



Board of County Commissioners Agenda Request

2V

Agenda Item #

Requested Meeting Date: February 24, 2026

Title of Item: Outdoor School For All Funding Agreement for LLCC

<input type="checkbox"/> REGULAR AGENDA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CONSENT AGENDA	Action Requested: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Approve/Deny Motion <input type="checkbox"/> Adopt Resolution (attach draft) <input type="checkbox"/> Hold Public Hearing <i>*provide copy of hearing notice that was published</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Direction Requested <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Item <input type="checkbox"/> Information Only
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Submitted by: Dennis (DJ) Thompson	Department: Land
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Presenter (Name and Title):	Estimated Time Needed:
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Summary of Issue:

The State has developed the Outdoor School Grant Program for statewide implementation of “grants to accredited learning centers to provide a multiday, overnight educational experience for students in grades 4 through 12 that is comprised mainly of outdoor-based learning activities” (Minnesota Session Laws – 2025, 1st Special Session - Article 1, Sec. 3, Subd. 6, (f)).

Long Lake Conservation Center's agreement is for \$130,507.40 and goes to June 30, 2028. The Agreement has reviewed by the County Attorney and was execute by LLCC Manager Dave McMillan in November. After further review we have determined that the funding agreement should be considered and ratified by the county board.

Alternatives, Options, Effects on Others/Comments:

Recommended Action/Motion:

Be it resolved that the Grant Contract Agreement between the State of Minnesota and Long Lake Conservation Center for Outdoor School for All funding be ratified.

Financial Impact:

Is there a cost associated with this request? Yes No

What is the total cost, with tax and shipping? \$

Is this budgeted? Yes No *Please Explain:*



This Grant Contract Agreement is between the State of Minnesota, acting through its Department of Natural Resources ("State") and Long Lake Conservation Center, 28952 438th Lane, Palisade, MN 56469. ("Grantee").

Recitals

Under Minnesota Statute § 84.026, the State is empowered to enter into this Grant Contract Agreement. The State has developed the Outdoor School Grant Program for statewide implementation of "grants to accredited learning centers to provide a multiday, overnight educational experience for students in grades 4 through 12 that is comprised mainly of outdoor-based learning activities" (Minnesota Session Laws – 2025, 1st Special Session - Article 1, Sec. 3, Subd. 6, (f)). The Grantee represents that it is duly qualified and agrees to perform all services described in this Grant Contract Agreement to the satisfaction of the State. Pursuant to Minnesota Statute §16B.98, Subd.1, the Grantee agrees to minimize administrative costs as a condition of this grant contract agreement.

Grant Contract Agreement

1 Term of Grant Contract Agreement

1.1 Effective Date. Execution date of this Grant Contract Agreement, or the date the State obtains all required signatures, whichever is later.

Per Minnesota Statutes § 16B.98, Subd. 5, the Grantee must not begin work until this Grant Contract Agreement is fully executed and the State's Authorized Representative has notified the Grantee that work may commence.

Per Minnesota Statutes § 16B.98 Subd. 7, no payments will be made to the Grantee until this Grant Contract Agreement is fully executed.

1.2 Expiration Date.

June 30, 2028, or until all obligations have been satisfactorily fulfilled, whichever occurs first.

1.3 Survival of Terms. The following clauses survive the expiration or cancellation of this Grant Contract Agreement: Liability; State Audits; Government Data Practices and Intellectual Property; Publicity and Endorsement; Governing Law, Jurisdiction, and Venue; Data Disclosure; and Monitoring.

2 Specifications, Duties, and Scope of Work

2.1 The Grantee will comply with the required grants management policies and procedures set forth through Minnesota Statute §16B.97, subd 4 (a)(1).

- 2.2 The Grantee will perform the duties specified in Exhibit A: Project Description and Exhibit B: Work Plan and Budget, which are attached and incorporated into this Grant Contract Agreement.
- 2.3 Meet all grant program requirements, as described in the Outdoor School Grant Program FY2026 Request for Proposal, which is incorporated into this Grant Contract Agreement by reference. [The Request for Proposal is located here.](#)
- 2.4 The Grantee agrees to complete the program in accordance with the approved budget to the extent practicable and within the program period specified in the Grant Contract Agreement. Any material change in the Grant Contract Agreement shall require an amendment by the State. The Grantee must acquire pre-approval for any changes to project objectives, audience, timeline and/or budget outlined in Exhibit A: Project Description and Exhibit B: Work Plan and Budget. All requests for changes must be submitted in writing and approved by the State's Authorized Representative prior to implementation.
- 2.5 The Grantee shall be responsible for the administration supervision, management, record keeping, and program oversight required for the work performed under this agreement.
- 2.6 The Grantee is responsible for maintaining an adequate conflict of interest policy. Throughout the term of this agreement, the Grantee shall monitor and report any actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest to the State's Authorized Representative

3 Time

The Grantee must comply with all the time requirements described in this Grant Contract Agreement. In the performance of this Grant Contract Agreement, time is of the essence and failure to meet a deadline date may be a basis for a determination by the State's Authorized Representative that the Grantee has not complied with the terms of the Grant Contract Agreement. The Grantee is required to perform all the duties cited within clause two "Specifications, Duties, and Scope of Work" within the grant period. The State is not obligated to extend the grant period.

4 Consideration and Terms of Payment

The consideration for all services performed by the Grantee pursuant to this Grant Contract Agreement shall be paid by the State as follows:

- 4.1 **Compensation.** The total obligation of the State under this Grant Contract Agreement, including all compensation and reimbursements, is not to exceed **\$130,507.40**, which shall be paid after the Grantee presents a final report with appropriate documentation for expenditures as described in Exhibit B: Budget Worksheet, which are attached and incorporated into this Grant Contract Agreement.
- 4.2 **Administrative Costs.** Grantee administrative costs must be necessary and reasonable. Administrative costs are only allowed as part of the Grantee's match requirement. No compensation or reimbursement will be paid.
- 4.3 **Travel Expenses.** Reimbursement for personal travel and subsistence expenses actually and necessarily incurred by the Grantee because of this Grant Contract Agreement will not exceed \$ 0.00. The Grantee will not be reimbursed for travel and subsistence expenses incurred outside Minnesota unless it has received the State's prior written approval for out of state travel. Minnesota will be considered the home state for determining whether travel is out of state.

The Grantee will be reimbursed for travel and subsistence expenses in the same manner and in no greater amount than provided in the current Nonrepresented Employees Compensation Plan promulgated by the Commissioner of Minnesota Management and Budget.

4.4 Invoices. Payments shall be made by the State after the Grantee's presentation of invoices for services satisfactorily performed and the written acceptance of such services by the State's Authorized Representative. Invoices shall be submitted timely, with additional details as requested by the State, and according to the following schedule:

- March 15, 2026 – For any education programs completed January-February 2026
- May 15, 2026 – For any education programs completed March-April 2026
- July 15, 2026 – For education programs completed May-June 2026
- September 15, 2026 – For education programs completed July-August 2026
- November 15, 2026 – For education programs completed September-October 2026
- January 15, 2027 – For education programs completed November-December 2026
- March 15, 2027 – For education programs completed January-February 2027
- May 15, 2027 – For education programs completed March-April 2027
- July 15, 2027 – For education programs completed May-June 2027
- September 15, 2027 – For education programs completed July-August 2027
- November 15, 2027 – For education programs completed September-October 2027
- January 15, 2028 – For education programs completed November-December 2027
- March 15, 2028 – For education programs completed January-February 2028
- May 15, 2028 – For education programs completed March-April 2028
- July 15, 2028 – For education programs completed May-June 2028

4.5 Unexpended Funds. The Grantee must promptly return to the State any unexpended funds that have not been accounted for in a financial report to the State.

5 Conditions of Payment

All services provided by the Grantee under this Grant Contract Agreement must be performed to the State's satisfaction, as determined at the sole discretion of the State's Authorized Representative and in accordance with all applicable federal, state, and local laws, ordinances, rules, and regulations. The Grantee will not receive payment for work found by the State to be unsatisfactory or performed in violation of federal, state, or local law.

Payments shall not be made on grants with past due progress and/or financial reports, including final reports, unless the State has given the Grantee a written extension.

In accordance with Minnesota Management and Budget Statewide Operating Policy 0801-01, payment shall be made within 30 days following the State's Authorized Representative approval of an invoice. Payments will not be made if reports or other deliverables are outstanding.

For awards greater than \$25,000, a grantee performance evaluation will be posted publicly at <https://osp.admin.mn.gov/granteval/grant-eval-uploader>, per Minnesota Statutes § 16B.98, Subdivision 12 and OGM Policy 08-13.

6 Contracting and Bidding Requirements

6.1 Any services and/or materials that are expected to cost \$100,000 or more must undergo a formal notice and bidding process.

- 6.2** Services and/or materials that are expected to cost between \$25,000 and \$99,999 must be competitively awarded based on a minimum of three (3) verbal quotes or bids or awarded to a targeted vendor.
- 6.3** Services and/or materials that are expected to cost between \$10,000 and \$24,999 must be competitively awarded based on a minimum of two (2) verbal quotes or bids or awarded to a targeted vendor.
- 6.4** The Grantee must take all necessary affirmative steps to assure that targeted vendors from businesses with active certifications through these entities are used when possible:
- A. State Department of Administration's Certified Targeted Group, Economically Disadvantaged and Veteran-Owned Vendor List
 - B. Metropolitan Council Underutilized Business Program
 - C. Small Business Certification Program through Hennepin County, Ramsey County, and City of St. Paul: Central Certification Directory
- 6.5** The Grantee must maintain written standards of conduct covering conflicts of interest and governing the actions of its employees engaged in the selection, award and administration of contracts.
- 6.6** The Grantee must maintain support documentation of the purchasing or bidding process used to contract services in their financial records, including support documentation justifying a single source bid, if applicable.
- 6.7** Notwithstanding 6.1-6.4 above, the State may waive bidding process requirements when:
- A. Vendors included in response to competitive grant request for proposal process were approved and incorporated as an approved work plan for the grant; or
 - B. It is determined there is only one reasonably able and available source for such materials or services and that grantee has established a fair and reasonable price.
- 6.8** The Grantee and any subrecipients must comply with prevailing wage rules per Minnesota Statutes §§ 177.41 through 177.50, as applicable.
- 6.9** The Grantee and any subrecipients must not contract with vendors who are suspended or debarred by the State of Minnesota or the federal government: Suspended and Debarred Vendors, Minnesota Office of State Procurement.

7 Authorized Representatives

- 7.1** The State's Authorized Representative is:
Amber Kastner, Outreach Grants Specialist, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Division of Fish and Wildlife, amber.kastner@state.mn.us, 500 Lafayette Road, St. Paul, MN 55155, 651-259-5193, or their successor, and has the responsibility to monitor the Grantee's performance and the authority to accept the services provided under this Grant Contract Agreement. If the services are satisfactory, the State's Authorized Representative will certify acceptance on each invoice submitted for payment.
- 7.2** The Grantee's Authorized Representatives are:
Dave McMillan, Manager, dave@longlakecc.org, and Beth Haasken, Education Coordinator, beth@longlakecc.org, 28952 438th Lane, Palisade, MN 56469, 218-768-4653, or their successors. If the Grantee's Authorized Representative changes at any time during this Grant Contract Agreement, the Grantee must immediately notify the state.

7.3 The Grantee must clearly post on the Grantee’s website the names of, and contact information for, the Grantee’s leadership and the employee or other person who directly manages and oversees this Grant Contract Agreement on behalf of the Grantee.

8 Assignment, Amendments, Waiver, and Contract Complete

8.1 Assignment. The Grantee may neither assign nor transfer any rights or obligations under this Grant Contract Agreement without the prior consent of the State and a fully executed agreement, executed and approved by the authorized parties or their successors.

8.2 Amendments. Any amendment to this Grant Contract Agreement must be in writing and will not be effective until it has been executed and approved by the same parties who executed and approved the original Grant Contract Agreement or their successors.

8.3 Waiver. If the State fails to enforce any provision of this Grant Contract Agreement, that failure does not waive the provision or its right to enforce it.

8.4 Contract Complete. This Grant Contract Agreement contains all negotiations and agreements between the State and the Grantee. No other understanding regarding this Grant Contract Agreement, whether written or oral, may be used to bind either party.

9 Subcontracting and Subcontract Payment

9.1 A subrecipient is a person or entity that has been awarded a portion of the work authorized by this Grant Contract Agreement by Grantee. The Grantee must document any subaward through a formal legal agreement. The Grantee must provide timely notice to the State of any subrecipient(s) prior to the subrecipient(s) performing work under this Grant Contract Agreement.

9.2 The Grantee must monitor the activities of the subrecipient(s) to ensure the subaward is used for authorized purposes; is in compliance with the terms and conditions of the subaward, [Minnesota Statutes § 16B.97, Subd.4 \(a\) 1](#), and other relevant statutes and regulations; and that subaward performance goals are achieved.

9.3 During this Grant Contract Agreement, if a subrecipient is determined to be performing unsatisfactorily by the State’s Authorized Representative, the Grantee will receive written notification that the subrecipient can no longer be used for this Grant Contract Agreement.

9.4 No subagreement shall serve to terminate or in any way affect the primary legal responsibility of the Grantee for timely and satisfactory performances of the obligations contemplated by the Grant Contract Agreement.

9.5 The Grantee and any subrecipients must not contract with vendors who are suspended or debarred by the State of Minnesota or the federal government.

10 Liability

The Grantee must indemnify, save, and hold the State, its agents, and employees harmless from any claims or causes of action, including attorney’s fees incurred by the State, arising from performance of this Grant Contract Agreement by the Grantee or the Grantee’s agents or employees. This clause will not be construed to bar any legal remedies the Grantee may have for the State’s failure to fulfill its obligations under this Grant Contract Agreement.

11 State Audits

Under Minnesota Statutes § 16B.98, Subd. 8, the Grantee's books, records, documents, and accounting procedures and practices relevant to this Grant Contract Agreement are subject to examination by the Commissioner of Administration, the State granting agency, the State Auditor, the Attorney General, and the Legislative Auditor, as appropriate, for a minimum of six years from the expiration or termination of this Grant Contract Agreement, receipt and approval of all final reports, or the required period of time to satisfy all State and program retention requirements, whichever is later.

12 Government Data Practices and Intellectual Property Rights

12.1 Government Data Practices. The Grantee and State must comply with the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act, Minnesota Statutes Chapter 13, as it applies to all data provided by the State under this grant contract, and as it applies to all data created, collected, received, stored, used, maintained, or disseminated by the Grantee under this grant contract. The civil remedies of Minnesota Statutes § 13.08 apply to the release of the data referred to in this clause by either the Grantee or the State.

If the Grantee receives a request to release the data referred to in this Clause, the Grantee must immediately notify the State. The State will give the Grantee instructions concerning the release of the data to the requesting party before the data is released. The Grantee's response to the request shall comply with applicable law.

12.2 Intellectual Property Rights. Reserved. No intellectual property will be created under this grant. If any intellectual property implications are discovered later, this clause will be amended.

13 Workers Compensation

The Grantee certifies that it is in compliance with Minnesota Statutes § 176.181, Subd. 2, pertaining to workers' compensation insurance coverage. The Grantee's employees and agents will not be considered State employees. Any claims that may arise under the Minnesota Workers' Compensation Act on behalf of these employees and any claims made by any third party as a consequence of any act or omission on the part of these employees are in no way the State's obligation or responsibility.

14 Governing Law, Jurisdiction, Venue

Venue for all legal proceedings out of this Grant Contract Agreement, or its breach, must be in the appropriate state or federal court with competent jurisdiction in Ramsey County, Minnesota.

15 Termination

15.1 Termination by the State.

A. Without Cause.

The State may terminate this Grant Contract Agreement without cause, upon 30 days' written notice to the Grantee. Upon termination, the Grantee will be entitled to payment, determined on a pro rata basis, for services satisfactorily performed.

B. With Cause.

The State may immediately terminate this Grant Contract Agreement if the State finds that there has been a failure to comply with the provisions of this grant contract, that reasonable progress has not been made, or that the purposes for which the funds were granted have not been or will not be fulfilled. The State may

take action to protect the interests of the State of Minnesota, including the refusal to disburse additional funds and requiring the return of all or part of the funds already disbursed.

15.2 Termination by the Commissioner of Administration.

The Commissioner of Administration may immediately and unilaterally terminate this Grant Contract Agreement if further performance under the agreement would not serve agency purposes or performance under the Grant Contract Agreement is not in the best interest of the State.

15.3 Termination for Insufficient Funding.

The State may immediately terminate this Grant Contract Agreement if it does not obtain funding from the Minnesota Legislature, or other funding source; or if funding cannot be continued at a level sufficient to allow for the payment of the services addressed within this Grant Contract Agreement. Termination must be by written notice to the Grantee. The State is not obligated to pay for any services that are provided after notice and effective date of termination. However, the Grantee will be entitled to payment, determined on a pro rata basis, for services satisfactorily performed to the extent that dedicated funds are available.

In the event of temporary lack of funding or appropriation, the State may pause its obligations under this Grant Contract Agreement without terminating it. This pause will be for the duration of the lack of funding or appropriation and shall not be considered a termination of the Grant Contract Agreement. The Grantee will be notified in writing of the temporary pause, and the Grantee's ability to provide services may be temporarily suspended during this period. The State will provide reasonable notice to the Grantee of the lack of funding or appropriation and shall notify the Grantee once funding is restored or appropriated, at which point the provision of services under the Grant Contract Agreement may resume.

The State will not be assessed any penalty if the Grant Contract Agreement is terminated due to insufficient funding. The State must provide the Grantee notice of the lack of funding within a reasonable time of the State's receiving notice.

16 Publicity and Endorsement

16.1 Publicity. Any publicity pertaining to the services resulting from this Grant Contract Agreement shall identify the State as the sponsoring agency. Publicity includes, but is not limited to: websites, social media platforms, notices, informational pamphlets, press releases, research, reports, signs, and similar public notices prepared by or for the Grantee or its employees individually or jointly with others or any subcontractors. All projects primarily funded by state grant appropriations must publicly credit the State, including on the grantee's website, when practicable.

16.2 Endorsement. The Grantee must not claim that the State endorses its products or services.

16.3 Signage. Any site funded by this grant contract shall display a sign at a prominent location at the entrance to the site and in a form approved by the State that acknowledges funding through this grant.

17 Data Disclosure

Under [Minnesota Statutes § 270C.65](#), Subd. 3, and other applicable law, the Grantee consents to disclosure of its social security number, federal employer tax identification number, and/or Minnesota tax identification number, already provided to the State, to federal and state tax agencies and state personnel involved in the payment of state obligations. These identification numbers may be used in the enforcement of federal and state tax laws which could result in action requiring the Grantee to file state tax returns and pay delinquent state tax liabilities, if any.

18 Use of Funds as Match to Other Grants or Programs

The Grantee must inform the State's Authorized Representative whenever the grant funds will be used as match or for reimbursement for any other grant or program.

18.1 The Grantee must inform the State's Authorized Representative or their grant specialist of the following information: grant program, grant name, the amount of grant or match funds to be used, location where funds were or will be used, activity the funds will support, and current landowner (if applicable).

18.2 The Grantee must also inform the State's Authorized Representative before work begins if the new grant or program will add any encumbrances to state land where grant or match funds will be spent.

19 Americans With Disabilities Act

The Grantee must comply with the 2010 American Disabilities Act Standards for Accessible Design.

20 Non-Discrimination Requirements

No person in the United States must, on the ground of race, color, national origin, handicap, age, religion, or sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under, any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance. Including but not limited to:

20.1 Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. § 2000d et seq.) and DOC implementing regulations published at 15 C.F.R. Part 8 prohibiting discrimination on the grounds of race, color, or national origin under programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (20 U.S.C. § 1681 et seq.) prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sex under Federally assisted education programs or activities.

20.2 Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (29 U.S.C. § 794), and DOC implementing regulations published at 15 C.F.R. Part 8b prohibiting discrimination on the basis of handicap under any program or activity receiving or benefiting from Federal assistance.

20.3 The Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended (42 U.S.C. § 6101 et seq.), and DOC implementing regulations published at 15 C.F.R. Part 20 prohibiting discrimination on the basis of age in programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance.

20.4 Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 which prohibits discrimination against qualified individuals with disabilities in services, programs, and activities of public entities.

20.5 Any other applicable non-discrimination law(s).

21 Reporting Requirements

Provide bi-monthly progress reports to the State's Authorized Representative in a format provided by the State with the current invoice. A final report is required at the conclusion of the grant project. The reports will describe work which was completed, time needed to complete said work and total cost and reimbursement request for said work. Payments will not be made on grants with past due progress and/or financial reports, including final reports, unless the State has given the Grantee a written extension.

22 Invasive Species Prevention

Grantees must follow Minnesota DNR's Operational Order 113, which requires preventing or limiting the introduction, establishment and spread of invasive species during activities on public waters and DNR-administered lands. This applies to all activities performed on all lands under this Grant Contract Agreement and is not limited to lands under DNR control or public waters. Duties are listed under Sections II and III (p. 5-8) of Operational Order 113 which may be found here: [Link to Operational Order 113](#).

23 Pollinator Best Management Practices

Habitat restorations and enhancements conducted on DNR lands and prairie restorations on state lands or on any lands using state funds are subject to pollinator best management practices and habitat restoration guidelines pursuant to [Minnesota Statutes § 84.973](#). Practices and guidelines ensure an appropriate diversity of native species to provide habitat for pollinators through the growing season. Current specific practices and guidelines to be followed for contract and grant work can be found here: [Link to Specific Pollinator Best Management Practices for DNR Grants and Contracts](#).

23 Monitoring

The State shall be allowed at any time to conduct periodic site visits and inspections to ensure work progress in accordance with this grant agreement, including a final inspection upon program completion. At least one monitoring visit per grant period on all state grants of over \$50,000 will be conducted and at least annual monitoring visits on grants of over \$250,000.

Following closure of the program, the State's authorized representatives shall be allowed to conduct post-completion inspections of the site to ensure that the site is being properly operated and maintained, and that no conversion of use has occurred.

24 Conflict of Interest

It is the policy of the State of Minnesota to work to deliberately avoid actual and potential conflicts of interest related to grant making at both the individual and organizational levels. A conflict of interest (actual or potential) occurs when a person has actual or apparent duty or loyalty to more than one organization and the competing duties or loyalties may result in actions which are adverse to one or both parties. A conflict of interest exists even if no unethical, improper, or illegal act results from it. The Grantee, by signing this contract with the State, certifies it has read and understands the Office of Grants Management [Conflict of Interest Policy 08-01](#), will maintain an adequate Conflict of Interest Policy and, throughout the term of the contract, monitor and report any actual or potential conflicts of interest to the State's Authorized Representative.

Exhibits

The following Exhibits are attached and incorporated into this Grant Contract Agreement.

Exhibit A: Project Description

Exhibit B: Work Plan and Budget

Grant Contract Agreement Signature Page

State Encumbrance Verification

Individual certifies that funds have been encumbered as required by Minnesota Statutes §§ 16A.15

Print Name: Sacia Matheson

Signature: Sacia Matheson
Signed by: B6A89D0BFC244A6...

Title: Contracts Officer Date: February 2, 2026

SWIFT Contract No. 282618/3000292956

State Agency

With delegated authority

Print Name: Kelly Straka

Signature: Kelly Straka
Signed by: AF4DB0AF515A47A...

Title: FAW Division Director Date: February 11, 2026

Grantee

With delegated authority

Print Name: Dave McMillan

Signature: Dave McMillan
DocuSigned by: 89E33C51E77F4BF...

Title: Manager Date: February 3, 2026



**Exhibit A: Project Description
Outdoor School Grant Program**

Applicant Information

Organization name	Long Lake Conservation Center		
Mailing address	28952 438 th Lane, Palisade, MN 56469		
Phone number	218-768-4653	Website	www.longlakeecc.org

Project Manager <i>This is the primary contact. They coordinate project activities and are responsible for reporting.</i>			
Name	Dave McMillan	Title	Manager
Phone	218-768-4653	Email	dave@longlakeecc.org
Authorized Representative (if different) <i>This individual authorizes the grant contract agreement and is responsible for project success.</i>			
Name	Beth Haasken	Title	Education Coordinator
Phone	218-768-4653	Email	beth@longlakeecc.org
Additional Contact (optional)			
Name		Title	
Phone		Email	

Project Information

Title	Outdoor School for All		
Estimated start date	February 1, 2026	Estimated end date	June 30, 2028
Location	Long Lake Conservation Center		

1. Project Goals: Based on the priorities listed in the request for proposals, describe your overall project goals and objectives.

Long Lake Conservation Center’s overall goals and objectives are to provide a rich, interactive, STEM-focused, standards-based outdoor education experience for as many Minnesota students in grades 4-12 as possible. Qualitatively, the goal is to increase our utilization by 15 percent, with at least a majority of this coming from underserved communities. Grant dollars provided through Outdoor School for All (OSFA) will target and prioritize schools with diverse and/or low-income student populations. A secondary goal is to broaden Long Lake’s geographic reach within the state, including the St. Cloud schools and districts westward.

2. Project Implementation: How do you intend to administer financial support to interested schools? What will the process look like for individual teachers or administrators? What systems and communication methods do you have in place to allow this to happen effectively?

Thanks to our experience providing financial aid to schools through the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF) through the Legislative-Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR) grant, Long Lake Conservation

Center has the tools and systems in place to guide planning teachers through the process, ensuring that the trip is affordable and in line with their educational goals. These systems include the completion of an application that details the school's objectives, and the demographic and socioeconomic makeup of the student population. The application specifically collects the percentage of students who qualify for free and reduced lunch, and the percentage of BIPOC and ELL students. There are also open-ended questions that allow teachers to explain other unique issues within their school population. This could include such things as being a Title One school, or that 50% of the students are classified as special ed, etc. (FYI, these are both real world examples that schools have provided). These planning instruments are foundational and valuable, but much of the hard work is done over the phone or through pre-trip school visits. The many conversations and discussions that take place help us understand the specific needs and goals of the school, and in turn helps the schools understand what they and their students can expect. Based on these discussions as well and the socioeconomic and demographic data, and other factors (other sources of trip funding, etc.), we determine the amount of financial aid available to the students.

3. Program Goals: How do you intend to implement mainly outdoor-based learning opportunities and provide ways for students to directly experience nature?

The vast majority of our classes take place almost entirely in nature, whether that is an outdoor classroom or a natural area such as a thicket, bog, forest, field, or lake. Students experience nature through hands-on activities. We follow an experiential educational model where student explore and discover the wonders of nature under the guidance of our Naturalist Educators. We enhance observation, learning and engagement by giving students outdoor scientific tools to use like magnifying glasses, binoculars, and telescopes.

Here are some examples:

Bog Trek – Students are asked what a bog ecosystem is, but are not told. Instead, they explore the bog, walking and jumping on its spongy moss, squeezing the water from the sphagnum, tasting the water, and chewing on some labrador tea leaves.

Survival Engineering – Students are briefly taught basic engineering principles, and then guided to explore the engineering process by working together to build a structure to shelter the group and "survive" the storm.

Thicket Ecology – Students discuss structural, physiological, and behavioral adaptations while visiting a thicket to experiment with various student-led predator/prey scenarios.

4. Program Curriculum: Describe how your curriculum utilizes research-based environmental and natural resources best practices. In what ways is your curriculum integrated with local school curricula? Provide specific examples of how your outdoor learning opportunities will help students meet academic standards.

Professional staff members implement, review, and adjust curriculum and instruction based on recognized and evidence-based content standards. Curriculum and instructional practices are assessed to assure alignment, relevancy, inclusiveness, and effectiveness for learners.

Professional staff members suggest and provide thoughtfully selected information resources and materials for learners that broaden and enrich the learning process. Resources and materials are selected from credible sources.

Respect for the diversity of cultures, backgrounds, and abilities is embedded in every aspect of the institution's culture and learning environments. The presence and contributions of the global community are authentically integrated in the curricular content and instructional practices.

Professional staff members monitor and adjust instruction based on learners' responses to instruction and learning targets. Professional staff members use a formal, systematic process for analyzing trend and current data to deepen each learner's understanding of content.

Leaders implement a documented process to determine the effectiveness of the institution's curriculum and instruction, including staffing and resources. Leaders use a formal, systematic process for analyzing current and trend data and stakeholder input to make decisions about retaining, changing, or replacing programs and practices.

Professional staff members and learners collaborate to determine learners' progress toward and achievement of intended learning objectives based on assessment data gathered through formal and informal methods. Assessment data are systematically used for ongoing planning, decision making, and modification of curriculum and instruction.

Each class syllabus at Long Lake Conservation Center identifies the State standard(s) that the class meets. In the trip planning process, this information is shared with the visiting school's planning teacher as part of a discussion about their academic goals. One class that is regularly selected because it fulfills a hard-to-meet standard is Stories and Legends of Minnesota's Indigenous People. The class focuses on the Native American winter tradition of storytelling. Students transform traditional Ojibwe and Dakota stories into lively dramas.

5. Audience Diversity: What demographic categories will you consider to ensure that financial support is granted to underserved audiences. What approach will you take to provide support to a broad geographic region in Minnesota?

Long Lake Conservation Center considers the socioeconomic and demographics of a school, including, but not limited to, the percentage of students who qualify for free and reduced lunch, and the percentage of BIPOC and ELL students. Priority will be given to schools from underserved communities.

6. Audience Accessibility: Describe how your organization will ensure that outdoor education is inclusive of students with a wide range of disabilities, both physical and non-physical. What kinds of environmental modifications will you implement? Will you incorporate training for support staff to help ensure that all learners have welcoming, authentic, and meaningful experiences in nature?

Long Lake Conservation Center's campus and buildings are accessible, and we provide adaptive equipment for a variety of classes, including adaptive canoes and sit skis. Two years ago, an accessible trail to the bog ecosystem was created. We will continue to seek to expand accessibility into our forests and wetland classrooms so that students with disabilities will be able to participate without accommodations alongside their classmates. When accommodations are necessary, we will work with the planning teachers to adjust classes. This will include providing off-road transportation to and from class for students with mobility issues, and changing classroom locations to be more accessible. It should be noted that one of the great benefits of working with schools is that they typically provide support staff to assist with students with disabilities. In addition to that, many times a parent of a disabled student will attend the trip as a chaperone.

As part of Long Lake's continuing professional development training, we will emphasize best practices when dealing with the students with physical or other disabilities. This will include training from certified disability counselor.

7. Organizational Capacity: How do you plan to integrate this project into your overall workload? What staffing and infrastructure resources do you have available to ensure timely project completion?

This project represents a growth opportunity for Long Lake Conservation Center. We intend to grow as needed to support the project, including but not limited to additional accounting/administrative support and additional educational staff. Our first priority is always to provide a safe and meaningful outdoor experience to our students. Our existing staff consists of year-round professional educators and administrators with an average of more than five years of outdoor education experience. This includes administrative experience working with a similar grant

program through the Environment and Natural Resource Trust Fund grant that is part of LCCMR. In other words, OSFA is an extension, with some variations, of what we already do. We will grow and change to ensure we meet the objective and priorities of the project.

8. Reporting and Evaluation: How will you track information on programs completed and students served? What methods will you use to collect demographic data from your audience? How will you ensure reporting is submitted in a timely manner? What methods will you use to evaluate your processes and make improvements?

Long Lake will collect complete information on the demographics and socioeconomics of schools, including the percentage of students who qualify for Free or Reduced Lunch, plus BIPOC and ELL percentages. This will be collected through a financial aid application document. This data will be compiled into a report that will include the total number of students served broken down by geographic region and demographics. This report will also include the number of academic hours provided and classes taken by school. This data will be completed at least bi-monthly. A report will be written and submitted to the grant administrators each quarter that provides the data, analysis of the data and a summary of the project results. A post-visit survey will be given to each school and student, asking probing questions designed to evaluate the effectiveness of the programming as related to the project’s goals. The data from these surveys will be compiled, analyzed and submitted within the report. The results of these surveys provide real-time feedback, allowing for use to adjust and improve our programming.

9. Sustainability: What aspects of this project do you anticipate leveraging for program sustainability?

When OSFA was passed into law last session, it represented a turning point in outdoor education and hopefully a paradigm shift within the state’s schools. It is significant because, to a large extent, it removes financial considerations as an obstacle for schools as an outdoor school experience. Overnight outdoor school experiences are now a very realistic option regardless of zip code and socioeconomics. Long Lake plans to leverage this to attract underserved schools, filling our school calendar with new schools. Our experience is that schools and students find so much value in these trips – in regard to both academic and social-emotional development – that they become long-standing traditions. With a full or nearly full calendar, Long Lake and other RELCs will be able to provide meaningful outdoor education experiences for generations to come.

Acknowledgements

- In submitting this application, you are making a request to be considered for grant funds administered by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The DNR is committed to upholding civil rights and ensuring equal access to programs, services, and information. Better understanding of customer demographics helps us develop targeted strategies for improving our services. You are required to provide this information to be considered for grant funds. Supplying this data, which includes both public and private data, gives consent to having the public data made available. Public data includes organization name, location, project title, and amount requested. Private data, including organizational tax information, is required for project administration and will not be published. In accordance with Minnesota Statute 13.356, personal email addresses and phone numbers are private data. Refusal to supply this data, both public and private, removes your eligibility to receive grant funds. DNR and Minnesota Information and Technology staff with a specific job function directly related to administering this program will have access to your specific data. Finally, the DNR provides data to parties when specifically required by court order, and as otherwise provided by law. The public data you provide can be released by the agency in response to a Data Practices Request.
- I have reviewed the complete Request for Proposals and affirm that my organization meets insurance and eligibility requirements, will address potential conflicts of interest, and can enter into a grant contract agreement with the Minnesota DNR.

I certify I have read the application and will comply with the approved application and assurances herein and additional state, local, federal regulations and policies that apply to my organization.

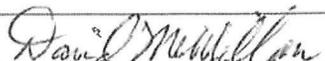
Signature		Date	11-25-25
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Exhibit B: Work Plan and Budget Outdoor School Grant Program

Work Plan

Number of tasks may vary by applicant. Include Planning, Implementation, and Reporting/Evaluation as a minimum.

Task #1	Description: Planning/Strategy Development		
Expected outcomes: The creation of a strategic plan with actionable tactics that supports the mission of OSFA. This will include identifying schools with underserved student populations and/or in underserved areas of the state			
Timeframe: Complete by February 10, 2026		Person(s) responsible: Dave McMillan and Beth Haasken	
Task #2	Description: Acquisition		
Expected outcomes: Actively recruit new schools identified in the strategic plan. The anticipated tactics will be direct communication with key teachers and administrators at the school, and potential site visits.			
Timeframe: February 11-28, 2026		Person(s) responsible: Dave McMillan and Beth Haasken	
Task #3	Description: Implementation		
Expected outcomes: Schedule, plan and coordinate with the planning teachers from the new schools. Collect demographic information, including the percentage of students at the school who qualify for Free or Reduced Lunch, are BIPOC or ELL. Establish academic expectations that align with the school's educational objectives/standards.			
Timeframe: March 1, 2026 – June 30, 2028		Person(s) responsible: Dave McMillan and Beth Haasken	
Task #4	Description: Evaluation		
Expected outcomes: In addition to observation and anecdotal evidence, we will send out post-visit evaluations to teachers and students. Analyze results and make programming adjustments as necessary.			
Timeframe: March 1, 2026 – June 30, 2028		Person(s) responsible: Beth Haasken	
Task #5	Description: Reporting		
Expected outcomes: Compile all data from evaluations and create a report that will be sent out quarterly, detailing the results related to the objections of the project. This report will include the schools and number of students served.			
Timeframe: March 1, 2026 – June 30, 2028		Person(s) responsible: Dave McMillan and Beth Haasken	

Budget

Item	Description (include estimated timeframe)	Quantity	Total Amount
Scholarships for program fees	An estimated 900 students from 10 schools receiving at least partial financial aid. March 1, 2026 – June 30, 2028		\$92,007.20

Bus transportation	Transportation support of \$3,500 on average for the 10 new school. March 1, 2026 – June 30, 2028		\$35,000
Teacher stipends	\$350 per planning teacher, per new school March 1, 2026 – June 30, 2028		\$5,507.20 \$3,500.20
Accessibility equipment or educational supplies	We will seek funds elsewhere to expand our accessibility.		\$0