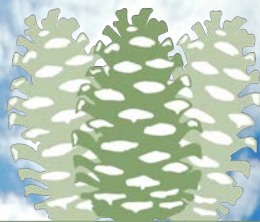


Caring for Our Corner of the Earth



Natural Resources FOUNDATION

of Wisconsin

Annual Report

2015

Josh Mayer

Connecting generations to the wonders of Wisconsin's
lands, waters and wildlife through conservation,
education, engagement and giving.



"Your support makes it possible to care for wildlife and wild lands across the state."

I'm ambling through the beginnings of a prairie restoration, nestled in the moraine hills of our beautiful state. As I wander, I reflect on how the past seasons—the past decades!—have shaped what this field will become. Similarly, I reflect on how the past decades of the Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin have shaped us today, as we celebrate highlights from 2015.

Natural wonders, special places and special species are reasons why you continue to support the Foundation. In 2015 you contributed over four hundred thousand dollars to conservation needs of the greatest importance. Your support makes it possible to care for wildlife and wild lands across the state.

Field trips continued to play a large role in Wisconsin's conservation legacy. Birdathon activities, including twelve Birdathon Tours, raised \$57,000. Our core field trip program had more benefit trips than ever, raising over \$25,000 for other conservation groups and endowments.

Hopefully you heard more about the Foundation in 2015 than ever before through our Heron Haiku contest, the Osa Costa Rica postcard campaign, The Big Day competition and turtle dogs live tweets. In the fall, the I Heart Wisconsin: River Trip generated an amazing number of print, television and radio stories with its positive message of what we can all do to forward the conservation legacy of our state.

You have given in so many ways: through memberships, by creating endowments and by making designated gifts for lands, waters and animal species. Thank you!

Diane Humphrey Lueck
Chair of the Foundation's
board of directors



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Bruce Braun - Madison
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Director of Communications

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Membership Director

Christine Tanzer
Field Trip Coordinator

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Outreach Coordinator

Caitlin Williamson
Grants Administrator

Ruth Oppedahl
Executive Director

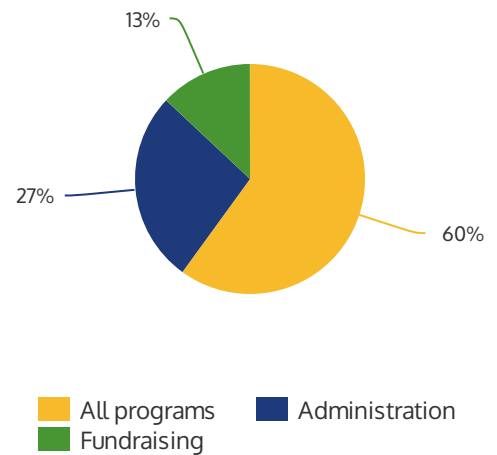
Camille Zanoni
Director of Development

4,000

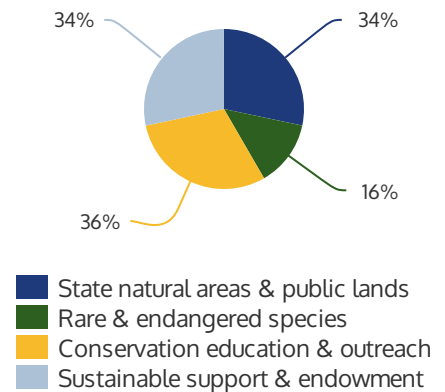
*Members as
of 12.13.15*

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION		
ASSETS	2015	2014
Current Assets		
Cash & equivalents	689,141	1,253,028
Pledge receivable	26,213	30,131
Other receivables	21,027	18,776
Prepaid expenses	32,334	18,447
Investments	5,112,007	4,212,443
Other Assets		
Custodial accounts	5,026,787	5,093,664
Property & equipment	772	2,316
Total Assets	10,908,280	10,628,805
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
Liabilities		
Grants payable	162,029	175,864
Other payables & accruals	10,269	34,169
Agency endowments	935,751	929,525
Custodial accounts	5,023,227	5,093,664
Net Assets		
Unrestricted	117,251	284,100
Temporarily restricted	596,680	745,981
Permanently restricted	4,063,073	3,365,502
TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS	10,908,280	10,628,805

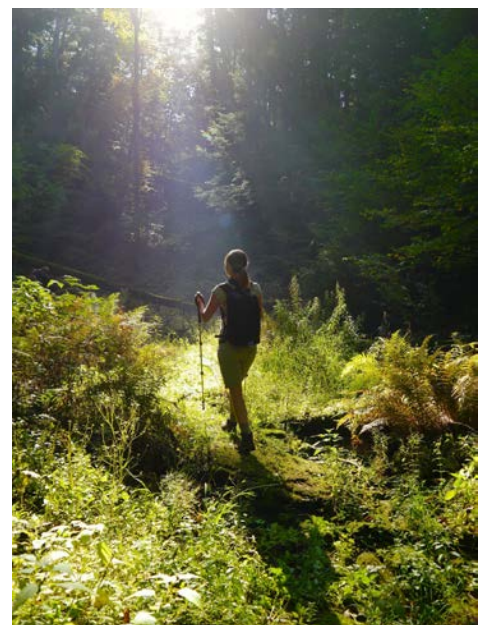
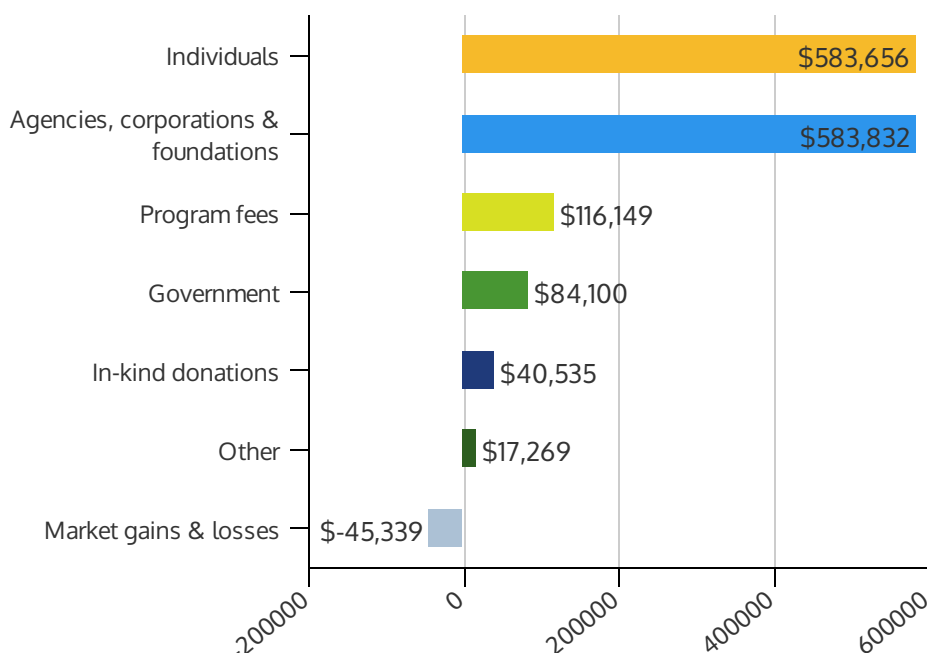
2015 Use of Total Funds: \$998,782



2015 Use of Program Funds: \$607,747



2015 Sources of Funding: \$1,380,202



L. Lesak

The Foundation conserves Wisconsin's **most vulnerable public natural resources statewide** by working in three key program areas:



Outreach & education



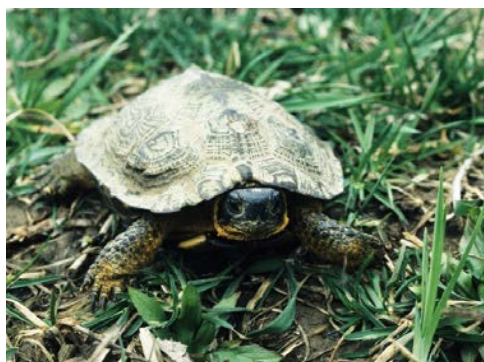
Michelle Milford

To keep up with your voracious appetite for outdoor education and adventure, **we offered 151 field trips across Wisconsin, and 2,078 of you, including 193 young explorers, joined us in the field.** Another adventurous bunch of you traveled to Belize and New Zealand. At eight schools, our Teachers' Outdoor Environmental Education Fund supported prairie restorations, school gardens and Project Green Teen's week-long field trip from Madison to the Kickapoo River, where students got their feet wet in stream ecology. **You also helped the Wisconsin Master Naturalist Program reorganize to enhance training for its 300 certified volunteers.**

You invested
\$67,908



Endangered species protection & recovery



DNR

More than 700 of you bird enthusiasts, plus several foundations, put \$109,000 to work for Wisconsin's birds. From monitoring rare and declining species and enhancing migratory stopover habitat to educating urbanites about preventing window strikes and mapping breeding birds through Wisconsin's largest-ever citizen science project, **you improved the welfare of thousands of birds for years to come. You also helped turtles in northern rivers survive and thrive through a habitat improvement project in northern Wisconsin and Minnesota.** Rare plants remained a focus, as you supported efforts to conserve lichens.

You invested
\$115,852



Public land conservation



Michelle Milford

From the goat prairies of the Mississippi bluffs to the forests of Oneida County to the Kettle Moraine savannas, **you helped manage 14,000 acres of Wisconsin's highest quality natural communities at 30 state natural areas.** From the 2,400-acre Avoca Prairie to the 22-acre Berlin Fen, your donations supported invasive plant surveys and removal, prescribed burns and other management needed to restore and maintain these important natural treasures, some of which are globally significant. **Your planned gifts and endowment proceeds supported campground improvements, trail maintenance and habitat restoration at more than 20 parks, forests and trails.**

You invested
\$162,083

A closer look at 2015

Species of Focus



Turtles



Fish



Lichens



Birds

\$106,192

for managing 30 of our beloved
state natural areas

By attending

174 field trips

you raised

\$55,093

for conservation efforts throughout the state

8 schools

received funds to incorporate
environmental education and
hands-on learning activities



4

New funds
created

DNR Chiwaukee Prairie
Endowment Fund, The
Wisconsin Bird Fund - A
Legacy Fund of the Society
of Tympanuchus Cupido
Pinnatus, Ltd., LaBarbera
Vaughn Outdoor Heritage
Fund and Louis' Bluff
Endowment Fund

28

C.D. Besadny Conservation Grants
provided \$27,311 to 28 different
grassroots, community conservation
& education projects

Sustainable Support for Conservation

70 permanent endowment funds held by the Foundation

*representing over \$5 million in
sustainable conservation funding
for Wisconsin*

These endowed funds contributed more
than \$167,600 in grants to support:

- Bird conservation at critical migratory and breeding habitats
- Capacity building for fellow conservation organizations statewide
- Rare plant preservation
- Quiet trails and accessibility at state parks
- Invasive species removal and habitat restoration at state natural areas

CHERISH



WISCONSIN OUTDOORS FUND

Thousands of DNR license purchasers made a big difference in a small way, contributing over \$93,000 through individual donations of \$2 or more to grow our Cherish Wisconsin Outdoors Fund for public land management.

You invested

\$763,787

in conservation
endowments

With gratitude to our supporters, who gave so generously in 2015

Donor Giving Levels

\$100,000 to \$299,999

The Nature Conservancy
Society of Tympanuchus
Cupido Pinnatus
Wisconsin Department of
Natural Resources

\$25,000 to \$49,999

Friends of the Cedarburg Bog
Mark & Coni LaBarbera
Frank & Mariana Weinhold

\$10,000 to \$24,999

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Bayfield Regional Conservancy
Dr. James Bennett
John C. Bock Foundation
Neal & Carla Butenhoff
Caerus Foundation
Douglas & Sherry Caves
Dan & Jan Chabot
Barry & Barbara DeBoer
Cathy Halpin
Mary Mowbray & Roland
Schroeder
Peter Ostlind
Mary Kay Ring
Luida Sanders**
We Energies Foundation
Joyce & David Weizenicker

\$5,000 to \$9,999

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Antonia Foundation
Bruce & Nancy Braun
Cabela's Outdoor Fund
Friends of Cherokee Marsh
Friends of Wisconsin State Parks
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Bill & Lisa Keen
Kristine Krause & Scott Patulski
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Michael Williamson

\$1,000 to \$4,999

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Nancy McGill
Medtronic
David & LaVonne Middleton
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Noel J Cutright Bird Club
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Roger & Lynn Van Vreede
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Wisconsin Environmental
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Caryl Zaar

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Holly & Dr. Jack Bartholmai
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Brookby Foundation
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The Community Foundation of
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Johanna Fabke
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Kathleen Gruentzel
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Milwaukee
Maggie Jones
Margaret Jones
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Kikkoman Foods Foundation
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\$250 to \$499

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Association of Retired Conservationists
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Shelley & Kevin Baker
Bruce & Kathleen Bartel
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James Friedrich
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Guy & Carole Hansen
Jan Hansen
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As a result, Wisconsin's conservation legacy continues to thrive

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 Linda Zetterberg
 Brent & Karen Zimmerman
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 Phillip & Dale Grimm
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 Friends of Governor Dodge State Park
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TASC
 Wells Print and Digital

**Denotes individuals who are deceased

Take heart my friends,
 Our mission stands
 As it has stood before
 To help and save
 Our woods and lands
 From bluffs to great lake shores
 Be not dismayed
 Though times have changed
 Through this we will endure
 So to that end
 Take heart my friends
 Our future is assured
Camille Zaroni
Foundation Development Director



DNR-Mike Repyak

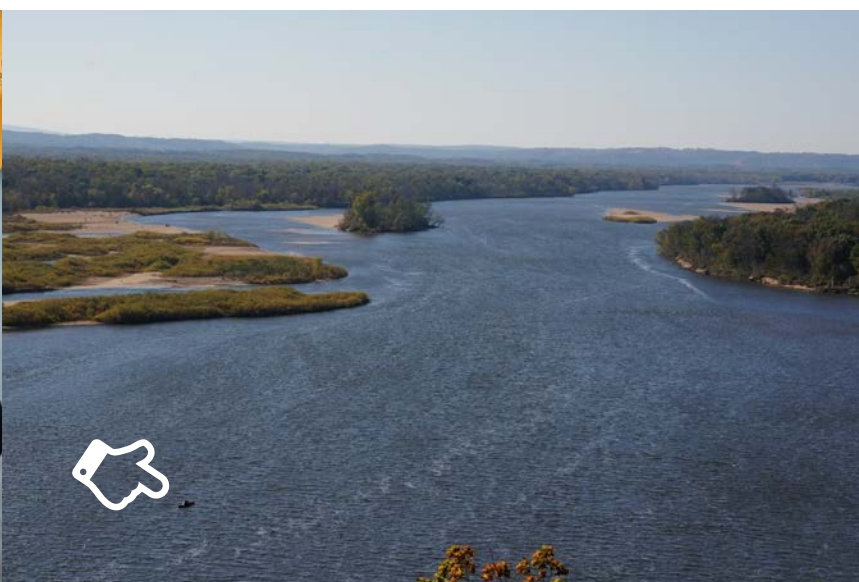


Ruth's I Heart Wisconsin: River Trip

Wisconsin's parks, conservation education and endangered resources experienced significant and unprecedented state funding reductions in 2015, jeopardizing some of the things Wisconsinites love most about this state: its lands, waters and wildlife. These cuts included the loss of an \$84,000 capacity grant that the Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin has received annually since 2000. In response to these developments, Foundation Executive Director Ruth Oppedahl embarked on an 18-day kayaking trip down the Wisconsin River from source to mouth. The initiative, called the "I Heart Wisconsin: River Trip" represented Ruth's effort to celebrate the state's cherished outdoors and inspire others to do what they can to help.



Greg Larson



Barb Baizen



"If I can paddle the Wisconsin River as one person, I am certain that every person can make a difference for our natural resources. We want to inspire others to find their river, find their prairie, find their forest. And then to help our state by becoming a steward of a state natural area, volunteering as a citizen scientist, encouraging kids to get outside and voting in line with their conservation values. Despite the challenges this year, we have so much to celebrate, and so much that we can each do as individuals." –Ruth Oppedahl



P.O. Box 2317
 Madison, WI 53701
 866-264-4096

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