



Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund Legacy Amendment 2018 Annual Report

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Students from Minneapolis South High All Nations Program paddle around B'dote

Canoemobile: Preserving Our Heritage as an Outdoor State

Wilderness Inquiry's Canoemobile program connected thousands of youth across the state to Minnesota's valued land and water natural resources. Through experiential place-based education, students learned about the cultural history of the area and connected to Minnesota's rich outdoor heritage. With the support from the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund, this project engaged 7,944 youth in both daylong opportunities and in multi-day educational and training experiences. These experiential education opportunities focused on Minnesota's natural heritage and brought cultural history into the present-day for each student, while emphasizing stewardship of our natural resources. Throughout this project Wilderness Inquiry continued to expand its programming across the state, in both the Twin Cities area and throughout greater Minnesota.

Project description:

Wilderness Inquiry will connect more than 7,650 youth to their local lands and waterways through place-based education and hands-on outdoor experiences. These experiences will focus on the cultural history of the area to connect students to Minnesota's rich outdoor heritage. Of the 7,650 youth, 650 will take part in overnight and multi-day camping, training, and service learning trips throughout the state of Minnesota to deepen their connection to place and build their stewardship ethic.

Project appropriation:

Through the generous support of the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund, \$490,000 over two years was appropriated to Wilderness Inquiry to preserve Minnesota's outdoor history, culture, and heritage by connecting Minnesota youth to natural resources. As of June 30, 2019,

Wilderness Inquiry received \$487,000 for direct project expenses and fully completed the project based on the proposed measurable outcomes. Administrative costs were \$3,000.



6th graders from Saint Paul Public Summer School learn primitive fire building techniques like the use of a bow drill



Former Representative and current Lieutenant Governor, Peggy Flannigan, met with youth from American Indian Youth Enrichment Program while they paddled on the Mississippi River in July, 2018

Additional funding and leverage:

The project has leveraged additional funding from private sources including: Askov Finlayson, Marbrook Foundation, McNeely Foundation, Target, and additional corporate, foundation, and individual supporters. Legacy funding also helped Wilderness Inquiry leverage additional private capital funding for Voyageur canoes.



Students from Edison High School learn about natural and cultural history from a NPS Ranger during an overnight to Fort Snelling State Park

Duration of project: July 1, 2017 - June 30, 2019

Number of full-time equivalents funded: 1.30 (FY18) / 2.50 (FY19)

Additional Information regarding the Canoemobile Program can be found at:

<https://www.wildernessinquiry.org/programs/canoemobile/program-overview/>

A specific media highlight of our partnership with the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund included a trip with both urban and rural youth to Voyageurs National Park to learn about the history of the park as well as future career opportunities in the National Park system.

<https://www.wildernessinquiry.org/current-news/news-notes/voyageurs-national-park-teen-ambassador-program/>

<https://www.wildernessinquiry.org/current-news/news-notes/teen-program-brings-minnesota-students-to-voyageurs-national-park-international-falls-journal/>



Youth from around the state in the Teen Ambassadors program pose for a group shot along the shore of Lake Kabetogama in Voyageurs National Park

Proposed Measurable Outcomes

- More than 7,650 Minnesota students experience state history through hands-on, outdoor learning opportunities.
- Minnesota's outdoor culture, history, and heritage is preserved by connecting youth to our natural resources.
- Teachers and school districts have more support and resources for implementing place-based curricula and opportunities to connect underserved youth to educational, recreational, and career opportunities across the outdoor sector.
- Wilderness Inquiry streamlines its partnerships with multiple Minnesota school districts to boost academic achievement through the educational, social, and emotional benefits of place-based education in outdoor settings.

Achieved Proposed Outcomes

Throughout the two years of this project, Wilderness Inquiry engaged a total of 7,944 youth. 7,137 youth participated in introductory daylong experiences focused on Minnesota's natural resources and cultural heritage. In addition, 807 students attended multi-day educational and training experiences that further deepened their connection to the outdoors. Highlights from the project include:

- Wilderness Inquiry traveled to the Rochester area to serve hundreds of middle school aged youth through the Canoemobile program. Students spent a day on their local waterway exploring the natural resources of the area and learning about the natural and human history that has shaped the landscape and the culture. Olmstead County Parks supported this program by providing local expertise about the area through a naturalist.



Students work as a team to paddle the Zumbro River through downtown Rochester with local State Senators David Senjem and Carla Nelson

- Through a partnership with Saint Paul Public Schools, over 3,000 students were given the opportunity to experience hands-on outdoor education as part of their summer school program. Students learned about the history of the fur trade in Minnesota as well as the land and water resources that exist in their community and how their actions can impact the future of these resources.
- Due to the support of the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund, Wilderness Inquiry was able to travel to Clinton, MN for the first time ever and partnered the Bonanza Environmental Center to connect 141 youth to their natural history through shared programming and paddling on Big Stone Lake.

- In an effort to build deeper connections between youth and the outdoors, Wilderness Inquiry worked with Harding High School's Outdoor Club throughout the school year on a variety of experiences. Students participated in day-long local canoeing events, workshops focused on resume-building skills and outdoor careers, and a multi-day winter camping adventure where they learned about historical survival techniques such as fire building and quinzhee construction.



Students from Harding High School's Outdoor Club paddle on the Mississippi River.

- Voyageurs National Park Association, the National Park Service and Wilderness Inquiry partnered to create the National Park Teen Ambassador program which connects students from metro and rural areas in Minnesota. Through this program, youth learn valuable outdoor skills and develop an environmental stewardship ethic. Students spent five days exploring Voyageurs National Park and learning about the rich history, culture and natural resources of the area.



Students from Saint Paul Public School's AVID program learn how to use a compass in an orienteering activity during a winter field trip

Thank you!

Through the support of the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund, Wilderness Inquiry is able to connect thousands of youth across the state to the rich culture and outdoor heritage that makes Minnesota unique.

"This trip to Itasca State Park with our 8th [grade] class has been a very powerful entry point in to student content. It has allowed all of our 8th graders to touch, smell, and see the beginnings of the Mississippi, many for the very first time. It has provided a very solid social connection with the other students that has helped launched the remainder of the year. We can't thank WI enough for helping to coordinate and make this experience possible for our 8th graders." -Dave, school principal

"[Wilderness Inquiry] did an amazing job connecting with our students. I've talked with a few of our students since, and they are still excited by the experience." -Brian, social studies teacher at Wellstone



Students from Wellstone International High School camp for the first time ever at Wild River State Park.

Wilderness Inquiry and ACHF share a commitment to preserving Minnesota’s outdoor heritage through hands-on education and programming, fostering student development as recreationalists and natural resource stewards. We thank you for the opportunity to bring Canoemobile to thousands of students across the state!



Native youth from Fond Du Lac learn about wild rice and other natural resources on an extended camping trip to Whiteface Reservoir in the Superior National Forest in partnership with the US Forest Service.

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