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*Extending the Knowledge and
Resources of the University
System to the People of
Waupaca County and Wisconsin*



To: Conservation Groups and Businesses

From: Environmental Youth Connections

Subject: Support for environmental education connections to local natural resource areas

This summer we will begin Environmental Youth Connections (EYC). This multi-year project will create and organize opportunities for youth to practice stewardship and to apply outdoor environmental learning experiences with local natural resource areas. We need your help to jumpstart this project. In coming years, we will be applying for Foundation and Wisconsin Environmental Education Board grants to carry our long range plan of education, expansion and utilization of natural resource areas.

Your contribution could include support for these project steps. This summer's work will include standardized lesson plans, prepared equipment list, gathered materials into resource packs, park maps with designated learning areas and in the fall an orientation of volunteers/staff plus initiation of a website for resources.

Earlier this year when we brought together 25 local environmental educators, professionals, and enthusiast, they supported this concept and long range plans of connecting our youth to our local natural resources areas through the classroom and informal groups. The project has several positive outcomes. One, it exposes young people to the beautiful areas in our own back yard. Two, it teaches youth sound stewardship practices so that one day they will be able to care for our natural resources. Three, it reinforces our life connection to the fragile environment. Four, it builds the capacity of teachers and volunteers to utilize these areas. Five, it provides packaged, straightforward curriculum. The list of benefits is endless.

Our pilot project will begin with 25-30 educators that are presently engaging their students in outdoor education. This summer and fall these teachers and a project coordinator will develop plans and a form for a standardized curriculum (\$2000), modify lesson plans to match the natural resource area maps (\$750), prepare equipment list/kits (\$1000), create a website for resources (\$500), and recruit/train individuals that are willing to support new teachers or groups as resources (\$300).

We hope as a conservation group or business that you might consider a financial contribution to support part of the above cost. Please let us know by Monday June 16th if you can partner with us on this project. Checks can be written to UWEX for the Environmental Youth Connections. Also if any of your members would be willing to participate as one-time volunteers *or* resources for youth experiences *or* on our EYC Advisory Board that meets twice a year, please call Kristi Jackson, 715-256-0871 or Connie Abert, 715-258-6226. For more information or confirmation also contact one of us through the above telephone numbers.