



Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

2026 Request for Proposal

General Information

Proposal ID: 2026-314

Proposal Title: Minnesota Bound Conservation Chronicle

Project Manager Information

Name: Francie Kennedy

Organization: Ron Schara Productions

Office Telephone: (763) 233-0746

Email: francie@mnbound.com

Project Basic Information

Project Summary: Minnesota Bound will create 48 feature segments entitled "Conservation Chronicles" designed to educate and inspire Minnesotans to connect with the lands and waters of the great state of Minnesota.

ENRTF Funds Requested: \$212,000

Proposed Project Completion: June 30, 2028

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?

Statewide

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.

Minnesota Bound provides an engaging platform to create special segments that further educate, promote sustainable practices, and create public awareness on the need to protect the lands and waters of Minnesota. Minnesota Bound has a 30-year history of deep connections with individuals, organizations, and local environmental advocates throughout the state of Minnesota, presenting an exciting opportunity to create a more sustainable future for the state's lands and waters. In addition, Minnesota Bound also promotes sustainable tourism and recreation by fostering eco-friendly tourism and recreational activities that highlight the natural beauty of the state while promoting the long-term health of lands and waters. This includes nature trails, boating, camping, and wildlife viewing. Minnesota Bound's television archives include numerous programs covering a wide variety of topics. Some of our highlights include Minnehaha Carp Removal, Weed Picking, Environmental Clubs, Bee Research, Dispersed Camping, River Migration, Grassland and Climate Change, Trash on Ice, and Wetland Rehabilitation. Minnesota Bound is an award winning outdoor television program with loyal viewers, more than 40 Emmy Awards and several hundred Outdoor Writers Association of America Awards. The show is hosted by Laura Schara and Bill Sherck with our ever present Brand Ambassador, Black Labrador, Minnesota Bound Millie.

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.

Ron Schara Productions will produce a feature segment titled "Minnesota Bound Conservation Chronicle" with the tagline "Protecting and Enhancing our Outdoor Legacy through Minnesota's Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund." The Minnesota Bound Conservation Chronicle will be a 4–8 minute length segment that runs within the existing Minnesota Bound television program twice each month with a total of twenty-four segments annually. These stories will be a combination of interviews and discussions with expert conservationists and local environmental advocates, on-location video, and consumer tips providing practical everyday actions that audiences can take to help protect the environment. This feature will be designed to appeal to a wide demographic, including families, outdoor enthusiasts, and environmental advocates. Minnesota Bound Conservation Chronicle will leverage Minnesota Bound's reputation and reach through its television program aired on local and regional television networks, social media platforms, and streaming services. Digital exposure includes an additional 48 posts annually through Minnesota Bound's YouTube (current subscriber base 8,000), Facebook and Instagram social media channels (58,000 followers.) Minnesota Bound also produces a weekly podcast (approximately 8,000 downloads per month) where once each quarter Minnesota Bound will host an expert conservationist or local organization for an in-depth discussion.

What are the specific project outcomes as they relate to the public purpose of protection, conservation, preservation, and enhancement of the state's natural resources?

The outcome of this partnership is to provide an informative and engaging platform to heighten ENRTF visibility, increase public support, and provide education on the importance of preserving lands and waters. Each segment will offer actionable insights into environmental protection emphasizing sustainable practices that viewers can incorporate into their daily routines. By working together, we can better engage the public, instilling a shared sense of responsibility for the state's lands and waters. By combining resources, expertise, and passion, we can make significant strides toward protecting and promoting natural resources for the benefit of state and local communities, and future generations.

Activities and Milestones

Activity 1: Produce, promote and distribute 24 Minnesota Bound Conservation Chronicle television segments.

Activity Budget: \$100,000

Activity Description:

The 24 Minnesota Bound Conservation Chronicle television segments will be distributed within 48 weekly episodes of Minnesota Bound on KARE-11 and online on Minnesota Bound YouTube. Broadcasts will occur in 2026/27 viewing season. Digital and social media promotion will run concurrent to weekly segments. Segments will promote and celebrate sustainable tourism and recreation by fostering eco-friendly tourism and recreational activities that highlight the natural beauty of the state while promoting the long-term health of lands and waters.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Produce and air 24 Minnesota Bound Conservation Chronicle television segments	June 30, 2027

Activity 2: Design digital platform for all social media and digital promotion

Activity Budget: \$12,000

Activity Description:

Create dedicated website landing page titled "Minnesota Bound Conservation Chronicle" to be accessed locally and nationally by viewers to provide digital access to all aired segments. This website will be supported with branding, additional resources, engaging text and graphics. It will also be used to promote the web access through other Minnesota Bound establish social media sites (YouTube, Instagram, Facebook, etc.)

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Design web page with ENRTF branding/logo	September 30, 2026
Launch promotion to promote viewership	September 30, 2026

Activity 3: Produce, promote and distribute 24 Minnesota Bound Conservation Chronicle television segments.

Activity Budget: \$100,000

Activity Description:

The 24 Minnesota Bound Conservation Chronicle television segments will be distributed within 48 weekly episodes of Minnesota Bound on KARE-11 and online on Minnesota Bound YouTube. Broadcasts will occur in 2027/28 viewing season. Digital and social media promotion will run concurrent to weekly segments. Segments will promote and celebrate sustainable tourism and recreation by fostering eco-friendly tourism and recreational activities that highlight the natural beauty of the state while promoting the long-term health of lands and waters.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Produce and air 24 Minnesota Bound Conservation Chronicle television segments	June 30, 2028

Project Partners and Collaborators

Name	Organization	Role	Receiving Funds
Katie Cody	Ron Schara Productions	Account Executive	No
Scott Fransen	Ron Schara Productions	CEO	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?

"Minnesota Bound Conservation Chronicle" segments will be broadcast and reshow in future productions of Minnesota Bound as well as the "Due North" television program, and be accessible digitally for ages to come. The material, knowledge and data will continue to be referenced and repurposed while gaining recognition through Minnesota Bound's brand, digital platform, footprint, and extensive audience reach.

Project Manager and Organization Qualifications

Project Manager Name: Francie Kennedy

Job Title: Business Manager

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

Responsible for all financial and business transactions for the company.

Organization: Ron Schara Productions

Organization Description:

Television production company

Budget Summary

Category / Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Purpose	Gen. Ineligible	% Benefits	# FTE	Classified Staff?	\$ Amount
Personnel								
Production Manager		Manage all aspects of production, including story lineup, videography, interviews, scripting, editing, graphics, post-production and communications.			25%	2		\$53,000
Videographer		Assist with developing topics and setting up interviews and b-roll, scripting, videography, editing and communications.			35%	2		\$74,200
Executive Producer / Host		Executive Producer / Host will serve as on-air program host, providing interviews on camera and narration. In addition, he produces sports, recreation and related conservation stories, advises on all segments and episodes, and promotes stories on social media.			40%	2		\$84,800
							Sub Total	\$212,000
Contracts and Services								
							Sub Total	-
Equipment, Tools, and Supplies								
							Sub Total	-
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	\$212,000

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	Program License Agreement	Revenue from the Program License Agreement is used to covers production expenses including travel, closed captioning, equipment, supplies, marketing, voice work and other costs.	Pending	\$56,676
			Non State Sub Total	\$56,676
			Funds Total	\$56,676

Total Project Cost: \$268,676

This amount accurately reflects total project cost?

Yes

Attachments

Required Attachments

Visual Component

File: [af094bde-20d.pdf](#)

Alternate Text for Visual Component

Minnesota Bound Television Coverage Map indicating the reach and service areas of stations broadcasting throughout the state....

Financial Capacity

Title	File
Financial Capacity Note	cc7f3c38-5a5.pdf

Supplemental Attachments

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

Title	File
Letter to Board	0abecd32-efc.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:

Scott Fransen, Katie Cody

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