

OUTDOOR EDUCATION

INDICATOR: Percentage of park visitors participating in outdoor education activities

WHY IS THIS INDICATOR IMPORTANT?

Outdoor education creates a sense of stewardship for Minnesota’s natural and cultural heritage. It promotes recreation through experiential programs on camping, hiking, biking, canoeing, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, fishing, wildlife watching, hunter education, and snowmobile safety. They also promote understanding of and support for DNR programs, key messages, and management decisions, reducing management costs and enhancing outcomes.

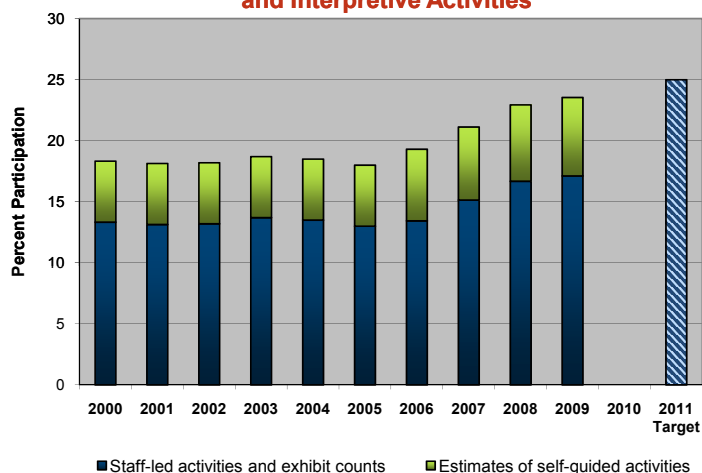
WHAT IS DNR DOING?

Educational programs have been integral to DNR’s mission for more than 60 years. Approximately 8.5 million people visit state parks each year, of these over 2 million participate in outdoor education activities. In July 2009, the Parks and Trails Legacy Fund began providing financial support to expand outreach and education. It established a Naturalist Corps internship program to conduct programming in state parks, funding 30 positions for 2010. We upgraded park and trail exhibits and displays and expanded the use of technology-based educational resources such as touch screen computers, MP3 trail guides, and geocaching programs. We held 30 workshops for beginning campers in summer 2010. We offered fishing poles for free checkout at 30 state parks. Several parks have expanded visitor center hours.

TARGET: Increase park visitor participation in outdoor education and interpretive opportunities to 25% by the end of FY 2011. This target represents

a significant increase from our 2007 goal of 18% participation. We will seek to reach our target by strategically delivering educational resources and documenting participation in interpretive services.

Percent Participation in Parks Education and Interpretive Activities



Each year, educational activities in Minnesota state parks reach more than 2 million visitors.



Outdoor education in Minnesota state parks creates a sense of stewardship for Minnesota’s natural and cultural heritage.

LEARN MORE ABOUT:

- Naturalist programs at: www.mndnr.gov/state_parks/kids.html
- State parks at: www.mndnr.gov/state_parks
- Other DNR natural resources education programs at: www.mndnr.gov/education