



FROM THE DIRECTOR

Greetings!

We have wrapped up another action-packed year, with new initiatives kicking into high gear and some exciting additions. In July, we welcomed our newest Animal Ambassador, Koda the barred owl! Koda has been undergoing training in preparation for live programs mid-2026. We said goodbye to our WisCorps Individual Placements, Mark and Elliot, and welcomed two new members, Hannah and Alaina. We hosted a DWD Outdoor Education Youth Apprentice, Cara, and a Flow Project artist, Brynne, who updated our "Voyageur Highway" educational sign. After years of rebuilding relationships post-pandemic, we reached our goal of once again engaging 10,000+ youth and adults in outdoor and environmental education programs! I am so pleased to invite everyone to take a look at our new website in 2026 and, as always, do not hesitate to contact me with questions, feedback, and ideas for collaboration and partnership.

Sincerely,

Amy E Workman

amy.workman@wisc.edu



MONITORING AQUATIC INVASIVES USING EDNA

Thanks to funding from Wisconsin Sea Grant and the Division of Extension's Innovation Grant Program, over 370 youth from 19 groups practiced their biotechnology skills and explored STEM career pathways by becoming "river detectives"! Youth collected environmental DNA (eDNA) from the Wisconsin river, performed on-site extraction, and used amplification and visualization techniques to hunt for evidence of invasive carp and native bluegill. This hands-on, community-based monitoring program thrilled adults and youth alike as they connected outdoor field work with lab investigation and analysis.

“

"[I liked best] the opportunity to engage in real world, place based learning that incorporated both field and indoor lab work all in one setting! I think my students really enjoyed feeling like they collected their own materials and data and in turn were able to see their individual results." - Baraboo High School teacher



A YEAR BY THE NUMBERS

PARTICIPANTS SERVED

7,974 Youth
2,953 Adults

10,972 Total

PROGRAM TYPE

158 Onsite education
22 Conferences/retreats
40 Outreach programs
4 Virtual programs

PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

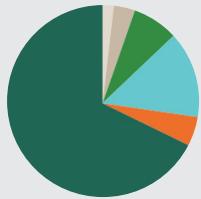
35 4-H Groups
86 Schools
103 Other Groups

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW



FUNDING

- Revenue (50%)
- State Funding (36%)
- Grants (8%)
- Donations (6%)



SPENDING

- Staff (68%)
- Maintenance (5%)
- Seasonal Staff (14%)
- Food (8%)
- Supplies (4%)
- Licensing (2%)

“

“After a semester of learning about fire ecology and how to work with prescribed fire to enhance the resilience of Wisconsin lands, a partnership with Craig Boehlke and others at Upham Woods created an opportunity for these students to put their knowledge into practice.” -Evan Larson, UW-Platteville

“

“The Master Naturalist class at Upham Woods was a highlight of 2025 for me. The lovely instructors opened my eyes to new perspectives on how naturalists can contribute to conservation and our communities.”
-Class Participant

FOREST FRIENDS: EARLY CHILDHOOD NATURE CLUB

This past year we designed a new program for 3- to 4-year-olds accompanied by a parent or grandparent. In this 4-week series, which ran in spring and fall of 2025, our littlest adventurers were introduced to nature and preschool concepts guided by Felix the Fox. Families reported an increased desire to spend time together outdoors after the series ended.

NEW CURRICULUM ON MICROCLIMATES

Thanks to funding from the Rural Partnerships Institute, over 250 youth and adults practiced using tools from forestry and meteorology to measure and compare the microclimates of different habitats! In the Microclimates of Blackhawk Island and Wisconsin programs, participants compare and predict how plants and animals in different habitats may be impacted by shifts in weather extremes happening now and into the future.

A COMMUNITY OF GIVING

We are overwhelmed with gratitude for Upham's supporters. We had four generous donors whose combined gifts created a \$15,000 match challenge for Day of the Badger towards reconstructing the Peanut Butter Mountain stairs. This project was jumpstarted by a \$10,000 pledge in memory of Patricia Buchanan, the namesake of our low element challenge course. Thanks to you, we raised the additional \$30,000 necessary to begin construction next year!

In May, our dismay turned to awe in response to the generosity of our supporters. When our WisCorps members' contracts were suddenly terminated, donors stepped in allowing us to direct hire Elliot and Mark. On Giving Tuesday, we raised over \$4,000 spurred by a \$1,500 unlock challenge, and our \$5,000 Year End appeal match challenge brought in over \$6,300! We could not provide positive outdoor and environmental education experiences for thousands of youth each year without the help of people like you. Thank you!