

Berlin School Forests Rationale

Value Statement

The four properties, which comprise the Berlin School Forest system, represent a diverse outdoor educational classroom for the greater Berlin community. Forest habitats include remote oak savanna, managed pine plantation, residential woodlot, and school site arboretum. Through ongoing development and refinement, each forest will serve as a unique educational facility to enhance interdisciplinary environmental education for our students, teachers, and community. Our mission in environmental education is to educate learners to become environmentally knowledgeable, skilled, dedicated citizens who are willing to work individually and collectively, toward achieving and maintaining a dynamic equilibrium between the quality of life and the quality of the environment. This will be accomplished through informed decision making as well as lifestyle assessment and modification. Environmental education should be a continuous lifelong process, beginning at the preschool level and continuing through all stages of a person's life. To successfully meet the mandated state environmental education standards, many of which are field skill based, the Berlin School Forests serve as exceptional outdoor classrooms, where hands-on, multi-sensory learning opportunities are provided to introduce, develop, and master each EE standard. Recreationally, the Berlin School Forests strive to provide lifetime outdoor recreation/adventure opportunities which instill a healthy lifestyle, as well as an aesthetic appreciation for the outdoors. Through sustainable forestry practices, the Berlin School Forests are managed for multiple use, taking into consideration the desired ecological, economic, and social outcomes for each property, to meet the needs of many users for years to come.



Target Messages

Awareness of local, regional, and global environmental issues, along with time spent learning outdoors, greatly influences the development of environmental sensitivity and environmentally responsible behavior in humans.



Identification and assessment of regional ecosystems within the school forest properties allows for active student participation in the ecosystems sustained management and restoration.



Lifetime outdoor recreational activities promote healthy lifestyle decisions by promoting fitness in and within the environment.



Flora and fauna field research is needed to inventory and monitor populations of native species while controlling the spread of invasive, non-native species.



The state of Wisconsin's historic and current dependence on forests and the forest industry requires the continual teaching of forestry management skills, resources, and careers within this field.



Environmental education is best infused into all K-12 curricular areas through direct, hands-on experiences including planned classroom activities, field activities, and teachable moments.

