



Play. Learn. Preserve.

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Park City, UT 84098

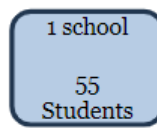
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WMI's 2023 Highlights

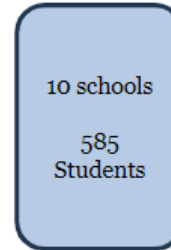
2023 brought a lot of change to WMI, including in the Executive Director position. I stepped into the role at the beginning of October, and wanted to take the time to introduce myself and to provide an update on some of the successes that WMI has recently had in our efforts to provide equitable and accessible hands-on science education and outdoor recreation opportunities to Utah school students.



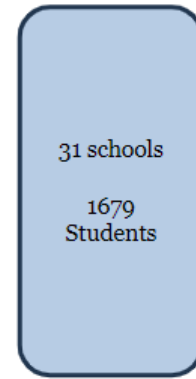
$\frac{2}{3}$ of students served are from Title 1 schools*



Fall 2019



2021-2022 School Year



2022-2023 School Year

*Title 1 schools serve a majority of students who come from low-income families

First, a little about myself, I have been working in outdoor education for over a decade. In that time, getting youth out to experience nature has become my life's work. I first learned about WMI a few years ago at a nonprofit fundraising event. It was immediately evident to me that this was exactly the kind of organization that I wanted to be a part of. That inclination has been affirmed over the last few months as I have had the opportunity to experience a small part of WMI's programming firsthand. I have been blown away by the quality of the educational experiences that are offered and by the work that Hilary Lambert, our outgoing ED, and the rest of the team at WMI has already accomplished.

School Trips:

Over the 22-23 School season:

- 1,452 students attended Field Ecology and SnowSchool Day Programs,
- 235 students attended Overnight camping Programs
- 71 teachers participated in teacher professional development workshops
- We hosted programming for students in multiple locations around the Wasatch Mountains and with various partners including the Jordanelle State Park and Snowbird Resorts





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It is difficult to put into words the impact of these school trips, and I am so excited to be able to show our programs firsthand. The following video was created by John Arthur, the 2021 Utah Teacher of the Year and an incredible 6th Grade teacher at Meadowlark Elementary. John and his students attended an overnight trip with us in September, and the video he captured shows how WMI helps students learn, play, and become stewards of the Wasatch [6th Grade Camping Trip 2023](#)

Camping in Color

We are so excited that our part in the community focused first-ever Camping in Color overnight program was a huge success! This collaborative camping program brought together many community partners and leaders to create a program designed for Black youth and children who have minimal-to-no prior experience with their families going tent camping to enhance a sense of belonging, appreciation, and engagement in the outdoors!

The goal with CiC was to increase outdoor recreation and education participation amongst Black youth, as well as provide an opportunity for positive youth development amongst a culturally representative social environment.

For a better understanding of the impact of the CiC program please view the following video, created by the incredible documentary filmmaker, The Sunroom: [Camping in Color 2023](#)

We are currently planning our next CiC event!

Other Community Events:

WMI additionally held many events for the general public at the Rock Cliff Nature Center with a big focus on the beautiful night skies that are visible. Rock Cliff is one of many dark sky certified locations in Utah, and the views are truly breathtaking. Through these and many other programs we are excited that we hosted and more than 1,675 community members visited the Rock Cliff Nature Center



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Plans for the Coming Year:

This summer the WMI board undertook a strategic plan to guide our next three years. Priorities include expanding program options to serve 4,000 students and 300 teachers annually. I am happy to report that we are already well on our way toward meeting that goal. We have over 800 students enrolled in our SnowSchool this coming winter season!



WMI has also recently taken over being the Utah coordinators for Project Learning Tree, a national teacher professional development curriculum focused on helping educators learn the power of outdoor education. We will soon be offering workshops to Utah teachers and to be able to provide a wealth of resources from the Project Learning Tree library.

In spring 2024, WMI will expand program offerings to include kayaking trips and instruction. We are very excited to be able to connect more youth with hands-on learning and believe that getting students out on the water to more directly connect with the natural world will create lasting memories and invigorate their learning experiences.

We look forward to continuing to teach the students of the Wasatch, and greatly appreciate your support in bringing learning to life through outdoor experiences.

Very sincerely,

Hamish Williams, Executive Director