

Wheaton Park District

Lincoln Marsh Natural Area Programs



2015 Annual Report Environmental Education

Deb Ditchman, Environmental Education Supervisor

Summary

Lincoln Marsh Natural Area is 150 acres comprised of woodlands, marshes, and prairies and is highly valued for recreation, education, and environmental reasons. The Lincoln Marsh annually provides thousands of visitors with many outdoor activities including bird-watching, picnics, adventure programs, environmental education and nature interpretation programs, and challenge course programs. Its two miles of trails connect with the Illinois Prairie Path and make it an ideal place to hike or cross-country ski.

Lincoln Marsh Natural Area through Environmental Education & Nature Interpretation hosts over 6,500 people annually including individuals, families, community groups, and schools. In addition to the programs offered through the Lincoln Marsh, two special events are hosted each year. The Annual Fish-O-Rama held in cooperation with Kiwanis Club of Wheaton, which turned 25 in 2015, draws approximately 200 people the Saturday before Father's Day. Kids 15 and under are invited to participate in the open fishing contest which awards 1st, 2nd, 3rd place prizes for largest and most fish caught. The Lincoln Marsh Open House is hosted in May to invite people to participate in a variety of activities highlighting some of the options available to our community.



The Environmental Education division of Lincoln Marsh provides environmental education and nature interpretation programs. These programs incorporate hands-on activities to promote interaction with and appreciation of the natural world through discovery and exploration. Whether participants are searching for life in the dirt or marveling at magnificent fliers in the sky, they are sure to pique their curiosity about all things wild and crave more. The types of interpretive and environmental education programs offered are as follows: park district brochure programs for individuals and families, educational programs that support Illinois State Learning Standards for children ages Preschool through 5th grade done in the field or in the classroom, badge programs for Girl and Cub Scouts that fulfill many of the badge requirements, and nature day camps for children ages 18 mos. - entering 6th grade.

The following report presents you with an opportunity to review the summary of accomplishments in environmental education for 2015.

Lincoln Marsh Environmental Education Fiscal Year 2015 Report

Total Programs

Type of Program	FY 2014		FY 2015			
	# of Prog.	# of Part.	# of Prog.	# of Part.	% Change in Prog.	% Change in Part.
Scout Programs	59	718	43	574	-27%	-20%
Field Trips	87	2,015	95	2,243	9%	11%
Outreach Programs	74	1,648	90	2,071	22%	26%
Brochure Programs	133	1,222	175	1,608	32%	32%
Summer Camps	22	192	21	208	-5%	8%
Total	375	5,795	424	6,704	13%	16%

Financial Summary - Total Programs

		Budgeted	Actual
FY 2014	Net	\$24,912.23	\$28,561.63
	% Profit	46%	59%
FY 2015	Revenue	\$53,896.00	\$54,786.93
	Wages	\$25,528.77	\$20,223.84
	Contractual	\$0	\$0
	Supplies	\$3,455.00	\$2,722.21
	Net	\$24,912.23	\$31,810.88
	% Profit	46%	58%

Percent Change in Net Revenue: +11%

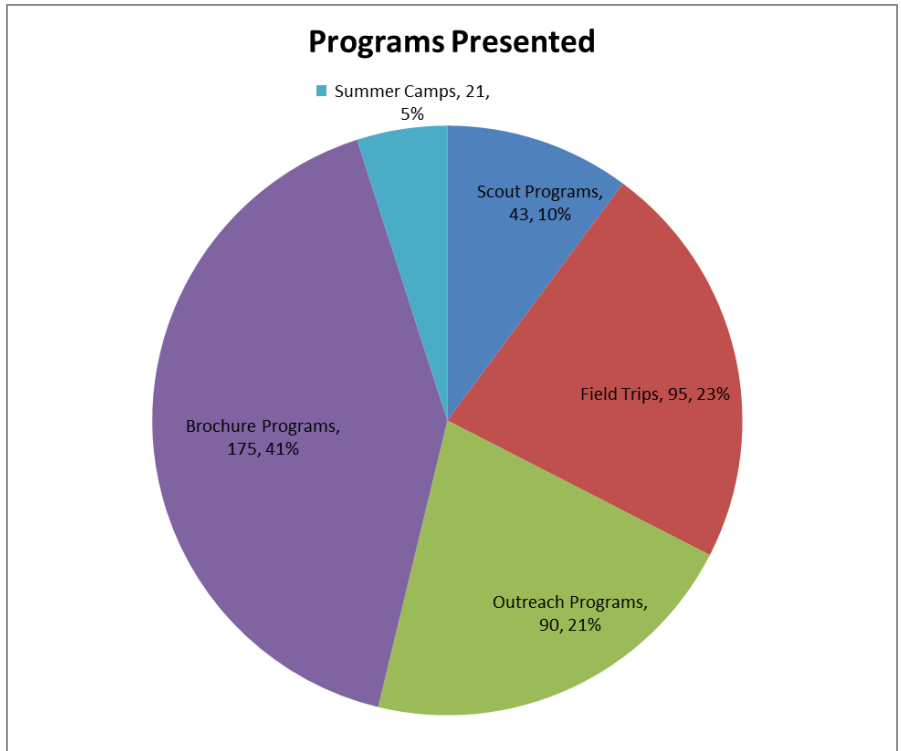
<p>Green Text = exceeded revenue/did not exceed expense Red Text = did not exceed revenue/exceeded expense</p>

Budget Summary: Environmental Education programs saw a 58% profit in 2015. Actual net revenue exceeded the budgeted net revenue by 28%. This happened because budgeted revenues were almost met or exceeded in all areas except for scout programs while overall expenses were lower than expected. Actual net revenue also increased from 2014 to 2015.

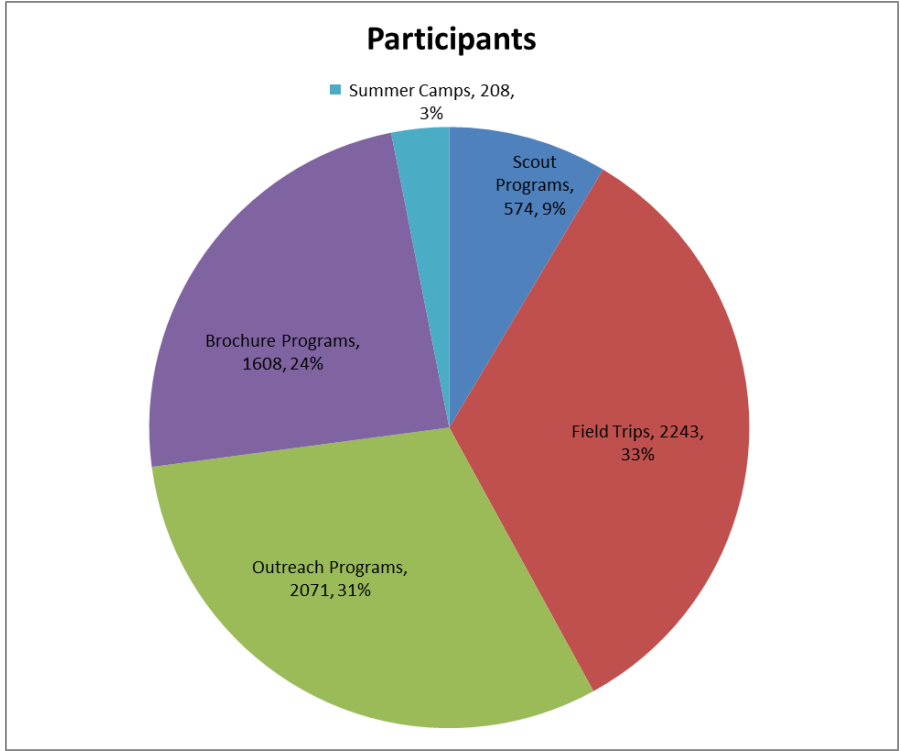
Environmental Education Cross-marketing and Training Highlights:

- In March 2015, staff participated in CPR/First Aid training and reviewed Wheaton Park District and Lincoln Marsh policies.
- Environmental Education Staff attended recertification training in March about Lincoln Marsh teaching practices and interpretive teaching techniques.
- Environmental Education Supervisor and Lincoln Marsh Program Manager attended a workshop on Next Generation Science Standards at Isle la Cache in Romeoville.
- Environmental Education Supervisor and Lincoln Marsh Program Manager attended 2 nature play workshops at the Chicago Botanical Garden.
- Environmental Education Supervisor attended the PDRMA H.E.L.P. II.
- Staff attended workshops offered at the Morton Arboretum and became certified in Project Learning Tree's Early Childhood and K-8 curriculums.
- Environmental Education Supervisor attended Girl Scout service unit meetings and Cub Scout leader meetings to market scout programs to local troops.
- In May 2015, Lincoln Marsh Program Manager led Eco-Phobia training for environmental education and camp staff.
- In June of 2015, Environmental Education staff attended the Taste of Wheaton event with an interactive display about Nature Play to promote programs and summer camps.
- In June of 2015, Environmental Education staff attended DuPage County Forest Preserve's Centennial Bio-Blitz with an interactive wetland model to promote programs and summer camps.
- In July of 2015, Lincoln Marsh sponsored Wheaton Park District's Monday Music in the Park program. A table was set up with marketing materials. Children were allowed to play with dress up materials and make a butterfly craft.
- In September of 2015, Environmental Education staff attended the Wheaton Park District's Day of Play event at the Wheaton Park District Community Center to promote programs. A table was set up with nature games and artifacts.
- In October of 2015, Environmental Education staff attended Halloween Happenings at the Wheaton Park District Community Center with an interactive display about bats to promote programs.
- In October of 2015, Environmental Education Staff attended the Spooktacular Event at Cosley Zoo with an interactive display about owls to promote programs.
- In November of 2015, Environmental Education Staff attended the Three Fires Council Boy Scout Fair/Training Academy at East Aurora High School to promote programs.

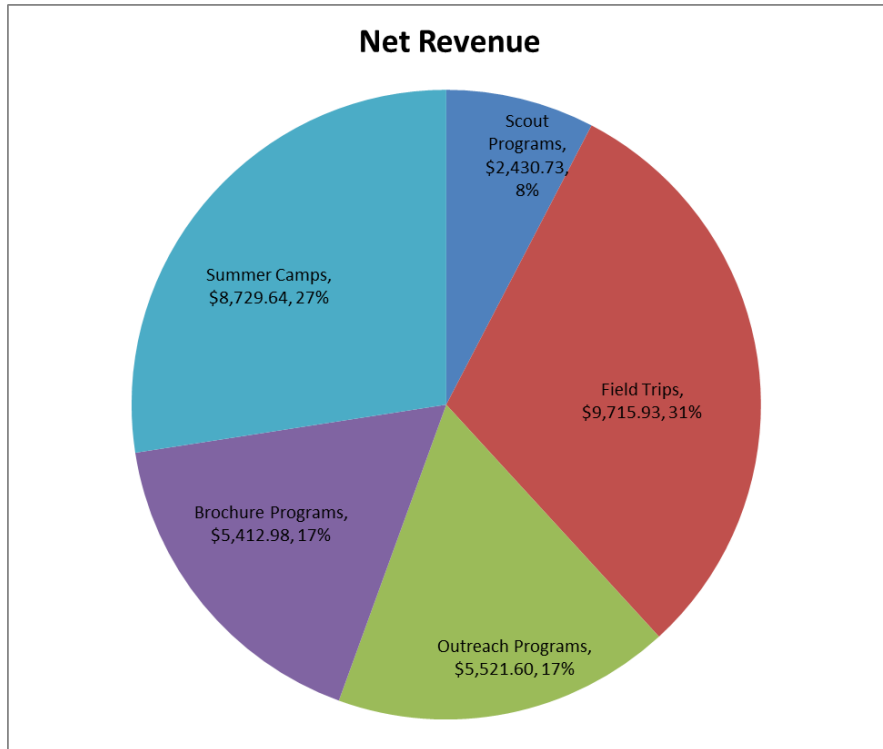




Environmental Education staff presented 424 programs, an increase of 13% from 2014.



Environmental Education staff presented programs to 6,704 participants, a 16% increase from 2014.



Environmental Education programs generated \$31,810.88 in net revenue, an 11% increase from 2014's net revenue of \$28,561.63.



Monthly Breakdown

The following pages provide further participation and program details *by month* and financial details *by year* for the above mentioned program categories.

Scout Programs

Month	FY 2014		FY 2015			
	# of Prog.	# of Part.	# of Prog.	# of Part.	# of Can.	Can. Rate
Jan	1	10	1	10	2	67%
Feb	4	52	3	32	1	25%
Mar	2	14	2	27	2	50%
Apr	9	111	7	95	1	13%
May	10	156	9	111	2	18%
Jun	3	56	1	10	0	0%
Jul	0	0	1	8	0	0%
Aug	0	0	0	0	0	-
Sep	6	57	0	0	2	100%
Oct	14	163	9	138	3	25%
Nov	7	72	7	105	1	13%
Dec	3	27	3	38	1	25%
Total	59	718	43	574	15	26%

Financial Summary (6609)

		Budgeted	Actual
FY 2014	Net Revenue	\$1,236.42	\$2,894.04
	% Profit	40%	58%
FY 2015	Revenue	\$5,881.50	\$4,321.00
	Wages	\$2,289.32	\$1,293.97
	Contractual	\$0	\$0
	Supplies	\$1,000.00	\$596.30
	Net Revenue	\$2,592.18	\$2,430.73
	% Profit	44.07%	56%

Percent Change in Net Revenue: -16%

Program summary:

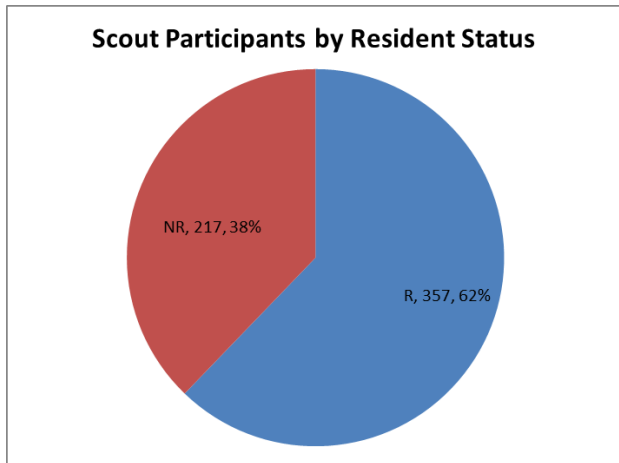
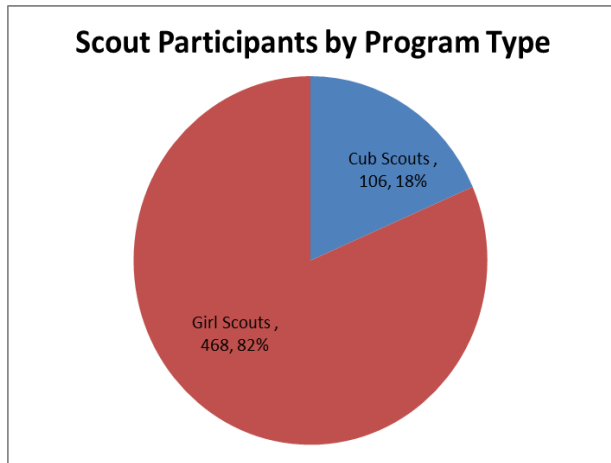
These requested programs are offered for Girl Scouts and Cub Scouts to fulfill the requirements for badge completion. There are currently 16 options for Girl Scouts and 12 options for Cub Scouts as well as Nighttime Nature & Outdoor Adventure program options.

Analysis:

The number of scout programs presented as well as the number of participants has decreased when compared to 2014. The actual net revenue of \$2,430.73 is lower than the budgeted net revenue of \$2,592.18 by \$161.45. Overall program net revenue was also down 16% from last year. This decrease can be partially attributed to the restructuring of the Cub Scout program by the Boy Scouts of America. These new standards were introduced to scout leaders in May and our old Cub Scout programs became obsolete at the start of this school year.

This chart shows which specific scout programs were presented in 2015.

Scout Programs									
	# Programs			# Participants			# Can.	# Resch.	Total Fees
	R	NR	Tot.	R	NR	Tot.			
Boy Scouts									
Let's Go Outdoors (Tiger)	1	0	1	8	0	8	0	0	\$60.00
Birds (Wolf)	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	\$0.00
Sharing Your World with Wildlife (Bear)	1	0	1	8	0	8	1	1	\$60.00
Water & Soil Conservation (Bear)	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	\$0.00
Forester (Webelos)	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	\$0.00
Naturalist (Webelos)	0	1	1	0	10	10	1	0	\$0.00
Outdoorsman (Webelos)	2	0	2	29	0	29	1	0	\$174.00
Readyman (Webelos)	3	0	3	27	14	41	0	0	\$267.00
Nighttime Nature Program	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	\$0.00
Other	0	1	1	0	10	10	1	0	\$85.00
Total	7	2	9	72	34	106	8	1	\$646.00
Girl Scouts									
Mouse Walk (DA)	3	0	3	59	0	59	1	0	\$354.00
Birdbath Award (DA)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	\$0.00
Wetland Wonders (DA)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	\$0.00
Earth & Sky (DA)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	\$0.00
Bugs Naturalist Badge (BR)	3	1	4	62	10	72	0	0	\$447.00
Senses Activity Badge (BR)	1	0	1	17	0	17	0	0	\$102.00
Hiker Activity Badge (BR)	1	1	2	13	10	23	0	0	\$176.00
Wonders of Water Activity Badge (BR)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	\$0.00
Home Scientist Activity Badge (BR)	2	1	3	27	7	34	2	0	\$271.00
Letterboxer Activity Badge (BR)	1	4	5	17	44	61	0	0	\$370.50
Flowers Naturalist Badge (JR)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	\$0.00
Camper Activity Badge (JR)	1	2	3	12	29	41	0	0	\$330.50
Geocacher Activity Badge (JR)	3	6	9	25	83	108	0	1	\$884.00
Animal Habitats Activity Badge (JR)	2	0	2	27	0	27	1	0	\$168.00
Trees Naturalist Badge (CA)	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	\$0.00
Night Owl Activity Badge (CA)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	\$0.00
Nighttime Nature Program	1	0	1	16	0	16	0	0	\$192.00
Other	1	0	1	10	0	10	1	0	\$60.00
Total	19	15	34	285	183	468	6	1	\$3,355.00
Campfire Add-Ons									
w/OUT Marshmallows/Hot Choc.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	\$0.00
w/ Marshmallows/Hot Choc.	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	\$0.00
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	\$0.00
Total	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	\$0.00
Patches									
	NA			113	35	148	9	0	\$320.00
Grand Total									
	26	17	43	357	217	574	15	2	\$4,321.00



Highlights:

- Twelve new Cub Scout programs were written and completed this year.
- The scout brochure was separated into Cub Scout and Girl Scout specific brochures. All of the new Cub Scout programs for all levels were listed in the new brochure.
- In November, Environmental Education staff attended the Three Fires Council Boy Scout Training Academy at East Aurora High School to promote programs.
- A mass mailing of both scout brochures was sent in November to scout leaders who have participated in any scout program since January 2014.
- Scout Saturday programs continued throughout 2015. Badge programs are offered in the quarterly WPD program brochure the first Saturday of the month with a Cub Scout program followed by a Girl Scout program. Five out of eighteen Scout Saturday programs offered in 2015 ran. The rest of the programs cancelled due to low enrollment.
- The Scout Saturday Readyman program was so popular that a second session had to be opened to accommodate all of the scouts who wanted to attend.



Looking Forward:

- Mailings to leaders of scout groups that have previously been to a program will continue.
- Staff should plan on attending the Three Fires Council Training Academy in November 2016, as well as seek out other local scout fairs or events.
- Currently we only offer programs for Cub Scouts up through Webelos (4th and 5th grade), but staff are also creating merit badge programs for older Boy Scouts. Two merit badge programs (Forestry and Water and Soil Conservation) should be ready to roll out in the spring of 2016. Additional merit badges (Nature and Environmental Science) should be available by the end of 2016.
- Environmental Education staff are in the process of becoming certified as Boy Scout Badge Counselors.
- Consider offering a Cub Scout day (with new Webelos programs) in the fall.
- Update scout brochure to reflect new merit badge programs when they become available.
- Consider moving Scout Saturday programs to another day of the week after school. Only offer these programs during the school year.



Field Trips

Month	FY 2014		FY 2015			
	# of Prog.	# of Part.	# of Prog.	# of Part.	# of Can.	Can. Rate
Jan	0	0	0	0	0	-
Feb	0	0	0	0	0	-
Mar	0	0	0	0	0	-
Apr	10	205	11	198	0	0%
May	42	992	34	822	0	0%
Jun	7	158	2	55	0	0%
Jul	2	50	4	100	0	0%
Aug	3	46	1	20	0	0%
Sep	9	167	4	82	0	0%
Oct	14	397	31	778	7	18%
Nov	0	0	8	188	0	0%
Dec	0	0	0	0	0	-
Total	87	2,015	95	2,243	7	7%

Financial Summary (6610)

		Budgeted	Actual
FY 2014	Net Revenue	\$5,531.50	\$8,031.98
	% Profit	53%	64%
FY 2014	Revenue	\$11,797.00	\$14,248.00
	Wages	\$4,435.75	\$4,107.58
	Contractual	\$0	\$0
	Supplies	\$460.00	\$424.49
	Net Revenue	\$6,901.25	\$9,715.93
	% Profit	58.5%	68%

Percent Change in Net Revenue: +21%

Program summary:

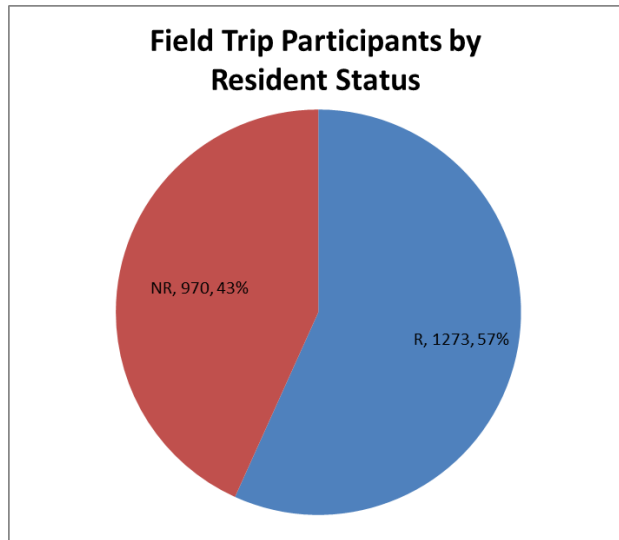
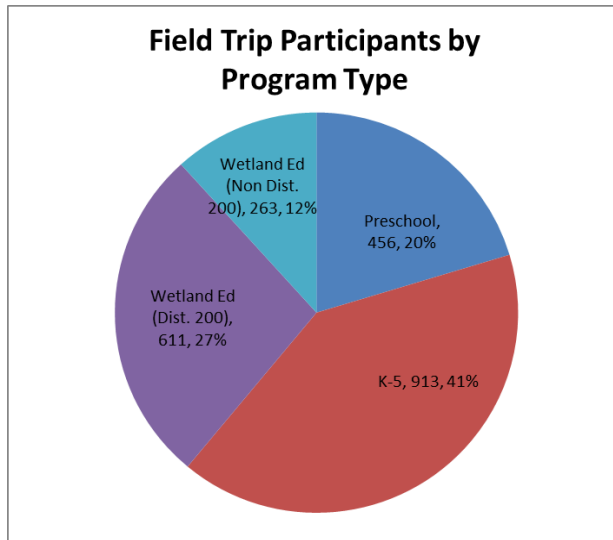
Field trip programs are held at the Lincoln Marsh Natural Area and provide students with the opportunity to learn about science and nature through hands-on experiences. These programs are requested through the Lincoln Marsh office. There are currently 8 different options, as well as custom programs, that address current Illinois state science learning standards.

Analysis:

The total number of participants increased significantly (11%) from 2014 to 2015, while the number of programs increased 9%. In September, all Outdoor Adventure Programs (canoeing, geocaching, orienteering, and snowshoeing) were transitioned over to the Environmental Education division and as a result there was a large increase in revenue and participation for this account. The actual net revenue of \$9,715.93 exceeded the budgeted net revenue of \$6,901.25 by \$2,814.68 or 41%. There was a 68% profit in field trips in 2015 because revenue greatly increased over last year. The outdoor adventure programs that ran in the fall were responsible for \$3,564.00 in revenue.

This chart shows which specific field trips were presented in 2015.

Field Trips									
	# Programs			# Participants			# Can.	# Resch.	Total Fees
	R	NR	Tot.	R	NR	Tot.			
Preschool									
Terrific Trees!	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	\$0.00
Mouse Walk	12	0	12	230	0	230	5	0	\$658.00
Insectmania	0	3	3	0	61	61	0	0	\$275.00
Nature's Recyclers	1	0	1	15	0	15	0	1	\$60.00
Discovery Hike: Seasonal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	\$0.00
Discovery Hike: Birds	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	\$0.00
Discovery Hike: Plants	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	\$0.00
Discovery Hike: Animals	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	\$0.00
Discovery Hike: Sensory Hike	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	\$0.00
Wetland Explorations	2	4	6	34	88	122	0	0	\$601.00
Other	1	2	3	10	18	28	0	0	\$375.00
Total	16	9	25	289	167	456	5	1	\$1,969.00
K-5									
Terrific Trees!	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	\$0.00
Mouse Walk	3	0	3	53	0	53	0	0	\$212.00
Insectmania	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	\$0.00
Nature's Recyclers	0	1	1	0	25	25	0	0	\$125.00
Discovery Hike: Seasonal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	\$0.00
Discovery Hike: Birds	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	\$0.00
Discovery Hike: Plants	0	1	1	0	20	20	0	0	\$100.00
Discovery Hike: Animals	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	\$0.00
Discovery Hike: Sensory Hike	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	\$0.00
Wetland Explorations	0	2	2	0	50	50	0	0	\$250.00
Sandburg 1st Grade Custom Programs	3	0	3	53	0	53	0	0	\$212.00
Sandburg 2nd Grade Custom Programs	6	0	6	130	0	130	0	0	\$524.00
Other	3	14	17	62	520	582	1	0	\$4,024.00
Total	15	18	33	298	615	913	1	0	\$5,447.00
Teaming with Nature	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	\$0.00
Wetland Ed (Dist. 200)	26	0	26	611	0	611	0	1	\$4,277.00
Wetland Ed (Non Dist. 200)	3	8	11	75	188	263	1	0	\$2,254.00
Campfire Add-Ons									
w/OUT Marshmallows/Hot Choc.	1	0	1	10	0	10	0	0	\$40.00
w/ Marshmallows/Hot Choc.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	\$0.00
Other	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	\$261.00
Total	1	2	3	10	0	10	0	0	\$301.00
Grand Total	60	35	95	1,273	970	2,243	7	2	\$14,248.00



Highlights:

- Sandburg Elementary continued an ongoing partnership with Lincoln Marsh. Environmental Education staff visit their school or teachers bring their entire Kindergarten, 1st, 2nd, and 4th grades to Lincoln Marsh to learn about habitats and seasonal changes.
- 686 students participated in the 24th year of the Wetlands Education Program in April & May.
- Ben Franklin School came out to the Lincoln Marsh to participate in the Wetlands Education program this November. They brought out 188 5th grade students.
- Wheaton Christian Grammar School continued to bring out their entire 5th grade class in October to participate in orienteering and a food web activity as well as cook a campfire lunch.
- In September, all Outdoor Adventure Programs (canoeing, geocaching, orienteering, and snowshoeing) were transitioned over to the Environmental Education division and as a result there was a large increase in revenue and participation for this account.
- The Environmental Education supervisor attended several workshops regarding aligning programs to the Next Generation Science Standards which will be adopted by Wheaton Schools in the 2016-17 school year.
- A new “Schools & Groups” brochure was created and includes all current field trip and outdoor recreation programs and options.
- All of the Wheaton Park District Bright Horizons preschool classes came out to the marsh for Mouse Walk programs.



Looking Forward:

- Marketing to past participants will continue as well as email blasts to perspective future participants. Include all outdoor recreation opportunities in these efforts.
- Consider marketing the custom Sandburg 2nd grade programs to the rest of the schools in the Wheaton School District, especially those within walking distance of the Lincoln Marsh.
- Consider marketing new outdoor recreation programs to local middle schools.
- Contact groups/schools who came in 2014 but not in 2015 and invite them back.
- Work in conjunction with the Wheaton Park District preschool coordinator to offer additional environmental education opportunities to the Wide Horizons Preschool.
- Update all of the Lincoln Marsh field trips to align with the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS).



Outreach Programs

Month	FY 2014		FY 2015			
	# of Prog.	# of Part.	# of Prog.	# of Part.	# of Can.	Can. Rate
Jan	19	481	13	345	0	0%
Feb	7	201	13	323	0	0%
Mar	5	78	7	180	1	13%
Apr	0	0	4	74	0	0%
May	0	0	0	0	0	-
Jun	6	149	12	284	0	0%
Jul	10	274	18	455	0	0%
Aug	5	63	8	169	0	0%
Sep	2	27	2	45	1	33%
Oct	2	29	5	70	0	0%
Nov	14	256	7	115	0	0%
Dec	4	90	1	11	0	0%
Total	74	1,648	90	2,071	2	2%

Financial Summary (6640)

		Budgeted	Actual
FY 2014	Net Revenue	\$4,088.44	\$5,370.42
	% Profit	64%	82%
FY 2015	Revenue	\$5,095.00	\$7,722.75
	Wages	\$1,782.00	\$1,796.16
	Contractual	\$0	\$0
	Supplies	\$405.00	\$404.99
	Net Revenue	\$2,908.00	\$5,521.60
	% Profit	57.08%	71%

Percent Change in Net Revenue: +3%

Program Summary:

In the requested “Nature in your Classroom” programs, naturalists bring a little nature to the classroom for an enjoyable lesson, which allows students to learn through first-hand observations. Outreach programs also provide students with an opportunity to experience an environmental education program at their school, something they may not usually be able to experience. Six different outreach programs are offered that address Illinois state science learning standards currently being used by schools.

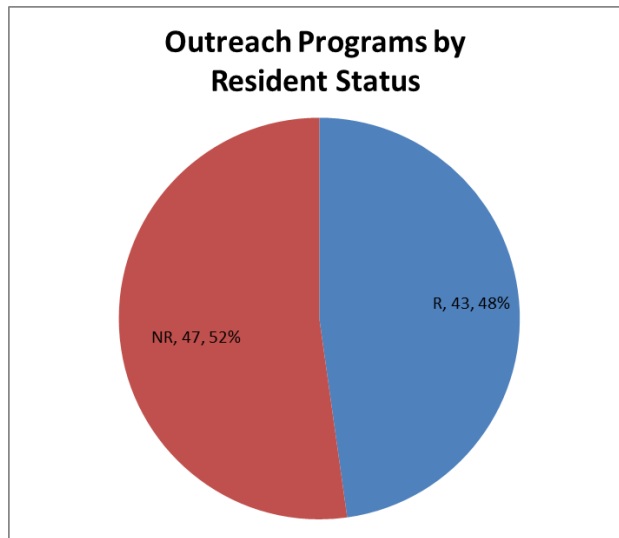
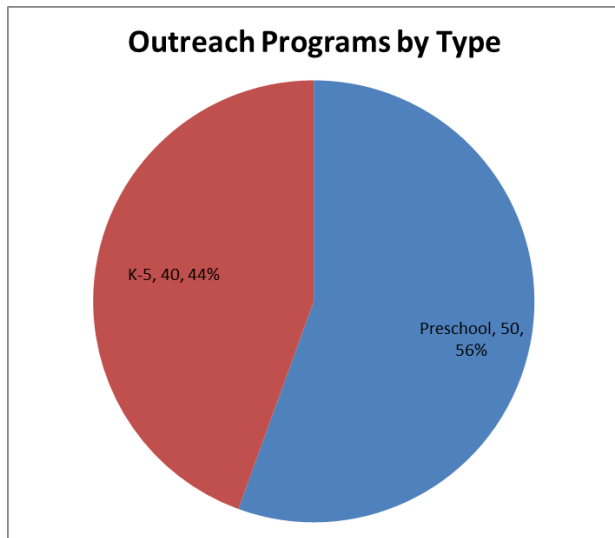
Analysis:

The total number of outreach programs and participants increased in 2015 in comparison to 2014 with a 3% increase in net revenue. The 2015 actual net revenue of \$5,521.60 exceeded the budgeted net revenue by \$2,613.60, or 90%. Most of this increase can be attributed to presenting 17 outreach programs to Wheaton Park District summer camps. However, these programs are offered within the Wheaton Park District at a discounted rate and do not generate as much profit as programs offered outside the park district. But they do greatly increase the numbers of participants and programs

offered which provide environmental education opportunities and experiences. Also, outreach programs, which are charged by the class, may be easier for schools to afford than field trips, which are charged by the student. Some local schools are even scheduling outreach programs that reinforce the topics they may be learning about on a future field trip. There was also a 71% profit for a couple of reasons this year. First, several of the programs were scheduled back to back. These programs require fewer wages because staff is only driving to and from a program once. Also a majority of the programs scheduled were to non-resident schools. These schools pay a higher price and often travel fees. Finally, outreach programs do not require a lot in the way of consumable supplies and once they are purchased, they can be reused for a long time. So even though revenue increased the supply budget did not have to increase the same amount.

This chart shows which specific outreach programs were presented in 2015.

Outreach Programs										
	# Programs			# Participants			# Can.	# Resch.	Total Fees	
	R	NR	Tot.	R	NR	Tot.				
Preschool										
The Unhuggables	0	7	7	0	194	194	0	2	\$710.00	
Winter Adaptations	1	5	6	14	150	164	0	0	\$590.00	
Insect Investigations	8	4	12	220	94	314	0	0	\$1,025.00	
Marsh Mysteries	0	10	10	0	255	255	0	0	\$1,010.00	
Who's The Wise Bird?	0	4	4	0	72	72	0	0	\$420.00	
Those Amazing Animals	0	2	2	0	49	49	1	1	\$210.00	
Other	2	7	9	40	107	147	1	0	\$585.00	
Total	11	39	50	274	921	1,195	2	3	\$4,550.00	
K-5										
The Unhuggables	3	1	4	88	20	108	0	0	\$320.00	
Winter Adaptations	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	\$0.00	
Insect Investigations	1	0	1	22	0	22	0	0	\$45.00	
Marsh Mysteries	9	1	10	185	30	215	0	0	\$731.50	
Who's The Wise Bird?	2	0	2	108	0	108	0	0	\$90.00	
Those Amazing Animals	4	0	4	128	0	128	0	0	\$250.00	
Sandburg 2nd Grade Custom Programs	3	0	3	73	0	73	0	0	\$255.00	
Other	10	6	16	114	108	222	0	0	\$1,121.25	
Total	32	8	40	718	158	876	0	0	\$2,812.75	
Travel Fees										
No Fee (R & NR 0-5 miles)	0	0	0							\$0.00
\$20 (NR 6-10 miles)		18	19							\$360.00
\$40 (NR 11-20 miles)	NA	0	0					NA		\$0.00
Other (NR more than 20 miles)		0	0							\$0.00
Total	0	18	18							\$340.00
Grand Total										
	43	47	90	992	1,079	2,071	2	3	\$7,722.75	



Highlights:

- This year Jefferson Preschool in Wheaton scheduled 8 Insect investigation programs for their classes. These classes included several special needs children and it was good to see how programs could be adapted to suit the needs of these kids.
- Kensington Academy reached out to the Lincoln Marsh to create a custom bird program for their 4 year olds. Two programs were presented at the schools in Naperville and Wheaton.
- Lincoln Marsh staff presented 6 after school enrichment programs to Carol Stream elementary schools.
- Weekly programs were presented to WPD summer camps. A custom 6 week program was developed for Camp I Don't Know and current outreach programs were presented to Camp No Name. These programs were presented to camps this year at a discount of \$45/program.
- The Environmental Education supervisor attended several workshops regarding aligning programs to the Next Generation Science Standards which will be adopted by Wheaton Schools in the 2016-17 school year.
- A new "Schools & Groups" brochure was created and includes all current outreach programs and options.
- A new Nature Telling program was created for the Warrenville Public Library.



Looking Forward:

- Marketing to past participants will continue as well as email blasts to perspective future participants.
- Environmental Education staff should work with the Lincoln Marsh administrative staff and park district marketing department to brainstorm new ideas to further promote outreach programs.
- Just as with field trips, continue to assess and align our programs to help teachers meet the new Common Core and Next Generation Science standards.
 - Meet with the Curriculum Coordinator for Dist. 200 to discuss timeline for transition.
- Consider marketing the custom Sandburg 2nd grade programs to the rest of the schools in the Wheaton School District.
- Continue to offer special pricing to other WPD facilities and camps.
- Work in conjunction with the Wheaton Park District preschool coordinator to offer seasonal outreach opportunities to Wide Horizons Preschool.



Brochure Programs

Month	FY 2014		FY 2015			
	# of Prog.	# of Part.	# of Prog.	# of Part.	# of Can.	Can. Rate
Jan	10	73	11	73	6	35%
Feb	14	99	12	81	0	0%
Mar	11	81	14	125	7	33%
Apr	11	77	20	178	1	5%
May	7	223	19	253	0	0%
Jun	9	86	10	98	0	0%
Jul	7	62	11	138	0	0%
Aug	9	72	10	123	2	17%
Sep	13	99	20	152	5	20%
Oct	14	117	21	173	2	9%
Nov	16	153	16	128	5	24%
Dec	12	80	11	86	7	39%
Total	133	1,222	175	1,608	35	17%

Financial Summary (6612)

		Budgeted	Actual
FY 2014	Net Revenue	\$3,654.77	\$4,011.57
	% Profit	46%	52%
FY 2015	Revenue	\$7,460.50	\$10,201.43
	Wages	\$4,182.42	\$4,273.24
	Contractual	\$0	\$0
	Supplies	\$500.00	\$515.21
	Net Revenue	\$2,778.08	\$5,412.98
	% Profit	37.24%	53%

Percent Change in Net Revenue: +35%

Program Summary:

These programs are offered through the quarterly Wheaton Park District program brochures. Each season different topics are offered. In 2015, the following types of programs were offered: Nature Play Days for children ages 18 months to 3 years with parent, Nature-Telling for children 2-5 years with parent (held at the Wheaton Public Library), Nature Tots and Tales & Trails for children ages 3-5 with parent, Kids N Critters and Marsh Monday Fundays for children ages 4-6, Junior Naturalists for children ages 6-11, School's Out Holiday Programs, and Family Programs.

Analysis:

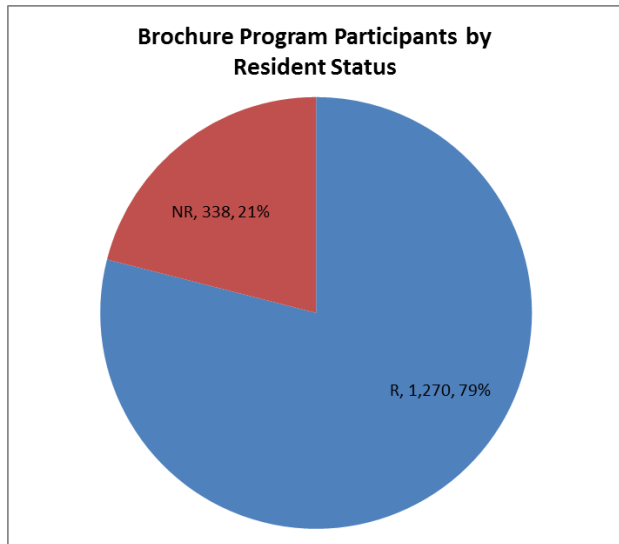
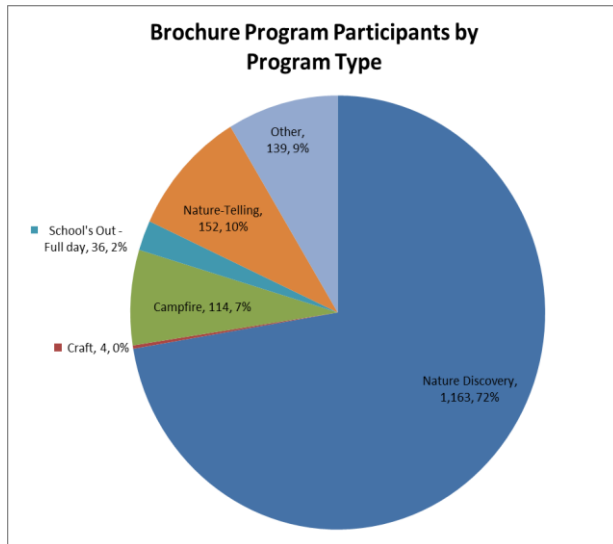
Both the total number of programs and the number of participants increased by 32% in 2015 compared to 2014. The 2015 actual net revenue of \$5,412.98 exceeded the budgeted net revenue by \$2,634.90, or 95%. Some of the increase may be because of the increased popularity of some of the nature series programs. Additional sessions were offered in spring and fall. Many new family programs were also created this year. These programs are also very popular since we are now only requiring parents to register for night hike

programs; for all other family programs the children just need to attend with a nonpaying adult. Analysis of brochure programs has shown that depending on the materials needed for each program, the minimum number of participants required to run each program may be reduced. This led to fewer program cancellations this year and more money spent on wages since the wages budget was based on a higher cancellation rate. The supply budget was exceeded slightly due to supplies required for the new programs offered.



This chart shows which specific types of nature brochure programs were presented in 2015.

Brochure Programs							
	# Programs	# Participants			# Can.	# Resch.	Total Fees
		R	NR	Tot.			
Nature Discovery							
Nature Play Days	22	158	54	212	0	0	\$1,429.70
Marsh Monday Fundays	2	10	0	10	3	0	\$140.00
Nature Tots	49	279	98	377	5	1	\$2,466.78
Kids 'n Critters	18	88	26	114	19	0	\$742.50
Junior Naturalists	40	254	35	289	1	0	\$1,898.76
Family	12	66	48	114	4	1	\$767.00
Other	4	37	10	47	1	0	\$175.50
Total	147	892	271	1,163	33	2	\$7,640.70
Craft	1	0	4	4	0	0	\$37.50
Campfire	7	70	44	114	3	0	\$839.25
School's Out - 1/2 day	0	0	0	0	2	0	\$0.00
School's Out - Full day	4	26	10	36	0	0	\$1,126.93
Nature-Telling	11	152	0	152	0	0	\$0.00
Other	5	130	9	139	2	0	\$557.05
Grand Total	175	1,270	338	1,608	40	2	\$10,201.43



Highlights:

- All Lincoln Marsh brochure programs support the Chicago Wilderness: Leave No Child Inside initiative with the goal of “improving children’s health and fostering generations of children who care enough about nature to protect it.”
- Lincoln Marsh partners with the Wheaton Public Library to offer a monthly program called Nature Telling at the library which features storytelling and a craft about a topic in nature. In 2015 Nature Telling was presented to 152 children ages 2-5 along with their parent or caregiver.
- Over 75 people attended the free Lincoln Marsh Spring Open House. This year the open house featured a live owl presentation by Stillman Nature Center. It was promoted extensively throughout the park district and promoted during the Wetlands Education Program. Activities included dipping, a story trail, crafts, climbing tower, and adventure walk. Information regarding summer camps and programs was available for people to pick up.
- The co-operative partnership continued with the Carol Stream Park District. Several family programs and nature program series were offered each season with the Lincoln Marsh receiving 80% of the revenue generated. A total of 54 Carol Stream residents attended programs at the Lincoln Marsh in 2015. This is a significant increase over the 34 who attended last year.



- Lincoln Marsh Program Manager started a family nature club titled “Nature Buddies that met 4 times during the summer months.
- Starting in the fall of 2015, the Kids N Critters program was extended to 90 minutes. This change is intended to appeal to parents of preschoolers who are looking for additional educational opportunities for their children.
- Two free programs were offered for the Week of the Young Child; a Sensory Hike and a Wetland Explorations program. 35 people attended these programs.
- In September, all Outdoor Adventure Programs (canoeing, geocaching, orienteering, and snowshoeing) were transitioned over to the Environmental Education division.
- To boost enrollment and help make programs more affordable for families we are now only requiring parents to register for night hike programs; for all other family programs the children just need to attend with a nonpaying adult.
- An adult only Owl Prowl program ran in November with 18 participants.

Looking Forward:

- Programs will continue to be offered for each age group with a variety of program options and themes to choose from.
- Environmental Education staff should work with the Lincoln Marsh administrative staff and park district marketing department to brainstorm new ideas to further promote brochure programs.
- Explore offering cooperative programs with the Winfield Park District similar to the current programs offered through the Carol Stream Park District.
- Research ways we can offer additional programs for working parents.



Summer Camps

Month	FY 2014		FY 2015			
	# of Prog.	# of Part.	# of Prog.	# of Part.	# of Can.	Can. Rate
Jun	7	55	11	113	2	15%
Jul	12	102	7	70	5	42%
Aug	3	35	3	25	2	40%
Total	22	192	21	208	9	30%

Financial Summary (6628)

		Budgeted	Actual
FY 2014	Net Revenue	\$10,401.10	\$8,253.62
	% Profit	40%	49%
FY 2015	Revenue	\$18,487.75	\$18,293.75
	Wages	\$11,173.96	\$8,752.89
	Contractual	\$240.00	\$30.00
	Supplies	\$753.25	\$781.22
	Net Revenue	\$6,320.54	\$8,729.64
	% Profit	40%	48%

Percent Change in Net Revenue: +6%

Program Summary:

Knee High Nature Camp is a 3 day parent/child camp for children ages 18 mos. – 3. This 90 minute camp meets at the east entrance of the Lincoln Marsh. Each day explores a different theme: plants, animals, and habitats.

Critter camp is a one week, three hour a day camp for children ages 4-6 with a maximum enrollment of 16 participants. Each session of camp is taught twice during the summer camp season. In 2015 mini-camps were also offered; these camps were three days. In 2015, there are a total of five different themes to choose from:

- Nature’s Neighborhoods
- Animal Friends
- Insect Investigators
- Little Explorers (Mini-camp)
- Dino Days (Mini-camp)

Curiosity Camp is a one week, three hour a day camp for children ages 6-9 with a maximum enrollment of 16 participants. Each session of camp is taught once during the summer camp season. In 2015 three mini-camps were offered; these camps were three days each. In 2015 there were a total of nine different themes to choose from:

- Those Amazing Animals
- Wetland Explorers
- Nature Surprise
- Nature Sleuths
- Bug-ology
- Dinosaur Detectives
- Bird Brains (Mini-camp)
- Grow Up Green (Mini-camp)
- Indian Summer (Mini-camp)

Camp Wild Explorers is a one week, six hours a day camp for children ages 9-12 with a maximum enrollment of 10 participants. This camp is held at the Boy Scout Cabin at Northside Park. In 2015 there were two different themes to choose from:

- Mad Science
- Survivor

Fishing Fever is a two day, three hour a day camp for children ages 8-14 and is designed to teach young anglers the basics of safe fishing. The maximum enrollment is 10 children. There were three sessions offered in 2015. This mini-camp was offered at 3 different locations (Northside Park, 7 Gables & Rathje Park) in hopes that campers would sign up for different sessions.

Fantastic Fishing Camp is a weeklong fishing camp that offered 1 hour of instruction and 2 hours of fishing each day. Two different ponds were utilized for this camp. On the last day, parents were invited to attend and fish with their kids.

Nature Adventure Camp is a weeklong, six hour a day camp for children ages 7-11 with a maximum enrollment of 16 participants. It is held at the Northside Park Boy Scout Cabin. Activities are nature focused and include canoeing, wetland dipping, catching insects, crafts, and games which promote physical activity.



Analysis:

The total number of camps decreased by one; but the total number of participants increased 8% in 2015 compared to 2014. The actual net revenue of \$8,729.64 was up 38% from the 2015 budgeted net revenue and also 6% more than the actual net revenue for 2014. Because some of the camps cancelled, money that would have been used to cover wages for those camps was not paid. This allowed there to be a 48% profit. The supply budget was exceeded slightly due to supplies required for the new camps offered.

Critter Camp

A PM session of the Little Explorers Mini-camp was opened to accommodate a waitlist. Unfortunately, not enough campers signed up for the PM session to run and all of the campers were moved to the AM session. A New Mini-camp (Dino Days) was offered in July. The AM session of this camp filled by May and a PM session was opened. A total of 24 campers attended this camp. The July session of Habitat Shuffle also cancelled due to low enrollment. A total of 9 camps ran with a total of 107 campers. The average number of campers per session was 12.

Curiosity Camp

A new Mini-camp (Indian Summer) was offered in August. Unfortunately, this was one of the two camps that cancelled this summer due to low enrollment. A total of 7 camps ran with a total of 64 campers. The average number of campers per session was 9.

Camp Wild Explorers

Both sessions of camp ran this summer. The use of the Boy Scout Cabin is very helpful for this camp. It allows for shelter if needed and it has a sink and bathroom for campers to clean up after activities and before lunch.

Fishing Camps

5 fishing themed camps were offered in 2015; 2 week long Fantastic Fishing camps and 3 Fishing Fever 2 day camps. Only one Fishing Fever camp ran in 2015. All other fishing camps cancelled due to low or no enrollment.

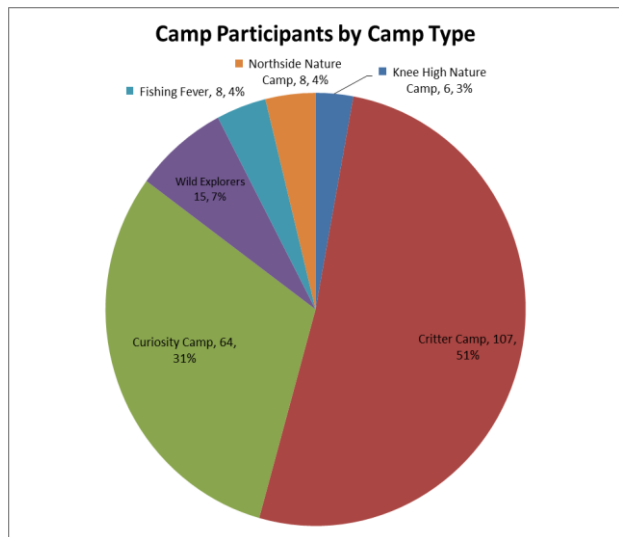
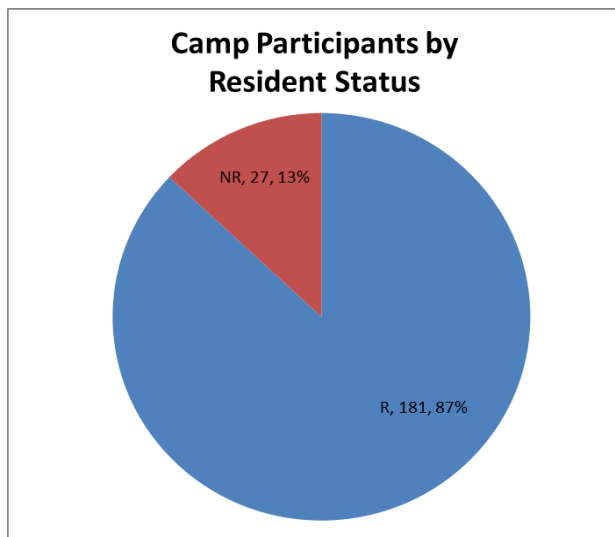
Northside Nature Camp

This used to be the last camp session offered and because of that enrollment was usually high. Now several camps continue to run into August and, with a lot of options to choose from, enrollment in this camp has decreased to only 8 kids this year.



This chart shows which specific sessions of camp were presented in 2015.

Summer Camps							
	# Programs	# Participants			# Can.	# Resch.	Total Fees
		R	NR	Tot.			
Knee High Nature Camp	1	6	0	6	0	0	\$180.00
Critter Camp							
Animal Antics	2	16	5	21	0	0	\$2,225.00
Habitat Shuffle	1	4	0	4	1	0	\$400.00
Bug Out!	2	24	3	27	0	0	\$2,750.00
Little Explorers Minicamp	1	13	7	20	1	0	\$1,965.00
Dino Days Mini Camp	3	34	1	35	0	0	\$1,440.00
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	\$0.00
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	\$0.00
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	\$0.00
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	\$0.00
Total	9	91	16	107	2	0	\$8,780.00
Curiosity Camp							
Wetland Explorers	1	7	1	8	0	0	\$825.00
Jurassic Giants	1	10	0	10	0	0	\$1,000.00
Groovy Growing	0	0	0	0	0	0	\$0.00
Animal Lovers	1	12	0	12	0	0	\$1,200.00
Nature Surprise	0	0	0	0	1	0	\$0.00
Bugology	1	7	0	7	0	0	\$700.00
Bird Brains Minicamp	1	9	0	9	0	0	\$540.00
Nature Sleuths	1	9	2	11	0	0	\$1,150.00
Grow Up Green Minicamp	1	6	1	7	0	0	\$435.00
Indian Summer	0	0	0	0	1	0	\$0.00
Total	7	60	4	64	2	0	\$5,850.00
Wild Explorers							
Survivor	1	6	2	8	0	0	\$1,147.50
Mad Science	1	6	1	7	0	0	\$978.75
Wet & Wild	0	0	0	0	0	0	\$0.00
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	\$0.00
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	\$0.00
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	\$0.00
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	\$0.00
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	\$0.00
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	\$0.00
Total	2	12	3	15	0	0	\$2,126.25
Fishing Fever	1	7	1	8	3	0	\$356.50
Northside Nature Camp	1	5	3	8	0	0	\$1,001.00
Fantastic Fishing	0	0	0	0	2	0	\$0.00
Grand Total	21	181	27	208	9	0	\$18,293.75



Highlights:

- Three mini-camp sessions were offered in 2015 for both Curiosity Camp and Critter Camp. Each camp ran sessions the first week of camp, during the week of the 4th of July and during the last week of camp in August.
- Lincoln Marsh participated in the Wheaton Park District's Summer Camp Open House in March to promote summer camps.
- Lincoln Marsh staff facilitated a Lincoln Marsh Camp Play Day during spring break at the Wheaton Public Library.
- Due to popularity, an afternoon session of Critter Camp - Dino Days had to be opened.



Looking Forward:

- Current marketing efforts will continue and new marketing efforts will be considered in order to further increase enrollment.
- One possibility would be to market heavily to past camp and brochure program participants and to do an e-blast or mass email from Rec Trac.
- Camps will continue to be promoted during the WPD Camp Open House.
- Consider creating a two (or even three year) camp theme rotation similar to the rotation for youth nature discovery brochure programs. This would be something to potentially work towards over several years.
- To increase enrollment, find a way to rebrand the Fishing camps by either changing the outlines or introducing new activities to the programs.
- Offer a Lincoln Marsh Summer Camp “Meet & Greet” before camps begin for the summer.
- New for 2016:
 - Curiosity Camp and Critter Camp will each have camps that alternate between week long sessions and mini-camps (3 days long)
 - Critter Camp will no longer have repeating themes during the summer. New themes for both week long and mini-camps will be introduced next year.
 - A new level of camp will be introduced. The Little Explorers camp will be offered twice during the summer. This 2 day camp is for independent 3-4 year olds and will run for 2 hours each day.
 - Northside Nature Camp will be joining the Wild Explorers camp rotation. Its new name will be Northside Adventure Camp and will be targeted to kids ages 9-12.
 - All Wild Explorers camps will be staged at the Boy Scout Cabin in Northside Park.
 - School’s Out programs held during spring break and Thanksgiving break will be moved into the camp budget.



Discover! Packs (no revenue generated)

Backpack Theme	2014 Circulation	2015 Circulation
Backyard Nature (2 packs)	11	11
Birds (2 packs)	20	16
Insects (2 packs)	11	8
Lincoln Marsh Habitats (2 packs)	11	6
Senses (2 packs)	9	15
Trees/Plants (2 packs)	11	13
Winter Wonders (2 packs)	9	6
Total Circulation	82	75

Percent change in circulation: -8.5%

Program Summary:

The Discover! Pack program is a cooperative effort between the Wheaton Park District and the Wheaton Public Library. This program was made possible by a generous grant from the Alcoa Foundation. The backpacks are filled with self-guided activities and discovery tools that will help families explore the “wild side” of Wheaton. The Discover! Packs made their debut in June of 2005 and are housed at the Wheaton Public Library. The following themes are available for checkout:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Backyard Nature ▪ Habitats at Lincoln Marsh ▪ Senses ▪ Winter Wonders | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Birds ▪ Insects ▪ Trees/Plants |
|--|--|

Analysis:

Although this program does not generate revenue it does offer the community a free resource to explore nature and provide awareness about Lincoln Marsh Natural Area. In 2015 there was a slight decrease in the amount of backpacks that were checked out. This is probably due to the fact that the backpacks were unavailable for 8 weeks while they were inventoried and updated. A 3rd set of backpacks is available for program participants to check out from the Lincoln Marsh office. Four of the Lincoln Marsh packs were checked out by participants.

Looking Forward:

- The Discover! Packs could be promoted to students attending the Wetlands Education and Nature-Telling programs as well as at any applicable special events Lincoln Marsh attends in an attempt to increase their circulation.
- Create a flyer regarding the backpacks or include information in take home flyers.
- The flyer at the library needs to be updated to refresh the display.
- Consider marketing the packs in the monthly Wheaton Park District e-blast during months when programs are slow.

Provided below is a summary of the goals and accomplishments for 2015.

Integrity

- Continued to learn and be conscious of the adventure programs and other goals of the Lincoln Marsh Natural Area by familiarizing myself with adventure programming during the transition. Assisted with planting a new prairie area for programs to utilize.

Fun

- Continued to develop and grow the partnership with the Wheaton Public Library. LM staff organized a Lincoln Marsh Camp Play day in the Children's Dept. during spring break. Staff also led a campfire song program for their summer reading club.
- Created a scavenger hunt for new employees to help them become familiar with program materials and where they are located.

Adaptability & Growth

- Continued to develop as Environmental Education Supervisor by attending relevant Chicago Wilderness and Morton Arboretum workshops. These workshops included Nature Play Workshops at the Chicago Botanical Garden, becoming certified in the Project Flying Wild Curriculum and attending classes for the Naturalist Certificate at the Morton Arboretum.
- Gave environmental education staff opportunities for professional development. Staff became certified in the Project Flying Wild, Growing Up Wild, & Project Learning Tree (Early Childhood) Curriculums.
- Provided time for environmental education staff to refine their programs & skills by observing the EE supervisor as she presented a program.
- Increased marketing efforts in order to create awareness and boost revenue by coordinating the WPD Summer Camp Open House event in March.
- Represented and promoted the Lincoln Marsh at several events in 2015. These included, but were not limited to, WPD Camp Open House, CUSD 200 Day Of Play, DuPage Co. BioBlitz, and Wheaton College's Green Expo.
- Updated scout brochures to reflect new & current badge offerings. New brochures were mailed to all previous scout leaders in November.

Commitment

- Became more aware and involved in the overall operation of the park district by attending the park district board meeting in April.

Kindness

- With the Lincoln Marsh Program Manager, researched & visited nature play spaces in Chicagoland with the goal of planning an outdoor nature play area near Lincoln Ave. entrance.

Service

- Observed staff on program presentation and skills at minimum 4 times per year. Gave staff tips to help better improve their programs, delivery style, & group management.
- Kept up on learning standards and trends in Environmental Education to improve what we currently offer to school groups by obtaining a copy of the Next Generation Science Standards to compare to Illinois learning standards currently listed in Nature Discovery Brochure.

Highlighted below are the 2016 goals for the Environmental Education division all categorized by the Wheaton Park District values.

Integrity

- Continue to learn and be conscious of the challenge course programs and other goals of the Lincoln Marsh Natural Area.
- Update Environmental education binder to reflect current procedures and policies.

Fun

- Create and establish new special event & programs for the Lincoln Marsh.
- Create Lincoln Marsh Activities Book for families to be handed out at marketing events.
- Continue to work with the Wheaton Public Library to offer free family programs 2-3 times per year.
- Create a permanent orienteering course at Lincoln Marsh.

Adaptability & Growth

- Increase marketing efforts in order to create awareness and boost program participation.
- Work with Challenge Course Supervisor to offer cooperative programs with the Winfield Park District similar to the current programs offered through the Carol Stream Park District.
- Research space options within the Wheaton Park District for possible creation of a nature based preschool program.

Commitment

- Research and go through the process to become approved to offer CPDUs at Lincoln Marsh – work with Challenge Course Supervisor to make this happen.
- Become more aware and involved in the overall operation of the park district.
- Increase my depth of knowledge and understanding for Illinois Parks and Recreation Association.

Kindness

- Working with the Lincoln Marsh Program Manager, Conservation Manager and parks department; design and create an outdoor nature play area near Lincoln Ave. entrance.
- Provide staff with opportunities for professional development.
- Celebrate the 25th year of the Wetlands Education program.

Service

- Observe staff on program presentation and skills at minimum 4 times per year.
- Revise Program Offerings to align with the Next Generation Science Standards.
- Keep up on learning standards and trends in Environmental Education to improve what we currently offer to school groups.