



Arts & Cultural Heritage Fund  
Minnesota Law 2016 Annual Report



*Minneapolis Public Schools summer school students explore Fort Snelling State Park and collect pinecones for their nature art activity.*

**Date of Report:** January 13, 2017

**Project Title:** Minnesota's Youth Outdoors

**Project Description:** This project expands access to outdoor and place-based education (PBE) opportunities for underserved youth throughout Minnesota. Educational experiences in the outdoors emphasize the state's natural heritage including a commitment to arts and culture, stewardship of public lands, and an interdisciplinary academic focus. Wilderness Inquiry will engage public, charter, and private schools to participate in experiential learning throughout greater Minnesota. This project merges Wilderness Inquiry's existing engagement in the Twin Cities metro area with the nationwide touring program, Canoemobile. Wilderness Inquiry provides sustainable outdoor opportunities for youth and collaborative work with state agencies throughout Minnesota.



*On campus at North Woods School in Cook, Minnesota, high school students learn about Minnesota's history as they use flint and steel to start fires during a activity rotation.*

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**Recipient Board Members:** Morgan Burns, John Butler, Mayor Chris Coleman, Greg Dehn, Jack Driscoll, Beth Finch, Paul Fischer, Camille Gibson, Hunt Greene, Doug Martin, Doug Moore, Dan Moreno, Dan Ness, Bill Schmoker, Ed Spencer, Steve Wells, Ron Zickert

**Legislative Citation:** ML 2015, Ch. 2, Art. 4, Sec. 2, Subd. 6(g)

**Appropriation Language:** \$200,000 each year is for grants to Wilderness Inquiry to preserve Minnesota's outdoor history, culture, and heritage by connecting Minnesota youth to natural resources.

**Source** Arts & Cultural Heritage Fund

**Duration of Project:** F 2016-17

**Funding Amount:** \$196,000 per fiscal year

**Direct expenses:** \$196,000

**Administration costs:** \$4,000

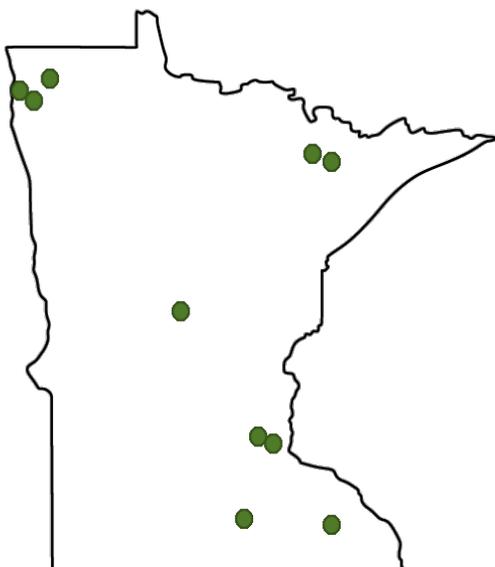
**Number of full time equivalents funded:** 1.75

### Proposed Measurable Outcomes:

- Engage 6,000 underserved Minnesota youth in place-based educational opportunities primarily through public school partnerships.
- Conduct 30 educational events emphasizing arts, culture, and Minnesota history.

### Actual Measured Outcomes:

- Wilderness Inquiry completed more than 50% of the project from July 1, 2015-June 30, 2016 by engaging 3,332 youth in over 30 events in the Twin Cities and throughout the state in outdoor experiences. Highlights include:
  - **October 2015:** 13 youth from Takoda Prep School spent a day planting wild rice seeds on the banks of the Rum River northeast of Saint Cloud. The students made a connection to cultural heritage through an experience of traditional ricing.
  - **November 2015:** 49 9<sup>th</sup> grade boys from Hiawatha Leadership Academy participated in a daylong outdoor experience to build cohesion in the group and learn about local history and culture at Hidden Falls Regional Park in Saint Paul.
  - **December 2015:** 259 youth from Crosby-Ironton and Crosslake engaged in single-day outdoor experiences. Students explored the Cuyuna State Recreation Area on snowshoes learning wilderness observation and survival skills.
  - **February 2016:** Wilderness Inquiry partnered with St. John's Outdoor University to bring 273 Saint Cloud 5th graders outdoors for snowshoeing and bird watching on the St. John's campus hiking trails.
  - **March 2016:** 135 students from North Woods School in Cook participated in a winter activities day observing animal adaptations and exploring the forest outside their school.
  - **May 2016:** 296 students from Rochester Public School students spent a day at Chester Woods Park paddling and learning about the history of the Voyageurs.
  - **June 2016:** 325 students from Crookston, Thief River Falls, and East Grand Forks paddled the Red River Basin learning about the cultural history and recreational opportunities in the area.



Through the ACHF grant Wilderness Inquiry expanded programming into more communities across the state of Minnesota including Thief River Falls, East Grand Forks, Crookston, Saint Cloud, Tower, Cook, Faribault, and Rochester. More youth in the Twin Cities were exposed to outdoor experiences and connected to the natural and cultural history of the area. Programming is expected to expand into more communities in FY2017.

● Engagement in new schools and communities



*Minneapolis summer school students fish at Fort Snelling state park.*



*St. Cloud 5<sup>th</sup> grade students snowshoe on the campus of Saint John's University in Collegeville.*



*Students from Crookston paddle in the Red River Basin.*

**Thank you!**

Thank you for the opportunity to expand Wilderness Inquiry programming to more students throughout the state of Minnesota!