



Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

2026 Request for Proposal

General Information

Proposal ID: 2026-102

Proposal Title: Improving Trail Accessibility for Minnesotans at Osprey Wilds

Project Manager Information

Name: Bryan Wood

Organization: Osprey Wilds Environmental Learning Center

Office Telephone: (320) 245-2648

Email: wood@ospreywilds.org

Project Basic Information

Project Summary: Osprey Wilds seeks to improve our network of 13 miles of hiking & cross country ski trails for all Minnesotans to enjoy by adding trail & interpretive signage, and Class-Five Crushed Limestone.

ENRTF Funds Requested: \$25,000

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): Central

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

Statewide

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.

Osprey Wilds hosts over 3,000 K-12 students each year at our 783-acre campus in Sandstone, MN. In addition, we also get thousands of community and adult participants and visitors each year attending our programs, and simply using our trails. We currently have no trail signage posted on our network of 13 miles of trails, making it difficult for participants and visitors to know where they are at. Osprey Wilds is uniquely positioned approximately halfway between Duluth and the Twin Cities, and just five miles off Interstate 35, making it an excellent spot for travelers to stop, explore and enjoy nature. Our trails are free and open to the public for hiking, running, and cross country skiing. By adding signage, we believe we will not only make our user experience better for our program participants, but we will create a more welcoming, appealing and accessible set of trails for visitors to enjoy. We also plan to upgrade to Class Five Gravel on our trails that go to and between our buildings. These efforts will expand the quality network of trails in Minnesota, improve accessibility and safety, and encourage all Minnesotans to recreate and engage with nature more comfortably and easily.

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.

We plan to design, order and install all-weather, durable exterior trail signs and install them on posts at all 50 of our trail intersections and trailheads on our 13 miles of trails at Osprey Wilds' 783-acre campus in Sandstone, MN. We have already mapped out our trails digital mapping software, now we seek to add physical trail maps to our site. In addition to trail mapping signage, we also plan to add four interpretive signs that highlight the unique natural ecosystems present at Osprey Wilds; the northern coniferous forest, the eastern broadleaf forest, the tallgrass prairie, and our freshwater resources Grindstone Lake and Windmill Creek. These interpretive signs will provide self-led educational opportunities for anyone exploring on their own to learn more about these important ecosystems found at Osprey Wilds and within Minnesota. In addition, we also plan to add Class Five Gravel around the .50 miles of trails that lead to and connect to our campus buildings, improving accessibility for K-12 students, program participants, and casual visitors. By making these upgrades, we add another 13 miles of beautiful, high quality trails to Minnesota's vast network of trails, giving more free opportunities for people to connect with and enjoy nature.

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?

Outcomes of this project will expand Minnesota's network of quality trails, improve accessibility and safety, and encourage all Minnesotans to recreate and engage with nature.

This project will add interpretive signage highlight Minnesota's three distinct native terrestrial biomes, giving people the opportunity to learn about the characteristics, range, and details of these ecosystems. This project will also add interpretive signage about our freshwater resources, highlighting Windmill Creek, and Grindstone Lake - a rare oligotrophic lake to east-central Minnesota and one of the state's most unique lakes. At 153 ft deep, it's the southernmost lake in Minnesota to hold lake trout.

Activities and Milestones

Activity 1: Improve Trail Surfaces

Activity Budget: \$5,000

Activity Description:

We will add 140 cubic yards of Class Five crushed limestone to our .50 miles of trails that connect our various campus buildings, creating a more accessible and safe environment for participants and visitors.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Order 140 cubic yards of Class Five crushed limestone and have delivered	August 31, 2026
Spread Class Five crushed limestone 5" deep on .50 miles of trails	October 31, 2026

Activity 2: Add Trail Map & Interpretive Signage to 13 miles of Osprey Wilds' Trails

Activity Budget: \$20,000

Activity Description:

We will design and order 50 trail map signs and 4 interpretive signs (northern coniferous forest, eastern broadleaf forest, Tallgrass prairie, and Grindstone Lake/Windmill Creek), along with all necessary installation materials and install these at our 50 trail waypoints, and along our trails at each of the four unique habitats.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Design and order 50 trail map signs, posts and supplies	October 31, 2026
Install 50 trail map signs posts and supplies	May 31, 2027
Design and order four interpretive natural ecosystem signs	June 30, 2027
Install four interpretive native ecosystem signs	August 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?

Upon completion of this project, Osprey Wilds will maintain the trail signage and interpretive signage through soliciting funds from our network of donors as well as trail patrons, encouraging their support for the trails they enjoy. There are multiple QR code donation signs on the property, which proceeds will go towards maintenance of these trails.

Other ENRTF Appropriations Awarded in the Last Six Years

Name	Appropriation	Amount Awarded
Increasing K-12 Student Learning to Achieve ENRTF's Goals	M.L. 2022, , Chp. 94, Art. , Sec. 2, Subd. 05b	\$1,602,000
Increasing Access to Environmental Education Youth Camps	M.L. 2024, , Chp. 83, Art. , Sec. 2, Subd. 05k	\$163,000

Project Manager and Organization Qualifications

Project Manager Name: Bryan Wood

Job Title: Executive Director

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

Bryan Wood has served as Executive Director of Osprey Wilds for 16 years. During that time, he has managed an annual of budget of approximately \$2.5 million, and a staff of 30+ employees. He has been the grant writer and administrator for four previous LCCMR grants totaling nearly \$1.9 million, with a pending 2025 LCCMR grant for \$3.92 million, and has secured other large grants including with the MN Land Trust (\$865,000), Shuttered Venue Operators Grant (\$866,000), two Payroll Protection Program grants (\$397,000) and numerous five-figure grants over the years. Bryan has worked at Osprey Wilds for 18 years and been involved with environmental education for over 22 years. Bryan has overseen the facilities operations of Osprey Wilds since 2009. During that time, Osprey Wilds has gone through many facilities projects including extensive additions of clean energy technologies, roofing projects, new buildings, the addition and infrastructure building of a regenerative farm, trail and road improvements, and regular attendance to repair, maintenance, and depreciation needs.

Organization: Osprey Wilds Environmental Learning Center

Organization Description:

Osprey Wilds has connected individuals to nature for over 55 years, and since our inception in 1969, we have educated more than 300,000 people (reaching more than 15,000 annually).

Much of our mission to instill a connection and commitment to the environment in people of all communities through experiential learning is accomplished through our accredited K-12 environmental education program, which delivers immersive, hands-on multi-day learning experiences to more than 3,000 students each year from more than 70 urban and rural schools across Minnesota.

At Osprey Wilds, our students, many of them experiencing nature for the first time, are offered more than thirty class options focused on life, earth, and physical sciences; natural and local cultural history; outdoor recreation and adventure; team-building; personal growth; sustainable energy; and agriculture. Although most visit from the Twin Cities Metro, Osprey Wilds serves a range of students geographically, economically, and culturally. The majority are students

of color.

While best known for our K-12 programs, authorizing charter schools has extended our mission, particularly to low-income students. With 36 charter schools, each with an environmental education focus, we are Minnesota's largest authorizer. More than 10,000 students annually acquire environmental literacy through our schools.

Budget Summary

Category / Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Purpose	Gen. Ineligible	% Benefits	# FTE	Classified Staff?	\$ Amount
Personnel								
Building & Grounds Manager		Install Signs on Property. 100 hours to install signs @ \$34/hr.			25%	1		\$3,400
Marketing & Communications Coordinator		Design content and layout for four interpretive signs, as well as trail map signs. 80 hours @ \$25/hr.			25%	1		\$2,000
							Sub Total	\$5,400
Contracts and Services								
							Sub Total	-
Equipment, Tools, and Supplies								
	Tools and Supplies	Class Five Crushed Limestone	To add 5" of Class Five crushed limestone gravel (140 cubic yards) to our .50 miles of trails to each of our campus buildings					\$5,000
	Tools and Supplies	Trail Map signage equipment and supplies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Max Metal signs – 36x24 - \$65 each sign, 50 map signs \$3,250 + \$160 for shipping Metal frames - \$90 each – 50 frames - \$4,500 4x4 8' posts \$25 each - 50 posts - \$1,250 Metal sign posts - \$10 each 50 posts - \$500 5"x5" Square plastic signs for way finding - \$48 each for 50 - \$2,400 High resolution base map image: \$200 Bolts, washers, nuts - \$1.80 each for 100 attachments - \$180 Screws – 400 pack - \$162.00 Drill bits – Hex bits – 6 pack for \$7 - \$42 					\$12,750
	Tools and Supplies	Four Interpretive Signs highlighting the Northern Coniferous Forest, Eastern Broadleaf Forest,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Max Metal Signs – 4 36" x48" @ \$175 each - \$700 Metal 					\$1,850

		Tallgrass prairie, and Grindstone Lake & Windmill Creek	frames 4 @ \$200 each - \$800 • 4x4 8' posts @ \$25 each – 12 - \$325					
							Sub Total	\$19,600
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	\$25,000

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	Osprey Wilds Environmental Learning Center	Contracted Site and Trail Map Plans through Alliance architectural firm	Secured	\$45,000
In-Kind	Osprey Wilds Environmental Learning Center	Volunteer Help to spread Class Five crushed limestone	Secured	\$5,000
			Non State Sub Total	\$50,000
			Funds Total	\$50,000

Total Project Cost: \$75,000

This amount accurately reflects total project cost?

Yes

Attachments

Required Attachments

Visual Component

File: [878f60a6-c49.pdf](#)

Alternate Text for Visual Component

Attached is Alliance's Campus Site and Trail Map plans. Page 7 shows our trail network layout and our 50 waypoints that we would mark each with trail map signage. Page 6 shows different options of trail and interpretive signage options...

Financial Capacity

Title	File
Certificate of Good Standing Secretary of State	187c74fa-707.pdf
Audited Financials 2024	08173727-f8b.pdf
2024 Form 990	21991e49-688.pdf

Board Resolution or Letter

Title	File
Board Resolution	a5e82915-b98.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")?

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:

Bryan Wood, Osprey Wilds Environmental Learning Center

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

N/A

