



Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

M.L. 2024 Approved Work Plan

General Information

ID Number: 2024-015

Staff Lead: Tom Dietrich

Date this document submitted to LCCMR: June 7, 2024

Project Title: Jay C. Hormel Nature Center Supplemental Teaching Staff

Project Budget: \$410,000

Project Manager Information

Name: Luke Reese

Organization: City of Austin

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Project Reporting

Date Work Plan Approved by LCCMR: June 20, 2024

Reporting Schedule: June 1 / December 1 of each year.

Project Completion: June 30, 2027

Final Report Due Date: August 14, 2027

Legal Information

Legal Citation: M.L. 2024, Chp. 83, Sec. 2, Subd. 05a

Appropriation Language: \$410,000 the second year is from the trust fund to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with the city of Austin to continue providing environmental education opportunities at the Jay C. Hormel Nature Center for learners from outside the city of Austin.

Appropriation End Date: June 30, 2027

Narrative

Project Summary: This project sustains momentum from the pilot project funded previously by the ENRTF for growing environmental education opportunities for learners from outside of Austin.

Describe the opportunity or problem your proposal seeks to address. Include any relevant background information.

For most of the over 50 years that the City of Austin has owned and operated the Jay C. Hormel Nature Center, a major part of the center's mission has been providing environmental education to local students. In fact, in 1970, Austin Public Schools were one of 12 pilot schools in the Minnesota Environmental Education Project. Schools from outside of Austin were squeezed into schedules when possible, but were never a priority.

Regional schools were not a priority until the fall of 2021, when the "Jay C. Hormel Nature Center Supplemental Teaching Staff" LCCMR grant began. This first project was a pilot to demonstrate that there is demand from schools outside of Austin for environmental education. The Jay C. Hormel Nature Center established new and grew existing relationships with at least 20 schools from outside of Austin.

If the Jay C. Hormel Nature Center is going to continue to focus on providing environmental education opportunities to students from the region, along with Austin students, continued outside funding is required for supplemental teaching staff.

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 proposed solution will maintain and grow the relationships developed from the 2020 project where we demonstrated growth from under 200 to over 250 school groups taught per year, from 35 to over 85 school classes from outside of Austin per year, and from 30 to 45 or more summer classes each year. The previous project allowed us to reach new classes at 23 schools from at least 15 non-Austin communities. It accomplishes these goals by adding one full-time naturalist for three years and one intern, on a one-year term for each of the three years of the grant, to the existing staff of 1 director, 1 office manager, 1 naturalist/teacher, and 1 intern.

The educator and intern will utilize curricula that are already developed and are tied to state science standards and include the following themes: nature discovery, seasons, five senses, living vs. non-living nature, seed dispersal, animal habitat requirements, tree anatomy (maple syruping), habitat restoration, animal adaptations, winter survival, cross-country skiing, climate change, planets & stars, orienteering, and aquatic macroinvertebrates. Summer curricula include monarch butterflies, bees & insects, gardening, birds, astronomy, fishing, raptor education, trees, canoeing/kayaking, rock climbing, water programs, nocturnal nature, and camouflage/adaptations.

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 funding will continue to impact the outreach and implementation of environmental education for children who live within a 40-mile radius of our nature center. An increase in staff has led to an increase in opportunities for these children. For the span of the 3-year grant, we see at least an additional 2,025 students per year from 22 different school districts of southern Minnesota during the school year. In the summer, we now provide 15 additional programs, creating 60 new opportunities per year for regional youths to partake in high-quality, hands-on outdoor learning.

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?

Region(s): SE

When will the work impact occur?

During the Project

Activities and Milestones

Activity 1: Maintain increase in environmental education programming to non-Austin schools and during the summer

Activity Budget: \$410,000

Activity Description:

With continued funding, the nature center will maintain 250+ school groups each school year, up from 198 before ENRTF funding, with at least 85 from outside of Austin, up from 35 before ENRTF funding. The additional teaching staff has allowed a 41% increase in total school classes participating, from 198 to 279, impacting approximately 2,025 students annually. Of that 81 class increase, 64 of those classes came from outside of Austin schools, impacting approximately 1,600 students annually. We will also maintain a total of 45 summer classes providing an additional 60 opportunities to explore the natural world each summer, a 50% increase over previous years.

Curricula for school and summer programming have been established in the over 50 years that the Jay C. Hormel Nature Center has been in operation. Modifications are made as requested by schools or required to align with science standards.

This activity will be evaluated by logging the number of participants in classes to better develop and adapt to what the needs are for the community in both age range and content for environmental education.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
30 summer 2024 programs (July-August) providing upto 40 additional youth opportunitis	August 31, 2024
50+ non-Austin school classes (impacting approximately 1250 students); 45 summer programs adding 60 youth opportunities	August 31, 2025
50+ non-Austin school classes (impacting approximately 1250 students); 45 summer programs adding 60 youth opportunities	August 31, 2026
50+ non-Austin school classes (impacting approximately 1250 students); 15 summer programs adding 20 youth opportunities	June 30, 2027

Project Partners and Collaborators

Name	Organization	Role	Receiving Funds
Mike Skiba	Friends of the Hormel Nature Center	The Friends fundraise to support programs, projects, and activities at the Jay C. Hormel Nature Center that enhance and encourage environmental education, scientific opportunities, and the enjoyment of nature.	No

Dissemination

Describe your plans for dissemination, presentation, documentation, or sharing of data, results, samples, physical collections, and other products and how they will follow ENRTF Acknowledgement Requirements and Guidelines.

When communicating this award, we will describe the process of applying to the LCCMR in order to receive ENRTF funding. When reaching out to schools, particularly new ones, we will inform them that this program is made possible by ENRTF funding awarded by the LCCMR. Our website describing this program will the ENRTF logo and cite that the program is made possible by ENRTF funding awarded by the LCCMR. In interviews or presentations where this program is described, we will ensure that ENRTF is acknowledged for making this funding available.

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?

During this second phase, we will maintain and grow relationships with non-Austin schools developed in the first phase, by teaching established environmental education curricula. The Jay C. Hormel Nature Center will continue to provide quality environmental summer programs by developing opportunities based on demand. While demonstrating the success of this program, we will continue to pursue future funding opportunities with other governmental and non-governmental agencies.

Other ENRTF Appropriations Awarded in the Last Six Years

Name	Appropriation	Amount Awarded
Jay C. Hormel Nature Center Supplemental Teaching Staff	M.L. 2021, First Special Session, Chp. 6, Art. 5, Sec. 2, Subd. 05e	\$225,000

Budget Summary

Category / Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Purpose	Gen. Ineligible	% Benefits	# FTE	Classified Staff?	\$ Amount
Personnel								
Naturalist		Coordinating and providing environmental education opportunities to students from outside of Austin in addition to the city-funded naturalist			24.5%	3		\$271,347
Environmental education intern Year 1		This position assists with teaching classes and is required to teach the proposed additional classes. It is in addition to the existing intern funded through the Friends of the Hormel Nature Center.			30.5%	1		\$44,362
Environmental education intern Year 2		This position assists with teaching classes and is required to teach the proposed additional classes. It is in addition to the existing intern funded through the Friends of the Hormel Nature Center.			31%	1		\$46,218
Environmental education intern Year 3		This position assists with teaching classes and is required to teach the proposed additional classes. It is in addition to the existing intern funded through the Friends of the Hormel Nature Center.			31.6%	1		\$48,073
							Sub Total	\$410,000
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	\$410,000

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	Friends of the Hormel Nature Center	Inservices x 3 years	Pending	\$3,000
Cash	Friends of the Hormel Nature Center	Mentorship program for 3 years	Pending	\$12,000
Cash	Schools attending programs	Program fees generated: 40 non-Mower County schools x 20 students/group x \$5/student	Potential	\$4,000
Cash	Schools attending programs	Program fees generated: 45 Mower County non-Austin schools x 20 students/group x \$1/student	Potential	\$900
In-Kind	Schools	Bussing 85 additional groups x \$150	Potential	\$12,750
In-Kind	City of Austin	Grant administration and supervision (10% of director's time) x 3 years	Secured	\$36,000
In-Kind	City of Austin	Supplies July 2024 - June 2027	Pending	\$7,500
			Non State Sub Total	\$76,150
			Funds Total	\$76,150

Attachments

Required Attachments

Visual Component

File: [88b4b769-02a.pdf](#)

Alternate Text for Visual Component

Picture of an intern working with students at the top. Map highlighting schools from outside of Austin participating in environmental education programming at the Nature Center. Text describing the 41% increase in all classes, 183% increase in non-Austin classes, and 50% increase in summer programming from the first grant....

Board Resolution or Letter

Title	File
Signed resolution	ff4f9f3d-03d.pdf

Supplemental Attachments

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

Title	File
Letters of support	02de60fe-997.pdf

Difference between Proposal and Work Plan

Describe changes from Proposal to Work Plan Stage

None.

Additional Acknowledgements and Conditions:

The following are acknowledgements and conditions beyond those already included in the above workplan:

Do you understand and acknowledge the ENRTF repayment requirements if the use of capital equipment changes?

N/A

Do you agree travel expenses must 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