

# Wisconsin Center for Environmental Education 2019 Year in Review - Service and Impact Report

The Wisconsin Center for Environmental Education provides leadership and resources to advance education for sustainable human and natural communities through the Wisconsin K-12 Energy Education Program (KEEP), LEAF-Wisconsin's K-12 Forestry Education Program and School Forest Program, Green & Healthy Schools Wisconsin, and Project Learning Tree.



**1,148**  
Teachers Impacted

## Professional Development

Over one thousand PK-12, non-formal, and pre-service educators participated in 78 professional development events during 2019. These educators returned from WCEE workshops, in-services, field trainings, and curriculum trainings equipped with standards-based energy, forestry, and environmental education resources that support their students' education.



**6,391**  
Students Impacted

## Community Outreach

Our staff value local and statewide communities and are dedicated to including youth, families, community members, and other environmental and education professionals in our mission to advance education for sustainable human and natural communities.

### Each year our staff:

- Present and exhibit at state, regional, national, and international conferences and symposiums
- Cooperate and partner with agencies/organizations to plan and organize conferences, events, and summits
- Work directly with students in the classroom and in the field
- Participate in community events



**9,914**  
Individuals Impacted

## Educational Resources

We provide more than 30 educational hands-on trunks and kits that are available to Wisconsin educators.

Kits and trunks contain hands-on props, posters, specimen samples, and standards-based activity guides. One hundred forty-six kits were checked out impacting a total of 9,914 individuals in 2019.



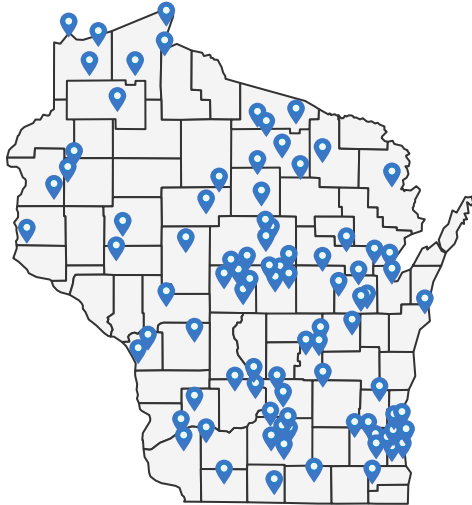
## Statewide Leadership

In 2019 WCEE staff led programs, events, and pursuits that support our position as statewide leaders in advancing environmental and sustainability education.

### Each year our staff:

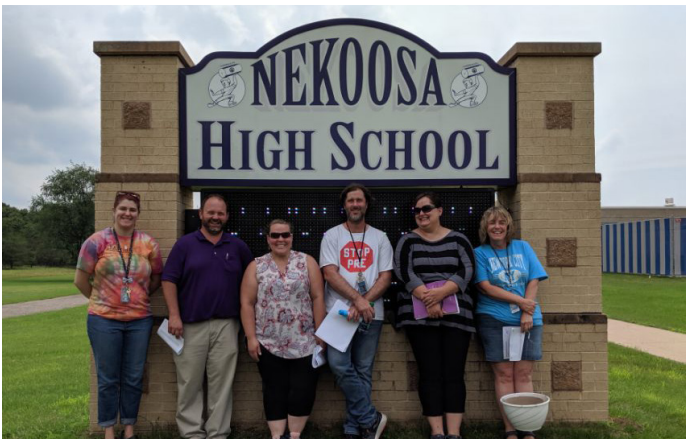
- Participate as members of advisory boards and committees
- Coordinate statewide events
- Administer multiple statewide programs
- Provide statewide recognition opportunities and awards
- Guide cooperative networking and partnerships in Wisconsin
- Create and distribute innovative curriculum and material resources
- Provide personalized support and services, and advise schools, districts, and communities in planning and development for advancing environmental education and sustainability
- Work face-to-face with school districts

## Where We Were in 2019



Each pin represents a location where staff have led community and student engagement events, facilitated professional development, and/or provided school forest and/or school site support. In many cases staff visited a school, site, school forest, or community on more than one occasion in 2019, conducting multiple outreach efforts throughout the year.

### Facilitating Place-based Learning With the Nekoosa School District



In early 2019, the Wisconsin Center for Environmental Education (WCEE) formed a relationship with the Nekoosa School District, with a goal of increasing place-based education over a multi-year period. To achieve this goal, WCEE staff meet with Nekoosa District staff regularly to learn about opportunities and challenges related to integrating the natural features and cultural aspects of their place into existing curricula and offer resources and curricula to increase place-based learning for students.

To support learning and place-based integrations, the WCEE has offered various professional development events for multiple teachers, including two workshops last summer and an early release day and inservice during the school year. These experiences have provided teachers time to think about what place-based education means to them as well as to experiment with new ideas and resources. A focus of this partnership will be to connect with local industry to explore potential careers, increase civic engagement, and use the school, school grounds, and community for teaching and learning.

This continuing partnership is just one example of how the Wisconsin Center for Environmental Education continues to evolve and innovate its practices. We are committed to helping Wisconsin's teachers and students utilize the environment as a context for learning and encourage schools and teachers to reach out to us for professional development, resources, and consulting.

Ardoin, N., Bowers, A., Roth, N., & Holthuis, N. (2017). Environmental education and K-12 student outcomes: A review and analysis of research. *The Journal Of Environmental Education*, 49(1), 1-17.

Research shows that schools that use the environment, or place, as a context for learning report higher grades and standardized test scores in reading, writing, math, science and social studies, due to the opportunity for students to participate in relevant, concrete experiences (Ardoin, Bowers, Roth, & Holthuis, 2017). Instead of learning measurement or graphing skills in the classroom, students who step outside and connect their learning with tangible items on their school grounds will remember these skills longer and can apply them better in different situations. Instead of learning important concepts in all disciplines from a textbook, using the school building as their textbook provides them with real-world experiences that help students understand why learning this information is important.

