Appendix B. Environmental and Natural-Resource Education and Awareness

Name of Granting Agency: Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

Title of Grant Program/Opportunity: Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund Community Grant Program

November 5, 2026

Short reference: Education and Awareness

Table of Contents

Appendix B. Environmental and Natural-Resource Education and Awareness 1

Table of Contents 1

B.1 Purpose and when to use Appendix B 1

B.2 What makes a project fit 2

B.3 Education or awareness as the primary purpose 2

B.4 Projects that may fit 2

B.5 Projects that do not fit 3

B.6 Activity-specific information required at stage 1 3

B.7 Additional activity-specific information at stage 2 4

B.8 Project-specific technical or authorization issues 4

B.9 Help and technical information 4

B.1 Purpose and when to use Appendix B

Use Appendix B when the primary funded purpose of your project is education or awareness related to stewardship of Minnesota's air, land, water, forests, fish, wildlife or other natural resources.

For this funding opportunity, applicants may request $20,000 to $150,000. Substantive project implementation must be completed within 12 months or less. Up to two additional months may be authorized for approved startup and closeout administration, but not to extend substantive project work.

Education or awareness may help people understand natural resources, recognize environmental conditions or stewardship needs, develop practical stewardship knowledge or skills, make informed natural-resource decisions or prepare to participate in stewardship activities.

The environmental or natural-resource connection must be a meaningful part of the project, not incidental.

B.2 What makes a project fit

A project may fit this activity area when education or awareness is the central funded purpose and the project has a clear connection to stewardship of Minnesota's environment or natural resources.

For this activity area, stewardship means responsible care, understanding, protection, conservation, preservation, management or use of Minnesota's environment and natural resources.

An education or awareness project does not have to complete restoration or demonstrate long-term ecological change during the grant period. The project should, however, explain what participants or the intended audience are expected to learn, understand, be able to do or become more aware of and why that matters for stewardship.

B.3 Education or awareness as the primary purpose

Education and awareness can also be part of projects whose primary purpose falls under another Community Grant Program activity area. Choose Appendix B as the primary activity area when education or awareness is the central purpose of the funded project.

If education mainly supports another activity, such as natural-resource restoration, trail maintenance or improvement, aquatic invasive species management or a project responding to environmental degradation in an adversely impacted community, select the activity area that best reflects the project's principal funded purpose.

You may identify additional activity areas that also apply. The DNR will evaluate eligibility under the primary activity area selected by the applicant and will not move the application to another activity area after the Stage 1 deadline.

B.4 Projects that may fit

Projects may use different education or awareness approaches. Depending on the project's primary purpose and design, eligible approaches may include:

- Community, youth, school, after-school, field-based or outdoor environmental education
- Training for volunteers, educators, community leaders, peer educators or others who will use or share stewardship knowledge or skills

- Development or adaptation of educational, interpretive, multilingual, culturally relevant, digital or other learning materials when there is a credible plan for their use
- Demonstrations, field experiences, hands-on learning or other experiential education connected to stewardship
- Public awareness or communications activities whose principal purpose is substantive natural-resource education or stewardship awareness
- Community science or participatory learning when education, public understanding, stewardship learning or participant skill development is a principal purpose

Detailed examples and project-development guidance may be provided separately as applicant resources. Examples do not expand eligibility or create additional requirements.

B.5 Projects that do not fit

Appendix B is not intended to fund a project whose primary purpose is:

- Organizational marketing, branding, fundraising, public relations or general promotion
- General youth development with only incidental environmental or natural-resource content
- General workforce development, job readiness, career development, employment placement, entrepreneurship or workforce services where natural-resource stewardship is not the principal project purpose
- Entertainment, networking or general event operations where environmental education or stewardship awareness is incidental
- Scientific research prohibited by the Community Grant Program, or
- Lobbying, prohibited political activity or advocacy that state grant funds may not support

A communications campaign, event, environmental-skills training activity, community-science activity or similar project may require additional review when its primary purpose or relationship to stewardship is unclear.

B.6 Activity-specific information required at stage 1

If you select this as your primary activity area, the Stage 1 Concept Note will ask for concise information needed to understand how the project fits this activity area. You should be prepared to identify:

- The environmental or natural-resource stewardship topic
- The people or audience the project is intended to reach
- What you reasonably expect participants or the intended audience to learn, understand, be able to do or become more aware of
- How the education or awareness will be delivered
- How the proposed education or awareness relates to stewardship of Minnesota's environment or natural resources

Stage 1 does not require a complete curriculum, detailed education plan, extensive community-engagement documentation or other developed Stage 2 materials.

B.7 Additional activity-specific information at stage 2

If your Concept Note advances, the Stage 2 Full Application may ask for additional information needed to evaluate the specific project. Depending on the project, this may include:

- More developed learning or awareness objectives and the intended audience
- The proposed education, delivery, outreach or participant-recruitment approach
- Curriculum, content, materials or a plan for developing or adapting them
- Educator, facilitator, partner or other implementation roles
- Accessibility, language access, participant safety, site or permission considerations relevant to delivery
- A practical way to understand whether the education or awareness achieved its intended result
- How educational products or materials will be used, distributed or made available when applicable

The DNR will request only information that is relevant to the proposed project and the published Stage 2 evaluation criteria.

B.8 Project-specific technical or authorization issues

Some education and awareness projects may involve additional legal, technical, safety, site, data or authorization requirements because of the activities proposed. Examples may include field activities, environmental monitoring or sampling, community science, demonstrations, work with youth, culturally sensitive or Tribal educational content, use of traditional knowledge or physical improvements.

Scientific research projects are ineligible under Section 13.1 of the main RFP. Lobbying and political contributions are ineligible costs under Section 45.2. Event-based education, environmental workforce or skills training, community science and projects involving advocacy or political content may require project-specific review to determine whether the primary funded purpose fits Activity B and whether proposed activities and costs are allowable. The DNR will apply the requirements relevant to the actual project rather than treat the project format alone as determining eligibility.

When a downstream requirement such as a permit, permission, accessibility measure, procurement requirement or other implementation obligation is important to developing a realistic project, schedule, feasibility assessment or budget, the Stage 2 application may ask you to identify or plan for it. Final compliance documentation is generally addressed later unless it is required earlier.

B.9 Help and technical information

Applicant resources and technical assistance may provide additional help with choosing the appropriate activity area, planning an education or awareness project, defining a realistic audience and result, adapting existing resources, considering accessibility and language access and distinguishing education or community science from scientific research.

Resources and technical assistance may explain the requirements in the RFP but do not create new eligibility or scoring requirements.