



Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

2026 Request for Proposal

General Information

Proposal ID: 2026-558

Proposal Title: Sportsmen and Sportswomen Training Center - Phase 2

Project Manager Information

Name: Ray Sogard

Organization: Minnesota Forest Zone Trappers Association

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Project Basic Information

Project Summary: The Minnesota Forest Zone Trappers Association (MFZTA) is requesting a \$1,050,000 grant for Phase 2 of the Sportsmen's & Sportswomen's Outdoor Training and Development Center.

ENRTF Funds Requested: \$1,050,000

Proposed Project Completion: December 31, 2027

LCCMR Funding Category: Education and Outdoor Recreation (C)

Project Location

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

Region(s): NE

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.

The Minnesota Forest Zone Trappers Association (MFZTA) is requesting an \$1,050,000 a LCCMR grant for Phase 2 of the development and construction of the Sportsmen's & Sportswomen's Training and Developmental Learning Center (SSTDC) along with all necessary amenities. Phase 1 of this project consisted of completing a master plan and an infrastructure analysis of the site. Phase 2 includes site preparation and grading, construction of site amenities and project design. Site preparation includes clearing/grading, wetlands review, surveying, hazardous materials evaluation, road construction, culverts and parking lots. Site amenities include a construction of a training pond, security fences, archery range, bleachers, bogwalk and overnight camping site development. Phase 2 also includes all project design needed. Total overall cost of Phase 2 is \$1,400,000.

The SSTDC meets LCCMR's constitutional aim of protecting, conserving, preserving, and enhancing Minnesota's air, water, land, fish, wildlife, and other natural resources all in one location. The center will educate and train people from around the State of Minnesota, increasing their knowledge of the outdoors and teaching them skills that will help them cultivate a sustainable lifestyle and maintain a healthy and biodiverse natural environment through hunting, fishing, and other outdoor activities.

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.

The MFTZA is a non-profit 501C3 Corporation operating under the laws of Minnesota. They encompass over seven counties throughout northeastern Minnesota. The primary purpose of the MFTZA will be to achieve the best possible, highest quality outdoor experience. Their work to date to develop this project include meetings with regional, state and federal government officials, educating the general public, holding outdoor programs, regulation enforcement training, support wildlife research and developing relationships with wildlife officials and promoting good sportsmanship and ethic outdoor practices. The MFZTA offers multi-day conventions, annual workshops and numerous training sessions throughout the year that focus on education and environmental stewardship.

The MFTZA has developed satellite programs in which they partner with Delta Waterfowl, MN Deer Hunters Association, Pheasants Forever, Grouse Society, MN Darkhouse and Angling Association, Ducks Unlimited, NRA, National Turkey Association and others to promote outdoor activities throughout the region.

The completion of site preparation and grading, construction of necessary amenities and project design will allow the MFTA to move onto Phase 3 which is the actual construction of the Center.

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 ultimate goal will be to own and operate the premier outdoor training and educational facility in the country. The center will educate and train people from around the State of Minnesota, increasing their knowledge of the outdoors and teaching them skills that will help them cultivate a sustainable lifestyle and maintain a healthy and biodiverse natural environment through hunting, fishing, and other outdoor activities.

Activities and Milestones

Activity 1: Activity 1 Title: Project Engineering Design

Activity Budget: \$150,000

Activity Description:

Activities include RFQ for engineering services, surveying, site evaluation, ADA requirements, permitting, wetlands delineation, bidding process oversight and public meetings.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Engineer/Architectural Firm selected through a competitive process	August 31, 2025
Start Site and amenity design and evaluation.	October 31, 2025
Design Completed and approved by MFZTA	February 28, 2026
Permitting, Wetlands Evaluation, Surveying Completed	July 31, 2026

Activity 2: Site Preparation /Grading and Site Amenities

Activity Budget: \$800,000

Activity Description:

Site preparation and grading include mobilization, staking, clearing/grubbing, roadway construction, culverts, vegetation replacement, erosion control and parking site leveling. Site amenities include primitive campsites, access road, parking, bog walk, archery range, training pond, fencing, gate and bleachers.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Competitive bid to select General Contractor for site preparation/grading/amenities	March 31, 2026
General Contractor selected and project bid awarded to construct the project	May 31, 2026
Construction start	June 30, 2026
Construction activities completed and approved by the association	December 31, 2027
Facility is open to the public	December 31, 2027

Activity 3: Construction Administration

Activity Budget: \$100,000

Activity Description:

Construction administration consists of the oversight/observation of all of the construction activities to ensure all work is being completed according to plans, specifications, bidding requirements, funding guidelines, ADA requirements, all permit requirements and construction meetings..

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Project Administration Starts	July 31, 2026
Administration Completed	December 31, 2027
Administrator Activities Approved By MFZTA	December 31, 2027

Project Partners and Collaborators

Name	Organization	Role	Receiving Funds
MFZTA Board of Directors	MN Forest Zone Trappers Association	This group will oversee the project.	No
State and Federal Agencies	State and Federal Agencies	State and Federal agencies will coordinate wetland delineation, permitting and environmental requirements	No
State and Regional Outdoor and Environmental Groups	State and Regional Outdoor and Environmental Groups	State and Regional Outdoor and Environmental Groups will assist in programming the events at the facility and will be critical in marketing this facility and its public relations.	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?

The ultimate goal will be to own and operate the premier outdoor training and educational facility in the country. MFZTA will be responsible for the ongoing funding and operation of the facility.

Other ENRTF Appropriations Awarded in the Last Six Years

Name	Appropriation	Amount Awarded
Sportsmen's Training And Developmental Learning Center	M.L. 2021, First Special Session, Chp. 6, Art. 5, Sec. 2, Subd. 09u	\$85,000

Project Manager and Organization Qualifications

Project Manager Name: Ray Sogard

Job Title: President

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

Ray Sogard is president of the Minnesota Forest Zone Trappers Association. Ray has years of experience in managing projects and working with grant and loan funding. The overall manager of this project will be the board of the association. The association will be assisted by the City of Hibbing as they are serving as the fiscal agent of the project. Ray will be working closely with the city council, mayor and administrative staff. Ray will be coordinating the work that is being done by the engineers, architects and the general contractor.

Organization: Minnesota Forest Zone Trappers Association

Organization Description:

The MFZTA is a 501 (c) (3) organization. They are governed by a board that consists of a president, secretary, 3 directors and an at large member. They were incorporated in May 2011. They are eligible to receive tax deductible bequests, devises, transfers and gifts under 170 of the Internal Revenue Code.

Since their inception the MFZTA have hosted and organized numerous activities including conventions, workshops, training and numerous other activities throughout the State of Minnesota. They partner on a regular basis with a variety of outdoor and environmental groups as listed in the main proposal section of this proposal.

A copies of their IRS corporation information, audited financial statements and a list of board members are attached and included in this proposal.

Budget Summary

Category / Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Purpose	Gen. Ineligible	% Benefits	# FTE	Classified Staff?	\$ Amount
Personnel								
							Sub Total	-
Contracts and Services								
Engineer hired through a competitive process	Service Contract	Project design and construction administration of the facility and amenities				6		\$250,000
General Contractor hired through a competitive bidding process	Service Contract	General Contractor Will Be Responsible Of All Project/Facility Construction				12		\$800,000
							Sub Total	\$1,050,000
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	\$1,050,000

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	IRRRB	Construction	Pending	\$350,000
			Non State Sub Total	\$350,000
			Funds Total	\$350,000

Total Project Cost: \$1,400,000

This amount accurately reflects total project cost?

Yes

Attachments

Required Attachments

Visual Component

File: [b61e81ed-af8.pdf](#)

Alternate Text for Visual Component

Site view of project site....

Financial Capacity

Title	File
Financial Audit Documents	565de198-0d5.pdf

Board Resolution or Letter

Title	File
Board Letter 2025	545ac312-347.pdf

Supplemental Attachments

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

Title	File
Letters of Support	92e6a185-1c9.pdf
Fiscal Agent	6de913fe-6cf.docx

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?

Yes

Do you understand and acknowledge IP and revenue-return and sharing requirements in 116P.10?

Yes

Do you wish to request reinvestment of any revenues into your project instead of returning revenue to the ENRTF? If so, describe here (1) the source and estimated amounts of any revenue and (2) how you propose to use those revenues:

Yes, The associating will be reinvesting any revenues back into the project to cover operation and maintenance

Does your project include original, hypothesis-driven research?

No

Does the organization have a fiscal agent for this project?

Yes, City of Hibbing

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")?

No

Provide the name(s) and organization(s) of additional individuals assisting in the completion of this proposal:

MFZTA Board Members

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