

May 8 Lakeshore Nature Preserve Committee meeting – Agenda item.

Committee vote to recommend prioritize/promote donations to the Preserve stewardship fund.

I propose that the Committee discuss and vote to officially recommend allocating some higher priority to soliciting contributions for the general Lakeshore Nature Preserve stewardship fund. Maybe someone at the meeting will suggest better wording for a proper motion

There are lots of good reasons to do this, a summary of my reasons is below. More and/or better wording could come up during discussion. I think we could better pitch the Preserve as an entity in its own right worthy of donation funding, above and beyond its individual pieces. Special projects could be billed as small pieces of the whole, not so much stand-alone with equal priority.

First, knowing that everyone is sorely strapped for time, here are some ideas to promote the general stewardship fund without cutting into other critical activities too much.

1. On the donations web page, move the stewardship fund up to top billing totally on its own, out of the list of "topics" for which donations might be considered. After that, relabel that other list as "Other topics and specific projects."
2. On the same web page, and as a description of the stewardship fund, include a brief statement of what the stewardship fund does. We could say this fund supports activities such as "short-term education/management partnership internships for students as opportunities arise," "additional needed management for areas not covered by funding for specific projects," "enhance monitoring of management outcomes." "[extend/enhance] the work done with base FP&M funding for the Preserve," "increasing the funding for ongoing long-term management allows more specific projects to be considered that cannot be funded by base UW-Madison funding, because any project increases the long-term maintenance (50-100 years) requirements," etc. Better wording could be contributed by other Committee members...
3. The idea in my head is to, in a much less grand and more limited way, pitch the stewardship fund as supporting and enhancing the Preserve in much the same tone as funding drives for public television and radio. NOT specific projects, but expanding on the base funding from the UW to FP&M in support of the entire Preserve as an entity in its entirety, not just a collection of individual named pieces.
4. This effort could be facilitated, by strengthening the description of the Preserve as a cohesive entity integrated with and enhancing the rest of the campus - a better "branding" of the Preserve as an entity worth supporting. This could be started perhaps by minor tweaking of the wording at the top of the "about the preserve" web page. I was struck when listening to Phil Townsend's presentation at the last meeting by how appropriate it would be to point out the value of the Preserve as one of many [semi-natural/other term] areas in the city along with those in city parks that form a network of natural areas that enhance the entire city's environment. The preserve enhances the campus and campus community with "natural" resources for education, research, aesthetic and passive recreation. As part of a city-wide network, the Preserve helps to do the

same for the entire city of Madison, as well as mitigating some of the city alterations to natural systems by providing ecosystem services such as erosion control, sequestering of excess nutrients, and amelioration of local climate.

4. Any/all of these small steps could start us on the path of emphasizing support for the entire Preserve over support for specific narrow projects when funding is sought. I don't think any of these requires the nonexistent time of the development committee to be done right now. Plus taking the Committee vote to give the stewardship fund top billing and achieving some of these steps to enhance the Preserve as an entity on its own on the web site and for donations might help the Foundation and the development committee when they have time to lean fund-raising toward the "entity" stewardship fund at least as much as for specific projects.

Submitted by Susan Will-Wolf
Academic Staff member, Lakeshore Nature Preserve
Department of Botany