Newport Wilderness Society Summary

Number of employees: 0

Number of volunteers: >100

What is your Mission Statement?
To work with the management of Newport State Park (NSP), Door County, Wisconsin, to help preserve the natural beauty of the Park's forest, meadow and shore areas for appropriate public use.

What is the main source of your funding and what percent of your funding does that source provide?
Donations and membership fees make up the majority of NSW revenue (77%). Merchandise sales generate approximately 23% of revenue.

What is the geographic scope of your services throughout Door County?
The physical location of the park is in northern Door County. The vast majority of activities logically happen within the park. These activities include educational programs, hiking, biking, camping, dark sky events and day visitors. Board members and volunteers participate in education and environmental forums held within Door County and within the State of Wisconsin.

Explanation of how you serve Door County including primary programs your organization offers to the community.
In 2020, it was estimated that 260,000 people visited NSP. Newport is the only wilderness state park in Wisconsin and the only park in Wisconsin to be certified as a Dark Sky preserve by the International Dark Sky Association. Both of these attributes draw a considerable number of visitors to Door County. In a typical year, the Park Naturalist conducts close to 100 educational and environmental programs for park visitors. It is estimated that these programs touch 4,000-5,000 visitors to Door County per year. The NWS provides 100% of the funding for the NSP Naturalist position. Other expenditures throughout a typical year include kiosk restorations, trail maintenance, ski trail grooming, and campsite restoration.

How would you define the impact your organization is making in Door County?
Newport is the only wilderness state park in Wisconsin, and the only park with Dark Sky designation. Visitors to the park enjoy wilderness camping and other outdoor experiences that are closer to nature.

What is your annual budget?
Our Annual Budget for operating expenses for this fiscal year is $67,000 and an additional $81,000 budgeted for the first 600 feet of the Fern Trail Project.

The remaining 1,200 feet to complete the boardwalk project is expected to cost an additional $150,000 for fiscal year 2022/23. The projected completion date is Fall 2023.

We have received matching grants of $40,000 from the Knowles-Nelson fund. In addition to other donations we have about 60% of the project funded.

If you were to receive a donation from 100+WWC, how would that donation be used?

The Newport Wilderness Society plans to use 100% of the donation for the construction of an elevated ADA compliant boardwalk on the Fern trail at Newport State Park. The Fern trail is currently designated as Newport's "wheelchair accessible" trail. In addition to visitors with mobility limitations, there are interpretive signs along the trail with an audio component for visitors who are visually impaired. This trail also allows access to the only group campsite at Newport.

Volunteers removed a 400 foot ground level boardwalk in November 2021 in preparation for the start of the elevated ADA boardwalk in 2022. Working with the DNR Engineering department, the boardwalk was designed to extend beyond the routinely flooded wetland area. Our plan is to extend the length of the boardwalk to 1,800 feet in length so that the trail will be accessible and enjoyed during every season. All of the labor to deconstruct the old boardwalk and build the new one will be done by Newport Wilderness Society volunteers. A donation from 100+WWC would be used for the proposed building materials. Based on current quotations, material costs are estimated at $240,000 to complete this project, with the NWS and its members contributing financially to this project.