

2022 Finalist Executive Summary – Woodford Cedar Run Wildlife Refuge

Organization: Woodford Cedar Run Wildlife Refuge (Cedar Run)

Website: www.cedarrun.org

Location and County Served: Cedar Run is located in Burlington County. Its target population includes all residents of southern New Jersey, with a particular focus on Burlington, Camden, and Gloucester counties. Cedar Run provides wildlife and nature-based educational programs, both at its on-site nature center, and in the community, to approximately 30,000 students each year through classroom presentations, field trips, summer camp programs, home-school activities, and community events.

Organization Mission: Cedar Run is dedicated to NJ's children, wildlife, and the habitats they share. It is home to the busiest wildlife rehabilitation hospital in the tri-state area - New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Delaware. Located on 171-acres of protected habitat in Medford, NJ, with an on-site wildlife rehabilitation hospital and nature center, it hosts STEM and nature-based education programs for all ages. Cedar Run's mission is the preservation of New Jersey's wildlife and habitats through education, conservation, and rehabilitation, serving as a community resource on the importance of protecting and enhancing healthy ecosystems for all.

Organization's Total Operating Budget (Current Year - 2021): \$1,059,655

Project Name: Creation of New Watershed Study Dock and Pavilion for New Jersey Student Environmental Education

Project Description: Cedar Run has been continually expanding and evolving their educational programs to include a watershed focus, emphasizing (1) water quality, (2) the importance of clean water for wildlife protection, and (3) the role people play in helping to ensure our water resources remain clean and healthy. With this in mind, Cedar Run's education department developed programs that include water quality sampling and analysis to provide students with hands-on experience with water sample collection and testing.

To fully realize the goal of incorporating water quality and watershed protection education into their educational programs, improved access to the property's lakefront is necessary. The proposed dock and pavilion will allow them to accomplish this. The new dock will offer easier, safer access to the lake to conduct ecology and water quality lessons, while the pavilion (24 ft. x 24 ft. with lowered 8 ft. x 24 ft. lean-to), built adjacent to the dock, will serve as an outdoor sheltered classroom, complete with running water and electricity. Construction cost estimates for the dock and pavilion have already been prepared by local contractors.

Cedar Run also plans to purchase microscopes and other educational materials to complement and enhance new and current programming. In addition, six picnic tables will be

purchased to serve as student seating while participating in lessons and activities in the pavilion.

Cedar Run believes engaging students in interactive, experiential activities will strengthen their critical thinking and problem solving skills. In addition, the organization believes that by experiencing nature first-hand, students will gain a better appreciation for (1) scientific exploration and discovery, (2) environmental issues, (3) wildlife and the life sciences, and (4) stewardship of the natural world.