



Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

2023 Request for Proposal

General Information

Proposal ID: 2023-051

Proposal Title: Statewide Environmental Education via PBS Outdoor Series

Project Manager Information

Name: Cindy Dorn

Organization: Pioneer PBS

Office Telephone: (651) 230-3995

Email: cdorn@pioneer.org

Project Basic Information

Project Summary: Pioneer PBS will produce 26 new episodes of a statewide television series designed to inspire Minnesotans to connect with the outdoors and to restore and protect our valuable natural resources.

Funds Requested: \$391,000

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 and In the Future

Narrative

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

This project addresses the long-term need for environmental education, engagement and tools that Minnesotans can use to restore and protect our valuable natural resources. The program's opportunity is to reach out to a statewide audience and inspire viewers to connect with the outdoors, increase their environmental science knowledge and adopt conservation practices. High-quality video programming is an enjoyable way to educate Minnesotans about research and advancements in natural resource management and sustainable agricultural practices, and how we can all improve water quality, protect wildlife habitat, promote pollinators and restore our natural world. Understanding the dangers of contaminants such as salt, lead, microplastics and polluted runoff can inspire people to make changes in their purchases and behaviors that are environmentally friendly. As background to the quality of productions that can be expected, Prairie Sportsman has received three Upper Midwest Emmy awards, including two for stories about conservation and wildlife research topics and one for Bret Amundson's hosting talent. Award-winning "evergreen" productions are an opportunity to promote environmental education and stewardship for years to come.

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.

Broadcast in 2024 and 2025 from late January to mid-May, the two 13-episode seasons will be filmed at locations throughout the state and feature a wide range of topics that appeal to diverse, changing demographics as well as traditional viewers. In addition to environmental education, Prairie Sportsman promotes fun ways to connect with the outdoors that are intended to inspire people of all ages, demographics and socioeconomic backgrounds to replace screen time with outdoor time, which is the path to environmental stewardship. Each season will include at least 13 segments on research, natural resource management and agricultural practices that benefit the environment. Episodes will also include outdoor sports and recreation stories and special features on citizen scientists, artists, chefs and others connecting with nature in innovative ways. In addition, the project will create easy online access to stories featuring ENRTF-supported projects. All Minnesota PBS stations air Prairie Sportsman including Pioneer, KSMQ (Austin), Lakeland PBS (Bemidji and Brainerd), tptLife (Twin Cities), WDSE (Duluth) and the MN Channel, carried by all Minnesota PBS stations and Prairie Public TV in Fargo. Minnesota's outdoors and conservation accomplishments are also showcased on all PBS stations airing Prairie Sportsman in Wisconsin, Iowa, South Dakota and Wyoming.

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 provides a statewide television and online audience with inspirational and educational environmental science and conservation content. Individual segments contained within this project's 26 episodes will be produced as stand-alone videos, distributed online and made available on DVD to public agencies, learning centers, outdoor organizations, civic organizations and educational institutions, with branded online access to stories about ENRTF-funded projects. This extends each segment's "evergreen" public education and outreach value for years to come. For example, past segments have been included in educational programs of the National Eagle Center, Minnesota DNR, wildlife associations, schools and colleges, lake associations and others.

Activities and Milestones

Activity 1: Produce, promote and distribute 26 episodes with a minimum of 26 environmental education segments

Activity Budget: \$376,000

Activity Description:

The 26 new episodes will be distributed via Minnesota PBS stations and online. Each 13-episode season will include a minimum of 13 environmental education segments on research, natural resource management or agricultural practices that benefit the environment. Episodes will also include outdoor sports and recreation stories that inspire Minnesotans to connect with the outdoors, and special features on citizen scientists, artists, chefs and others connecting with nature in innovative ways. Broadcast in 2024 and 2025 from late January to mid-May, the two 13-episode seasons will be filmed at locations throughout the state and feature a wide range of topics that appeal to diverse, changing demographics as well as traditional viewers.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Completion Date
Produce 13 episodes with 13 environmental education segments for the 2024 season	May 31, 2024
Create individual segments to distribute via DVDs, website and social media	June 30, 2024
Produce 13 episodes with 13 environmental education segments for the 2025 season	May 31, 2025
Create individual segments to distribute via DVDs, website and social media	June 30, 2025

Activity 2: Design branded web page featuring stories on ENRTF-funded projects

Activity Budget: \$15,000

Activity Description:

Create online, branded access to stories featuring Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund projects with engaging text and graphics. Promote the web access through social media, e-newsletters and other communications.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Completion Date
Design web page with ENRTF branding/logo linked to Prairie Sportsman website	December 31, 2023
Create descriptions and images for 2024 stories featuring ENRTF projects	May 31, 2024
Promote stories on social media	December 31, 2024
Continue branding, linking and promoting 2025 ENRTF stories	June 30, 2025

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?

Prairie Sportsman stories are "evergreen" videos and can be broadcast and used in educational settings for years to come. The program's statewide focus and high-quality content has steadily increased our audience reach. Production and other related expenses above the ENRTF grant are covered by sponsorship dollars. Although we lost three primary underwriters after COVID-19 arrived, Pioneer PBS has interest from several new sponsors that market to our expanded viewing area. These dollars will cover travel, transcripts, closed-captioning, voice work, marketing and other production expenses.

Other ENRTF Appropriations Awarded in the Last Six Years

Name	Appropriation	Amount Awarded
New Prairie Sportsman Statewide Broadcast Video Project	M.L. 2016, Chp. 186, Sec. 2, Subd. 05d	\$300,000
Prairie Sportsman Statewide Environmental Broadcasts and Videos	M.L. 2018, Chp. 214, Art. 4, Sec. 2, Subd. 05a	\$300,000

Project Manager and Organization Qualifications

Project Manager Name: Cindy Dorn

Job Title: Writer/Producer

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

Since 2016, project manager Cindy Dorn has served as producer of Prairie Sportsman, which has received three Upper Midwest Emmy awards and 24 nominations over the past four seasons. She holds degrees in Journalism/Mass Communications and American Studies from Minnesota State University Moorhead. In the 1980s, Dorn served as Pioneer Public Television's Development Director and later produced the nationally distributed Country Spires documentary, which received two Upper Midwest Emmy nominations. Dorn has served in communications positions at the Minnesota House of Representatives and Agricultural Utilization Research Institute and as development director with Conservation Corps Minnesota & Iowa.

Organization: Pioneer PBS

Organization Description:

The mission of Pioneer PBS is to facilitate educational growth, support cultural opportunities and promote economic development for the more than 2.5 million people who live in Pioneer's service area. The station serves children, elderly, diverse communities, farmers, artists and outdoor enthusiasts with quality programming. Pioneer has developed a robust social media platform, combined with an ability to advance civic discourse.

Pioneer has a history of producing a variety of award-winning, quality content. Locally produced programs have received 16 Upper Midwest Emmy awards. In 2018, Pioneer PBS administrative offices moved from Appleton to a state-of-the-art campus in Granite Falls, and the production staff moved to the facility after equipment installations and production studios were completed in 2019. Pioneer has the talent and technological capacity and financial stability to produce informative and entertaining outdoor program series that are "evergreen" and appeal to a diverse, statewide audience. Through this project, Pioneer will inform, inspire, connect and create new opportunities for Minnesotans to protect and restore natural resources critical to our future.

Budget Summary

Category / Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Purpose	Gen. Ineligible	% Benefits	# FTE	Classified Staff?	\$ Amount
Personnel								
Executive Producer/Editor		Manage all aspects of production, including story lineup, videography, interviews, scripting, editing, graphics, post-production and communications.			22%	2		\$123,000
Videographer/editor		Assist with developing topics and setting up interviews and broll, scripting, videography, editing and communications.			22%	2		\$93,800
							Sub Total	\$216,800
Contracts and Services								
Host/Producer Bret Amundson	Professional or Technical Service Contract	Bret Amundson will continue to serve as on-air program host, providing interviews on camera and narration. In addition, he produces sports, recreation and related conservation stories, advises on all segments and episodes, and promotes stories on social media.				1		\$66,000
Writer/Producer Cindy Dorn	Professional or Technical Service Contract	Cindy Dorn will continue to research story topics, primarily related to environmental science and education and non-traditional outdoors sports and recreation, schedule filming, conduct interviews, script segments, oversee editing and advise on all segments and full episodes.				1		\$65,000
Videographer/Production Assistant	Professional or Technical Service Contract	Assist the Host with preparation, videography and editing for outdoor sports, recreation and conservation stories.				0.66		\$43,200
							Sub Total	\$174,200
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								
							Sub Total	-
							Grand Total	\$391,000

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				
Cash	Underwriting sponsorships	Covers production expenses including travel, transcripts, closed captioning, equipment, supplies, marketing, voice work and other costs.	Pending	\$90,000
			Non State Sub Total	\$90,000
			Funds Total	\$90,000

Attachments

Required Attachments

Visual Component

File: [594453a1-f67.pdf](#)

Alternate Text for Visual Component

Map of Minnesota PBS stations viewing areas...

Financial Capacity

File: [d5321e7b-c7b.pdf](#)

Board Resolution or Letter

Title	File
Pioneer Board Letter of Support	2930317b-925.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



