizen science projects could be Water Quality monitoring, Fungal Diversity survey, Invasive Species tracking and removal, and more. The weekend retreats include more outdoor ethics training, leadership development, and service.

The volunteer youth members of the Green Crew will lead the programs. The trained youth intern will lead the program. Adult advisors and subject matter experts will support the youth leaders. The youth will see themselves as environmental experts and leaders.

Additionally, Green Crew will recruit members of the organization's youth groups to participate in service projects with a direct environmental impact on the health of our soil, air, woods, water, and wildlife. An example of one of these youth-

led service projects includes reforesting the Landfall community in Washington County, reestablishing native bee habitat in Hopkins, and restoring native wetlands along the Minnesota River.

**Activity Milestones:**

Description	Completion Date
Supplemental Day Program: Education and Science	June 30, 2025
Weekend Immersion Program: Leadership and Service	June 30, 2025
Environmental Service Projects	June 30, 2025

**Activity 3: Train Youth Environmental Leaders**

**Activity Budget:** \$15,000

**Activity Description:**

The Green Crew youth leadership program develops the youth skills to design, develop and lead complex conservation and environmental service projects. Youth learn these skills through direct experience with progressive levels of responsibility. Youth mentors support participants who choose to co-lead education and training activities. In addition, adult Advisors and trained mentors support the youth who step up for Crew leadership positions. In addition, each youth-led conservation service project goes through a youth-driven review process, including a science review and environmental impact review. The youth are additionally organized into teams that support all aspects of Crew operations, including the science team, which evaluates all projects' scientific basis and environmental impact.

The youth from the traditionally underrepresented communities engaged with the support of this grant will receive focused support to assume these leadership positions. Over the next two years, we expect to involve and educate 125 youth from the five communities, engage 35 of them in Green Crew leadership training and promote at least three from each of the five targeted communities onto the Green Crew youth leadership team. This grant will help establish a pipeline of trained youth environmental leaders for years to come.

**Activity Milestones:**

Description	Completion Date
Identify and train youth intern from targeted communities	September 30, 2023
Provide leadership training for youth from targeted communities	June 30, 2025
Provide youth leadership mentors to launch projects	June 30, 2025

## Project Partners and Collaborators

Name	Organization	Role	Receiving Funds
Tedd Suss	Friends of the MN River	Program Support for the River Watch Program	Yes
Terri Fick	Center for Outdoor Ethics -- MN Chapter	Advisor and Consultant of Delivery of LNT Training	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 work be funded?**

The Green Crew is firmly established as the youth program of the Izaak Walton League -MN Valley Chapter, and funding is planned as part of the organization's ongoing mission from its endowment. Volunteer and in-kind services primarily support the Green Crew. The special financing from LCCMR will allow us to expand the existing program to specific underserved communities. This initial investment will establish lasting relationships that will continue beyond the grant. We believe that the resources, materials, and program developed by the Green Crew through this grant will be replicable throughout the state.

## Project Manager and Organization Qualifications

**Project Manager Name:** Joseph Barisonzi

**Job Title:** Executive Director of Youth Programming

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

Officer of the Izaak Walton League -MN Valley Chapter, Advisor and co-founder of the Green Crew, 30+ years of project management experience

**Organization:** Izaak Walton League of America - Minnesota Division

**Organization Description:**

Environmental Defenders of the defend the nation's soil , air, woods, water, and wildlife for 100 years

## Budget Summary

Category / Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Purpose	Gen. Ineligible	% Benefits	# FTE	Classified Staff?	\$ Amount
<b>Personnel</b>								
Project Coordinator		Ensure quality program delivery with partners and vendors			14%	20		\$15,000
Youth Interns		Youth leadership intern from each of 5 target groups (\$3K/intern/year/group)			14%	40		\$30,000
Volunteer Coordinator		Ensure properly trained volunteers scheduled for all youth events			14%	40		\$20,000
Program Liaison and Outreach		Ensure proper preparation and support for each program visit from each of the 5 target groups.			14%	40		\$15,000
							<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>\$80,000</b>
<b>Contracts and Services</b>								
Friends of MN Valley	Sub award	River Watch programming, training, and support				20		\$15,000
TBD	Professional or Technical Service Contract	Cultural transliteration of program and training materials (5 groups)				50		\$25,000
							<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>\$40,000</b>
<b>Equipment, Tools, and Supplies</b>								
	Tools and Supplies	Leave No Trace Training Materials	Supplies for each Leave No Trace Training (\$10/youth x 25 youth x 5 groups x 4 trainings)					\$5,000
	Tools and Supplies	River Watch Training Materials	Testing supplies used during a River Walk (\$10/youth x 25 youth x 5 groups x 3 walks)					\$3,750
	Tools and Supplies	Fungis Diversity Survey Kit	Additional Testing Kit to Support Expanded Group Participation					\$1,250
	Tools and Supplies	Leave No Trace Trainer Kit	Additional Trainer Kits including required material to facilitate training					\$2,500
	Equipment	Invasive Species Removal Tools	Set of tools required for safe and effective removal of invasive plants					\$2,500

							<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>\$15,000</b>
<b>Capital Expenditures</b>								
							<b>Sub Total</b>	-
<b>Acquisitions and Stewardship</b>								
							<b>Sub Total</b>	-
<b>Travel In Minnesota</b>								
	Other	Bus Trips (Ave 50 miles RT, 20 trips, 5 groups, 25 youth/group, \$100 bus cost/trip)	Reduce barrier to participation by target organizations					\$10,000
							<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>\$10,000</b>
<b>Travel Outside Minnesota</b>								
							<b>Sub Total</b>	-
<b>Printing and Publication</b>								
	Publication	Program Material (5 versions)	Language and Culture Versions of Materials (Photos, Layout, Writing, Printing)					\$50,000
							<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>\$50,000</b>
<b>Other Expenses</b>								
		Digital Marketing	Age and Culture Appropriate digital marketing materials for programs (\$500/group/year)					\$5,000
							<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>\$5,000</b>
							<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$200,000</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
<b>State</b>				
			<b>State Sub Total</b>	-
<b>Non-State</b>				
Cash	Izaak Walton League MN Valley Chapter -Program Funds	Allocation of Funds to support base program	Secured	\$20,000
In-Kind	Izaak Walton League MN Valley Chapter -Dues	Building, Meeting Space, General Supplies, Food, Water, Electricity	Secured	\$24,000
In-Kind	Adult Volunteers	Training and Program Support (2 adults x 24 events x 6 hours x 5 groups) \$24/hour billable	Potential	\$34,560
In-Kind	Youth Volunteering	Program Planning and Delivery (3 youth x 24 events x 6 hours x 5 groups) \$15/hour billable	Potential	\$32,400
Cash	General Grants Solicitation	LNT Training, Conferences, Marketing, Program Supplies	Potential	\$90,000
			<b>Non State Sub Total</b>	<b>\$200,960</b>
			<b>Funds Total</b>	<b>\$200,960</b>

## Attachments

### Required Attachments

#### *Visual Component*

File: [a3493fca-d21.pdf](#)

#### *Alternate Text for Visual Component*

Collage of images of Green Crew training, events, and service projects...

#### *Financial Capacity*

File: [07ce58e8-e91.pdf](#)

#### *Board Resolution or Letter*

Title	File
IWLA-MNV Board Resolution -- LCCMR 2022	<a href="#">d6b4b7ad-54b.pdf</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?**

Yes

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

No



