

APPENDIX F

MIDDLETON CROSS PLAINS AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT EVENTS UTILIZING CONSERVANCY LANDS

Contributed by Deb Weitzel

A recap of MCPASD events utilizing Middleton's conservancy lands

*Sixth grade classes pulls garlic mustard in conjunction with FOPB

*Ninth grade biology (550 students) over two days and during 90 minute class periods, comes to the Conservancy and collects data to support a research question, "Does proximity to trails impact the biodiversity of plants?" A week later, the same students collect seed (in the same manner - during 90 min. class period over 2 days) at the Conservancy, Holy Wisdom Monastery, or Gov. Nelson State Park. Coordinated with FOPB.

*Grades K-5 have the option to take field trips to the Conservancy to learn about trees, plants, soil, water, ecology. 500+ students did. Coordinated by FOPB.

*FOPB coordinated with sixth grade teachers at Kromrey Middle School (KMS) for all sixth graders to learn about the importance of storm water management to protect Pheasant Branch Creek behind the school. The focus was the extensive rain gardens on Kromrey campus. The students learned about native plants vs invasive plants. They then did literature search to help decide what invasive species to remove. Each class removed 3 different species, bagged them and Purple Cow Organics took the weeds away for composting. Plans are in the works to restore native species to one rain garden that has a high percentage of invasive species.

*All Middleton High School (MHS) photography students upload 1-5 of their best photos of the Conservancy during a nature photography unit. The photos are judged by semester for first-third place with honorable mention as well. The photos are for use in the FOPB Phenology calendar. Service learning project with FOPB.

*MHS Field biology students (around 50) come to the Conservancy to learn native and invasive plant ID. They then come back to survey the density of species. FOPB.

*MHS Field Biology is centered around the Conservancy. The students are frequently coming to conservancy lands during their class period to tag turtles, survey reptile populations, small mammal study and other wildlife related projects. (Only invasive/native plant study is coordinated through FOPB).

*FOPB partnered with 4K classes to produce curriculum for 10 outdoor experiences for all 10 4K sites. A spring field trip to the Conservancy is being planned.

*FOPB partnered with Girl Scouts to produce backpacks for getting a badge in nature exploration. One of these backpacks with the lessons and equipment needed, will be housed at Northside School for use in Pheasant Branch Conservancy.

*FOPB have also coordinated with an English teacher to have 4 different stations for the students to learn about land use, prairie management, history, etc at the Conservancy. The students explored a bit on their own. Back at school they completed a research paper on a variety of subjects centered on what was learned at the Conservancy. They also produced seasonal poetry that was included in a couple of the Phenology calendars.

*Elm Lawn art teacher, Anne Gustafson planned with FOPB on a grant to have an intergenerational art project for third graders. The students heard stories about growing up outside from senior center residents. The students had a field trip to the conservancy and then produced art projects - drawings, clay, multi-media - in turn with nature.

*FOPB teamed with MHS video class to learn about the Conservancy and how it attracts folks to Middleton...many speakers with different angles. The kids produced short videos about the value of the Conservancy to Middleton. Grant monies supported project.

*FOPB teamed with Jeff Sledge's UW graduate class to produce a report about various aspects of the Conservancy....signage, boardwalks, social media support, etc.

Conservancy Lands Plan 2018-2023

*Students at MHS in Ecology Club dedicated 3 year's of profits from the Organic Dinner (\$10,000) to help Bock Forest purchase. Bock Forest was purchased in 2006.

*MHS Students from ecology classes, teams and other organizations plus Clark St. Community School students have helped with restoration and management in Conservancy. Invasive removal and seed collecting with FOPB.

*MHS ecology students monitored Pheasant Branch Creek and wrote a report that was given to the City each year. In the 90s - then the monitoring expanded to Rock River Coalition and documenting the results on line with UW-EX. Water Action Volunteers. The monitoring site was behind MHS in creek corridor (ended in 2011).

School Awards and Accolades

MCPASD has US Department of Education Green Ribbon Award 2015 | Middleton High School - Green and Healthy Schools - Red Maple Award and Green Ribbon Award 2012 | Park School - GHS/Red Maple and Green Ribbon 2014 | West Middleton School - GHS/Red Maple and Green Ribbon 2015 | Kromrey Middle School - GHS/Red Maple and Green Ribbon 2016

Comments on How the City Could Support Future Events

If events are occurring on conservancy lands that would benefit with students or with naturalist help, the City should reach out to the school district. Any projects that could help educate students about nature is an opportunity for collaboration.

Other events

Contributed by Jeff Erikson

Middleton Hill School teachers use conservancy areas for a variety of teaching needs. Lessons include: prairie plant ID and frequency survey. Seed collection. Deep pellet count survey, field camera images, forest management of Bock forest, worm survey, crane survey, turtle survey, stream flow monitoring, and biotic indexing.