



## Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

### 2026 Request for Proposal

#### General Information

**Proposal ID:** 2026-147

**Proposal Title:** Land Perspectives: Experiential History at Eagle Bluff ELC

#### Project Manager Information

**Name:** Colleen Foehrenbacher

**Organization:** Eagle Bluff Environmental Learning Center

**Office Telephone:** (507) 467-2714

**Email:** colleenf@eaglebluffmn.org

#### Project Basic Information

**Project Summary:** Land Perspectives” provides approximately 120 schools attending Eagle Bluff’s Outdoor School to explore Dakota and Settler Colonist land use in the 1800s through hands-on activities and using historically accurate dwellings.

**ENRTF Funds Requested:** \$210,000

**Proposed Project Completion:** June 30, 2029

**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?**

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.**

Eagle Bluff ELC hosts 9,000 K-12 students annually through its Outdoor School program, offering experiential classes in adventure, science, and cultural history. These include lessons on the nomadic peoples of the Ice Age, the pre-contact Oneota, and European Settler Colonists, which provide students with hands-on learning experiences that can't be replicated in the traditional classroom. While these lessons provide important historical context, they do not address the contributions and ongoing role of the Dakota peoples, who play a pivotal role in Minnesota's contemporary history.

The new 2022 Minnesota state history standards also strongly emphasize the importance of learning more about Indigenous peoples, stating that "The contributions of Minnesota's American Indian tribes and communities are integrated into each strand and all standards." This shift highlights the need for a more comprehensive approach to history education, one that incorporates the experiences and contributions of federally recognized tribes, like the Dakota, in a more prominent way.

Given the increasing demand from schools for content that supports these new standards, there is a clear need for a class that not only honors the historical significance of the Dakota peoples but also highlights their continued presence in Minnesota culture today.

**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.**

Recognizing the need for more comprehensive history education, particularly regarding Dakota peoples, we developed a 3-hour class three years ago, "Land Perspectives." This class incorporates Indigenous viewpoints, aligning with the 2022 state history standards and fulfilling LCCMR priorities C.3 (engaging, hands-on programming) and C.5 (integrating diverse cultural perspectives into environmental education).

To bring this class to life in a meaningful and historically accurate way, we aim to build three physical sites that will serve as authentic learning environments. Students will visit replica dwellings used by both Dakota people and settler colonists who homesteaded Minnesota. At each site, students will participate in hands-on activities such as hide-tanning, farming, and cooking, allowing them to experience how these groups used and impacted the land of southeast Minnesota. These activities will provide a deeper understanding of the seasonal land use of Dakota people in contrast with settler practices.

Lastly, while we have begun establishing partnerships with Indigenous groups, particularly the Prairie Island Indian Community, this grant will fund their time and expertise. This partnership will ensure the class uplifts the Dakota voice, supporting LCCMR priority C.7 (fostering deeper connections with local Indigenous communities).

**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?**

-By exploring both Dakota and settler colonist practices, students will gain a deeper understanding of how different cultural approaches to natural resource use and conservation have shaped Minnesota's landscapes, fostering respect for sustainable practices and the preservation of natural resources.

-Through hands-on activities and direct interaction with natural materials, students will cultivate a sense of place and a personal connection to Minnesota's natural resources, encouraging future stewardship.

-Collaboration with Indigenous communities will offer students the opportunity to engage directly with Indigenous knowledge, enhancing their understanding of the importance of preserving both cultural and natural resources through respectful partnerships.

## Activities and Milestones

### Activity 1: Consultation with Indigenous Collaborators

**Activity Budget:** \$50,000

**Activity Description:**

Eagle Bluff has been engaging with Prairie Island Indian Community and the Great Lakes Lifeways Institute regarding the development of this class to ensure we are building culturally accurate learning structures and student activities. This collaboration ensures that the “Land Perspectives” lesson plan is not only historically accurate but also respectful and inclusive, providing students with an engaging, culturally rich educational experience. We will formalize this Indigenous partnership by entering into a paid contract with Prairie Island Indian Community during the duration of this grant period to collaborate on finalizing the class.

**Activity Milestones:**

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Formalize the partnerships with Indigenous collaborators	December 31, 2026
Review lesson plan and class activities	March 31, 2027
Attend pre-design meetings for the bark house construction	October 31, 2027
On-site construction oversight and participation for the bark house	September 30, 2028

### Activity 2: Site preparation, Tipi assembly & Sod House Construction

**Activity Budget:** \$41,481

**Activity Description:**

We will be constructing historically significant demonstration structures: two Dakota tipis at site 1 (Indigenous) and a sod house (Settler Colonist) at site 2. The tipis will be purchased, as recommended by our Indigenous partners, and assembled by Eagle Bluff staff and volunteers. This will ensure the structures align with Dakota cultural practices while providing an authentic learning environment for students.

For the sod house at Site 2, construction will begin site preparation, as half of the structure will be built underground. Materials for the frame and roof will be purchased, and the walls will be constructed using traditional settler colonist methods. The sod house will serve as both a historical demonstration and a living classroom experience; the wall construction will be integrated into the class as an activity, allowing students to participate in the building process. This class will provide students with hands-on, immersive educational experiences that reflect both Dakota traditions and settler colonist practices. These structures will serve as valuable learning tools for students to engage with history, fostering a deeper understanding of the cultural practices that shaped Minnesota’s past.

**Activity Milestones:**

Description	Approximate Completion Date
ESA	February 28, 2027
Consultation with SHPO	March 31, 2027
Site preparation: all 3 sites	May 31, 2027
Site 1: purchase tipi supplies	May 31, 2027
Site 2: purchase sod house structure materials	June 30, 2027
Site 1: assemble tipis	July 31, 2027
Site 2: finish the framing of sod house	August 31, 2027

### Activity 3: Bark Lodge Construction

**Activity Budget:** \$108,739

**Activity Description:**

This activity involves construction of a bark lodge which will be located at Site 3 which has an Indigenous focus. The ESA and SHPO consultation was addressed in the previous activity. Local Indigenous groups, especially Prairie Island Indian Community and Great Lakes Lifeways Institute will ideally be involved in the pre-construction meetings and on-site construction monitoring to ensure accuracy and respect for cultural traditions.

We will contract with specialized construction companies for the bark lodge. The completion of the bark lodge will provide an immersive learning environment where students can engage with Dakota cultural history firsthand.

**Activity Milestones:**

Description	Approximate Completion Date
RFP/RFQ preparation or research sole source to build bark lodge	December 31, 2026
Select contractor for construction of bark house	February 28, 2027
Approval of building plans	May 31, 2027
Permits secured	July 31, 2027
Site preparation	October 31, 2027
Construction administration and oversight ends	August 31, 2028
Finish construction of the bark lodge	August 31, 2028

### Activity 4: Activity 4: Purchase of equipment and supplies

**Activity Budget:** \$9,780

**Activity Description:**

This activity involves purchasing the equipment and supplies needed for the various student activities that will be offered during this 3 hour class. The activities are either focused on the land use for Settler Colonists or Indigenous people. All activities are hands-on.

**Activity Milestones:**

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Finishing purchasing supplies for the students activities	September 30, 2028

## 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?**

After grant funds have allowed us to install the three lodging structures and purchase the start-up equipment and supplies for the class, future maintenance expenses for the sites and materials will be Eagle Bluff's responsibility. Eagle Bluff uses rigorous evaluation tools (lead teacher interviews, chaperone evaluation forms, student assessment, and internal feedback channels for staff) to ensure the class is meeting objectives and our mission. Eagle Bluff's curriculum team will revise lesson plans and update materials or activities in response to trends from these evaluations. We will also provide opportunities for our indigenous partners to attend classes and provide feedback.

## 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
Root River Habitat Restoration at Eagle Bluff	M.L. 2023, , Chp. 60, Art. 2, Sec. 2, Subd. 08c	\$866,000
Minnesota Driftless Hiking Trail	M.L. 2024, , Chp. 83, Art. , Sec. 2, Subd. 09a	\$426,000

## Project Manager and Organization Qualifications

**Project Manager Name:** Colleen Foehrenbacher

**Job Title:** Executive Director

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

Colleen Foehrenbacher has served as Executive Director for Eagle Bluff Environmental Learning Center since April of 2020. Before this, she served as Eagle Bluff's Deputy and Education Director for 3 years. While at Eagle Bluff Colleen has managed over \$2,436,000 in grant projects including \$1,684,800 ENRTF funds with the following projects: "Expanding Raptor Center Online Education (sub-grantee)," "Root River Habitat Restoration Project," "Minnesota Driftless Hiking Trail," and "Outdoor School for Minnesota K-12 Students (sub-grantee)".

**Organization:** Eagle Bluff Environmental Learning Center

**Organization Description:**

Founded in 1978, Eagle Bluff is a year-round outdoor learning center providing accredited education programs and outdoor adventures to over 14,000 children, adults, and families each year. For the people that visit Eagle Bluff, their experiences are more than just another nature center trip or walk through the woods. By participating in direct observation, interaction, engagement, and exploration of the outdoors, participants connect with the outdoors on another level, cultivating a relationship with and deeper understanding of the natural world. Through hands-on learning in nature, we aim for people to leave Eagle Bluff with experiences that stick with them and inspire them to become lifelong stewards of the environment. We accomplish this goal through our overnight Outdoor School program, Nature Preschool in partnership with Head Start, summer youth, adult, and family camps, adult education, public programs, and an outdoor education training program. Our mission is to empower people to care for the earth and each other and we achieve this mission by providing programs that:

- Foster a sense of respect, stewardship and community
- Impart life skills such as teamwork and problem-solving
- Increase environmental awareness & academic literacy

- Promote positive outdoor experiences, and
- Spark curiosity and appreciation for the natural world

## Budget Summary

Category / Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Purpose	Gen. Ineligible	% Benefits	# FTE	Classified Staff?	\$ Amount
<b>Personnel</b>								
							<b>Sub Total</b>	-
<b>Contracts and Services</b>								
Prairie Island Indian Community	Service Contract	educational consultant				0.4		\$50,000
Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office	Service Contract	SHPO review				-		\$15,000
TBD	Service Contract	Minnesota Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA)				-		\$10,000
Great Lakes Lifeways Institute	Service Contract	Design, construction, and education constulation for the bark lodge				0		\$108,739
							<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>\$183,739</b>
<b>Equipment, Tools, and Supplies</b>								
	Tools and Supplies	10 pump drills	fire starter activity for students (Indigenous activity)					\$450
	Equipment	1 freezer	to store deer hides for tanning (Indigenous activity)					\$500
	Tools and Supplies	2 Storage bins	to store deer hides being actively used for fleshing/tanning (Indigenous activity)					\$100
	Tools and Supplies	4 fleshing beams	for fleshing deer hides (Indigenous activity)					\$640
	Tools and Supplies	4 bags of shells	to use with the pump drills to create beads for art (Indigenous activity)					\$100
	Tools and Supplies	1 crosscut saw	for cutting wood cookies (settler colonist activity)					\$250
	Tools and Supplies	10 throwing axes	(Indigenous activity)					\$500

	Tools and Supplies	8 foot landscape timber	for building the throwing axe targets/backstop (Indigenous activity)					\$112
	Tools and Supplies	2-in x 4-in x 12-ft treated lumber	for building the throwing axe targets/backstop (Indigenous activity)					\$10
	Tools and Supplies	1 kevlar net backstop	for the throwing axe activity (Indigenous activity)					\$230
	Tools and Supplies	5 bundles of flint	for fire starting (settler colonist activity)					\$525
	Tools and Supplies	20 pieces of steel	for fire starting (settler colonist activity)					\$219
	Tools and Supplies	3 wooden bowls	for the cooking activities (Indigenous and settler colonist activity)					\$117
	Tools and Supplies	15 antler flintknapping kits	(Indigenous activity)					\$480
	Equipment	1 bovine milking udder simulator	(settler colonist activity)					\$1,299
	Tools and Supplies	1 milking stool	for use with the bovine milking udder simulator (settler colonist activity)					\$100
	Tools and Supplies	10 hand looms	(settler colonist activity)					\$430
	Tools and Supplies	20 maple syrup spiles	(Indigenous activity)					\$41
	Tools and Supplies	4 human powered plows (high wheel cultivator)	(settler colonist activity)					\$720
	Tools and Supplies	10 pairs of safety glasses	for use with flint knapping and fire starting (settler colonist activity)					\$170
	Tools and Supplies	1 campfire pit grate	for cooking use (settler colonist activity)					\$298
	Tools and Supplies	1 hand turned grain mill	wheat grinding for cooking (settler colonist activity)					\$370
	Equipment	1 wood burning stove	For use in the sod house (settler colonist site)					\$400
	Tools and Supplies	4 stove pipe sections	For use in the sod house (settler colonist site)					\$636
	Tools and Supplies	1 single wall stove pipe	For use in the sod house (settler colonist site)					\$20
	Tools and Supplies	wood stove ceiling kit	For use in the sod house (settler colonist site)					\$279
	Tools and Supplies	1 cast iron dutch oven	cooking supplies (settler colonist activity)					\$80
	Tools and Supplies	1 cast iron fry pan	for the cooking activities (settler colonist activity)					\$70



	Tools and Supplies	2 brooms	for use in the sod house (settler colonist site)					\$66
	Equipment	1 week rental of bobcat/skid steer	for the site preparation for the historical structures (6 ton excavator one-week rental)					\$1,500
	Equipment	2, all year round tipi (22 feet)	replica tipi for dakota winter site (Indigenous site)					\$4,800
	Tools and Supplies	2, tipi liners	Put on the ground in both tipis (Indigenous site)					\$550
	Tools and Supplies	15 blankets	Remnants used for tipi, sod house, or bark lodge (Indigenous and settler colonist sites)					\$225
	Tools and Supplies	2 rope beds	Furniture for the sod house (settler colonist site)					\$200
	Tools and Supplies	4 wood benches	Furniture for the sod house (settler colonist site)					\$120
	Tools and Supplies	2 trunks	Furniture for the sod house (settler colonist site)					\$100
	Tools and Supplies	3 wooden tables	Furniture for the sod house (settler colonist site)					\$150
	Tools and Supplies	1 slab door and frame	Construction of the sod house (settler colonist site)					\$538
	Tools and Supplies	2 windows and frames	Construction of the sod house (settler colonist site)					\$150
	Tools and Supplies	7- 8" diameter 18' cedar logs	Construction of the sod house- roof rafters (settler colonist site)					\$1,594
	Tools and Supplies	6- 4" diameter 6' cedar logs	Construction of the sod house- for door headers (settler colonist site)					\$306
	Tools and Supplies	12- 4" diameter 5' cedar logs	Construction of the sod house- for window headers (settler colonist site)					\$510
	Tools and Supplies	sheathing boards 2" thick	Construction of the sod house - for roof (priced per square foot) (settler colonist site)					\$4,979
	Tools and Supplies	300 square feet of tar paper	Construction of the sod house- for roof (settler colonist site)					\$30
	Tools and Supplies	2- 2"x4"x18' cedar board	Construction of the sod house- to keep sod from slipping off roof (settler colonist site)					\$68
	Tools and Supplies	12- 2"x6"x12'	Construction of the sod house- to tie roof poles together (settler colonist site)					\$418

	Tools and Supplies	12- 2"x6"x9'	Construction of the sod house- to tie roof poles together (settler colonist site)					\$391
	Tools and Supplies	12-2"x6"x5'	Construction of the sod house- to tie roof poles together (settler colonist site)					\$240
	Tools and Supplies	8- 1/2 in x 2 ft. #4 Rebar	Construction of the sod house- for window and door framing (settler colonist site)					\$36
	Tools and Supplies	1 Canvas tarp	Construction of the sod house- ceiling (settler colonist site)					\$144
							<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>\$26,261</b>
<b>Capital Expenditures</b>								
							<b>Sub Total</b>	-
<b>Acquisitions and Stewardship</b>								
							<b>Sub Total</b>	-
<b>Travel In Minnesota</b>								
							<b>Sub Total</b>	-
<b>Travel Outside Minnesota</b>								
							<b>Sub Total</b>	-
<b>Printing and Publication</b>								
							<b>Sub Total</b>	-
<b>Other Expenses</b>								
							<b>Sub Total</b>	-
							<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$210,000</b>

Classified Staff or Generally Ineligible Expenses

Category/Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Justification Ineligible Expense or Classified Staff Request
---------------	---------------------	-------------	--

## Non ENRTF Funds

Category	Specific Source	Use	Status	Amount
<b>State</b>				
			<b>State Sub Total</b>	-
<b>Non-State</b>				
In-Kind	Eagle Bluff Environmental Learning Center	Grant Administration	Secured	\$9,000
In-Kind	Eagle Bluff Environmental Learning Center	Construction administration and oversight of the bark house	Secured	\$28,000
In-Kind	Eagle Bluff Environmental Learning Center	in kind services for site preparation with skid-steer/bobcat and tree removal	Secured	\$5,000
In-Kind	Eagle Bluff Environmental Learning Center	Staff time to finish lesson plan and design interpretive signage to be placed at each of the 3 sites so people from the public hiking around Eagle Bluff understand the context and use of the structures.	Secured	\$10,500
			<b>Non State Sub Total</b>	<b>\$52,500</b>
			<b>Funds Total</b>	<b>\$52,500</b>

**Total Project Cost: \$262,500**

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

Yes

## Attachments

### Required Attachments

#### *Visual Component*

File: [76855e35-073.pdf](#)

#### *Alternate Text for Visual Component*

Map of Eagle Bluff ELC property showing the locations of the 3 sites that will be used for the demonstration structures....

#### *Financial Capacity*

Title	File
EBELC 990	<a href="#">13497d7b-518.pdf</a>
2023 audited financials	<a href="#">3ba3f3be-64d.pdf</a>

#### *Board Resolution or Letter*

Title	File
Board letter of Support	<a href="#">69bf5cc7-e65.pdf</a>
Board resolution	<a href="#">7b7cb1a9-456.pdf</a>

### Supplemental Attachments

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

Title	File
Capital Construction Project - Budget Addendum	<a href="#">8a48ddbc-bb4.xlsx</a>
ENRTF Capital Construction Project Questionnaire	<a href="#">e2c3a598-a8d.pdf</a>
Bark Lodge Construction- breakdown of anticipated costs from the Great Lakes Lifeways Institute	<a href="#">d0d806aa-62c.pdf</a>
Letter of support: Mounds Park Academy	<a href="#">6d32d8c2-f57.pdf</a>
Letter of Support: Rochester Arts and Science Academy	<a href="#">690d17d8-0d8.pdf</a>
Evidence of good standing- Secretary of State EBELC	<a href="#">4aee0278-0bc.png</a>
Bark House photo 3- close up of entrance	<a href="#">c03f8063-77d.jpe</a>
Bark House photo 2- inside	<a href="#">22732f27-18e.jpe</a>
Bark House photo 1- outside	<a href="#">af3b2d78-f73.jpe</a>

## 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?**

Yes

**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:**

Luke Williamson- Eagle Bluff ELC, Jenna Moon- Eagle Bluff ELC, Mary Junko-Isle- Eagle Bluff ELC, Callie Rohan- Eagle Bluff ELC

**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