



# Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

## 2025 Request for Proposal

### General Information

**Proposal ID:** 2025-301

**Proposal Title:** Science Centers Supporting Northern Boys and Girls Clubs

### Project Manager Information

**Name:** Lee Furuseth

**Organization:** Headwaters Science Center

**Office Telephone:** (218) 444-4472

**Email:** leehscbemidji@gmail.com

### Project Basic Information

**Project Summary:** This proposal will expand access to environmental science education in Northern Minnesota by leveraging partnerships between rural and urban organizations to deliver culturally relevant, hands-on learning experiences to underserved students.

**ENRTF Funds Requested:** \$1,091,000

**Proposed Project Completion:** June 30, 2028

**LCCMR Funding 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 and In the Future

## Narrative

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

In Northern Minnesota, a region characterized by its high poverty/free and reduced lunch rates, and remote rural landscapes, there exists a profound inequity in access to informal environmental science education. The challenge is two-fold: 1) Geographical isolation of students from major urban educational centers and 2) The Headwaters Science Center (HSC) in Bemidji (pop. 15,300), though well located to serve this student population, is a very lean organization currently with limited capacity to provide staff training and deliver science education to students at scale.

**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.**

Under the leadership of the Headwaters Science Center, this initiative brings together the strengths of four Boys & Girls Club Systems In Northern Minnesota (BGCA), the Science Museum of Minnesota (SMM), and Freshwater (FW) to immerse students in place-based, culturally relevant, indoor/outdoor environmental science activities as part of their after-school and summer programs, many of which have high Native student populations and are far from the state's urban centers. The existing curricula will be chosen to reflect the unique ecological contexts and cultural heritage of each community including topics that illuminate the connections between geology, soils, watersheds, plants, animals, and people.

The partnership will leverage the strengths and resources of each organization, thereby extending the reach and impact of environmental education to regions where it is most needed. The active involvement of BGCA sites in choosing their curriculum guarantees that the educational content will resonate with the students' lived experiences and the environmental realities of their communities. The participation of the SMM and FW ensure high-quality, engaging hands-on experiments and training for the HSC and BGCA staff.

**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 central outcome of this project is to enhance the accessibility of environmental education for students in Minnesota's economically and geographically disadvantaged counties including the BGCA sites on the White Earth Nation (5), Detroit Lakes (2), the Red Lake Nation (2) and Bemidji (2) more than 20 times each year resulting in a greater appreciation of the protection, conservation, preservation, and enhancement of the state's natural resources. Additionally, this work will establish a cooperative model that provides a scalable and adaptable framework for expanding access to quality environmental informal science education across rural and economically challenged areas of Minnesota.

## Activities and Milestones

### Activity 1: Project spin-up

**Activity Budget:** \$255,000

**Activity Description:**

The project begins by hiring four staff members, the purchase of two vans, 4 trailers and the assembly of initial science kits.

**Activity Milestones:**

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Initial Spin-up Complete	September 30, 2025

### Activity 2: In-person meetings for communication, selecting curriculum and for training.

**Activity Budget:** \$130,000

**Activity Description:**

Two meetings will be held annually. An annual all-hands meeting, convening partners from HSC, BGCA, SMM, and FW in Bemidji or a chosen BGCA site, to coordinate and train BGCA staff on the year's curricula. A meeting will be held at SMM in St Paul to allow the BGCA to see proposed curricula and choose material for the year. SMM and FW staff will also participate in students activities at multiple BGCA sites yearly.

**Activity Milestones:**

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Year 1 Meetings	June 30, 2026
Year 2 Meetings	June 30, 2027
Year 3 Meetings	June 30, 2028

### Activity 3: HSC staff work with BGCA sites to teach the environmental science curricula.

**Activity Budget:** \$706,000

**Activity Description:**

HSC visits each BGCA location in Northern Minnesota more than 20 times during the calendar year. HSC educators will lead place-based activities that connect students to their local ecosystems covering topics like wildlife, plant biology, and water quality. These engagements are designed by SMM and FW to educate and empower students, fostering a deeper understanding and stewardship of the natural world. Additionally, the program strengthens HSC and BGCA staff capabilities, promoting ongoing impactful science education.

**Activity Milestones:**

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Year 1 Teaching	June 30, 2026
Year 2 Teaching	June 30, 2027
Year 3 Teaching	June 30, 2028

## Project Partners and Collaborators

Name	Organization	Role	Receiving Funds
Andrea Kent	Boys & Girls Club of the Bemidji Area	Coordination between this project and local BGCA site	Yes
Carol Thompson	Boys & Girls Clubs of White Earth	Coordination between this project and local BGCA site	Yes
Thomas Barrett Jr.	Boys & Girls Clubs of Red Lake and Ponemah	Coordination between this project and local BGCA site	Yes
Patrick Petermann	Boys & Girls Clubs of Detroit Lakes and Perham	Coordination between this project and local BGCA site	Yes
Farzad Sadjadi	Science Museum of Minnesota	Training, provider of curriculum and classroom materials	Yes
Carrie Jennings	Freshwater	Training, provider of curriculum and classroom materials	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 work be funded?**

The Headwaters Science Center maintains a diversified budget that includes funding from government, membership and admissions as well as donations from individuals, foundations and corporations. We will continue to develop these contributed and earned sources of revenue to sustain the impacts of this work beyond the life of this project. In addition, we are actively looking for future long-term funding from private sources and governmental agencies. We fully intend to continue this work after this funding ends.

## Project Manager and Organization Qualifications

**Project Manager Name:** Lee Furuseth

**Job Title:** Director, Headwaters Science Center

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

Thirty-seven years of public education with seventeen years as a classroom teacher, and twenty years as a building administrator. During the twenty years of administration in the Walker-Akeley-Hackensack and Bagley Schools districts was responsible for the supervision of eighty staff including both certified and non-licensed education staff.

Furuseth has been the Executive Director of the Headwaters Science Center since 2019.

**Organization:** Headwaters Science Center

**Organization Description:**

The Headwaters Science Center (HSC), established in 1994 and situated in Bemidji, Minnesota, is a non-profit (501(c)3) that advances science and technology education across its service area encompassing 23 counties in Northern Minnesota. HSC's primary mission is to deliver informal science education through interactive displays, exhibits, and

school visits to a diverse audience. This mission is executed outside the traditional school environment, aiming to fill an educational void in the region. HSC has a long established network of collaborations with educational entities, such as Bemidji State University, many Northern Minnesota school districts as well as the White Earth, Red Lake, and Leech Lake Nations. Through these partnerships, HSC seeks to enhance its educational outreach and impact, particularly among underserved communities, thereby contributing significantly to regional development in science and technology education.

## Budget Summary

Category / Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Purpose	Gen. Ineligible	% Benefits	# FTE	Classified Staff?	\$ Amount
<b>Personnel</b>								
Education and Outreach Director		Management of Project and Teaching at BGCA Sites			15%	3		\$121,000
Education Specialists		Provide Instruction at the BGCA Sites			15%	4.5		\$176,000
Project Administrator		Scheduling, purchasing			15%	0.6		\$50,000
Two Student Interns From Bemidji State or Leech Lake Tribal College		Support Roles in Teaching and Preparation for working with BGCA Students			12%	1.8		\$39,000
							<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>\$386,000</b>
<b>Contracts and Services</b>								
Science Museum of Minnesota	Professional or Technical Service Contract	Training, STEM Kit Assembly, Coordination within SMM				1.8		\$192,000
Freshwater	Professional or Technical Service Contract	Training and Environmental STEM Kits				0.6		\$30,000
BGCA White Earth	Professional or Technical Service Contract	Coordination with project and attendance of off-site meetings				0.6		\$15,000
BGCA Bemidji	Professional or Technical Service Contract	Coordination with project and attendance of off-site meetings				0.6		\$15,000
BGCA Detroit Lakes	Professional or Technical Service Contract	Coordination with project and attendance of off-site meetings				0.6		\$15,000

BGCA Red Lake	Professional or Technical Service Contract	Coordination of project and attendance of off-site meetings				0.6		\$15,000
							<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>\$282,000</b>
<b>Equipment, Tools, and Supplies</b>								
	Equipment	4 cargo trailers	To transport educational materials and experiments to BGCA Sites. They also provide storage of materials on-site.					\$55,000
	Equipment	Environmental STEM Kits	Kits containing experiments, tools and activities that will be used with the students at the BGCA Sites. Purchased over the 3 years of the project.					\$150,000
							<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>\$205,000</b>
<b>Capital Expenditures</b>								
		Cargo Vans	Two vans to transport materials and personnel to BGCA sites	X				\$120,000
							<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>\$120,000</b>
<b>Acquisitions and Stewardship</b>								
							<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Travel In Minnesota</b>								
	Miles/ Meals/ Lodging	Travel from HSC in Bemidji to BGCA sites Aprox. 38,000 miles/yr	For HSC be at BGCA sites to teach Environmental STEM					\$55,000
	Miles/ Meals/ Lodging	1 trip for 10 people. 2400 miles. 3 Days	Yearly trip to SMM for HSC to choose STEM Kits					\$18,000
	Miles/ Meals/ Lodging	20 People, Yearly for 3 years, 10,000 miles	Annual training of HSC and BGCA Staff on Curricula and Stem Kits in Bemidji					\$10,000
							<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>\$83,000</b>
<b>Travel Outside Minnesota</b>								

							<b>Sub Total</b>	-
<b>Printing and Publication</b>								
	Printing	Printing of Environmental STEM Materials for BGCA sites. Quantity TBD	Curricula for students and staff					\$15,000
							<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>\$15,000</b>
<b>Other Expenses</b>								
							<b>Sub Total</b>	-
							<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$1,091,000</b>



## Classified Staff or Generally Ineligible Expenses

Category/Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Justification Ineligible Expense or Classified Staff Request
<b>Capital Expenditures</b>		Cargo Vans	This project is about bringing environmental education to students and would not be possible without these vans. <b>Additional Explanation :</b> We fully intend to use these vans to continue this work after the duration of the project.

## Non ENRTF Funds

Category	Specific Source	Use	Status	Amount
<b>State</b>				
			<b>State Sub Total</b>	-
<b>Non-State</b>				
In-Kind	HSC Budget	HSC Director 0.2 FTE	Secured	\$33,000
In-Kind	HSC Budget	Accounting	Secured	\$15,000
In-Kind	HSC Budget	Programs and Exhibits, Maintenance	Secured	\$16,000
In-Kind	HSC Budget	Occupancy.	Secured	\$30,000
In-Kind	HSC Budget	Use of HSC Vehicle	Secured	\$6,000
In-Kind	Unclaimed Federal Indirects	SMM	Pending	\$77,000
In-Kind	Local donors	Electric Panel Van	Potential	\$70,000
In-Kind	Freshwater	Training 12 staff to become Minnesota Water Stewards	Secured	\$12,000
			<b>Non State Sub Total</b>	<b>\$259,000</b>
			<b>Funds Total</b>	<b>\$259,000</b>

**Total Project Cost: \$1,350,000**

**This amount accurately reflects total project cost?**

Yes

## Attachments

### Required Attachments

#### *Visual Component*

File: [f3bd222b-129.pdf](#)

#### *Alternate Text for Visual Component*

Locations of the project partners....

#### *Financial Capacity*

Title	File
HSC Form 990	<a href="#">5da92ba8-0a0.pdf</a>

#### *Board Resolution or Letter*

Title	File
HSC Board Resolution	<a href="#">9614ed5e-046.pdf</a>

### Supplemental Attachments

#### *Capital Project Questionnaire, Budget Supplements, Support Letter, Photos, Media, Other*

Title	File
Science Museum of Minnesota Support Letter	<a href="#">fce15c35-1d0.pdf</a>
Freshwater Support Letter	<a href="#">4325f82f-4fb.pdf</a>
White Earth BGCA Support Letter	<a href="#">a3c9bb74-ebf.pdf</a>
Detroit Lakes BGCA Support Letter	<a href="#">2519622d-ae0.pdf</a>
Bemidji BGCA Support Letter	<a href="#">421adb03-5b7.pdf</a>
Rep. McCollum Support Letter	<a href="#">32240713-313.pdf</a>
Red Lake BGCA Support Letter	<a href="#">e0d3c113-aeb.pdf</a>

## 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")?**

Yes

**Do you certify that background checks are performed for background check crimes, as defined in Minnesota Statutes, section 299C.61, Subd. 2, on all employees, contractors, and volunteers who have or may have access to a child to whom children's services are provided by your organization?**

Yes

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

Paul Morin, Headwaters Science Center