

Schmeeckle Reserve

2015 Student Survey



Total number of respondents: **1135** Survey population: **9,823** (entire student body)

1. On average, how often do you visit Schmeeckle Reserve?
 - **Never: 7%** (75)
 - **Rarely (less than once per month): 29%** (334)
 - **1-3 times per month: 35%** (398)
 - **4-6 times per month: 14%** (157)
 - **Over 6 times per month: 15%** (171)

2. If you have not been to the Reserve, what keeps you from visiting? Check all that apply. (Percentages listed are of respondents who have not been to Schmeeckle.)
 - **Not enough time: 52%** (38)
 - **Unfamiliar with the Reserve: 48%** (35)
 - **Too far away: 12%** (9)
 - **Not interested: 25%** (18)
 - **Weather: 27%** (20)
 - **Feel unsafe: 5%** (7)
 - **Other: 19%** (14)

3. What activities have you participated in at Schmeeckle? Check all that apply. (Percentages listed are of respondents who have been to Schmeeckle)
 - **Walking: 95%** (999)
 - **Jogging/running: 62%** (647)
 - **Bicycling: 32%** (332)
 - **Cross-country skiing or snow shoeing: 6%** (62)
 - **Wildlife watching: 61%** (642)
 - **Photography/art: 35%** (367)
 - **Studying/homework: 30%** (310)
 - **Canoeing or kayaking: 8%** (84)
 - **Fishing or Ice Fishing: 9%** (95)
 - **Attending classes: 42%** (439)
 - **Attending Candlelight Hike Festivals: 23%** (241)
 - **Attending nature programs offered by Schmeeckle Reserve Visitor Center: 11%** (119)
 - **Visiting Schmeeckle Reserve Visitor Center: 30%** (315)
 - **Student organization activities: 20%** (205)
 - **Conducting studies/research: 12%** (131)
 - **Geocaching: 3%** (27)
 - **Other: 4%** (47)

4. Please rate the following statements based on whether you agree or disagree:
(Percentages listed are of respondents who have been to Schmeeckle)
- A. *Schmeeckle helps me escape the stress of college life.*
- **Strongly agree: 60.71%** (615)
 - **Agree: 29.02%** (294)
 - **Neutral: 9.67%** (98)
 - **Disagree: 0.49%** (5)
 - **Strongly disagree: 0.1%** (1)
- B. *Schmeeckle Reserve was a reason why I chose to attend UWSP.*
- **Strongly agree: 12.44%** (126)
 - **Agree: 23.4%** (237)
 - **Neutral: 36.43%** (369)
 - **Disagree: 18.26%** (185)
 - **Strongly disagree: 9.48%** (96)
- C. *Schmeeckle Reserve is a valuable part of my experience at UWSP.*
- **Strongly agree: 43.44%** (440)
 - **Agree: 38.3%** (388)
 - **Neutral: 15.00%** (152)
 - **Disagree: 2.47%** (25)
 - **Strongly disagree: 0.79%** (8)
- D. *It is important that Schmeeckle continues to acquire and protect more land.*
- **Strongly agree: 58.44%** (592)
 - **Agree: 29.62%** (300)
 - **Neutral: 10.66%** (108)
 - **Disagree: 0.89%** (9)
 - **Strongly disagree: 0.39%** (4)
- E. *Schmeeckle is an important part of my exercise/health routine.*
- **Strongly agree: 28.04%** (284)
 - **Agree: 26.36%** (267)
 - **Neutral: 33.27%** (337)
 - **Disagree: 9.08%** (92)
 - **Strongly disagree: 3.26%** (33)
- F. *The trails and boardwalks are well maintained.*
- **Strongly agree: 41.36%** (419)
 - **Agree: 49.06%** (497)
 - **Neutral: 8.29%** (84)
 - **Disagree: 1.09%** (11)
- G. *Schmeeckle Reserve staff are friendly and knowledgeable.*
- **Strongly agree: 30.01%** (304)
 - **Agree: 34.55%** (350)
 - **Neutral: 34.35%** (348)
 - **Disagree: 0.89%** (9)
 - **Strongly disagree: 0.2%** (2)
 - **Strongly disagree: 0.20%** (2)

5. Schmeeckle Reserve needs to generate most of its own funding each year to maintain trails and facilities, manage habitats, present educational programs and events, and staff the visitor center. Currently, full-time students pay \$13.56 of their annual \$685 student activity fee (2.0%) to help fund Schmeeckle Reserve.

Do you support \$13.56 of your student activity fee being used to fund Schmeeckle Reserve?

(Percentages listed are of all respondents):

- **Yes: 92%** (984) (88.77% (941) of respondents who have been to Schmeeckle)
(59.72% (43) of respondents who have *not* been to Schmeeckle)
- **No: 8%** (87) (5.47% (58) of respondents who have been to Schmeeckle)

6. Would you support an increase of your student activity fee to help offset costs of maintaining and operating Schmeeckle Reserve? (Percentages listed are of all respondents):

- **Yes: 74%** (788) (76.28% (762) of respondents who have been to Schmeeckle)
(36.11% (26) of respondents who have *not* been to Schmeeckle)
- **No: 26%** (283) (23.72% (237) of respondents who have been to Schmeeckle)
(63.89% (46) of respondents who have *not* been to Schmeeckle)

7. If yes, how much more would you be willing to add to your student activity fee?
(Percentages listed are of respondents who support an increase in fees):

- **Up to \$2.00: 21%** (176) (20.32% (165) who have been to Schmeeckle)
(34.38% (11) who have not been to Schmeeckle)
- **\$2-\$4: 19%** (158) (18.97% (154) who have been to Schmeeckle)
(12.50% (4) who have not been to Schmeeckle)
- **\$4-\$6: 18%** (148) (17.24% (140) who have been to Schmeeckle)
(25.00% (8) who have not been to Schmeeckle)
- **\$6-\$8: 10%** (81) (9.73% (79) who have been to Schmeeckle)
(6.25% (2) who have not been to Schmeeckle)
- **\$8-\$10: 16%** (135) (16.01% (130) who have been to Schmeeckle)
(15.63% (5) who have not been to Schmeeckle)
- **More than \$10: 17%** (146) (17.73% (144) who have been to Schmeeckle)
(6.25% (2) who have not been to Schmeeckle)

8. If you are interested in becoming more involved at Schmeeckle Reserve, which of the following activities interest you? Check all that apply. (Percentages listed are of all respondents.):

- **Joining the Friends of Schmeeckle Reserve, a community organization formed to support the Reserve: 19%** (200)
- **Obtaining a work-study job at Schmeeckle: 31%** (335)
- **Conducting research within the Reserve: 25%** (267)
- **Volunteering (trail maintenance, invasive species control, programs and events): 38%** (58)
- **I'm not interested in becoming more involved: 45%** (480)
- **Other: 2%** (20)
 - Non-work study job/internship (7), Hunting (2), Club activities (2), Environmental education opportunities (2), Workshops/classes (2), Attending programs (1), Advertising for Schmeeckle (1), Fundraising (1), Volunteering in the workshop (1), Compost demonstration (1)

9. Do you feel safe while visiting Schmeeckle? (Percentages listed are of respondents who have been to Schmeeckle.)

- **Yes: 97%** (952)

- *Please explain your answer* (This question was short answer and responses were coded):

- **Safe Environment/No threats: 45%** (208)
- **Many friendly people on the trails: 16%** (74)
- **Visits during daylight hours: 9%** (40)
- **Close proximity to campus/town: 7%** (31)
- **Visits with at least one other person: 7%** (31)
- **The reserve is well managed/maintained: 6%** (28)
- **Feels comfortable being alone outdoors: 5%** (23)
- **Rangers patrolling the trails: 4%** (20)
- **Carries defensive mechanisms: 2%** (8)
- **Emergency beacons located on the trails: 1%** (3)

- **No: 3%** (30)

- *Please explain your answer* (This question was short answer and responses were coded):

- **Concerned about threatening people/illegal activity: 46%** (19)
- **Not comfortable being alone outdoors: 12%** (5)
- **Uncomfortable visiting in poor lighting settings: 10%** (4)
- **Not enough emergency beacons: 10%** (4)
- **Afraid of wildlife/wildlife attacks: 7%** (3)
- **Not enough rangers patrolling: 5%** (2)
- **Fear of becoming lost: 5%** (2)
- **Concerned about dangers from poor maintenance: 5%** (2)

10. What do you value most about Schmeeckle Reserve? (Percentages listed are of respondents who have been to Schmeeckle. This question was short answer and responses were coded):

Quiet and Relaxing Experience: 45.28% (326)

- Peace, calm, serene, tranquility, privacy, clear my mind, escape from campus/city/people/stress, pureness, untouched

• **Natural Setting: 21.53%** (155)

- Enjoyment, value, and love of nature, being outside/outdoors, walk through the woods

• **Trails and Boardwalks: 17.78%** (128)

- Well-maintained, wood-chipped, soft, great for jogging/running, abundance of trails, neat bridges, quotes

• **Wildlife, Plants, Habitats: 16.81%** (121)

- Seeing wildlife, variety of habitats, nature observation, trees, tame wildlife, enjoy watching deer

• **Beauty: 16.53%** (119)

- Beautiful, pretty, scenery

• **Proximity: 14.72%** (106)

- Close to campus and Stevens Point, easy access

• **Recreational Opportunities: 13.75%** (99)

- Running, jogging, biking, exercise, photography, fishing, hiking

• **Green Space and Conservation Efforts: 13.19%** (95)

- Island of Green, preservation, protection from development/urban sprawl, few manmade structures, natural area, environmental awareness

• **Educational Opportunities: 9.17%** (66)

- Classes, learning, public programs, hands-on labs

• **Lake Joanis: 7.36%** (53)

- Beautiful view, loop trail, benches, beach, clear and clean water

• **Well-Maintained: 5.00%** (36)

- Well kept natural area, nearly free of litter

• **Other: 8.06%** (58)

- Open to both University and community (15), Social aspects (13), Safe/comfortable environment (4), Reflection Pond with swing bench (3), Visitor Center (3), Link to Green Circle Trail (2), Tasteful signs and maps (1), Treehouse (1), Berard Oaks (1), Conservation Hall of Fame (1), Great place to work (1)

• **Everything: 1.25%** (9)

11. What suggestions do you have for improving Schmeeckle Reserve? What concerns do you have about the Reserve? (Percentages listed are of respondents who have been to Schmeeckle. This question was short answer and responses were coded):

- **Increase community outreach efforts: 12.17%** (60)
 - More programs, better communication to students, more events like the Candlelight hikes, create programs geared towards college students, offer non work-study job opportunities, more volunteer opportunities
- **Increase the size of the Reserve: 9.94%** (49)
- **Manage and restore native habitats: 7.91%** (39)
 - Attract more wildlife, plant trees, install wildlife houses, follow sustainable forestry and prescribed fire practices
- **Trail and boardwalk maintenance concerns: 7.71%** (38)
 - Boardwalk and bridge repairs, trails need to be wider, trails are too wide, fix boggy/wet areas
- **Safety concerns: 6.49%** (32)
 - Illicit/illegal activities, unsafe toward evening, increase emergency call phones, creepy individuals, wildlife, need more patrols
- **More trails and benches: 6.49%** (32)
- **Remove invasive exotic species: 5.48%** (27)
- **Concerned about budget cuts affecting Schmeeckle Reserve: 5.27%** (26)
- **Less restrictions: 4.46%** (22)
 - Allow evening use, let people bring dogs into the reserve, allow swimming in Lake Joanis
- **Keep the Reserve in-tact and natural: 3.25%** (16)
 - Avoid excessive development, remove roads, keep for future generations
- **Improving informational signs: 2.64%** (13)
 - Install additional signs and maps, update maps, simplify maps, bigger rules signs
- **Other: 17.85%** (88)
 - Not enough fish/wildlife (11), Litter concerns (10), More areas like the treehouse and swing (8), Too much human activity in the reserve (7), Too many deer (7), Tame deer (7), Expand/improve visitor center (6), Better trail lighting (6), Groom cross-country ski trails (4), Increase availability of recreational activities (4), More research (5), User conflicts—runners, bikers (3), Vandalism concerns (3), Groom cross-country ski trails (4), Increase natural barrier between suburban development and the reserve (3), Don't expand the reserve (2), vandalism concerns (2), Increase reserve staff (2), more bathrooms/access to water (2), Enhance sustainability practices (2), Outdoor recreational equipment rental (2), Too high student fee (2), Make a bridge to island on Lake Joanis (2) Allow bow-hunting and timber harvests (2), Sound pollution from nearby traffic (1), Better parking near campus (1), More regulations (1), lock-up available for valuables (1)
- **No concerns: 29.82%** (147)

Demographic Information

(Percentages listed are of all respondents):

12. What is your gender?

- **Male: 34%** (351)
- **Female: 66%** (687)
- **Other: 1%** (9)

13. Do you live...

- **On campus (dorms): 44%** (463)
- **Off campus: 56%** (585)

14. What is your program/major?

15. What is your current class status?

- **Freshman: 18%** (183)
- **Sophomore: 21%** (219)
- **Junior: 25%** (266)
- **Senior: 33%** (345)
- **Graduate: 3%** (32)

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| College of Natural Resources | 28.80% (282) |
| Wildlife and Fisheries | 9.09% (89) |
| Forestry | 7.05% (69) |
| Waters, Waste Mgmt, Watershed Planning | 3.98% (39) |
| General Resource Mgmt/Land Use | 3.58% (35) |
| Env. Ed./Interp.-Youth Program/Camp Mgmt | 3.17% (31) |
| Environmental Law Enforcement | 1.12 (11) |
| Soils | 0.92% (9) |
| Wildlands Fire Management | 0.61% (6) |
| Paper Sciences | 0.32% (3) |
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| College of Letters and Sciences | 38.61% (378) |
| Biology | 10.62% (104) |
| Business Administration/Economics/Accounting | 5.92% (58) |
| Psychology | 4.39% (43) |
| Sociology/Social Sciences | 4.39% (43) |
| Chemistry and Physics | 3.78% (37) |
| English | 2.45% (24) |
| International Studies/Foreign Languages | 2.25% (22) |
| Mathematics and Computing (CIS, WDMD) | 2.04% (20) |
| Pre-Professional Studies | 1.94% (19) |
| Geography | 1.94% (19) |
| History | 0.61% (6) |
| Political Science | 0.61% (6) |
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| College of Professional Studies | 23.49% (207) |
| Health Promotion/Human Development and Health, Exercise Science/Athletics (Dietetics, Athletic Training, Family and Consumer Sciences, Human & Community Res.) | 11.44% (112) |
| Education (elementary, secondary, music, physical, early childhood, math, exceptional) | 8.48% (83) |
| Interior Architecture | 0.72% (7) |
| Communicative Disorders | 0.51% (5) |
| Clinical Lab Sciences | 0.31% (3) |
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| College of Fine Arts and Communication | 9.30% (91) |
| Communication/Public Relations | 3.98% (39) |
| Art and Design, Graphic Design, Arts Management | 3.78% (37) |
| Music, Vocal Performance | 1.02% (10) |
| Theater, Acting, Drama, Dance | 0.72% (7) |
| | |
| Undecided or Other | 3.78% (37) |

**Selected Quotes from Survey Question 10:
What do you value most about Schmeeckle Reserve?**

"It is a powerful and practical symbol of our university's commitment to the proper stewardship of our state's shared natural resources. Not only does it provide refuge and stress relief for students and the community at-large, it is also a fantastic recruiting tool and research opportunity."

"I value the educational and recreational opportunities that Schmeeckle Reserve offers to students, community members, and visitors. Whenever I have a friend or family member visit, Schmeeckle is one of the first places I bring them. When I meet with students at other universities, I find that they generally do not have a similar opportunity. Whenever people ask what my favorite classroom is, I always respond with Schmeeckle."

"As a graduating senior, I can say that Schmeeckle Reserve offers not only a sanctuary to wildlife, but to many college students. Finding a quiet area in the woods to escape the stress of college or just using the trails for an amazing run is indescribable. UWSP is not UWSP without the Schmeeckle Reserve."

"I value the escape it provides and the well maintained paths. I feel mentally lost in the preserve but never physically lost. Which is exactly the experience I'd like to have. It is a great place to go to mull through thoughts, observe nature, and feel connected to the earth. It is also very inspiring for artwork."

"Schmeeckle is extremely valuable! It is a beautiful and safe place to connect with nature and get fresh air, exercise, and sunlight, as well as a great place to study, meditate, and do yoga. I would not have stayed in college had it not been for Schmeeckle! As a freshman I felt college was not for me until I started going for hikes in Schmeeckle every day, and three years later I believe that staying in college was the best decision I've ever made."

"It means many different things to many different people. It feels like something we all have in common even though we use it for different purposes."

"The time in nature is very therapeutic, I am thankful to have a preserve so close to my home. I feel lucky to be able to escape to a place that feels completely pure and I am not surrounded by buildings and cars and people. It is amazing to be able to see what the land we live in actually looks like without being touched by humans."

"I value the opportunity to escape the cement, grass, large buildings, noise, and cars. The woods are a special place to learn, grow, and reflect. Without Schmeeckle, attending school would be much more difficult. The range of life in the Schmeeckle is extremely valuable to all that witness it."

"It's a great escape. No classrooms, no obligations. I sometimes prefer it over home."

"I really appreciate and value the quiet alone time Schmeeckle provides me. But above all, I love that I can get away and experience the beauty of Wisconsin nature when I step foot inside the reserve. I often see turtles, birds, snakes, frogs, and deer in Schmeeckle. Everything about Schmeeckle Reserve makes me happy!"

"Lake Joanis has been a huge part of my life, even since I was a child. I've always gone on field trips to Lake Jonas for science classes and gym classes. To me, Lake Jonas isn't a body of water, it's a nostalgic part of my life that I have many great memories around."