



Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

2025 Request for Proposal

General Information

Proposal ID: 2025-183

Proposal Title: Nature Play Area Expansion

Project Manager Information

Name: Michael Granlund

Organization: Friends of Lake Bemidji State Park

Office Telephone: (701) 370-1981

Email: mikegranlund@hotmail.com

Project Basic Information

Project Summary: The proposed project is to install natural play elements at the established nature play area that blends into the existing natural environment at Lake Bemidji State Park.

ENRTF Funds Requested: \$18,000

Proposed Project Completion: June 30, 2026

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): NW

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

Region(s): NW

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.

The nature play area at Lake Bemidji State Park is inviting to younger, able-bodied children, but lacking in elements of play for physically disabled people and elements that will increase knowledge of environmental and conservation practices for all ages. Most people who access Minnesota State Parks are white, non-Hispanic families with children and annual household incomes of \$100,000 or more (2022 Minnesota State Park Visitor Survey). This is likely reflected at Lake Bemidji State Park, albeit the annual income is probably lower. Common visitors to the park include families, couples, individuals, students from local Title 1 schools, and developmentally disabled adults from local care centers. The proposed project aims to make the nature play area more accessible to people with disabilities and make it more desirable to people of all ages. There will be a development day where underrepresented children from the community will be invited to help install some of the nature play elements. Advertising for the improvement of the nature play area will be placed in locations that serve the underrepresented public in an effort to bring more BIPOC families and people with mobility limitations to the park.

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.

The nature play area will receive multiple elements to help it become more accessible to people with mobility limitations and include elements that teach people of all ages about the natural resources of the park and how to protect and preserve them for future generations. The installation of these elements will have minimal impact on the park's environment and will be placed in the area already developed. Currently, the nature play area is geared toward children ages 5-12 years old that do not have mobility limitations. The nature play area includes elements that could be used by older children, but lacks guiding signage and play elements that will teach environmental and conservation practices to enhance and preserve the park's natural resources. The proposed new elements for the nature play area will include a spider web, two log tunnels, loose items to dig out of the sand pit, fort starting structures for fort building, a wheel chair accessible merry go round, an accessible swing, acoustic play items, an archway, and a sluiceway for water play. The goal is to create a play space that is inclusive of people with disabilities and teach them about the natural resources of the park.

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?

The mission of this program will be to conserve and manage the park's natural resources, while providing outdoor recreational opportunities with an enhanced educational program for all ages to increase knowledge of environmental and conservation practices. The natural play space encourages creative play and learning. It will provide new environmental and conservation programs and resources to be enjoyed by all ages and abilities. The Park Naturalist offers interpretive programs throughout the year. These programs are open to schools, Scouts, community organizations, and other park visitors. The Friends Group feel that this project will protect the state's natural resources.

Activities and Milestones

Activity 1: Nature Play Area Expansion

Activity Budget: \$18,000

Activity Description:

The mission of the program will be to conserve and manage Lake Bemidji State Park's natural resources, while providing outdoor recreational opportunities with an enhanced educational program for all ages as well as handicapped individuals to increase knowledge of environmental and conservation practices at the park. The natural play area space will encourage creative play and learning. An improved and more diversely focused play area will attract more people to the park. The Friends of Lake Bemidji State Park believe that a better natural play area design will increase the viability of the park to further their mission of being a destination for those wishing to learn more about the environment and conservation practices. This activity will be accomplished by the Friends of Lake Bemidji engaging with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources to implement the project and to provide an ongoing project maintenance and funding program for the project. The Friends of Lake Bemidji State Park and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources have developed a formal written Memorandum of Understanding for this project. The Friends of Lake Bemidji State Park will communicate this environmental and conservation natural play area on their website, regular newsletter, and DNR site.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Engage Minnesota of Department of Natural Resources to purchase equipment	July 31, 2025
DNR will purchase equipment as per approved equipment list and design	May 31, 2026
Development Day for underrepresent people of all ages will be invited to park	May 31, 2026
LCCMR-ENRTF will added to Visitors Center Wall of Park Donations	June 30, 2026

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 Friends of Lake Bemidji State Park will engage with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources to implement the project and to provide any ongoing funding for the project. The Friends of Lake Bemidji State Park and The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources have developed a formal written Memorandum of Understanding for this project. If additional work is needed, The Friends Group and DNR will develop a long-term strategy for the future of the play space. These additional funds will come from the Friends of Lake Bemidji State Park and will be part of the MOU agreement.

Project Manager and Organization Qualifications

Project Manager Name: Michael Granlund

Job Title: Fundraiser Officer

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

The Fundraiser raises money on behalf of The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources to support and to enhance the resources of Lake Bemidji State Park. The Fundraiser is an officer of The Friends of Lake Bemidji State Park who raises money through fundraising and volunteer efforts. The Friends Group will engage the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources to implement the project and to provide any ongoing funding for the project. The Friends of Lake Bemidji State Park and The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources have developed a formal written Memorandum of Understanding for project implementation. The Friends Group will engage the DNR and communicate their intention of developing this environmental and conservation nature play area in the park.

Organization: Friends of Lake Bemidji State Park

Organization Description:

The Friends of Lake Bemidji State Park is a 501(c)(3) non profit organization. The Friends Mission Statement is to support and enhance Lake Bemidji State Park's natural and cultural resources, recreational opportunities, facilities, and educational programming through leadership, volunteerism, and fundraising for the present and future generations.

Budget Summary

Category / Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Purpose	Gen. Ineligible	% Benefits	# FTE	Classified Staff?	\$ Amount
Personnel								
							Sub Total	-
Contracts and Services								
							Sub Total	-
Equipment, Tools, and Supplies								
	Equipment	12' x 12' spider web netting	playground equipment					\$2,175
	Equipment	Assorted wood to create arch	playground equipment					\$500
	Equipment	Assorted wood to create fort	playground equipment					\$500
	Equipment	Accessible swing	playground equipment					\$2,000
	Equipment	Hand pump for water at sluiceway logs	playground equipment					\$200
	Equipment	playground equipment	Musical xylophone					\$750
	Equipment	Windchimes	playground equipment					\$375
	Equipment	Wheelchair accessible merry-go-round	playground equipment					\$11,500
							Sub Total	\$18,000
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	\$18,000

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	Friends of Lake Bemidji State Park	Purchase Playground Equipment	Secured	\$20,000
			Non State Sub Total	\$20,000
			Funds Total	\$20,000

Total Project Cost: \$38,000

This amount accurately reflects total project cost?

Yes

Attachments

Required Attachments

Visual Component

File: [2c022524-d20.docx](#)

Alternate Text for Visual Component

Support Letter ENRTF_3.14.24...

Financial Capacity

Title	File
990	d00015a8-6fc.pdf

Board Resolution or Letter

Title	File
Support Letter	7420d06a-bb0.docx

Administrative Use

Does your project include restoration or acquisition of land rights?

No

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

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

Does your project include the pre-design, design, construction, or renovation of a building, trail, campground, or other fixed capital asset costing \$10,000 or more or large-scale stream or wetland restoration?

No

Do you propose using an appropriation from the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund to conduct a project that provides children's services (as defined in Minnesota Statutes section 299C.61 Subd.7 as "the provision of care, treatment, education, training, instruction, or recreation to children")?

No

Provide the name(s) and organization(s) of additional individuals assisting in the completion of this proposal:

Pamela Kelsey

