

Woodland Dunes Nature Center and Preserve

Final Report: RP -223-12

Project Goal:

The project aimed to support three major goals:

- 1) Enhance the Maritime Museum and Woodland Dunes watershed stewardship groups existing within the project area by building their capacity to reach and engage local citizens and officials.
- 2) Raise citizen awareness and provide individual citizens with the opportunities to participate in protecting and restoring rivers.
- 3) Create a special emphasis program for Manitowoc County 4-H Clubs.

The results of our efforts are described below:

Project Products and Deliverables:

Goal 1: Enhance the Maritime Museum and Woodland Dunes watershed stewardship groups existing within the project area by building their capacity to reach and engage local citizens and officials. The watershed groups were enhanced and capacity was built through increased visibility in the public through events and event advertising. Cooperative work on litter clean-up events and advertising increased efficiency. Educational events were hosted on each of the four rivers along with a rain barrel making workshop at the Wisconsin Maritime Museum hosted by the City of Manitowoc. Through the Lakeshore Chronicle newspaper 31,000 fliers advertising river events were sent to residents of Manitowoc county, event announcements and pamphlet excerpts were included in partners' newsletters and websites.

Goal 2: Raise citizen awareness and provide individuals with the opportunities to participate in protecting and restoring the rivers. Six events were held for people to learn about and help clean-up rivers.

March 24, 2012: "Rain Barrel Workshop" Build your own rain barrel! All the pieces, including the barrel, will be provided. 28 participants

March 28, 2012 "Exploring by kayak: Kayak Connections" Tom Koeppen and friends from the Northeast Wisconsin Paddlers will introduce you to the sport of kayaking. They will cover what gear and skills are needed, where to go kayaking and how to connect with classes and kayaking groups. 15 participants

April 14, 2012 "Manitowoc River Clean-up and Adopt-a-beach Clean-up" This is an excellent way to beautify our community and make our water healthier. Call today to help clean our waterways and beaches. 130 participants & 600lbs of garbage!!

April 14, 2012 "Wetland Night Hike" Early spring is the best time to explore our wetlands and forests for the wildlife that depend on our waters. Join us on a night hike to search for the sky dancing timberdoodle and snipe and listen and look for the frogs that live on the preserve. 40 participants

June 1&15; July 6&20; August 1&17; September 7 2012 "Guided Marsh Tour by boat" Enjoy a guided pontoon trip down the West Twin River, sit and relax as you learn about the river ecosystem and the animals and plants that make the West Twin River their home. 54 participants

June 19, 2012 "Bat Monitoring" As predators that rely almost exclusively on insects, bats are often found along lakes and rivers and provide a reliable measure of ecosystem health. Join Bill Mueller from the Western Great Lakes Bird and Bat Observatory to learn about threats to Wisconsin bat species and how you can help monitor bat populations. 17 participants

June 29-July 1, 2012 "Maritime River Rendezvous" Paddle your own canoe or kayak, or borrow one of ours. You'll travel past natural and historical points along the Manitowoc River. Following the paddle, relax to the sounds of live maritime music at the museum. 400 participants

Goal 3: Create a special emphasis program for Manitowoc County 4-H Clubs. A comprehensive booklet was created that advertised special events, field trips that could be taken to the Wisconsin Maritime Museum and Woodland Dunes Nature Center as well as activities and meeting ideas for clubs all dealing with water resources. Each 4-H leader in the county was given a booklet. Wendy and I participated in the 4-H family fun night to kick off our involvement and introduce ourselves to club leaders, we also included reminders in some of the 4-H newsletters about upcoming events and field trip opportunities. Unfortunately neither organization was contacted by any 4-H groups for field trips. As a result we turned our attention to reaching a youth demographic in another way with the Watershed Ambassadors Summer Camp. This endeavor was far more effective in reaching kids and getting them ready to be spokespeople for the waterways in our community. (See materials for camp details.)

Summary

Through the continuing partnership between the Wisconsin Maritime Museum, the city of Manitowoc and Woodland Dunes Nature Center we are increasing the number of people in the community who understand the threats to the rivers and lakes in our area as well as how to mitigate these threats. Getting people on the river both through the river clean-up and pontoon tours we have found is a great way to connect people to the waterways in our community. The brochures produced through a previous river planning grant continue to be a great source of information for those attending programs and visiting our facilities. The addition of the Watershed Ambassadors Camp in our community is a big step forward in helping spread the word about the importance of protecting and restoring our water resources. During the camp experience groups of students work on community outreach projects to help spread the word to others within our county. These projects are displayed during the River Rendezvous attended by hundreds in our community and focus on topics like invasive species, impacts and prevention of runoff and the impact on wildlife of unhealthy waterways. In post-camp surveys campers showed an increased knowledge and interest in watershed issues. As always we greatly appreciate the support to facilitate programs like these in our community.