

FINAL REPORT

Outdoor Adventure Center Great Lakes Fisheries Learning Program
2016.1606

PROJECT PROFILE

Synopsis:

- **Project Title:** *Outdoor Adventure Center Great Lakes Fisheries Learning Program*
- **Grantee Organization:** Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR)
- **Project Team:**
Linda Walter, DNR/ Kevin Frailey, DNR/ Jim Francis, DNR/ Natalie Cypher,
DNR/ Emily DeLong, DNR/ Matt Lincoln, DNR
- **Contact Person:** Matt Lincoln, DNR
- **Grant Amount:** \$15,000
- **Time Frame:** 06/14/2016 to 04/01/2017
- **Focus Area:** Stewardship
- **Brief Project Summary:** The purpose of this project was to design a plan to guide the implementation of an integrated education program in the downtown Detroit area which will serve schools and family audiences. The program will be designed to make aquatic environments relevant and will provide opportunities to get Detroiters hooked on angling.

Project In Context:

The Outdoor Adventure Center (OAC) offers a unique introduction to outdoor recreation located in downtown Detroit. The OAC opened in 2015 in a renovated industrial building near the Detroit River. Interactive exhibits in the OAC include aquatic habitat, camping, hunting, fishing, energy, and natural environments. Programs offered at the OAC continue to evolve and include Boy/Girl scout programs, archery, and **school programs focusing on natural resources**. The OAC is located steps away from W.G. Milliken State Park, the Dequindre Cut Bike path, and the Detroit Riverwalk.

Goals and Effort:

The key goal for this project was to provide a plan for the implementation of a Great Lakes Fishery learning program based at the Outdoor Adventure Center with the target audience being children and families.

Results:

The result of the project is a comprehensive plan which provides a guide for the proposed program to be realized. The plan also provides a cost estimate for program implementation, which will be used to seek funding from partners. The plan also outlines how the program's success will be measured and what methods will be used.

Once implemented, DNR is confident that the program will become an integral component to the Outdoor Adventure Center and the State Park system.

Products and Resources:

Once the plan is funded and program development is underway, the DNR will issue a press release and post information about the program on the Outdoor Adventure Center's website.

DNR will continue to work collaboratively with our partners to ensure that funding is sought in order to implement the program. This model will be evaluated for the potential of replication in other subjects highlighted at the Outdoor Adventure Center.

FINAL NARRATIVE REPORT

Background/Overview

1. The project included developing a plan for a Great Lakes fisheries program at the Outdoor Adventure Center (OAC). The plan will be used as a guide to fundraise and to implement the program.
2. The project was completed as originally intended to target children and families, but part of the research performed to develop the plan was to specify the target audience. The finished project accomplishes the original project goal by developing a plan for the program and outlining how the program will be implemented and how the program will be evaluated for success.

Outcomes

1. Activities associated with the development of the plan included assembling the DNR team, which lead the effort in developing the program plan. This was spearheaded by Linda Walter, Natalie Cypher and Emily De Long. Other team members acted as a sounding board to review the material being developed. The team met initially to brainstorm the project and identify educational organizations to contact to begin the research phase of the project.
2. The DNR Parks and Recreation Division reached out to several educational organizations to identify the gaps in Great Lakes fishery education and determine the target audience, ensuring efforts were not being duplicated.
3. As part of the research phase for the plan, it was discovered that several elementary student programs already existed. The largest gap identified was at the middle school and high school levels. As a result of these findings, the program defined in the plan will include a three phased school program geared towards middle school and high school students. The three phases include an outreach program at the school, a field trip to the OAC, and a fishing event at a State Park.
4. A component of the plan outlines how data will be gathered to evaluation the program's success. The success of the plan will be measured if the program becomes funded and is implemented as defined in the plan.
5. The most important benefit to this project is the outreach opportunities the program will offer to middle school and high school students in the classroom setting, at the OAC and

in the field. In addition, the program will expand current related programs at the OAC and introduce students to fishing.

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Related Efforts

1. As a result of the plan, the program will also provide the ability to expand existing fishing-related programs at the OAC and at the State Parks, which will expand outreach to the general public and to families.
2. Two teacher professional development opportunities are also included in the plan.
3. DNR is hopeful that the momentum will continue from this project and the program can be implemented in the near future.
4. If successful, this plan may be used as a model to develop other OAC programs in the future.

Communication/Dissemination

1. A press release is planned for the entire project once the program is implemented. This will be posted on the DNR's website: www.michigan.gov/dnr.
 - a. DNR will continue to work collaboratively with our partners to ensure that the plan is funded and implemented in the future.
2. In addition to the press release being developed, the DNR will use its social media outlets to promote the program.

Reflections

1. A challenging aspect of this project was assembling the project team. While several team members were outlined in the grant application, it was soon discovered that many of these team members weren't available to contribute large amounts of time towards the effort. Linda Walter, the OAC director immediately recognized **the** talented staff and assembled a team in order to move the project forward. After the initial kick-off meeting, each person on the project team had a clear understanding of the project and their tasks.
2. Recommendations for similar projects in the future would be focused around the project schedule. DNR underestimated the project timeline. Between the time it took to assemble the team and the amount of time spent meeting and contacting education organizations, it became evident that the project would have been easier if **more time** was built into the project schedule. DNR's recommendation to future grant recipients is to build into the project schedule ample time for coordination with partners and team meetings.

Attachments

1. Final plan and appendices