



Wilderness
Inquiry



Arts & Cultural Heritage Fund
Legacy Amendment 2017 Annual Report

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Wilderness Inquiry

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Wilderness Inquiry's Canoemobile paddles with 5th graders from Soudan on Lake Vermillion as part of the program's expansion to new communities throughout Greater Minnesota (above).

Minnesota's Youth Outdoors

In 2017, Wilderness Inquiry's Canoemobile program provided access to outdoor and place-based (PBE) education opportunities to students throughout Minnesota. These experiential education opportunities on local waterways emphasized the state's natural heritage, including a commitment to arts and culture, stewardship of public lands, and an interdisciplinary academic focus. Through Legacy Amendment funding, Wilderness Inquiry expanded its existing engagement in the Twin Cities to a statewide focus, promoting sustainable outdoor opportunities for young people through collaborative work with state and local agencies.

Project Appropriation: With the generous appropriation from the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund, Wilderness inquiry received \$200,000 each year to preserve Minnesota's outdoor history, culture, and heritage by connecting Minnesota youth to natural resources

Expense Allocation: \$196,000 in direct expenses, \$4,000 in administrative costs

Duration of Project: FY 2016-17

Number of full time equivalents funded: 2

Recipient Board Members:

Cecile Bedor

Morgan Burns

John Butler

Chris Coleman

Jack Driscoll

Beth Finch

Paul Fischer

Hunt Greene

Mary Hanley

Kate Hartfiel

John Hinck

Doug Moore

Dan Moreno

Bill Schmoker

Ed Spencer, Jr.

Steve Wells

Ron Zickert



Sauk River in Cold Spring, MN is one of the newest program locations funded through ACHF (above). A student learns about an historic and indigenous hunting technique of using deerskin hide as camouflage (left).

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.

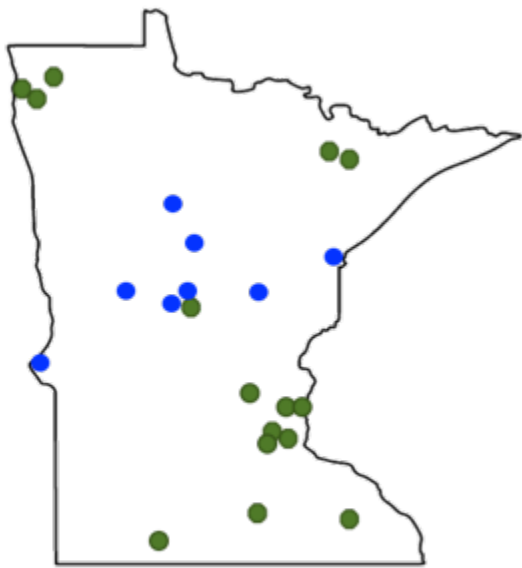
Actual Measured Outcomes:

- In total, more than 7,000 Minnesota youth paddled their local waterways in FY16-17, learning about the natural, cultural, and ecological history of their home. Wilderness Inquiry engaged 3,746 youth across Minnesota in the final year of the project. Highlights from July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017 include:
 - **August 2016:** Wilderness inquiry supported the 50th Annual Mille Lacs Pow Wow, offering canoe rides for youth and families in attendance.
 - **September 2016:** In an expansion of FY 2016 winter programming, Wilderness Inquiry engaged 800 6th grade students from Saint Cloud Area Schools in paddling, orienteering, and cultural history lessons on Lake Sagatagan Saint John's University.
 - **September 2016:** Students from Rocori H.S. in Cold Spring paddled the Sauk River, learning about the history of their waterway and potential career pathways in natural resources.
 - **October 2016:** In continued partnership with the International Water Institute, Wilderness Inquiry connected 150 River Watch students to the history and recreational opportunities of the Red River Basin.
 - **February 2017:** 55 students from Rochester Public Schools explored Chester Woods Regional Park on snowshoes, and they were able to try both traditional and modern snowshoe designs.
 - **May 2017:** Wilderness Inquiry supported the 1st Annual Dakota Truth Telling Gathering at Fort Snelling State Park; attendees paddled canoes through the backwaters of the Mississippi River to the confluence with the Minnesota River, a significant site in Dakota culture.



A St. Cloud student takes a compass reading during orienteering (above). US Forest Service Rangers reenact the history of the fur traders for a group of Silver Bay students (right).

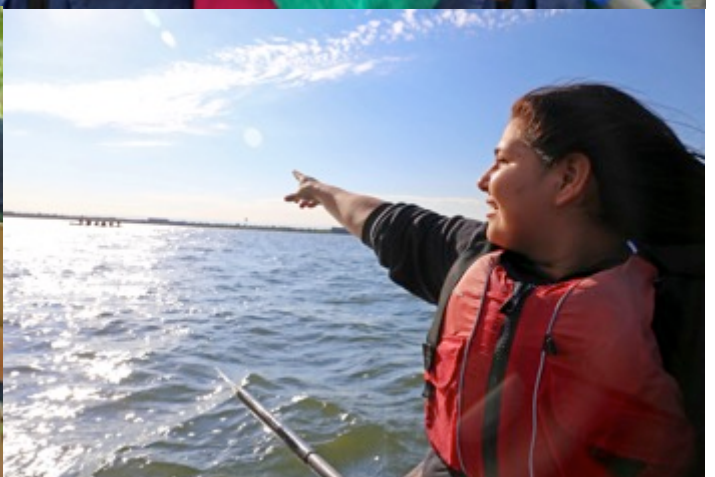




Through the ACHF grant, Wilderness Inquiry deepened its engagement with communities across the state of Minnesota and connected to new communities including Alexandria, Bemidji, Brainerd, Cold Spring, Duluth, Moorhead, Onamia, and Rice. Wilderness Inquiry anticipates sustainable programming with these communities through future years.

- Engagement in continuing schools and communities
- Engagement in new schools and communities FY2017

Relieved to have the wind at their backs, students return to Lake Bemidji after a day of paddling the Mississippi River (top right). Conditions on Lake Mille Lacs were great for the 50th Annual Mille Lacs Pow Wow in August 2016 (bottom right). Students explore Fort Snelling State Park with binoculars hoping to catch a glimpse of a resident eagle family along the park's Minnesota River Valley path (bottom left).



Thank you!

With your generous support, Wilderness Inquiry connected more than 7,000 young people to Minnesota's rich cultural and historical outdoor heritage. Through more than sixty on-water experiential opportunities, students gained an understanding of the significance and immensity of our lakes and rivers. One student wrote, "I really appreciated the opportunity to go on the canoeing trip yesterday. The trip definitely enlightened me with information about nature like the variation of animals you can find in one habitat and environmental problems we go through the day not even thinking about. Personally this was my first time canoeing and it was fun doing something that I have never done before." Thank you for ensuring thousands of students receive an introduction to Minnesota's arterial waterways, exposing them to the important role of nature for the health and wellbeing of our state and its citizens.

Wilderness Inquiry and ACHF share a commitment to preserving Minnesota's outdoor heritage. Through the Arts and Cultural Heritage funding, Wilderness Inquiry helped students develop as recreationalists and stewards to sustain outdoor spaces for generations to come. We are grateful for the support of the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund, thank you for the opportunity to expand programming to more students throughout the state of Minnesota!

