



2022 Annual Volunteer Report

Description of volunteering in each DNR division

Division	Volunteer Position	Number of Volunteers	Number of Hours	Conservation Impacts
Ecological and Water Resources	Lake Level Monitoring	655	5,895	Provided information used for decision making on 670 unique lakes and waters monitored
	MN County Biological Survey	12	1,631	Delineated thousands of native plant community polygons in GIS; surveyed tens of thousands of acres; 20 years of important field data and notes scanned and archived
	MN Loon Monitoring Program	332	2,076	Provided data on changes in the adult population of loons counted on 540 lakes; this data records the reproductive success of the state's common loons and helps anticipate any problems
	Nongame Wildlife Program	101	1,002	Completed 37 biological surveys including monitoring loons on 80 lakes
	Observation Well Drilling	1	35	Assisted in installing 1 new groundwater observation well
	Rainfall Monitoring	1,906	22,872	Provided guidance on Minnesota's changing climate by monitoring Minnesota's rain, hail, and snowfall conditions
	Rare Plant Conservation	21	374	Protected 400 acres of rare plant habitat and 3 biological surveys completed
	Scientific and Natural Areas	255	1,092	Improved acres of habitat by removal of invasive species, site observations, and biological surveys

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Ecological and Water Resources	State Climatology Office	1	252	Assisted with reporting Lake Ice In/Out data
	State Fair Volunteers	10	43	Assisted in educating thousands of fairgoers on invasive species
	Volunteer Loon Watcher Survey	137	2,258	Monitored loons on 158 lakes in Minnesota. Volunteers observed 905 resident adult loons, found 127 active nests, and observed 207 loon chicks hatch with 116 of these chicks surviving until fledging.
	Watercraft Inspection Program	28	327	Educated adult and/or youth boaters on aquatic invasive species at public access sites
	Eco/Waters Resources Subtotal	3,459	37,857	
Enforcement	BWCAW Enforcement Trip	1	60	Assisted with trip to build resource and environmental protection skills
	Advanced and Bow Hunter Education Instructors	52	792	Educated and certified students to hunt using a bow.
	ATV Safety Instructors	852	5,112	Educated and certified students to operate All-Terrain Vehicles.
	Firearms Safety Instructors	3,572	71,440	Educated and certified students to hunt using firearms.
	Snowmobile safety instructors	1,134	13,608	Educated and certified 5,004 students to operate snowmobiles.
	Trail Ambassadors	185	4,532	Monitored 79 trails and reported on conditions observed, as well as educated adults and/or youth on trail etiquette.
	Training Academy Actors	30	630	Provided real-life, hands-on experience for cadets training to be Conservation Officers. Scenarios are enacted that new officers will encounter in the field. This provides experience on how to react and relate to the public.
	Enforcement Subtotal	5,826	96,174	

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Fish & Wildlife - Fisheries	Aquatic Management Areas	65	242	Improved 4 acres of habitat established to protect, develop, and manage lakes, rivers, streams, and adjacent wetlands and lands that are critical for fish and other aquatic life, for water quality, public fishing and other recreational uses
	Harvesting Rearing Ponds	1	2	Harvested 4,703 Muskellunge from rearing ponds to stock lakes
	Sampling and Tagging Fish	69	368	Completed more than 15 biological surveys, sampled lakes to determine the fish population and tagged approximately 3000 Muskellunge fingerlings prior to stocking to help gather data to study them
	Walleye Spawning	16	204	Collected over 700 quarts of walleye eggs resulting in hundreds of thousands of fertilized walleye eggs producing fry raised for stocking in area lakes
	Fisheries Subtotal	151	816	
Fish & Wildlife - Wildlife	Area Wildlife Management Volunteers	139	575	Groomed 5 miles of cross-country ski trails; cleaned parking areas of debris and mowed area; improved, protected or restored 107 acres of habitat; treated 40 acres of buckthorn; collected 26 pounds of native seed; removed 900 feet of fence
	Adopt-A-WMA	17	216	Planted 45 acres of food plots, improved 6 miles of trail and cleaned 8 parking areas of litter
	Becoming an Outdoor Woman (BOW) Program	43	787	Provided outdoor skills education to adult women and youth engaged in outdoor activities
	Bird Banding, Houses and Surveys	27	464	Banded over 600 Canada geese; monitored kestrel nesting boxes and bluebird houses; completed prairie chicken surveys; completed surveys on Spruce, sharp-tailed and ruffed grouse; maintained hunter walking trail; built 20 bird houses and 30 bee houses
	State Fair (Wildlife Wing)	18	107	Educated adults and youth attending the State Fair on wildlife

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Fish & Wildlife - Wildlife	Wildlife Research	44	853	Collected 30 bear data points at bear dens visited; captured and radio collared 12 deer fawns; completed 4 predator scent station routes with 10 stops each
	Wildlife Subtotal	288	3,002	
Forestry	Fire Wardens	1,518	9,871	Protected thousands of acres by issuing burning permits to residents
	Urban and Community Forestry Volunteers	80	4,711	Educated communities and assisted in planting and maintaining trees in their area
	Forestry Volunteers	5	171	Created 3 wooden signs, 3 drawer inserts, and 6 pickup box organization inserts to assist staff in daily work
	Project Learning Tree (PLT)	19	380	Created 300 tree cookies for classroom use; conducted 5 teacher workshops; 8 new PLT workshop facilitators were trained
	School Forests	264	9,720	Educated 151 schools engaged in outdoor education in school forests; constructed and delivered 100 field desks to 4 school forest sites
	State Fair Volunteers (Wildfire Prevention)	18	134	Smokey Bear delivered wildfire prevention messages to the public at the MN State Fair
	Forestry Subtotal	1,904	24,987	
Operations Services	State Fair Volunteers	26	170	Educated adults and youth attending the State Fair on various environmental topics; provided music on DNR stages; greeted and provided directions to fairgoers
	OSD Subtotal	26	170	
Lands & Minerals	State Fair Volunteers	1	8	Assisted in educating adults and youth visiting the Lands and Minerals exhibit at State Fair
	Lands & Minerals Subtotal	1	8	

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Parks & Trails	Adopt-a-Trail	76	1,122	Picked up trash, removed light debris, and reported trail conditions to staff
	Bluebird Monitoring	33	777	Collected data and monitored change in abundance of bluebirds in nesting boxes; more than 100 bluebird young survived to fledglings
	Campground Hosts	159	20,842	Maintained campgrounds and facilities, provided customer services to thousands of campers, served as public contact and aided with safety in parks
	Candlelight Events	28	130	Placed luminaries on trails, kept fires going throughout event, and picked up luminaries at the end of event; engaged over 600 visitors
	Naturalist Programs	357	2120	Educated adults and youth engaged in activities on nature topics; completed Christmas Bird Counts
	Other State Park Projects	203	3,348	Helped plan events; served on committees; assisted at events; completed 3 non-game fish surveys; completed 15 wildlife surveys; groomed cross-country ski trails
	Prairie Restoration	16	541	Restored over 60 acres of land to native prairie; collected and cleaned seed
	Resource Management	291	551	Improved acres of habitat; completed biological surveys
	Shade Tree Planting	9	61	Planted shade trees in picnic areas and campgrounds
	Trail Maintenance	282	2,850	Groomed cross-country ski trails and improved miles of trail for recreational use
	Parks & Trails Subtotal	1,416	31,600	
2022 Volunteer Totals		13,071	194,614	Volunteer numbers continue to maintain at the same level during the third year of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Since creating a department wide DNR Program in 1988, Minnesotans have engaged in more than **12.7 million hours** of volunteer service adding **\$244 million** in value focused on managing our state's natural resources.

The table shows the 10 states with the highest 2021 formal volunteering rates in the country.

State	2021 Formal Volunteering Rate
Utah	40.7%
Wyoming	39.2%
Minnesota	35.5%
Maine	34.9%
District of Columbia	34.2%
South Dakota	34.2%
Nebraska	33.9%
Kansas	31.5%
Montana	31.1%
Missouri	30.5%

Minnesota Gives Back.

In 2021, more than **1.5 million** residents volunteered through an organization contributing **\$3.5 billion** in economic value.

More than **2.6 million** residents helped their neighbors in the height of the pandemic.



Volunteer Statistics Summary

13,071 DNR Volunteers

194,614 Hours Donated

94 FTE's (Full Time Equivalents based on a 40-hour workweek or 2,080 hours/year.) Volunteer hours are equivalent to an extra 4% or 946 full-time people helping the DNR manage the state's natural resources.

\$6.3 Million Value – using \$32.33/hour is based on the hourly earnings of all Minnesota production and non-supervisory workers on private non-farm payrolls average as determined by the Bureau of Labor Statistics and increased by 12 percent to estimate for fringe benefits as listed by [Independent Sector](#).

Conservation Impacts – Volunteers monitored changes in abundance of fish and wildlife, conducted biological surveys, improved acres of habitat, educated and engaged citizens in outdoor activities, safety and conservation practices.

Global Pandemic - The World Health Organization declared a COVID-19 outbreak as a pandemic on March 11, 2020. Federal and state actions were taken to try to slow the spread. In 2020, people were not allowed to gather with others in public places and volunteering almost came to a complete halt for a time at the DNR. In 2021, masking, social distancing and vaccines made it possible for more volunteering to take place and in 2022, health restrictions were eased. The numbers on this year's annual report and table below show the results.

DNR Volunteer Trends 1993-2022

