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**City of Duluth - Parks and Recreation Division**

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**DATE: 11/7/2019**

**SUBJECT: Media Advisory: Hartley Nature Center \$1 Million Closer to Expansion after Grant Award**

**BY: Kate Van Daele, Public Information Officer**

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**Media Advisory**

**Hartley Nature Center \$1 Million Closer to Expansion after Grant Award**

**Press Conference**

**Friday, November 8, 10:30 a.m.**

**Hartley Nature Center**

Media Contact:

Tom O'Rourke, Hartley Nature Center Director: 218-724-6735

[Duluth, MN] Hartley Nature Center (HNC) and the City of Duluth are proud to announce that one million dollars in funding was secured from the Greater MN Regional Parks and Trails Commission for the Hartley Nature Center building expansion. A press conference will be held tomorrow, November 8th at 10:30 a.m. at Hartley Nature Center building to give details about the capital campaign, and recent grant award.

Hartley Nature's Center's capital campaign will expand programming and better meet community needs. The 6,000 square foot building addition will include:

- Two new classrooms
- New restrooms
- Community gathering space
- Re-imagined exhibit hall
- Expanded equipment rental
- Additional office and storage space

To date, nearly \$1.8 million of the \$2.5 million dollar project has been secured. Hartley Nature Center intends to complete the fundraising in the coming months, with construction to follow.

"We are thrilled and thankful for this grant award," said Tom O'Rourke, Executive Director of Hartley Nature Center. "Now more than ever it's critical to help people build deeper connections with nature, children especially. The building expansion will allow our core programs to grow, while providing space for us to develop new offerings for the community."

The Hartley Nature Center is dedicated to inspiring lifelong connections with nature through education, play and exploration. HNC's core programs include school field trips, Hartley Nature Preschool, summer and winter camps, Last year HNC provided programs for over 10,000 people from throughout the region, including many early childhood and school aged children.

The Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails Commission also funded \$293,795 for implementation of aspects of the Hartley Park Master Plan. This includes trail and accessibility improvements, wayfinding and signage, and parking and pedestrian access improvements at the nature center.

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