

ECO Education / Pontoon Classroom

May 2011

"4th Pontoon Classroom / ECO Field Trip"

Following the fall 2010 program the education committee was determined and committed to completion of individual written curriculums for all seven sessions that were designed. These were written in conjunction with Wisconsin Education Standards for 7th and 8th grade to ensure that any school would be able to utilize and support them. John Kudlus, who was an educator and curriculum designer for Rochester Schools in his career, was instrumental in helping us get this accomplished. The Education committee met weekly through the winter and spring to get this completed. We also created in class curriculums that would support all seven segments of the field trip. Additional lesson learned over the previous session included

1. We needed to improve the students preparation for the field trips by conducting an in class segment for each segment of the field trip.
2. Planned segments to better support the time of season, (Aquatics plants in the fall, shoreline restoration in the spring etc.
3. Canoeing was introduced to support researching Critical Habitat and also to introduce some entertainment for the students
4. The in class sessions needed to include an evaluation segment following the field trip. This helped us better understand what the students liked, disliked and what they learned.

The 4th session was again held on Bony Lake at Carol Lebreck's property. The 36 students were able to learn about Macro Invertebrates, Shoreline restoration, and Critical Habitat. Travis Tulowitzky and Ann Brovold plus POA volunteers helped the students plant Native plants and grasses and tree seedlings. Each student was also given a tree to take home to plant. Jeremy Bates Bayfield Co. AIS Coordinator and John Kudlas lead the Macro session and Jerry Kaiser and Scott Peterson for 'Canoes on Wheels' lead the students through the Critical Habitat experience. The students were paired up and with a canoeing partner and were on the water for 90 minutes studying 4 areas of CH on Bony Lake. For the in class session on CH the students used the school computer lab and were introduced to the DNR CH web site and printed off maps of Bony Lake with CH designations displayed. Equipment purchased with the grant funds was utilized to enhance the hands on experiences. Equipment used included; dip nets, aqua view scopes, pails, shovels underwater cameras, clipboards forceps, ice cube trays and magnification lenses. By the end of this 4th session we were getting pretty comfortable with the program but still realized we needed some improvements. The key learning was the students needed canoeing lessons! We took it for granted that most students from the north woods/lakes area would have canoeing experience... not so.