



EDUCATION MANAGEMENT PLAN

KICKAPOO VALLEY RESERVE
LA FARGE, WI
2020-2025

INTRODUCTION

The Kickapoo Valley Reserve (KVR) is an ideal setting for hosting diverse learning experiences. It is an 8,600-acre outdoor classroom where students of all ages can engage in a variety of learning experiences, including those offered for academic pursuits and others designed for personal enjoyment and enrichment.

EDUCATION MISSION

The Kickapoo Reserve Management Board (KRMB) recognizes that education is an essential component of the many functions of the Reserve. Life-long learning opportunities in conjunction with public use not only attract tourists, but students of all ages.



EDUCATION OVERVIEW

HISTORY AND STATISTICS

Since the start of the first education program in the summer of 1999, when a one-week class was held for middle school students, the Reserve's programs have expanded to include:

- **Over 50 different schools and groups for instructor-led, hands-on programming per year.** This translates to over 2,500 students participating in day-use programs each year.
- **10 weeks of summer day camps for ages two through seventeen.** Summer camps are led by experienced Reserve instructors that lead hands-on activities to help foster a positive connection to nature.
- **Monthly community programs for all ages.** These programs offer a chance to learn more about the natural world and practice new skills.

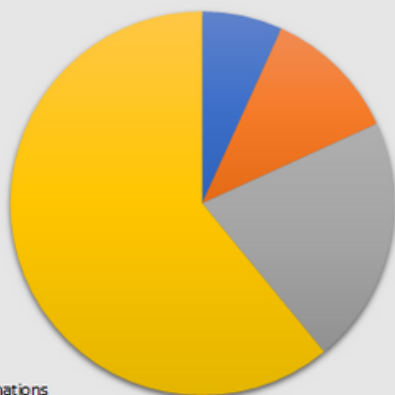
EDUCATION STAFF

The KVR Education Program is overseen by the KVR Education Director and Program Assistant.

- There are over 20 trained environmental educators working on contract to teach programs at the KVR.



2019 Fiscal Year Education and Events Funding Sources



- Friends of KVR
- Program Support - Grants & Donations
- KVR Revenue (i.e. timber sales, agricultural land leases)
- Education and Events Program Revenue

EDUCATION OVERVIEW

2015-2020 NOTEWORTHY HIGHLIGHTS




- The expansion of the scope of Education Program included but was not limited to:
 - Offering the Wisconsin Master Naturalist program twice in 5 years
 - Writing new curriculum for day-use programming
 - Expansion of summer camps to include more overnight opportunities for older students
 - Launching Forest Kindergarten pilot which utilized natural play areas and determined high community interest
 - Expansion of homeschool programming
- Education Assistant was hired at 10 hours per week to assist with growth of Education Program.
- \$700,000 Wisconsin DPI Charter School grant awarded in partnership with La Farge School District for a 4K-2nd grade public charter. The Kickapoo Valley Forest School will be on-site at the KVR.
- Exhibit Upgrade Capital Campaign was initiated to raise over \$600,000 for updating existing exhibit area and building an outdoor classroom space.
- New Ciiporoke tarps were acquired and installed.
- Creative Communities Canvas Project was begun as fundraiser and community event.
- Learning Outside blog was created in response to COVID-19.
- Friends of the Kickapoo Valley Reserve served as significant co-sponsor of Education Program via direct funding .
- Staff adapted to changes in the Education Program caused by COVID-19 and began planning for resilience of future programs according to safety protocols and considerations.



Education Project Priorities and Management Objectives







The following is a summary of the priority projects and the strategies for implementation over the course of the five-year Master Plan (2020-2025). Implementation strategies are identified where appropriate and priorities are assigned.



Project	Priority	Implementation Strategies	Resources
Support implementation and growth of Kickapoo Valley Forest School through DPI grant in cooperation with La Farge Schools.	 High	Education Director will serve on KVFS Leadership Board; At least 2 KVR-appointed members will serve on KVFS Governance Council to oversee development of KVFS	Education Staff/Volunteers Funding Time Building Property
Addition of education space on KVR Visitor Center grounds.	 High	Through committee and board input, proceed to secure funding, design and build additional educational spaces for use by expanding Education Programs.	Education Staff/Volunteers Funding Time Building Equipment
Exhibit Upgrade and Installation.	 High	Work with architect and engineer on exhibit design to enhance curricular connections with outdoor learning and encourage exploration of the KVR	Education Staff/Volunteers Funding Time Building



Education Project Priorities and Management Objectives

Project	Priority	Implementation Strategies	Resources
Expand programming to include outreach to schools and provide more employment opportunities for KVR instructors	 Medium	Provide staff for travel to schools to work with teachers on utilizing local green spaces.	Education Staff/Volunteers Funding Time
Expand Nature Immersion opportunities for older students	 Medium	Create week-long overnight/immersion experiences. Explore partnerships with other entities, i.e. Further Along, Essential Skills, etc.	Education Staff/Volunteers Funding Time Property
Expand Citizen Science projects for the public.	 Medium	Create a webpage with volunteer opportunities and annual reports.	Education Staff/Volunteers Funding Property
Annual or biennial offering of the Wisconsin Master Naturalist Program to increase trained volunteer pool	 Low	Work with UW-Extension to continue this program on an annual or biennial basis in cooperation with Valley Stewardship Network. Determine cost/benefit ratio. Determine uses for trained volunteers and create database.	Education Staff/Volunteers Funding Property
Expand Invasive Species Education	 Low	Partner with other agencies doing invasive species work; Involve volunteers.	Education Staff/Volunteers Funding Time Property
Increase Professional Development for KVR Instructors	 Low	Create new curriculum and offer staff trainings.	Education Staff/Volunteers Funding Time

