

RESOLUTION #8-R-21

Resolution expressing support for the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program

May 19, 2021

Submitted By: Alderperson Schultz – District 9, Alderperson Fenton – District 6, Alderperson Meltzer – District 2, Alderperson Prohaska – District 14, Alderperson Wolff – District 12, Alderperson Smith – District 10, Alderperson Thao- District 7

Referred To: Parks & Recreation Committee

WHEREAS; the Wisconsin Legislature created the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program in 1989 to preserve valuable natural areas and wildlife habitat, protect water quality and fisheries, and expand opportunities for outdoor recreation, and;

WHEREAS; the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program is set to expire in 2022, a matching funds program that has supported land acquisition and capital development by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR), local governments, and nonprofit conservation organizations to preserve valuable natural areas, wildlife habitat, water quality and outdoor recreation for public benefit around the state, and;

WHEREAS; the Fox Cities region has benefited tremendously from KNSP, a vital funding component in the implementation of 170 land conservation and recreation projects totaling \$18 million dollars in economic benefit which have expanded recreational opportunities and access to the Fox River Corridor's natural infrastructure contributing greatly to the quality-of-life enjoyed in the Fox Cities, and;

WHEREAS; the City of Appleton has been awarded Stewardship funds in the recent past to support the Lawe Street Trestle improvement project which opened in the fall of 2020 to significant public use and praise, and currently has scheduled a number of key Fox River crossing projects to complete the contiguous network of trails along the Hydrologic Heritage Trailway, driven by the City's Trails Master Plan which, in the absence of essential KNSP matching philanthropic funds, will be dramatically hampered and significantly delayed, and;

WHEREAS; demand for outdoor recreation opportunities continues to grow, especially in the current era of COVID which is seeing trail use increase one-hundredfold, with trail improvements consistently ranked as the most desired and needed amenity of Appleton residents, and these needs that can be meet with the KNSP's minimal burden on the taxpayer, roughly \$20 annually which returns a maximum benefit to the community through land conservation, recreational infrastructure and economic growth,

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the City of Appleton acknowledges and considers the Knowles- Nelson Stewardship Program a valuable tool to preserve and restore natural areas, wildlife habitat, and water quality while supporting the development of public nature-based outdoor recreation opportunities that promote economic development and enhance quality of life, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City of Appleton supports the reauthorization of the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program for ten years and consideration of the proposal in Governor Evers budget request of \$70 million per year, and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the City of Appleton Clerk be directed to forward a copy of this resolution to members of the Senate Joint Finance Committee, State Representatives of the Fox Cities, Governor Evers and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Secretary, 101 S. Webster Street, Madison, WI 53702.

Attachments:

KNSP Fox Valley Investments

KNSP Fox Valley Investments – Loop the Little Lake

KNSP Fox Valley Investments – Nelson Family Heritage Crossing

Knowles-Nelson Fox Valley Investments

Loop the Little Lake



The \$3.5 million **Loop the Little Lake Trail** project built upon the popularity of the trestle trail between Menasha and what is now the Village of Fox Crossing. The 3.5-mile Little Lake Loop connects the trestle to Herb and Dolly Smith Park, the Neenah Slough, Neenah's future 30-acre Arrowhead Park and the Neenah and Menasha downtowns. The funding request came before the Joint Finance Committee in 2015 with freezing spending for Knowles-Nelson on the same agenda. Stewardship money was deemed so important to the trail that senators scheduled a separate vote to approve \$1.6 million to pay for two pedestrian bridges needed to complete the loop.

MUNICIPAL SUPPORT:

- \$325,000 City of Neenah
- \$325,000 City of Menasha.

BUSINESS SUPPORT:

- \$600,000 from Pheifer Brothers Construction Co. Inc.
- \$200,000 Community First Credit Union
- \$100,000 Fox Cities Convention and Visitor Bureau Tourism Development Grant
- \$35,000 Fox Cities Marathon.
- \$6,300 Fox Cities Convention and Visitor Bureau way-finding signage

PHILANTHROPIC SUPPORT:

- \$1.1 million in private donations collected by Future Neenah Inc.
- \$150,000 from the Community Foundation's Frank Shattuck Community Fund.
- \$11,000 from other donor funds within the Community Foundation.
- \$450,000 previous grant from Alice Jean Smith through her Community Foundation fund.

Knowles-Nelson Fox Valley investments

Nelson Family Heritage Crossing



The **David and Rita Nelson Family Heritage Crossing** joins Little Chute and Kaukauna in a new way – by their trail networks. The \$3.3 million, 1,200-foot pedestrian and bicycle bridge spans from Heesakker Park to an abandoned railroad bed connected to downtown Kaukauna. The project also brings together a great variety of financial support. Extensive fundraising brought in more than \$100,000 from individual donors, ignited by a combination of \$650,000 from the Community Foundation’s David L. and Rita E. Nelson Family Fund and \$1 million from Knowles-Nelson.

MUNICIPAL SUPPORT:

- \$328,000 City of Kaukauna
- \$328,000 Village of Little Chute
- \$600,000 Outagamie County Greenways Committee

OTHER GOVERNMENT SUPPORT:

- \$483,000 National Park Service
- \$14,000 Federal Recreation Trails Program

BUSINESS SUPPORT:

- \$250,000 Fox Cities Convention and Visitor Bureau Tourism Development Grant
- \$100,000 Unison Credit Union
- \$20,000 Great Wisconsin Cheese Festival

PHILANTHROPIC SUPPORT:

- \$650,000 from the Community Foundation’s David L. and Rita E. Nelson Family Fund.
- \$85,000 Hoffman Family, Little Chute
- \$100,000+ individual donations



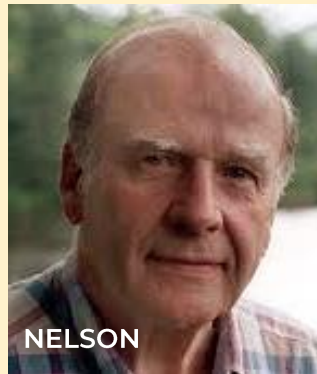
4455 W. Lawrence Street • Appleton, WI 54914
Phone: 920.830.1290 • Fax: 920.830.1293
info@cffoxvalley.org • www.cffoxvalley.org

Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program Fox Valley Investments

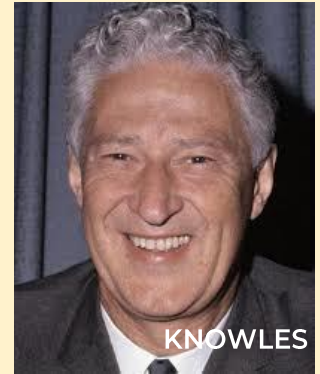
Wisconsin's Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program has been an important contributor to key land conservation and outdoor recreation projects in the Fox Valley region. The state grant program has awarded 148 grants to projects in the Fox Valley region totaling \$18.4 million.

Legislation creating the fund in 1989 authorized it for 10 years, with 10-year renewals in 1999 and 2009. It was named for Republican Gov. Warren Knowles and Democrat Gov. and U.S. Sen. Gaylord Nelson in 1993. Funding for Knowles-Nelson has ranged from \$23 million to \$86 million annually. The current funding is \$33 million per year, expiring in 2022.

In recent years, Fox Cities recreation trails have seen heavy use. With COVID limiting recreation choices, some locations report trail use up 100% or more. Fox Cities municipalities have already planned \$20.4 million in new trails through 2023. They are left wondering if the state will keep pace. The Community Foundation for the Fox Valley Region has partnered with the land trust umbrella agency Gathering Waters, along with other foundations and more than 50 environmental and conservation groups, to encourage the Legislature to return to adequate 10-year funding.



NELSON



KNOWLES

KNOWLES-NELSON LOCAL GRANTS

- Smalley Park, Shawano, \$218,100
- Newton Blackmour Trail, New London to Seymour, \$212,875.
- Herb & Dolly Smith Park, Neenah, \$197,600
- Upper Wanick Park, Sherwood, \$143,000
- Heckrodt addition, \$69,548
- Wiouwash Trail head, Clayton, \$30,000
- Ball diamond lighting, Navarino, \$19,000
- Miller Park, Hortonville, \$10,750
- Sunset Park overlook, Kimberly, \$12,000
- Kiwanis Park, New Holstein, \$6,450
- Picnic Shelter, Vendenbroek, \$6,000

Knowles-Nelson Support for the Fox Valley

County	# Grants	KNSP Grant
Calumet	17	\$ 1,080,968
Outagamie	53	\$ 3,641,194
Shawano	25	\$ 1,530,262
Waupaca	31	\$ 2,512,293
Winnebago	62	\$ 9,676,832