



Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

2026 Request for Proposal

General Information

Proposal ID: 2026-039

Proposal Title: River Bend Nature Center's Inclusive Interpretive Plan Implementation

Project Manager Information

Name: Brad Bourn

Organization: River Bend Nature Center

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Email: bourn@rbnc.org

Project Basic Information

Project Summary: River Bend's Outdoor Diversity Initiative will incorporate multi-lingual/cultural, interactive interpretive and educational exhibits providing culturally relevant and accessible nature connections with Faribault's Somali, Latinx, and Blind & Deaf communities.

ENRTF Funds Requested: \$293,000

Proposed Project Completion: December 31, 2027

LCCMR Funding Category: Small Projects (G)

Secondary Category: Education and Outdoor Recreation (C)

Project Location

What is the best scale for describing where your work will take place?

Region(s): SE

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

Region(s): SE

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.

River Bend Nature Center is an 823 acre nature preserve and environmental education center located in Faribault. We host over 100k visits per year and our educational programs serve over 10k people.

Faribault is one of the most diverse “micropolitan” areas in Minnesota. Over half of the school district’s population are BIPOC and speak a language other than English at home. The city also has a disproportionate number of Deaf and Blind as the home of the Minnesota Academies for the Deaf and Blind. The nature center is on the site of the Faribault Regional Center- Minnesota’s first state institution for individuals with disabilities. Many former patients, staff, and their descendants still live in the area.

Minnesota faces real barriers to building meaningful nature connections with non-white or disabled Minnesotans. These are exacerbated in Faribault. In addition to the diversity of cultures, our nature center is still marked with scars of trauma inflicted on communities by the State of Minnesota’s former regional center like dump sites and unmarked graves.

We haven’t had the ability to significantly invest in educational, culturally inclusive exhibits. This leaves many Minnesotans feeling excluded from nature or invisible to our efforts to build more inclusive experiences.

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.

In 2024, we hired 106 Group to develop an inclusive interpretive plan to improve how Faribault’s uniquely diverse community can build culturally relevant and accessible nature. We plan to install multi-lingual/cultural interactive educational displays in our educational building and on select outdoor areas.

LCCMR funding supports installation of exhibits in the Interpretive Center building and one outdoor node identified in the plan.

Exhibits focus on the site’s natural history and current ecology to support educational programming. Multi-lingual exhibits are designed to engage school/youth groups, children, and families from multiple cultures in learning about Minnesota biomes while encouraging stewardship. Designs draw parallels and differences in natural environments of different countries of visitors’ origins to Minnesota’s natural environment, aiding in contextual understanding.

Exhibits include interactive, tactile, large print, and audio-visual media and a low-sensory area to provide comfortable spaces for visitors with conditions that make them overwhelmed in highly stimulating environments.

An outdoor exhibit will be installed highlighting Dakota history in the region and impacts of the Faribault Regional Center. The node will acknowledge the trauma connected to the land for some Minnesotans and their descendants while welcoming everyone to access nature as a way to help heal from trauma.

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?

Minnesota’s Outdoor Recreation Taskforce identifies “improving cultural relevance and increasing accessibility” of outdoor and nature experiences as a key strategy to increase participation in the outdoors and to foster “growth in outdoor recreation from untapped users in BIPOC and other historically underrepresented communities.” Creating more inclusive visitor experiences through the installation of culturally affirming, interactive exhibits will allow BIPOC Minnesotans, Minnesotans with disabilities, and families who experienced State sponsored trauma at the regional

center to see themselves reflected, visible, and welcome in nature. This will enhance RBNC's work in creating current and future generations of more diverse environmental stewards.

Activities and Milestones

Activity 1: Designer selection and contract negotiations

Activity Budget: \$13,000

Activity Description:

We have received preliminary commitments from several vendors interested in the project and will continue engaging with them throughout LCCMR's decision-making process. However, since project execution is set for 2027, we have built in flexibility to identify alternative vendors if needed.

Confirmed implementation partners include:

-Justin Hooper Designs (Ind. Contractor): A regional designer with 20 years of experience in theater sets, retail displays, and interpretive exhibits. Hooper will adapt 106 Group's interpretive plan into interchangeable displays.

-Fardosa Hassan (Ind. Contractor): With over a decade of experience in immigrant community engagement, Hassan will support display design and Somali translation.

-Evelyn Rosas (Ind. Contractor): A Minnesota Master Naturalist and lifelong Faribault resident, Rosas will assist with Spanish translation, outreach, and programming.

-Carleton College (Vendor): The Indigenous Community Liaison will incorporate Dakota and Wahpekute narratives, while students will help develop exhibits.

-Caitlin Juvland Video Production (Ind. Contractor): A Minnesota Master Naturalist and Twin Cities film producer, Juvland will create embedded video content.

-Minnesota State Academies for the Deaf and Blind: Will support accessible display creation and translation services.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Compose RFP/RFQ & Scope for any potential replacement vendors	July 31, 2026
Vendor selection from received bids	September 30, 2026
Contract negotiation and execution with selected vendors	September 30, 2026

Activity 2: Design of interpretive display nodes and locations based on interpretive plan

Activity Budget: \$64,000

Activity Description:

Project team members and selected vendors will review the 106 Group's 62-page interpretive plan to design "interpretive nodes" that reinforce River Bend's environmental education goals. Exhibits will be interactive, multilingual, and located in three key areas:

Interior Interpretive Nodes will showcase the site's natural history and ecology, connecting southern Minnesota's ecology to the homelands of immigrant. They'll include tactile, audiovisual, and interactive elements, with audio descriptions, spanish & Somali print and transcripts for accessibility. A low-sensory area will provide a calming space for visitors sensitive to high-stimulation environments.

-Nature Trails Near the Interpretive Center: A ¾-mile loop will receive updated wayfinding, etiquette, and feature ID signs to enhance field trips and guided and self walks

-Human Impact/History Node: Located at the intersection of River Bend's trails and remnants of the Faribault Regional Center / cemetery, this exhibit explores human trauma, highlighting Faribault's role in the Dakota diaspora and the experiences of the center's residents.

-Each node is budgeted as an individual equipment expense of \$10,000 with 5–20 individual elements per node ranging from \$500–\$4,500. Cost estimates developed by the 106 Group and the US Forest Service's Center for Design and Interpretation.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Selected vendors led by lead designer present concept for approval by RBNC staff	December 31, 2026
Design revisions from RBNC staff and project ambassadors from communities	February 28, 2027

Activity 3: Fabrication and installation of interpretive nodes

Activity Budget: \$216,000

Activity Description:

Once design work is complete, exhibit nodes will be constructed offsite by Justin Hooper and installed between May and October of 2027.

Interior node materials and components will consist of interpretive panels and interactive physical features, with modest A/V and technological components installed to aid accessibility. Panels and features will primarily be constructed from high-grade plywood, MDF panels with vinyl wrapping, and high-density fiberglass panels. Some interactive features will be made from materials like "mock rock" to emulate natural features found at the nature center.

In the budget section, each node line item is listed as an individual equipment expense of \$10,000–\$15,000. Each node will consist of 5–20 individual elements, ranging in price from \$500–\$4,500 and do not meet the definition of capital in the LCCMR RFP. An estimating tool for individual elements was developed by the 106 Group and incorporated into our interpretive plan (pages 46–48). Additional price estimates were obtained from the U.S. Forest Service's Center for Design and Interpretation.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Finalize interpretive language and graphic design on exhibits	April 30, 2027
Finalize design of landing page to host QR codes, multi lingual audio descriptions of exhibits	April 30, 2027
Offsite fabrication of interpretive panels and exhibits for interior nodes	June 30, 2027
Offside fabircation of interpretive panels and exhibits for exterior nodes	August 31, 2027
Installation of interior interpretive nodes	August 31, 2027
Installation of exterior nodes (nature trail and human impact)	October 31, 2027

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?

River Bend Nature Center maintains an endowment fund (supported by individual philanthropic contributors) to provide for the maintenance and upkeep of the interpretive center. Each year, we release approximately \$10-\$20,000 from the endowment to maintain the center ensuring that we will be able to continue to care for and update new interpretive features once acquired.

We anticipate needing to overhaul interpretive features again in approximately 10 years. River Bend will create a dedicated fund for the planned obsolescence of equipment funded through this project.

Project Manager and Organization Qualifications

Project Manager Name: Brad Bourn

Job Title: Executive Director

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

Brad Bourn, MPNA- Executive Director, River Bend Nature Center

Responsible for project team management, grant reporting and accountability to deliverables

Bourn holds a master's degree in public administration, has more than two decades of non-profit executive experience.

He is a recognized leader in the field of Park and Recreation, served twelve years as a commissioner on the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, and has extensive experience in managing state and federal grants.

Daily project management of activities in the proposal will be led by Molly Dulka. A leader in engaging people from diverse backgrounds with nature and is a board member of the Minnesota Naturalists Association. She creates and leads all environmental education programs and River Bend serving more than 100,000 visitors and 10,000 program attendees each year. Dulka recently led the project to develop River Bend's interpretive plan referenced throughout this proposal.

Organization: River Bend Nature Center

Organization Description:

River Bend Nature Center, a 501(c)3 non-profit, operates an 823-acre nature preserve, public green space, trails, and an environmental learning center in Faribault. Our mission is to inspire curiosity, respect, and care for nature. We help people build lifelong connections to nature while preserving natural resources for future generations. Our staff are credentialed leaders in environmental education, parks & recreation, and conservation.

Our programs fall into three areas:

The Environmental Stewardship division manages one of the region's largest public green spaces. We restore 823 acres of land formerly home to Minnesota's first and largest state hospital. After its closure, the land was left scarred by dump sites and medical waste. Over 45 years, we have led efforts to heal the land, mitigate waste, create accessible trails, and restore critical habitats.

The Education and Engagement division is the largest environmental educator in the region, serving over 10,000 environmental learners and 100,000 park visitors annually.

The Outdoor Diversity Initiatives division eliminates barriers to nature-based careers. Our multi-year conservation career training program, in partnership with Faribault Public Schools and the Minnesota Dept. of Employment and Economic Development, prepares up to 50 job seekers annually for careers in conservation.

Budget Summary

Category / Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Purpose	Gen. Ineligible	% Benefits	# FTE	Classified Staff?	\$ Amount
Personnel								
Molly Dulka		project management, vendor selection, designer coordination, coordination of interior node installations			0%	0.4		\$34,000
Brad Bourn		Grant compliance and reporting			0%	0.04		\$5,750
Brittany Smith		Coordination of exterior node installation			0%	0.04		\$3,750
Katy Anderegg		Interpretive graphic design			0%	0.14		\$11,500
							Sub Total	\$55,000
Contracts and Services								
Justin Hooper	Service Contract	Independent contractors- Interpretive display construction and design				0		\$50,000
Carleton College	Service Contract	Indigenous Communities liaison, Dakota translation, gathering of oral stories about Dakota land use				0		\$10,000
Fardosa Hassan	Service Contract	Somali translation, design consultation				0		\$10,000
Minnesota Academies for the Deaf and Blind	Service Contract	audio and visual adaptation services				0.1		\$10,000
Evelyn Rosas	Service Contract	Spanish translation				0		\$10,000
Caitlin Juvland	Service Contract	Local film maker will lead the creation of accessible video elements incorporated into interior interpretive nodes.				0.5		\$25,000
							Sub Total	\$115,000
Equipment, Tools, and Supplies								
	Equipment	Interior interpretive node 1- Entrance vestibule	The Main Entrance Area serves as the gateway to River Bend's Interpretive Center, providing an introduction to the interactive exhibits and experiences					\$10,000

			<p>within. This node is designed to orient visitors to the center, offering clear, accessible information about the facility, its natural resources, and the various interpretive nodes. Large, visually engaging maps and directional signage will help guide visitors to key areas of interest, ensuring a seamless and welcoming experience from the moment they arrive. For Blind visitors, tactile maps and braille labels will be available to help them navigate the space, while audio guides will provide a welcoming introduction to the center's mission and offerings. Deaf visitors will benefit from a visual display, which includes captions and images to highlight the center's main features, including the different biomes, outdoor trails, and exhibits. Videos with sign language interpretation will also offer an overview of the center's goals and programs. For Somali and Latino communities, multilingual signage and culturally relevant imagery will help visitors feel immediately welcomed and informed, offering context about the center's environmental education programs and emphasizing the importance of nature conservation. Panels will introduce the significance of River Bend as a community resource for environmental education and stewardship. This welcoming area will create an inclusive, accessible entry point for all visitors, ensuring they can easily explore and engage with the natural world in meaningful ways. Material cost for a series of 5-15 unique elements within the node ranging in approximate price between \$500-4500 per element. Elements examples</p>					
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			include but are not limited to large format interchangeable interpretive panels, display stands, and interactive features. Cost is estimated using an apprx. Square footage of zone assuming mid range interpretive panel and feature materials. Features are semi-permanent in nature and do not meet the definition of capital expenditure per the RFP instructions.					
	Equipment	Interior Interpretive node 2- Natural History	This interpretive node will explore the rich geological and ecological history of the Faribault region, highlighting the transformation of the landscape over thousands of years. Visitors will learn about the retreat of glaciers during the last Ice Age, which shaped the land and created the diverse biomes that exist today, from prairies to forests. The exhibit will also delve into the unique flora and fauna that have evolved to thrive in this area. For Blind visitors, tactile maps and 3D models will help them understand the changes in the landscape over time, such as the formation of lakes and wetlands. Audio descriptions will provide a sensory experience of the land's transformation, with sounds of glacial movements, the arrival of different species, and seasonal shifts. Deaf visitors will engage with visual displays of the land's geological evolution, such as animated diagrams showing glacier movement and the rise of diverse ecosystems, with detailed sign language interpretation. For Somali and Latino communities, multilingual panels will draw comparisons between the natural history of the region and landscapes from their ancestral homelands, helping to contextualize Minnesota's environmental evolution.					\$10,000

			<p>The exhibit will emphasize shared values of preserving natural heritage across cultures. This node will provide a comprehensive understanding of the area's natural history, fostering a deeper connection to the land and its ongoing conservation. Material cost for a series of 5-15 unique elements within the node ranging in approximate price between \$500-4500 per element. Elements examples include but are not limited to large format interchangeable interpretive panels, display stands, and interactive features. Cost is estimated using an apprx. Square footage of zone assuming mid range interpretive panel and feature materials. Features are semi-permanent in nature and do not meet the definition of capital expenditure per the RFP instructions.</p>					
	Equipment	Interior Interpretive node 3- Interpretive Animals	<p>This interpretive node will feature live animals native to Minnesota's ecosystems, offering visitors an up-close opportunity to learn about the species that inhabit the state's diverse biomes. Species such as frogs, snakes, turtles, and birds of prey will serve as ambassadors for their wild counterparts, helping to engage visitors in a deeper understanding of wildlife conservation and the role these animals play in maintaining ecological balance. For Blind visitors, touchable animal models and audio guides will provide sensory engagement, with detailed descriptions of the animals' characteristics, behaviors, and habitats. Deaf visitors will have access to visual cues and sign language interpretation, highlighting the animals' movements and interactions within their environments. For Somali and Latino</p>					\$10,000

			<p>communities, the exhibit will include multilingual panels explaining the cultural significance of various animals. For instance, certain animals may hold traditional importance in the visitors' home countries, creating a deeper connection and appreciation for Minnesota's wildlife. The exhibit will also emphasize protecting their habitats, relating these concepts to similar efforts in the visitors' cultural contexts. This node will foster an inclusive environment where visitors of all backgrounds and abilities can connect with Minnesota's wildlife, inspiring a sense of stewardship for the state's natural resources. Material cost for a series of 5-15 unique elements within the node ranging in approximate price between \$500-4500 per element. Elements examples include but are not limited to large format interchangeable interpretive panels, display stands, and interactive features. Cost is estimated using an apprx. Square footage of zone assuming mid range interpretive panel and feature materials. Features are semi-permanent in nature and do not meet the definition of capital expenditure per the RFP instructions.</p>					
	Equipment	Interior Interpretive node 4 Big Woods Biome of MN	<p>The Big Woods biome is a dense, hardwood forest dominated by sugar maple, basswood, red oak, and elm. Once covering much of central and southeastern Minnesota, this biome is now a rare remnant of what was once an extensive forest ecosystem. The rich soil and abundant rainfall support diverse plant and animal life, including white-tailed deer, pileated woodpeckers, and spring ephemeral wildflowers. This interpretive node will</p>					\$10,000

			<p>provide an immersive, multi-sensory experience. Blind visitors can explore the textures of bark and leaves from key tree species, and a scent station will allow them to experience the earthy aroma of the forest. Audio recordings of rustling leaves and bird calls will be paired with visual spectrograms for Deaf visitors. For Somali and Latino communities, the exhibit will compare the Big Woods to tropical and subtropical forests of their ancestral regions, discussing the ecological importance of hardwood forests in sustaining biodiversity. Multilingual panels will also highlight the historical significance of the Big Woods for the Dakota people, who used its resources for shelter, food, and medicine. By engaging with this exhibit, visitors will develop a deeper connection to the Big Woods and an understanding of the need to preserve Minnesota's remaining forested landscapes. Material cost for a series of 5-15 unique elements within the node ranging in approximate price between \$500-4500 per element. Elements examples include but are not limited to large format interchangeable interpretive panels, display stands, and interactive features. Cost is estimated using an apprx. Square footage of zone assuming mid range interpretive panel and feature materials. Features are semi-permanent in nature and do not meet the definition of capital expenditure per the RFP instructions.</p>					
	Equipment	Interior Interpretive Node 5 Priarie Biome of MN	<p>Once covering one-third of Minnesota, the prairie grasslands are now one of the most endangered ecosystems in North America. This biome is home to</p>					\$10,000

			<p>deep-rooted grasses like big bluestem, switchgrass, and Indian grass, which help prevent soil erosion and store carbon. The vast, open landscape supports diverse wildlife, including bison, prairie chickens, pollinators like monarch butterflies, and burrowing animals such as badgers and thirteen-lined ground squirrels. This interpretive node will offer a hands-on and accessible experience for all visitors. Blind guests will be able to feel the textures of native grasses and wildflowers, while scent stations will allow them to experience the aromas of prairie plants like purple coneflower and wild bergamot. Deaf visitors will engage with visual elements showing the movement of grasses in the wind and the role of fire in maintaining prairie health. For Somali and Latino communities, the exhibit will highlight similarities between Minnesota's prairie and the open grasslands of East Africa and Latin America, drawing connections to traditional land management practices. Multilingual displays will also share how Indigenous Dakota people used controlled burns to sustain the prairie, reinforcing the importance of conservation and restoration efforts today. Material cost for a series of 5-15 unique elements within the node ranging in approximate price between \$500-4500 per element. Elements examples include but are not limited to large format interchangeable interpretive panels, display stands, and interactive features. Cost is estimated using an apprx. Square footage of zone assuming mid range interpretive panel and feature materials. Features are</p>					
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			semi-permanent in nature and do not meet the definition of capital expenditure per the RFP instructions.					
	Equipment	Interior Interpretive Node 6 Northwood and Great Lake Biome of MN	<p>Minnesota's Coniferous Forest and Great Lake Biomes are distinct yet interconnected ecosystems. The Coniferous Forest, or Boreal Forest, thrives in the state's colder northern regions, dominated by evergreen trees like pines, spruces, and firs. It supports diverse wildlife, including moose, wolves, black bears, and over 200 bird species, and features dense forests, bogs, and nutrient-poor soils. The climate here is cool and shaded. The Great Lake Biome includes the shores of Lake Superior, with habitats such as wetlands, marshes, and rocky shorelines. Rich in biodiversity, it supports fish like lake trout and walleye, migratory birds, amphibians, and aquatic plants. The climate is milder, with cooler summers and milder winters than inland areas due to the lake's influence. An interpretive node will provide an inclusive experience for all visitors. Blind individuals can explore textures and audio descriptions of the biomes, while deaf visitors will access visual representations. Multilingual exhibits will highlight the universal importance of water across cultures for Somali and Latino communities. Material cost for a series of 5-15 unique elements within the node ranging in approximate price between \$500-4500 per element. Elements examples include but are not limited to large format interchangeable interpretive panels, display stands, and interactive features.</p>					\$10,000

	Equipment	Interior Interpretive Node 7- Low sensory area	<p>This interpretive node is designed as a calm, welcoming space for visitors who may be easily overstimulated, including those with sensory processing sensitivities, autism spectrum disorders, or other conditions that make high-stimulation environments challenging. The area will feature soft lighting, natural textures, and soothing sounds from nature, creating a peaceful retreat where visitors can relax and process their surroundings at their own pace. For Blind visitors, tactile displays will allow them to feel materials like smooth stones, soft moss, and tree bark, connecting them to the natural world through touch. Deaf visitors will experience visual elements such as subtle, flowing water displays or the gentle sway of plants in the wind, complementing the calming atmosphere. To accommodate individuals on the autism spectrum, the space will incorporate features such as sound-dampening walls, soft, neutral colors, and low-stimulation sensory activities. Interactive stations will allow visitors to engage with nature in a gentle, non-overwhelming way, while clear signage and visual aids will guide them through the space. For Somali and Latino communities, this quiet area will offer a place for reflection, fostering a peaceful connection to nature that respects cultural values of rest and well-being. Multilingual panels will emphasize the healing properties of nature for all visitors, ensuring accessibility and inclusion for all. Material cost for a series of 5-15 unique elements within the node ranging in approximate price between \$500-4500</p>					\$2,000
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			per element. Elements examples include but are not limited to large format interchangeable interpretive panels, display stands, and interactive features.					
	Equipment	Interior Interpretive Node 8- 3D Sandbox	The 3D Sandbox node offers an interactive, hands-on learning experience that allows visitors to explore topography and geology in a dynamic way. Using a projected map, visitors can shape the sandbox's surface to create mountains, valleys, rivers, and lakes, while real-time visualizations show how water flows and erodes the landscape. This exhibit is designed to engage visitors in understanding the forces that shape our environment, such as erosion, water movement, and land formation, making complex concepts accessible through play. For Blind visitors, the 3D models will be accompanied by tactile guides that allow them to feel the topographical changes they've made, helping them understand how the land changes over time. Audio cues will describe the flow of water and changes in the terrain. Deaf visitors will benefit from the visual, real-time changes displayed on the sand as they manipulate the terrain, with clear, visual explanations of the processes at play. For Somali and Latino communities, this exhibit will incorporate multilingual instructions and comparisons to similar environmental features in their homelands, providing cultural context for understanding Minnesota's unique topography. It will also emphasize the role of water in shaping landscapes, drawing parallels to the importance of water in many cultural practices. This					\$4,500

			hands-on experience fosters deeper engagement with the natural world, encouraging visitors to understand and respect the forces shaping Minnesota's landscapes. Material cost for a series of 5-15 unique elements within the node ranging in approximate price between \$500-4500 per element. Elements examples include but are not limited to large format interchangeable interpretive panels, display stands, and interactive features. Cost is estimated using an apprx. Square footage of zone assuming mid range interpretive panel and feature materials. Features are semi-permanent in nature and do not meet the definition of capital expenditure per the RFP instructions.					
	Equipment	Interior interpretive node 9- Small children's discovery space	The Children's Natural Play/Learning Area is an indoor space designed to encourage hands-on exploration, fostering a connection to nature through unstructured play and learning. This interactive space features natural looking structures like logs, rocks, and plants to climb in/on and inviting children to engage with the environment in a way that sparks curiosity and creativity. The area promotes physical activity and social interaction while introducing young visitors to ecological concepts, such as geology, plant life, and wildlife habitats. For Blind visitors, tactile play elements like textured stones, tree branches, and water features will allow them to experience the outdoors through touch, while audio descriptions guide them through the interactive elements. Deaf visitors will enjoy visual cues and signs throughout the space, with videos and interactive displays explaining the					\$10,000

			<p>natural processes occurring in the play area, such as how rainwater flows or how plants grow. For Somali and Latino communities, the play area will include multilingual signage to provide context for the different natural elements, emphasizing the importance of outdoor learning and environmental stewardship. Cultural stories and practices related to nature will be highlighted, connecting the play area to their heritage and fostering a deeper sense of belonging in nature. This play area provides a safe, welcoming space where children of all abilities and backgrounds can learn through exploration, building a foundation for lifelong environmental appreciation and stewardship. Material cost for a series of 5-15 unique elements within the node ranging in approximate price between \$500-4500 per element. Elements examples include but are not limited to large format interchangeable interpretive panels, display stands, and interactive features. Cost is estimated using an apprx. Square footage of zone assuming mid range interpretive panel and feature materials. Features are semi-permanent in nature and do not meet the definition of capital expenditure per the RFP instructions.</p>					
	Equipment	Exterior Interpretive node 1- Nature trail exhibits and wayfinding	<p>This outdoor node will consist of signage along a ¾ mile nature loop immediately adjacent to the interpretive center and will receive new updated wayfinding, etiquette, and feature ID signs to enhance the experience of school groups coming for field trips and naturalist guided tours. Signs will be designed to be informative but subtle and low profile to not detract</p>					\$10,000

			<p>from the nature based experience. Material cost for a series of 5-15 unique elements within the node ranging in approximate price between \$500-4500 per element. Elements examples include but are not limited to large format interchangeable interpretive panels, display stands, and interactive features. Cost is estimated using an apprx. Square footage of zone assuming mid range interpretive panel and feature materials. Features are semi-permanent in nature and do not meet the definition of capital expenditure per the RFP instructions.</p>					
	Equipment	Exterior Interpretive Node 2-Human impacts on the land	<p>This outdoor interpretive node will explore the complex and often painful history of the land where River Bend Nature Center is located, focusing on the intersection of Dakota history, the Faribault Regional Center, and its legacy. The site was originally home to the Dakota people, who lived and thrived on the land long before it became a state institution. The Faribault Regional Center, Minnesota's first state institution for individuals with disabilities, operated here for over a century, leaving behind a legacy marked by systemic harm, including unmarked graves, a history of forced institutionalization, and a painful relationship with the local Indigenous community. The exhibit will acknowledge the trauma associated with this land, offering a reflective space for visitors to understand the painful history of both Dakota dispossession and the injustices faced by disabled individuals in institutional settings. Through accessible, respectful signage and historical context, the node will</p>					\$10,000

			<p>offer a healing dialogue for visitors. For Blind visitors, tactile maps and touchable replicas of historical artifacts will allow them to engage with the land's complex past. Audio guides will offer contextual information about the cultural and historical significance of the site. Deaf visitors will benefit from visual panels and video displays, including sign language interpretation, sharing the history of the Dakota people, the Regional Center, and the impact of these events on the community. For Somali and Latino communities, multilingual panels will explain the significance of the land and its history, drawing connections to shared experiences of trauma and resilience in their own cultural histories. The exhibit will encourage reflection and healing, while also providing a pathway for visitors to understand how the natural world can serve as a space for reconciliation and healing. This outdoor node will honor the memory of those affected by these histories while inviting all visitors to find common ground through a connection to nature and a commitment to healing. Material cost for a series of 5-15 unique elements within the node ranging in approximate price between \$500-4500 per element. Elements examples include but are not limited to large format interchangeable interpretive panels, display stands, and interactive features. Cost is estimated using an apprx. Square footage of zone assuming mid range interpretive panel and feature materials. Features are semi-permanent in nature and do not meet the definition of capital expenditure per the RFP instructions.</p>					
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	Equipment	Select multi-media equipment for incorporation into nodes	A misc. collection of low price technology including monitors, speakers, limited gallery lighting, and laptops used in various nodes to operate some multi-media features. It is anticipated that no single item will have a cost of more than \$1000	X				\$7,500
							Sub Total	\$104,000
Capital Expenditures								
							Sub Total	-
Acquisitions and Stewardship								
							Sub Total	-
Travel In Minnesota								
							Sub Total	-
Travel Outside Minnesota								
							Sub Total	-
Printing and Publication								
	Printing	Accessible and multi-lingual program brochures, trail maps, and handouts	Printing expenses for misc. accessible handouts including braille, large format, and spanish.					\$4,000
							Sub Total	\$4,000
Other Expenses								
		Website accessibility page creation and hosting	landing pages for multi lingual translation	X				\$15,000
							Sub Total	\$15,000
							Grand Total	\$293,000

Classified Staff or Generally Ineligible Expenses

Category/Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Justification Ineligible Expense or Classified Staff Request
Equipment, Tools, and Supplies		Select multi-media equipment for incorporation into nodes	These items are necessary to incorporate accessibility features and language features into interpretive displays.
Other Expenses		Website accessibility page creation and hosting	Hosting / website landing pages are necessary for accessibility features: Language translation, audio description, ASL interpretation, etc.

Non ENRTF Funds

Category	Specific Source	Use	Status	Amount
State				
			State Sub Total	-
Non-State				
Cash	River Bend Nature Center / City of Faribault cash match	Philanthropic and municipal tax dollars for capital cash match for permanent improvements to the building (flooring/walls/lighting), trail grading, and trail improvements to happen simultaneously with interpretive displays.	Secured	\$100,000
			Non State Sub Total	\$100,000
			Funds Total	\$100,000

Total Project Cost: \$393,000

This amount accurately reflects total project cost?

Yes

Attachments

Required Attachments

Visual Component

File: [e267a28d-5fc.pdf](#)

Alternate Text for Visual Component

River Bend Nature Center Interpretive Concept Plan by 106 Group Page 8 of 56 (existing conditions and opportunities). Full plan included as optional attachment....

Financial Capacity

Title	File
2023 River Bend Audit	8c12a17a-c22.pdf
2023 River Bend 990	c661e7a9-1e6.pdf
Certificate of Good Standing	f2a8a827-c1c.pdf

Board Resolution or Letter

Title	File
Board resolution and letter	b1b57256-d4f.pdf

Supplemental Attachments

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

Title	File
Faribault Chamber of Tourism Letter of Support	d03f61f6-036.pdf
Faribault Public School Support Letter	c603f54d-3e7.pdf
River Bend Interpretive Concept Plan	c0ced163-457.pdf

Administrative Use

Does your project include restoration or acquisition of land rights?

No

Do you understand that travel expenses are only approved if they follow the "Commissioner's Plan" promulgated by the Commissioner of Management of Budget or, for University of Minnesota projects, the University of Minnesota plan?

N/A

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:

Brad Bourn, Molly Dulka, Brittany Smith- River Bend Nature Center staff.

Do you understand that a named service contract does not constitute a funder-designated subrecipient or approval of a sole-source contract? In other words, a service contract entity is only approved if it has been selected according to the contracting rules identified in state law and policy for organizations that receive ENRTF funds through direct appropriations, or in the DNR's reimbursement manual for non-state organizations. These rules may include competitive bidding and prevailing wage requirements

Yes, I understand