



Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

2026 Request for Proposal

General Information

Proposal ID: 2026-254

Proposal Title: Sharing Minnesota's Greatest Environmental Investment Phase II

Project Manager Information

Name: Joy Hobbs

Organization: Science Museum of Minnesota

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Project Basic Information

Project Summary: This project will continue the Science Museum of Minnesota's work to communicate the stories of LCCMR/ENRTF-funded work to a public audience through an online story map and video content.

ENRTF Funds Requested: \$709,000

Proposed Project Completion: June 30, 2029

LCCMR Funding Category: Education and Outdoor Recreation (C)

Project Location

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

Statewide

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.

According to the LCCMR website, “since 1991, the ENRTF has provided approximately \$1.1 billion to over 1,700 projects around the state.” Although project summaries and final reports are available online, the extensive body of work that the Commission has funded through the ENRTF for decades remains largely unknown to most citizens of Minnesota.

In our first round of funding, we are finding that ENRTF project managers are eager to engage with us to bring their findings to a public audience. The large body of work funded by the ENRTF over the years means that there are many more stories we would like to tell, and we view the story map as a living piece of work that should be kept current as project managers build on their projects and have new findings to share. In addition, we often find that project managers have more information to share than we can fit into our current format.

Investing in the dissemination of the stories of the ENRTF to public audiences will garner greater interest and investment in the work and mission of the LCCMR to protect, conserve, preserve, and enhance Minnesota’s air, water, land, fish, wildlife, and other natural resources.

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 propose to use the Science Museum of Minnesota’s (SMM) expertise in communicating science to public audiences to continue telling the stories of LCCMR/ENRTF-funded projects.

The goal of this work is to make the work funded by the LCCMR accessible to the public in a way that is central and easily digestible. We aim to generate a feeling of pride for making this commitment to the state’s future and illustrate that these projects have long-lasting, ripple effects.

The primary deliverables for our original proposal are an online interactive story map, which will contain 100 stories of ENRTF projects, as well as short films, where we tell project stories in greater detail. We have been reaching out to ENRTF project managers throughout the state, and telling the stories from projects ranging from wolf ecology to harmful algal blooms to environmental education. Here, we propose to add stories to the story map and create additional films in a variety of formats for different audiences. Although the story map will not be publicly available until the end of our first grant (spring 2026), we invite you to watch our first round of films, currently available at <https://new.smm.org/lccmr-stories>

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?

This work is broad in scope and addresses concerns from all of the current funding priorities. This project is making the large body of work funded by the LCCMR/ENRTF accessible to the public in a central and easily digestible way. These stories will instill Minnesotans with a sense of pride in the investment that is being made in the state’s environment and natural resources. We will showcase the impact that public money has had, and leave public audiences with an appreciation for the integral role that the LCCMR and ENRTF have played in conserving, protecting, and enhancing Minnesota’s resources.

Activities and Milestones

Activity 1: Online story map addition and enhancement.

Activity Budget: \$261,574

Activity Description:

One of the deliverables from our original grant is a free online interactive map (story map); this map will be available for public viewing in the Spring of 2026 on the Science Museum of Minnesota's website. The story map will contain 100 stories of ENRTF projects told through a summary of interesting findings and photos.

Here, we propose to add an additional 75 stories to the story map, and enhance 25 of the existing stories. For the 75 new stories, we will follow our established methodology of reaching out to project managers to hear about interesting findings and share photos. In addition, we will expand on 25 of our original story map pages that have had compelling project updates since we first created them.

In addition, we will work on expanded map functionality based on user feedback.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Reach out to project managers to gather updates for 25 of the existing stories.	June 30, 2027
Selection of the first 35 new stories, begin reaching out to project managers and writing.	June 30, 2027
Twenty-five updates added to the Story Map.	December 31, 2027
Select the next 40 new stories, reach out to project managers, and continue writing.	June 30, 2028
All 75 of the new stories added to the story map.	June 30, 2029
Expanded story map functionality based on user feedback.	June 30, 2029

Activity 2: Films to tell the stories of ENRTF projects in greater detail.

Activity Budget: \$399,178

Activity Description:

A subset of projects will have their stories told in a short film format. The first round of films from our current grant can be viewed at (<https://new.smm.org/lccmr-stories>). As with our previous project, we will work in collaboration with a Minnesota filmmaker and will continue with the same overall tone and approach to keep continuity with the entire body of work. We will create the budgetary equivalent of eight films of 5-6 minutes in duration, leaving the option of a larger number of films of shorter duration, if that is the best fit for telling the stories (especially given the need for shorter clips for social media); we will collaborate with the filmmaker to make this determination. The films will be housed on the story map, and available as stand-alone products.

SMM project leaders will work with the filmmaker to prescreen interview subjects, ensuring they have time to devote to filming and photo assets to share. We will travel to the location of the project manager to interview and film them in a lab, office, and/or field setting. We will learn more about their project and the importance of the ENRTF to their work.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
In conjunction with the contract filmmaker, begin identifying and reaching out to video subjects.	March 31, 2027
Film the first round of videos; begin reaching out to subjects for the second round.	December 31, 2027
Film the second round of videos.	September 30, 2028

Post production on all videos complete.	December 31, 2028
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Activity 3: Dissemination of the Story Map and Videos to reach a wide audience.

Activity Budget: \$48,248

Activity Description:

Dissemination is a focal point of this project, and we will use the Science Museum of Minnesota's (SMM) breadth of scientific programming to assist with these efforts. The story map will be free to the public on SMM's website, other institutions can freely link to it and can also use the videos for their own programming.

At the end of our current funded project (spring 2026) the story map will be available to SMM visitors on a touchscreen. This touchscreen will remain in the SMM galleries through the duration of this proposal (summer of 2029).

Throughout the course of the project, SMM will continue to promote the story map and video content through its social media channels.

To continue to promote the story map, and the work of the ENRTF in general, each year we will invite a subset of project managers who have been working with us during both phases of the project to SMM's Earth Day Celebration. SMM will have a table at the event dedicated to these ENRTF project managers sharing their work with the general public.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Host ENRTF project managers at SMM's annual Earth Day celebration.	April 30, 2029
Ongoing access to the story map (with videos) on SMM's website.	June 30, 2029
Ongoing access to the story map in the SMM galleries.	June 30, 2029
Ongoing social media posts throughout the project.	June 30, 2029

Project Partners and Collaborators

Name	Organization	Role	Receiving Funds
Stephanie Long	Science Museum of Minnesota	In-house video Producer, creative lead, story map project management. For twenty-four years, Stephanie Long has created, produced, and led projects at the Science Museum of Minnesota. She is currently the in-house producer on our first phase of work, Sharing Minnesota's Biggest Environmental Investment (2023-185; 05e).	Yes
Adam Heathcote	Science Museum of Minnesota	Scientific Content Advisor for Story Map and Films.	No

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?

All content will be created and disseminated during the course of the project. One of the strengths of this project is that the story map and video content will live on after the project ending date. We will host the story map on the Science Museum of Minnesota's website. Video content will be hosted on YouTube, or a similar platform, making it easily accessible and available to anyone who wishes to incorporate it into their own platform, or use it in informal or formal educational programming.

Other ENRTF Appropriations Awarded in the Last Six Years

Name	Appropriation	Amount Awarded
Sharing Minnesota's Biggest Environmental Investment	M.L. 2023, , Chp. 60, Art. 2, Sec. 2, Subd. 05e	\$628,000

Project Manager and Organization Qualifications

Project Manager Name: Joy Hobbs

Job Title: Senior Scientist

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

Joy Ramstack Hobbs is a Senior Scientist at the Science Museum of Minnesota's St. Croix Watershed Research Station (SCWRS), where she has worked for nearly 20 years. She manages projects that range in scope from pure research to education and outreach, providing her with the necessary breadth of experience to lead this project and interact with LCCMR project managers. She is currently the project manager on the first phase of work on which this proposal is based (Sharing Minnesota's Biggest Environmental Investment, 2023-185; 05e); the scope of work and budget for this project are on track, we have assembled a team who know how to tell these stories, and the success of the approach has led to this current request for additional funding.

Joy is also currently the PI on a large National Science Foundation grant to provide research and networking opportunities for high school students who are underrepresented in the geosciences. She has worked extensively with the National Park Service in the Great Lakes region, on both research in the parks and educational initiatives. She has also led numerous research projects on Minnesota lakes, including work with the MPCA, the MN DNR, and local Watershed Districts. This range of experience makes her well qualified to lead a team of scientists, exhibits and communications professionals at SMM, and leaves her well-poised to coordinate and collaborate with LCCMR

researchers from a broad range of disciplines.

On this project, Joy will continue to collaborate with Stephanie Long. For twenty-four years, Stephanie has created, produced, and led projects at the Science Museum of Minnesota. In her role as Artistic Director and Producer of Science Live, she provides strategic leadership and oversight in the creation of professional-quality live performances and films. She is the in-house producer on our current phase of work.

Organization: Science Museum of Minnesota

Organization Description:

Founded in 1907, the Science Museum of Minnesota (SMM) is a science-technology center located along the Mississippi River in downtown Saint Paul. SMM has a longstanding tradition as a natural history museum with scientific research, collections, and interpretive exhibits. SMM is known nationally for the development of museum exhibitions that present science in the context of human culture and values and programming that reaches a diverse audience. The museum's location in downtown Saint Paul offers 370,000 square feet of space, with a 10,000-square-foot temporary exhibit gallery, five permanent galleries, and an IMAX Digital Omnitheater. We impact over a million people from around the world every year through trips to our museum, school visits, our traveling exhibitions, and Omnitheater films. The museum is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization and an accredited member of the American Association of Museums (AAM) and the Association of Science-Technology Centers (ASTC). In addition, SMM has produced major touring exhibitions, including the RACE: Are We So Different? exhibition for the American Anthropological Association.

Budget Summary

Category / Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Purpose	Gen. Ineligible	% Benefits	# FTE	Classified Staff?	\$ Amount
Personnel								
Joy Hobbs, Project Manager, Senior Scientist, SMM		Project Manager; Will provide general project management, will oversee project selection as well as science content for the story map and films, will handle communications with ENRTF project managers			24%	1.26		\$138,820
Stephanie Long, Artistic Director and Producer of Science Live Programs, SMM		In-house video Producer, creative lead, story map project management			24%	1.11		\$107,324
SMM Program Support		Film production support and event staff support for Earth Day events			24%	0.75		\$51,320
SMM Experience Developer		Copy writing, editing, proofing, project support for website content and exhibit experiences			24%	0.9		\$80,854
SMM Graphic Designer		Maintain design standards and brand elements for any story map expansion as well as graphics for in-museum experiences			24%	0.03		\$3,406
SMM Outreach and Social Media Coordinator		Coordinate social media based outreach of story map and videos			24%	0.06		\$4,927
SMM Full Stack Developers, 3 positions		Software engineers to maintain and expand story map functionality and capabilities			24%	0.3		\$37,518
SMM Technology Project Manager		Oversee and manage the technical work on the story map, work with project leads to understand the story map needs and integrate needs with the work of the IT team			24%	0.03		\$2,012

SMM Software Development Manager		Maintain the software needs of the story map			24%	0.09		\$14,928
							Sub Total	\$441,109
Contracts and Services								
TBD	Service Contract	Filmmaker to script, film, direct, produce and handle all post-production work for the videos. The filmmaker will work with project leads Hobbs and Long to prescreen interview subjects. Contract amount is based on industry rates for videos of equivalent quality and duration to those from our first phase of work.				0.5		\$220,000
TBD	Service Contract	Translation services for the story map and the videos.				0.1		\$16,500
							Sub Total	\$236,500
Equipment, Tools, and Supplies								
	Equipment	Camera Lens - 24-70mm f/2.8 DG DN II Art Lens	Lens for filming videos	X				\$1,200
	Equipment	Cinema Line Full-frame Camera	Camera for filming the videos.	X				\$3,900
	Equipment	External Drive	The large video files require this size external hard drive.	X				\$500
	Equipment	SD Cards	Memory cards necessary for transfer of the large video files.	X				\$400
	Tools and Supplies	Supplies for tabling at the annual SMM Earth Day events.	Support of project promotion at SMM Earth Day events.					\$4,000
							Sub Total	\$10,000
Capital Expenditures								
							Sub Total	-
Acquisitions and Stewardship								
							Sub Total	-

Travel In Minnesota								
	Miles/ Meals/ Lodging	6 trips, 3 SMM staff per trip. Cost based on meals and lodging at GSA rates and vehicle rental. Exact destinations within MN will be determined once video subjects are selected.	Trips to travel to ENRTF project managers to film the videos.					\$15,391
							Sub Total	\$15,391
Travel Outside Minnesota								
							Sub Total	-
Printing and Publication								
							Sub Total	-
Other Expenses								
		Honorariums (12 x \$500)	Each project year, we will give out three of the Honorariums to ENRTF project managers who participate in the SMM Earth Day event to offset their time and travel expenses. The remaining three will be reserved for any ENRTF project manager who needs to travel to us for filming.					\$6,000
							Sub Total	\$6,000
							Grand Total	\$709,000

Classified Staff or Generally Ineligible Expenses

Category/Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Justification Ineligible Expense or Classified Staff Request
Equipment, Tools, and Supplies		Camera Lens - 24-70mm f/2.8 DG DN II Art Lens	This AV equipment is necessary for high-level video quality.
Equipment, Tools, and Supplies		Cinema Line Full-frame Camera	This AV equipment is necessary for high-level video quality.
Equipment, Tools, and Supplies		External Drive	This equipment is necessary for storage of the large video files.
Equipment, Tools, and Supplies		SD Cards	These memory cards are necessary for transfer of large video files.

Non ENRTF Funds

Category	Specific Source	Use	Status	Amount
State				
			State Sub Total	-
Non-State				
In-Kind	All indirect project costs are provided in-kind by the Science Museum of Minnesota (federal indirect rate 48.73% on all direct costs = \$345,496).	In-kind contribution of indirects.	Pending	\$345,496
			Non State Sub Total	\$345,496
			Funds Total	\$345,496

Total Project Cost: \$1,054,496

This amount accurately reflects total project cost?

Yes

Attachments

Required Attachments

Visual Component

File: [20e4bb98-397.pdf](#)

Alternate Text for Visual Component

This project will continue SMM's work to communicate the stories of LCCMR/ENRTF-funded work to a public audience through an online story map and video content. Experience Phase I stories at <https://new.smm.org/lccmr-stories...>

Supplemental Attachments

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

Title	File
SMM FY23 Audited Financial Statements	785036b3-325.pdf
SMM 990 FY23	04028464-0fb.pdf
Annual Reinstatement - Nonprofit Corporation	3e8f6e54-65f.pdf
Letter of Support from SMM President Alison Brown	990cf884-e6e.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?

Yes, I understand the Commissioner's Plan applies.

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:

N/A

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

