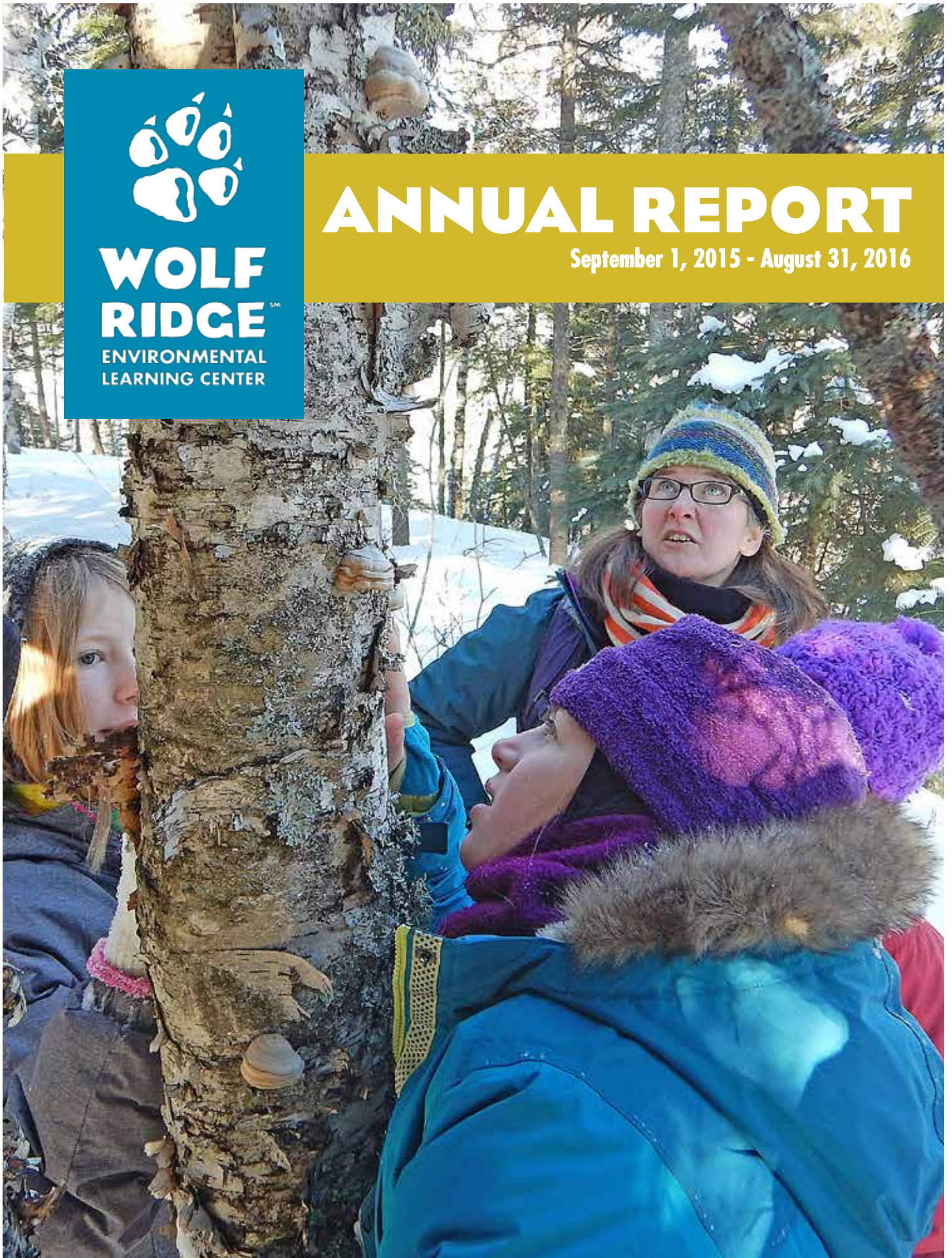




**WOLF  
RIDGE** <sup>SM</sup>  
ENVIRONMENTAL  
LEARNING CENTER

# ANNUAL REPORT

September 1, 2015 - August 31, 2016







Dear Friends,

What if buildings and campuses like Wolf Ridge were balanced with nature, like a flower, generating all it's own energy, using only local water sources, containing no toxic materials, and actually moving beyond net zero to a more restorative vision for our future? Imagine you can live and learn in such a building. What if all Minnesota and Wisconsin children felt a connection to and responsibility for Lake Superior?

This past year Wolf Ridge achieved many of our goals, from building a partnership with Antioch University of New England to develop better educational leaders to continuing our 46-year history of facilitating learning for children in the outdoors. Taking center stage to all of this was our *Making Waves* campaign and building projects. With these projects we began a much stronger commitment to walk our talk and show something can be done that's never been done before in Minnesota. The campaign has been in full swing to raise the needed funds. The *Making Waves* projects will provide critically needed facility improvements at the highest international level of sustainability, the Living Building Challenge. Wolf Ridge is the first in the state of MN to build in pursuance of a fully certified Living Building. We're trying to reach a bar placed much higher than anyone else has.

All of what is learned at Wolf Ridge or accomplished by us is done so within a community of people. We believe that all the members of a community are prepared to make small changes in their lifestyle if they can be shown it's in their interest to do so. We all want to leave a legacy of what we find important and valuable in the world. Thank you for being a part of our community, investing in Wolf Ridge and our programs, where together we're leaving a legacy for human ecology and the planet. With your support we're assuring this work continues and the Wolf Ridge goals are achieved.

Thank you.



Peter Smerud

Executive Director



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# MAKING WAVES CAPITAL CAMPAIGN



## MAKING WAVES GOING PUBLIC

In 2014 Wolf Ridge began to raise the needed funds for essential improvements on the Wolf Ridge campus. Since then, campaign has been quietly building key leadership support. On June 15, 2016, the Wolf Ridge community gathered in Minneapolis to celebrate the achievements to date and kick-off the public phase of the campaign.

HGA Architects and Engineers donated their space in the beautifully renovated old Ford factory where over 150 people gathered to learn of the goals: facilities that better meet the needs of managing children in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, living and learning in a building that will be an internationally leading model of sustainability as it is built to the Living Building Challenge, and providing children with a meaningful connection to the freshwater of Lake Superior.

This event was the invitation to everyone who shares our values to partner with Wolf Ridge and make a financial pledge to assure these goals are achieved. As of June 15<sup>th</sup> \$5 million had been raised toward the goal of \$9.4 million.

## CONSTRUCTION UNDERWAY

The sites for the new naturalist house and maintenance facility were cleared in May, and on August 15, 2016, construction began. These two projects represent Phase 1 of the campaign. When completed, the naturalists and maintenance staff will move out of the West Dorm, which sets up our original dorm for its critically needed renovation. At the same time the dorm renovation begins, construction of access and facilities at our new Lake Superior shoreline property will begin.



## 2015-2016 Program Attendance

### SCHOOLS & GROUPS

Youth 8,875

Adults 2,515

NATURALIST TRAINING 20

### COLLEGES/CONFERENCES/ OTHER

823

ROAD SCHOLAR & FAMILIES 117

OFF SITE 1100

SUMMER YOUTH 555

# PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS

## ANTIOCH UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIP

Wolf Ridge has been operating our Naturalist Training program for over 40 years. Throughout the years we have worked hard to stay on the cutting edge of environmental education working with different university partners to accomplish this. We are excited to announce our new relationship with Antioch University in New England (AUNE) – a well-known leader in environmental education. The partnership ushers in a new era in the Naturalist Training Program focusing on accessibility (from a cost perspective) for graduate degrees, intentional blending of theory and practice in higher education through residencies at Wolf Ridge and a deeper engagement with sustainability education.



## TECHNOLOGY IN EDUCATION

Wolf Ridge intentionally incorporates technology into our participants experience. We use digital cameras in some of our classes, ipads and digital monitoring equipment in our stream study class and a variety of devices in our energy and sustainability classes. We also are branching out to do some video conferencing with partners around the country.

This year we greatly improved our internet capacity. For years we have had internet with limited bandwidth and intermittent connectivity. We were not able to count on the internet in our classes and video conferencing was not a possibility - sometimes even basic internet related business functions were not possible. Through a rural access grant Lake County received the funds to provide high speed fiber optic cable to the community. Wolf Ridge was able to upgrade our technical infrastructure to take advantage of this new resource. Today we are able to provide a better work and educational experience for everyone at Wolf Ridge.





# SUMMER ACCOMPLISHMENTS

## NEW SPECIALTY CAMPS

This summer Wolf Ridge ran two new specialty program camps – Farm Camp and Wildlife Camp. In Farm Camp, students dug into the soil investigating the process of food production from planting to preparation. The campers spent an overnight at the farm and even made a celebratory kale cake for the whole camp. Wildlife campers helped with on-going wildlife research happening at Wolf Ridge – radio tracking, trail cameras, study plants and bird banding. They also got to help take care of our education animals exploring behind the scenes assisting with feeding, training and cleaning up.



## TRADITIONAL CRAFTS

In addition to our new specialty camps we also updated the crafts that we offer in ALL our summer camp programs. Wolf Ridge summer camps focus on developing a connection to the natural world and an understanding of our relationship with the natural world. To better support these goals, we integrated traditional crafts that align with the theme of the camp. Kids (of all ages) are spinning wool and weaving, making fishing lures and paddles.



## SCIENCE IMMERSION CREDIT PROGRAMS

Wolf Ridge continues to work in partnership with Minnesota Office of Higher Education's Get Ready program, the US Forest Service, Murray Junior High and the Fast Track Scholars program and a variety of funders to provide authentic, hands-on science programs for diverse, urban Middle and High School students. The programs include both a school year component either after school or during the school day as well as a summer component. This summer our programs ran for 2-6 weeks and served 48 students. Students who successfully completed the program received high school and/or college science credit.

This summer we expanded our High School Credit Academy options for our public summer camp programs. We offered a two week Wilderness Ethics Credit Academy. In this two week program, Students backpacked on Isle Royale and exploring society's evolving views of wilderness through its depiction by artists, writers, and ecologists. We also offered a three week program focusing on freshwater and field science. Students worked with professionals to conduct scientific research and developed their own field investigations. Through the program, students developed an understanding of Minnesota's waterways and how people can work together to manage and sustain them as well as explored possible career options.



## BIOBLITZ

In partnership with the US Forest Service, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, and a variety of experts from all over Minnesota, we conducted a bioblitz. A bioblitz is an intense catalog of living organisms in a specific area for a specific amount of time. Our bioblitz focused on combining science with education. Campers participating in our Science Immersion programs identified bird, plants, amphibians, reptiles, insects and much more.

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Include Wolf Ridge as a beneficiary of your will, trust, retirement account plan, or life insurance policy. Your planned gift sustains Wolf Ridge's excellence by supporting our endowment and ensures we can educate future generations about the importance of the natural world.

Become part of the Wolf Ridge Heritage Circle.

# SCHOOLS & GROUPS

FISCAL YEAR SEPTEMBER 1, 2015 TO AUGUST 31, 2016

Afton-Lakeland Elementary  
Andersen Elementary  
Andersen United School  
Annandale Middle School  
Arcadia Charter  
Arete Academy  
Assumption School  
Badger School  
Bancroft Elementary  
Barnum Elementary  
Beacon Academy  
Benilde St Margaret's  
Bethlehem Academy  
Birch Lake Elementary  
Blue Earth Area Middle School  
Boy Scouts Pack 569  
Boy Scouts Pack 157  
Breck School  
Carleton College  
Carlton High School  
Cavalier Middle School  
Cental Middle School  
Central Cass School  
Central Lutheran School  
Chisago Lakes Middle School  
Churchill Elementary  
COCO  
Cogdon Park Elementary  
Cooper Elementary  
Covern Elementary  
Cumberland Middle School  
Diamond Path Elementary  
Dugsi Academy  
Emanuel Lutheran  
Engineering Cool  
Epiphany  
FACE TO FACE Academy  
Fast Track Scholars  
First Lutheran  
Fisher High School  
Five Hawks Elementary  
Fond Du Lac Ojibwe School  
Fond Du Lac Ojibwe School  
Prevention/Intervention  
Fond Du Lac Prevention/  
Intervention  
Fox West Academy  
Franklin Elementary  
Frassati Catholic Academy  
Friends School of MN  
Girl Scouts  
Girl Scouts Troops 4250 &  
4026  
Glen Lake Elementary  
Glendale Elementary  
Grace Fellowship  
Grainwood Elementary  
Great Expectations School  
Heilicher Mpls Jewish Day  
School  
Hennepin Elementary  
HEY St Cloud  
Hibbing Community College  
Hilltop Primary  
Hinckley-Finlayson Elementary  
Holy Name of Jesus School  
Holy Rosary School  
Holy Trinity School  
Hopkins Summer Biology  
Imhotep

Intl Spanish Language Academy  
Jeffers Pond Elementary  
John Ireland  
Jordan Middle School  
Kelliher Public School  
Key Club Ely  
King of Grace Lutheran  
Lake Superior Youth Choir  
Lakewood Elementary  
Laura MacArthur Elementary  
Leave No Trace  
Lester Park School  
Lowell Elementary  
Loyola Catholic School  
LSS ONE Program  
Manvel Public School  
Maple Lake Elementary  
Marcy Open School  
Marquette Catholic School  
Marshall County High School  
McGuire Middle School  
Memorial Middle School  
Midway School  
Miltona Science Magnet  
Minnehaha Elementary  
Minnesota New Country School  
Minnetonka Middle School East  
MN DNR Parks & Trails Naturalist  
Training  
MN Phenology Network  
Mound Boy Scouts  
Murray Jr High  
Nawayee Center  
New London-Spicer Middle School  
Niigaane Ojibwemowin Immersion  
School  
Norman County West Elementary  
North Shore Community School  
North Woods Great Lakes Master  
Naturalists  
Northern Lights Community School  
Northstar Academy  
Nyquist School  
Oak Crest Elementary  
Oak Grove Middle School  
Oak Park Elementary  
Odyssey Academy  
Onamia Junior High  
Open World Learning  
Our Lady of Grace Catholic School  
Our Lady of the Lake  
Park River Area School  
Peace Church  
Peidmont Elementary  
Pine Island High School  
Prairie Creek  
Presentation Of Mary  
Prior Lake Teachers  
Providence Academy  
Raleigh Edison School  
Redtail Ridge Elementary  
Richard R Green Central School  
Rockwood Community Ed  
Rogers Middle School  
Sacred Heart East Grand Forks  
Sacred Heart Robbinsdale  
Sawtooth Elementary  
Schoolcraft Learning Community  
School  
Shell Lake School

Shirley Hills Elementary  
Sierra Club  
Simley High School  
Sojourner Truth Academy  
South Ridge Elementary  
Spirit of the Lake  
St Anne's School  
St Anthony Park  
St Bridget  
St Charles Borromeo  
St Croix Catholic  
St Croix Montessori  
St Croix Prep  
St Francis de Sales  
St James  
St John the Baptist  
St John The Evangelist  
St John's  
St Mark's  
St Mary's Breckenridge  
St Mary's Morris  
St Michael's Lakeside  
St Pascal Baylon  
St Patrick's  
St Peter's  
St Scholastica Youth Theology Retreat  
St Stephen's  
St Thomas More

St Vincent de Paul  
Stellar  
Stowe Elementary  
Stride Academy  
Superior Cathedral  
Superior Hiking Trail Association  
Todd County Youth Initiative  
TREK North High School  
Trinity Lutheran/Our Lady of the Prairie  
Triton High School  
Two Harbors Elementary  
UMD Preservice Teachers  
Valley Middle School  
Valley View Middle School  
VandenBerge Middle School  
Vintage Sports Camp  
Warroad Middle School  
Watershed High School  
Watertown-Mayer Middle School  
Wayzata Central Middle School  
Wayzata East Middle School  
West Central Area Schools  
West Fargo STEM  
Westwood Elementary  
William Kelley Elementary  
Willow River Elementary  
WinterQuist Elementary  
Youth Conservation Corp



**ADVENTURES IN LEARNING**



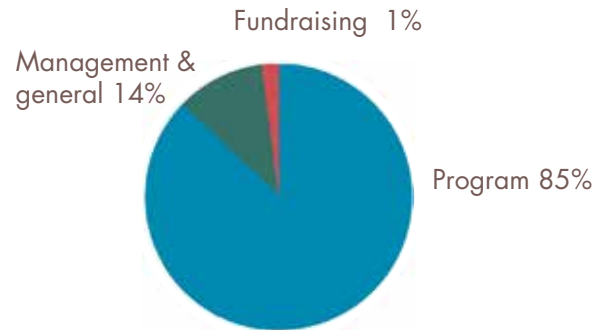
# FINANCIAL STATEMENT

**FISCAL YEAR SEPTEMBER 1, 2015 TO AUGUST 31, 2016**

## STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

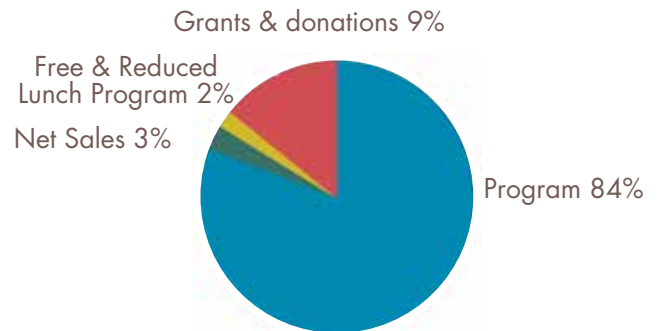
### Expenses

Program services	\$2,371,729
Management & general	395,120
Fundraising	34,891
Total Expenses before Depreciation*	<u>\$2,801,740</u>



### Revenue and Other Support

Program revenue	\$2,406,673
Investment income & one time gains	44,815
Sales (net of expenses)	95,740
Free & reduced lunch program	59,939
Grants & donations	247,664
Total Revenue	<u>\$2,854,831</u>



## Statement of Financial Position

Current assets	\$581,457	Current liabilities	\$436,397
Fixed assets	7,912,089	Temporarily restricted net assets	2,710,524
Investments & supporting funds		Permanently restricted net assets	351,732
Endowment	413,215	Unrestricted net assets	8,618,775
Board restricted reserve	763,634		
Cash Equivalents	2,447,033	Total liabilities & net assets	<u>\$12,117,428</u>
Total Assets	<u>\$12,117,428</u>		

\*Depreciation expense = \$443,372

Wolf Ridge Environmental Learning Center is a nonprofit, tax exempt organization under 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code. This financial information is drawn from the audited financial statements by the accounting firm Esterbrooks, Scott, Signorelli, Peterson, Smithson, Ltd.



**WOLF RIDGE**<sup>SM</sup>  
ENVIRONMENTAL LEARNING CENTER

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**MAKE A DONATION.**

**Our mission is to develop a citizenry that has the knowledge, skills, motivation, and commitment to act together for a quality environment.**