

LEAF - Wisconsin's K-12 Forestry Education Program

with Wisconsin's School Forests and Project Learning Tree

2023-2024 Fiscal Year Work Plan Accomplishments

Submitted to the DNR-Division of Forestry in Support of the LEAF Contract

A Partnership Program

LEAF – Wisconsin's K-12 Forestry Education Program is a partnership between the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources – Division of Forestry and the Wisconsin Center for Environmental Education in the College of Natural Resources at UW-Stevens Point.



Vision, Mission, Values and Outcomes

Wisconsin Center for Environmental Education

The Wisconsin Center for Environmental Education supports forestry education through the LEAF program.

Vision: The Wisconsin Center for Environmental Education envisions an actively engaged, educated population who create and maintain sustainable human and natural communities.

Mission: The Wisconsin Center for Environmental Education provides leadership and resources to advance education for sustainable human and natural communities.

LEAF – Wisconsin's K-12 Forestry Education Program

LEAF integrates learning in and about Wisconsin's forests into K-12 schools by providing the knowledge, skills, and ways of thinking necessary to sustain our forests and communities. With the work of LEAF, citizens can be informed and inspired to engage in sustaining healthy forests and communities.

Values

We believe:

- WI forests can be managed sustainably for economic, ecologic, and social benefits.
- Forestry education is integral to K-12 learning, across all grades and subject areas.
- Healthy communities are dependent upon informed and engaged citizens.
- Humans are dependent upon and connected to earth's systems.
- Forests are support systems for life on earth.

These are the core values that directly underlie the LEAF Program. They provide guidance in delivering program services and products and directions we pursue as a program.

Outcomes are the long-term impacts that we want to have on LEAF's audiences. Through the services and resources of the LEAF program, we strive to accomplish the following outcomes with our audiences:

1. *Instill a strong sense of place and connection to human and natural communities.*
2. *Inspire a sense of appreciation, awe and respect for forests and other ecosystems.*
3. *Increase teachers' and students' forest literacy.*
4. *Develop an understanding of forest management decisions, principles, issues, and opportunities.*
5. *Encourage individual and community action in sustaining forests.*

LEAF will continue to broaden our outreach to educators whose students have been underserved due to economic, cultural, and racial barriers, infuse resources about the changing climate into our newly developed or revised LEAF materials, and support projects and partnerships that develop a sustainable forestry workforce. You will find these initiatives seamlessly woven throughout our workplan goals and priority objectives.

LEAF is committed to supporting the goals and strategies in [Wisconsin's 2020 Statewide Forest Action Plan](#). Please see number and letter subscript annotations designating how our goals and objectives relate to each of the eight areas of the Forest Action Plan. Example: Support use of the Wisconsin Community Tree Map by students *Forest Action Plan Goals and*

Strategies - T1;T6;U4

Listed below are the 2023-2024 fiscal year workplan objectives and LEAF's achievements of those corresponding objectives.

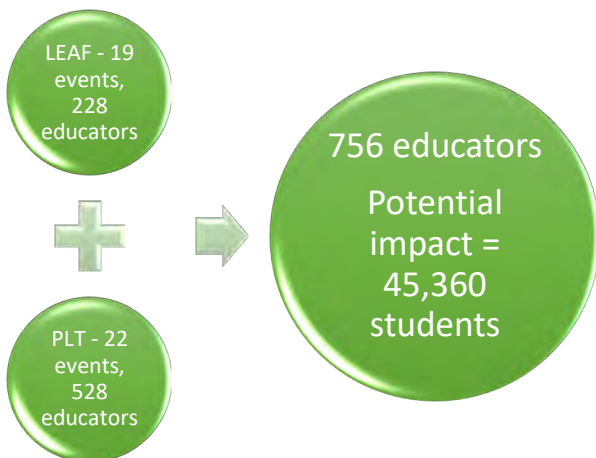
Work Plan Accomplishments FY24

Teacher Professional Development

FY24 Priority Objectives:

- Develop, enhance, and deliver in-person or virtual workshops, in-services, and trainings that reach approximately 600 educators as appropriate to holistically address professional development goals and program outcomes for teachers, schools, and school districts.
 - Offer the following professional development opportunities:
 - A minimum of 5 workshops, in-services, or online classes that **help teachers utilize outdoor spaces**. Current online classes include Step Outside and Community Tree Map. T1;T5;T6;U4
 - One workshop for educators that focuses on how to use **forestry measurement tools** found in the kits and how those tools are used in management decisions. C6
 - A minimum of 1 workshop, online course, and/or in-service that encourages teachers to use their **school forests** to integrate forestry concepts and activities.
 - A minimum of 2 workshops, online course, and/or in-services related to awareness and education about **climate change**-related issues. J10
 - A minimum of 1 workshop related to awareness and education about forestry best management practices in water quality, such as **Healthy Forests, Healthy Waters** A5;A6;A7;H1;H4.
 - Host and coordinate the **Statewide School Forest Summit**.
 - Support the facilitation of 15 **Wisconsin Project Learning Tree (PLT)** workshops at all levels (PK-12 and pre-service), including at least one workshop related to urban tree canopy. H5;K3;T2;T5;T6;U4
 - Integrate the new **SFI/PLT resource Black Faces in Green Spaces: The Journeys of Black Professionals in Green Careers** into two existing LEAF professional development opportunities or resources. N3;N
 - Plan and develop online forestry education training resources for **newly hired DNR foresters**.
 - Initiate conversations for future professional development collaborations with DNR Division of Wildlife. I1
 - Assist with future planning and development of professional learning for teachers regarding the HS Applied Curriculum being developed by the **Wisconsin Forestry Center** in the WI Forestry Careers Coalition.
 - Strategically assess the location of our professional development to ensure we are reaching a broad range of **diverse teachers and students** by using the internal GIS-based tool that maps LEAF's outreach.
 - Initiate conversations with the Abbotsford School District, which is identified as a **rural underrepresented school** and registered a school forest in January, for teacher professional development that would focus on forestry education and forestry careers.

Achievements:



Professional Development Content and Number of Offerings:

- School district in-services (3)
- School Forest Summit (1)
- LEAF and PLT online (on-demand) classes (4)
- Forestry Field Skills/measurement tools (1)
- School forest use (4)
- Forests and the changing climate (3)
- Step Outside in to Learning (2)
- Healthy Forests, Healthy Waters (1)
- Focus on new 4th grade lesson guide (3)
- Developing and utilizing outdoor learning spaces (15)
- PLT workshops, conferences, college classes (22)

Professional Development details...

- Staff provided 19 LEAF **professional development experiences** for 228 participants in 2023-2024. If each teacher has on average 60 students per year, 13,680 students were reached. Professional development includes in-services, courses, statewide workshops, school forest workshops, and conference presentations. This year, professional development included a blend of in-person and online/virtual events. Since 2003, more than 8,635 educators have participated in LEAF professional development potentially affecting more than 500,000 students.
- In addition, 22 **PLT workshops** were held at various locations, including colleges/universities and conferences in 2023-2024, reaching 528 people.
- LEAF held a two-day **School Forest Summit** at Nels P Evjue School Forest in Merrill. 18 educators attended. WI State Forester Heather Berklund, WDNR visited participants and helped to judge a School Forest Maple Syrup competition. Friends of the Merrill School Forest, Access-ability – Wisconsin, WI DNR Forestry, UWSP CNR professors, and Couillard Solar Foundation were guest presenters.
- The **SFI/PLT resource “Black Faces in Green Spaces: The Journeys of Black Professionals in Green Careers”** was integrated into one professional development offering and one new kit.
- LEAF continues to partner with the **Wisconsin Forestry Center (WFC)**. Professional development for teachers with LEAF inclusion will be held in April 2025. LEAF staff have been supporting, reviewing, providing comments, and meeting with WFC staff regularly to assist in the development of the applied HS Forestry lessons.
- **New professional development** offerings created this year included training on LEAF’s newly revised 4th Grade guide, as well as a Forestry Field Skills workshop.
- Planning for the development of a training resource for newly hired DNR foresters has begun, is not complete, and is included on the next FY workplan.
- A total of 15 offerings focused on helping teachers step outside and utilize nearby outdoor spaces.
- LEAF staff uses an internal GIS-based tool and Wisconsin DPI data to plan locations for upcoming professional development and targeted promotion to ensure we are reaching a broad range of diverse teachers and students. Specific locations selected for workshops utilizing this tool included: Ashland, Glendale, Green Bay and Wausau.
- The Abbotsford school district is interested in foundational planning to develop their school forest program. LEAF is waiting for the district to set a date for next steps.



Forestry Field Skills Workshop



School Forest Summit



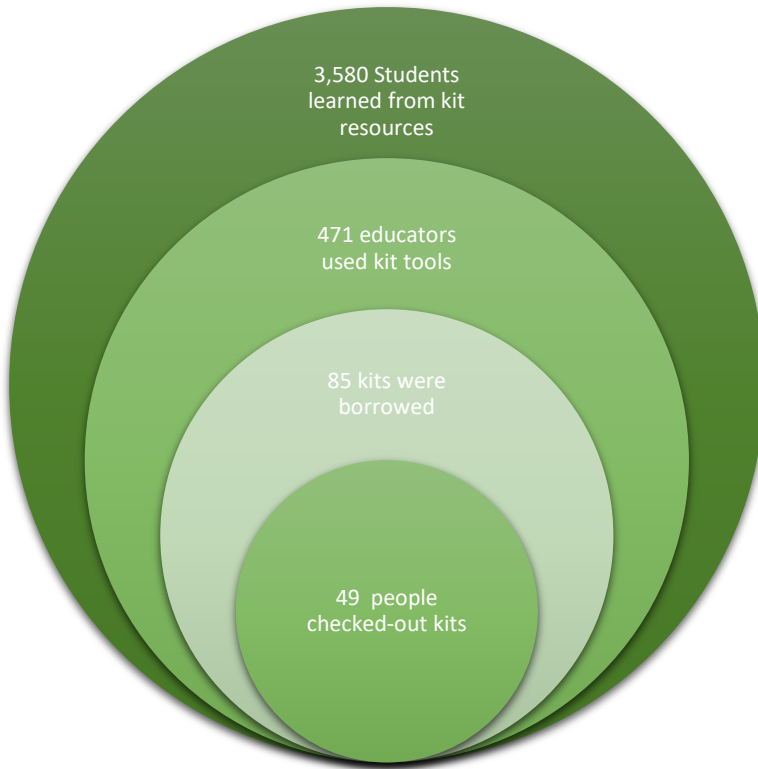
Cedarburg School District In-service

Curriculum Resources

FY24 Priority Objectives:

- Evaluate need for new and/or reformatted curriculum materials.
 - Develop new and/or reformat lessons in the **Urban Forestry Lesson Guide** to support educators with a particular focus on **inclusivity and incorporation of climate change** concepts.
 - Explore updates and modifications for the 9th-12th grade Field Enhancements.
 - Update two anchor lessons from each grade band of the LEAF Forestry Lesson Guide to meet North American Association of Environmental Educators (NAAEE) guidelines for excellence which showcase **inclusivity, skill development, civic responsibility, and usability**.
 - Complete the revision, reformat, and print of existing 4th Grade LEAF curriculum to ensure best practices in **cultural relevance and diversity**, with a particular focus on Wisconsin forest history.
 - Inventory, reorganize, and update LEAF videos and multimedia resources.
- Assist in the development of an **applied forestry curriculum** in high schools and promote the program to high school teachers throughout Wisconsin as a partner with the WFC in their Forest Industry Workforce Recruitment and Development Initiative.^{N3;N4}
- Maintain coordination of the **Forestry Education Kits**, Tree ID kit, LEAF K-8 Lesson Guide Kits, Edible Forest Reference Kit, Bioblitz Kits, Forest Exploration Toolkits for Early Childhood Education, Wildland Fire Kit, Forest Health Kits^{L1}, and Forest Products Kits^{L6}.
 - Update, repair, and/or replenish equipment in forestry-related kits, as needed.
- Coordinate the dissemination of **Project Learning Tree materials**.
- Share quality **non-LEAF forestry education resources** with teachers.
- **Migrate LEAF website** materials from SharePoint 2016 to WordPress with a focus on maintaining resource access.

Achievements:



LEAF kits available at no cost:

- LEAF Grade Level Lesson Guide Kits K/1,2/3,4,5/6,7/8
- Forestry Education Kit (measurement tools)
- Forest Health Kit
- Forest Products Kit
- Tree ID Kit
- Wildland Fire Kit
- Wood ID Blocks Kit
- Digital Herbarium
- Edible Forest Reference Kit
- Forest Exploration Toolkit for Early Childhood
- Journeys Guide Kit

- LEAF Bioblitz Kits:
 - (Field Guide Kit,
 - GPS Kit,
 - Weather Meter Kit,
 - Magnifier Kit,
 - Tree and Log Scale Sticks)

Students really enjoyed being able to use real tools to measure trees. There were a lot of excited (kids) of being able to go outside and measure the trees. Heather was amazing at the coordination of the kits. She was prompt with her communication and answered any questions that I had. Overall, great experience. I really appreciated the waived shipping fees for the kits this school year as well.” - teacher using a Forestry Education Kit

Details regarding LEAF's Curriculum resources ...

- LEAF staff updated the 5th-8th grade lessons in the **LEAF Urban Forestry Lesson Guide** to be more place-based and include concepts related to climate change. Lessons incorporate the Wisconsin Community Tree Map, climate maps, and activities that demonstrate how Urban Forests help mitigate the impacts of rising temperatures and an increase in intense rainfall events. LEAF staff shared updated lessons with educators during a Wisconsin DPI Fall Climate Webinar Series.
- LEAF staff completed updates to the **Wisconsin K-12 Forestry 4th Grade Lesson Guide** that includes a more accurate representation of all people and histories in Wisconsin. The updated guides were printed and have been posted on the LEAF website. In addition, the 4th Grade Kit has been updated to support the lessons. Three workshops were held throughout the state to share the updated guide with educators. The updated guide pairs well with the Wisconsin Forest Tales book; copies of the 4th Grade Forestry Lesson Guide and Wisconsin Forest Tales were given to all educators who attended the workshop.
- LEAF staff attended First Nations Studies 2023-2024 Webinars and to learn how to incorporate best practices in cultural relevance and diversity in LEAF and PLT programming and resources.
- LEAF staff attended Climate Generation Summer Institute for Climate Change Education to learn how to integrate place-based TEK and SEK and climate into LEAF and PLT programming and resources.
- **Materials to support forestry career information** this year include: continuation of our online class called Teaching About Careers in the Forest and continued the partnership with WI Tree Farm Committee to support tree farmers as guest speakers in schools. A student intern created career profiles which can support diverse forestry careers in a forestry career pathway. LEAF staff also served as Lead Instructor for SAF's career-focused Conservation Education pilot.
- LEAF staff created a **new Journeys Guide Kit**, based on PLT's *Black Faces in Green Spaces: The Journeys of Black Professionals in Green Careers*, to be checked out and used by K-12 educators throughout the state.
- **Kits:** A total of 3245 K-12 students, 192 educators, and 209 members of the general public received hands on learning through a LEAF Kit. Across 48 transactions from July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024, 44 educators borrowed 54 LEAF kits. Locations ranged from Abbotsford to White Lake, with organizations including elementary schools, middle schools, high schools, summer school programs, and a handful of parks, botanical gardens, wildlife areas, etc. who were working with children. LEAF continued to provide free shipping of kits to/from educators outside the Central Wisconsin Area as one of our Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion initiatives. In addition, 4 LEAF staff and 1 non-LEAF WCEE staff checked out 31 LEAF kits for 16 events. These events reached 279 educators, 335 students, and 30 general public.
- Over 400 copies of **PLT's Early Childhood, K-8 and Secondary curriculum** materials were distributed to educators, preservice teachers, and teacher educators throughout the state.
- LEAF successfully transitioned from SharePoint 2016 to WordPress in September. All LEAF Lesson guides, tree identification materials, forestry kits, and supporting materials can be found on the **LEAF website** and are easily downloadable for any teacher who needs them.
- The WCEE maintains a **YouTube** channel for its educational videos. The channel was migrated to a brand channel this past year. LEAF videos that had been hosted elsewhere (particularly ones on the UWSP CNR YouTube Channel) were migrated to the WCEE channel and relinked as part of the website migration project. LEAF is on pace for just under 4,000 **views** on LEAF specific videos, which is about a 33% increase, which is about what we expected.
- LEAF staff did not have time or capacity to begin work on the 9-12 Lesson Guide Field Enhancement updates.
- LEAF staff continued to meet with the WFC's High School Program Manager to provide support as the applied curriculum is developed.
- **Non-LEAF** forestry material that supports educational efforts or forestry content knowledge relevant for students is sent to teachers throughout WI. Examples include resources from the DNR Division of Forestry areas (ie Forest Health, Reforestation, Urban Forestry, etc) and forest industry stakeholders.

"All the books were great. Kids loved the firefighter suit and equipment. Poster was nice to have to hang up. Tools with their pictures and uses laminated were helpful. Thank you for providing us these materials. It is nice to have access to them for doing specifically themed programming with the youth that visit our center. We will be renting another box soon and make use of your wonderful program." – educator using Wildland Fire Kit

Consultation

FY24 Priority Objectives:

- Respond to **requests for assistance** in all priority program areas.
- Work with schools to integrate forestry education throughout their **district's curriculum** (e.g., grade-specific, subject-specific, school-specific integration).
- Provide support for the **Forest Exploration Center**^{L10;S6}.
- Respond to requests from schools in the Wisconsin Green & Healthy Schools Program as it relates to enhancing forestry and outdoor education.
- Respond to and/or explore partnerships with schools in underrepresented communities based on **DEI related initiatives**.

Achievements:

- LEAF staff **respond daily** to requests from educators regarding forestry education needs in the state. Inquiries range from professional development requests, forestry inclusion in the curriculum, school forest assistance, teaching resources available from LEAF, teaching outdoors on a school site, and tree identification...among many other forestry education questions.
- **School and Community Forest Consultation** services were provided to 190 individuals from 103 different school districts and 2 municipalities throughout Wisconsin. LEAF served 96 registered school forests and 9 potential school or community forests. Work was done in conjunction with 34 DNR foresters, 9 other DNR individuals, and an additional 25 partnership/outreach opportunities that are not captured in the school district, school forest, and DNR forester totals. All school forests receive regular updates and resources from LEAF. There are 350+ school forest contacts.
- LEAF staff serve on the **Forest Exploration Center's** Education/Interpretation and Forest Management subcommittees. LEAF continually looks for opportunities to utilize the FEC site for future forestry educ. initiatives.
- LEAF staff continued to support and promote **Wisconsin Green & Healthy Schools** throughout the state, including serving as Focus Area Contacts.
- LEAF staff continued to consult with the **Forest History Association of Wisconsin** regarding the organization's educational goals and resources for teachers by serving on their board, acting as head of the Education committee, and serving on their Archive committee.
- LEAF hosted a visit in April from Amanda Bryan, part time Forestry lecturer at the Scottish School of Forestry, which is part of the University of the Highlands and Islands. She toured school forests and forestry education partners in the state to understand how initiatives in the USA, specifically in Michigan and Wisconsin, have helped to embed forestry education across the school curriculum and to pilot lessons learned back in Scotland. The intention is to ensure that all young people understand the benefits of forestry and the range of career opportunities that exist in the sector.



LEAF's Gretchen Marshall and Amanda Bryan, Scottish School of Forestry, University of the Highlands and Islands

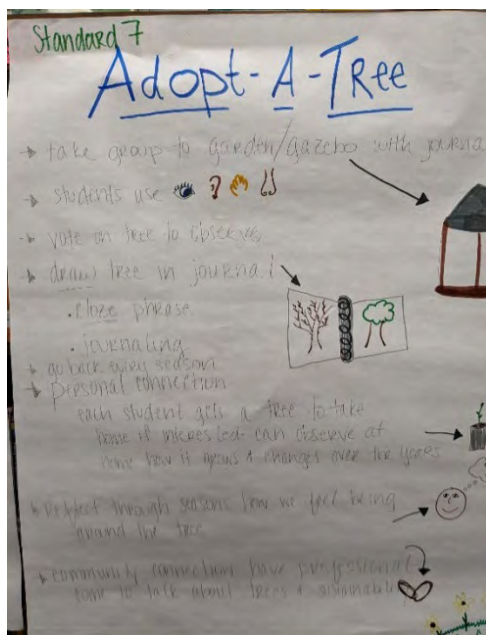
Outdoor Classrooms

FY24 Priority Objectives:

- Support **school and community forest** development and utilization and explore additional services as needed:
 - Assist schools with the development of school forest foundational plans.
 - Increase awareness of resources available to school forest landowners.^{.03}
 - Present awards for school forest accomplishments.
 - Visit school forest sites with school staff.
 - Register school and community forests.^{.R1}
- Support schools and their diverse populations through **LEAF's School Grounds Program** in the development and utilization of outdoor learning on their school sites:
 - Incorporate an awareness of urban forests and the benefits of trees in communities.
 - Provide professional development offerings on planning and utilizing outdoor classrooms.
 - Assemble and offer materials and resources to support outdoor classrooms.
 - Consult with schools on the development and utilization of outdoor classrooms.
 - Support the use of LEAF's kits and/or WCEE kits that enhance outdoor learning.
- Work with partners and stakeholders to encourage and support getting **diverse student populations** into Wisconsin's forests.

Achievements:

- **School forest/community forest registration** assistance was provided to 15 schools and 1 municipality. Three new school forests and 1 new community forest were registered.
- Services were provided to 30 participants from 13 schools regarding **school forest education/foundation plans**.
- Four **School Forest Awards** were presented to two educators, one community member, and one student.
- LEAF staff **visited 20 school forest sites**.
- LEAF staff exhibited and presented at the **Milwaukee Green Schools Consortium** and **Madison Green Schools Summit**. LEAF Lessons and resources are posted online for Milwaukee Green Schools to utilize as part of REFLO's Eco literacy challenge and on the Wisconsin Climate Education Hub.
- **Professional development** related to teaching outdoors occurred at 15 events and included 152 teachers.
- Consultation regarding **school grounds** and outdoor classrooms was provided to 74 individuals from 23 schools and through 5 site visits.
- LEAF staff participate on the **WI SAF DEI committee** to implement the **Wisconsin Wheels to Woods** transportation grant program. This program funds K-12 educational field trips, with priority for underserved student populations, to forests and forest products industries.
- LEAF staff served as Lead Instructor for **SAF's Conservation Education Pilot Program**, bringing over 60 youth from underserved demographics together to learn about forest-related careers.



LEAF School Grounds In-service at La Crosse – Summit Elementary



Networking

FY24 Priority Objectives:

- Provide in-person or online networking opportunities including at **professional/educator conferences**.
- Represent LEAF to other **forestry stakeholders** in and outside of WI.
- Facilitate a time for educators at the **school forest summit** to network and learn from each other.
- **Work with other partners**, organizations, and agencies to provide relevant information about forestry education, school forests, LEAF, and Project Learning Tree
 - Collaborate with non-formal educators to further LEAF goals.
 - Provide input to others' publications, such as *The Branch – PLT's E-Newsletter* and DNR Urban Forestry Update email newsletter.
- Stay connected with educators and stakeholders using **social media**.
- Provide educators and stakeholders with relevant information through **newsletters and the website**.
- Maintain network of Wisconsin PLT facilitators and a relationship with **national PLT and SFI**.

Achievements:

- **Forest industry stakeholders and organization partners**– LEAF, PLT, and school forest information has been shared with or work was done with the following stakeholders, partners, and organizations:

Couillard Solar Foundation	UW-La Crosse
Forest Exploration Center	UW-Milwaukee
Forest History Association of WI	UW-River Falls
Fox Valley Technical College	UW-Stevens Point College of Natural Resources
Friends of the Merrill School Forest	UW-Stevens Point Office of Sustainability
GLTPA's Log-A-Load for Kids	Wisconsin Arborist Association
KEEP (Wisconsin's K-12 Energy Education Program)	Wisconsin Association of Agriculture Educators
Menominee Tribal Enterprises	Wisconsin Association for Environmental Education
Michigan Department of Natural Resources	Wisconsin Council on Forestry
Milwaukee Green Schools Consortium	Wisconsin DNR Division of Forestry
Milwaukee Water Commons	Wisconsin DNR Urban Forestry Team
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.	Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction
Natural Resources Foundation of WI	Wisconsin Forestry Center
Riveredge Nature Center	Wisconsin Society of American Foresters
Sustainable Forestry Initiative and the Wisconsin SIC	Wisconsin Society of Science Teachers
Trees for Tomorrow	Wisconsin Urban Wood Network
- LEAF staff serve on the **Board of Directors** and **committees of the following partner organizations....**
 - Forest History Association of Wisconsin (FHAW) - Board member, Archives Committee, Chair of Education Com.
 - WI Society of American Foresters (SAF) – DEI Committee (Wheels to Woods grant), Conservation Educ. Pilot Program
 - Council on Forestry - Funding subcommittee
 - Forest Exploration Center - Education Committee
- LEAF acknowledges the following indigenous communities, school districts, businesses, and organizations for their **contributions to LEAF's 4th Grade Lesson Guide revision**:

Lac du Flambeau Band of Lake Superior Chippewa	Pokagon Band of Potawatomi	Kretz Lumber
Bad River Band of Lake Superior Chippewa	Stockbridge-Munsee Community	Menominee Tribal Enterprises
Menominee Tribe of Wisconsin	Ho-Chunk Nation of Wisconsin	Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
Bois Forte Band of Ojibwe	Phillips School District	Packaging Corporation of America
Waadookodaading Ojibwe Language Institute	Rice Lake School District	Twin Forest Products, LLC
Oneida Nation	Marathon School District	Trees for Tomorrow
Indian Community School	Eagleville Elementary Charter School	Wagner Family Tree Farm, LLC
	South Shore School District	
	White Lake School District	

- **Conference presentations or exhibits** were provided by LEAF staff at Wisconsin Council for the Social Studies, Midwest Environmental Education Conference, Wisconsin Society of Science Teachers, WI Association of Agriculture Educators, WI Chapter of the Society of American Foresters, Forest History Association of WI, DPI Promoting Early Childhood, PLT-Project WET-Project Wild Joint Coordinator Conference, WI Rural Schools Alliance, and WI Early Childhood Association conferences.
- **School Forest Networking** – LEAF co led and facilitated the first Great Lakes School Forest Webinar between MI, MN, and WI; LEAF held a School Forest Summit at Merrill School Forest in which participants and guests numbered approximately 30 educators, administrators, natural resources professionals, and community members; Held the first of quarterly or semi-annual online school forest networking meeting.
- The **LEAF website** is used to support and provide access to resources and relevant information about forestry. The website was moved from SharePoint to WordPress in September. The most popular pages continue to be our tree identification, professional development, kits, curriculum, and other resources pages.
- LEAF focuses on **Facebook** as its primary social media platform. LEAF is on pace to reach 13,000 people through its organic reach on Facebook. It has also expanded its social media footprint to Instagram and LinkedIn and is slowly growing its audience there.
- LEAF distributed the LEAFlet, a **monthly electronic newsletter**, to 5,000 subscribers per month with an open rate of more than 40%, a 3% increase over the prior program year.
- LEAF staff contributed information for the following **publications**: The Press and Journal (a Scottish Daily newspaper) and PLT's newsletter "The Branch."
- LEAF staff attended and presented at the PLT-Project Wet-Project Wild Joint Coordinators Conference (in lieu of the PLT International Coordinators' Conference) to strengthen ties with the **national PLT program and SFI**.
- LEAF staff attended **SFI Implementation Committee** meetings and provided information about LEAF and PLT as needed.



Wisconsin School Forest Summit networking and professional development.



The LEAF website was reorganized, has a new look, and moved to WordPress.

Student Activities

FY24 Priority Objectives:

- Facilitate the annual FFA Career Development Event (CDE) – **State Forestry Contest** in partnership with agriculture educators^{N3;N4}.
- Participate in other **student-based activities** as appropriate that promote forestry education.
- Continue to collaborate with forest industry and other Wisconsin forestry partners to **enhance workforce** development opportunities for K-12 students.
- Support use of the **Wisconsin Community Tree Map** by students^{T1;T6;U4}.

Achievements:

- LEAF staff facilitated the annual **WI State Forestry FFA Career Development Event (CDE)** at UW Arboretum in Madison. Sixty-four students from 16 schools competed in a written test that included general forestry knowledge, forest products, forestry tools, and forest health; and outdoor skills tests that included forest measurement, orienteering, and forestry management.
- LEAF staff participated in the following additional **student-based activities** that promoted forestry education and reached approximately 1,578 students. While most of LEAF's efforts are directed to a teacher audience, we carefully selected these student events based on need and partner support:
 - drafted and proctored the Middle School Forestry State Science Olympiad Exam
 - facilitated the Envirothon Forestry event at the request of organization leaders
 - presented a Tree ID lesson to students from Milwaukee High School of the Arts
 - led Tree ID and measurement tool activities for Log-a-Load events at Winneconne and Lena school forests
 - A UWSP Graduate student facilitated LEAF lessons at both the Boston School Forest Earth Day event and Pulaski 4th grade forest field Day.
- A partnership with the **Wisconsin Forestry Center** is ongoing and efforts to enhance workforce development opportunities for students were detailed in other sections of this report.
- LEAF staff continued to provide ongoing support for those who have questions about use of the **Wisconsin Community Tree Map** with students. Urban Guide 5-8 Lesson 3, Management Decisions and Biodiversity was updated to include an option that utilizes the Wisconsin Community Tree Map to analyze biodiversity in school neighborhoods.



"I will be looking at our current curriculum to see how I can implement these resources into what we are learning. More importantly, focusing on how to bring the idea of sustainability of our forests into what we are teaching while continuing to model using the indigenous people." – Educator from 4th Grade Lesson Guide Workshop

Evaluation

FY24 Priority Objectives:

- Conduct evaluations and **annual surveys** (LEAF, School Forests, & PLT).
- Assess program progress toward meeting outcomes and program objectives.
 - **Implement changes** in programs annually using the results from program evaluation.
 - Analyze GIS outreach mapping tool to evaluate our reach both geographically and within specific student demographics, and adjust outreach plans to **meet WCEE diversity, equity and inclusion goals** as needed.
- Collect stories and case studies to evaluate **LEAF's forestry education effectiveness**.
- Participate in **staff training** to learn how to better evaluate LEAF's effectiveness to attain the WCEE's goals related to equity.

Achievements:

- LEAF utilizes a variety of ongoing evaluations of resources and services. Surveys are provided to participants at the end of professional development. The forestry education kits, and curriculum materials contain evaluations. Results of the evaluations are reviewed regularly to determine if changes are needed.
- The **LEAF Post-Professional Development Survey** is sent to participants one year after they have completed a professional development experience to evaluate use of LEAF materials and resources since their training. This has been a very reliable source of feedback; however, the past three years have seen very low completion rates. Only 22% of participants responded to the survey in March. However, 83% of those indicated they have implemented LEAF lessons, 88% see evidence that students are learning forestry concepts, and 60% have shared LEAF curriculum with other educators. Sixty-six percent taught about Wisconsin forests before LEAF training and 100% indicate they have taught about WI forests since training.
- The **WCEE Kit Resource Evaluation Survey** received 18 responses providing feedback about LEAF kits. Additional comments received included:
 - [Forestry Education and Tree and Log Scale Sticks] *The clinometer, measuring sticks, and the activity guide were useful for my purposes. Students got to measure the height of several trees including their adopted tree for 23-24. Thank you! I appreciate the delivery price.*
 - [Wood ID Blocks] *Students were fascinated by the differences in color and weight of the tree blocks. They especially liked to sort them based on these 2 things. The delivery and pick-up was excellent and thank you so much for offering this resource for free!*
- **End-of-course professional development surveys** from this fiscal year (N = 121) indicated that 92% of the respondents would recommend LEAF professional development opportunities to others, 97% of the participants indicated that their personal knowledge **about** forestry topics increased, and 97% of the participants indicated that their personal knowledge about **how to teach about** forestry topics increased. Some comments from participants in our LEAF Professional Development experiences are:
 - *"It was valuable to connect with representatives from School Forests and affiliated organizations; to share and compare resources, information, and perspectives to improve our own approaches and site/program-specific advancements."* - WI School Forest Summit
 - *"It made me more aware of trying to plan my curriculum around outdoor activities, one's that can accomplish the same types of things as sitting in a desk!"* - LEAF School Forest Inservice
 - *"I have quite a bit of experience measuring trees...however I did find that I was using a clinometer incorrectly all of these years. It was good to get that cleared up. I enjoyed the winter tree sampling project....."* - Forestry Field Skills Workshop
 - *"This helped me understand the school forest process at a school/district level and gave me an opportunity to understand where colleagues are in the process (I'm new to the group!)."* - School Forest Foundational Planning Workshop
 - *"I can't wait to use this in my classroom."* - Forestry for the Elementary Classroom Workshop
 - *"I loved the idea of bringing pieces of this program into our WI history unit and incorporating the tribal nations"* - Forestry for the Elementary Classroom Workshop
- LEAF staff utilizes the **GIS CORE Map** to inform decision making about professional development locations and opportunities with priority given to opportunities in locations that have **diverse populations** or have not recently received LEAF services.

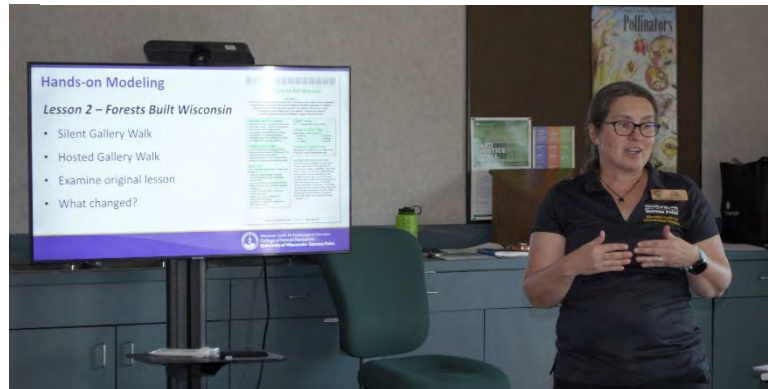
- Created a **survey for DNR foresters** to gain data on financial barriers that may be impacting school forest management. Of the foresters that responded, 88% indicated the school forests they work with need funding/grants/financial assistance in order to implement forest management practices, at a total need over \$600,000.
- The **annual school forest evaluation** was conducted; 107 individual schools or districts provided responses out of 255 individual schools or districts that received the survey. Responses were received from 103 public school districts, 3 private schools, and 1 higher education institution. This is a 42% response rate.
- **LEAF Staff member awards:** Nicole Filizetti was nominated for the UWSP Academic Staff Spirit of Community Service Award. Gretchen Marshall was awarded the Non-Formal Educator of the Year by the Wisconsin Association for Environmental Education. The LEAF Program received an award from the Wisconsin Association of Agriculture Educators for Organizational Relations.



Forestry Field Skills Workshop



New 4th grade Lesson Guide Workshop for Elementary Educators



Respectfully submitted by:
 Becca Franzen – WCEE, Director
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