

# READY, SET, GO!

The newsletter that keeps you up-to-date on the Project GO happenings around Crookston and St. Paul!

## A PROJECT GO INTRODUCTION

Project GO works to establish meaningful connections with nature and kids. The program was started in SE Minnesota back in 2006. Today, the program has spread throughout southern MN and is making it's way farther North! Weekly outings into the natural environment provide kids with unstructured play that helps with concentration, cooperative play, and cognitive thinking—all for free! The program is a community-supported program run by community volunteers with support from partnering organizations.

## NORTHWEST REGION: PARTNERSHIPS AND EXCITED KIDS!

Like the Prairie Chicken in this region, the Northwest is booming with excitement for warmer weather and recreational opportunities. Project Get Outdoors has been connecting with organizations in the Northwest communities. There are promising developments and interest for collaboration in creating joint opportunities with kids getting outside!

Crookston High School students are gearing up to get some trainings in and help out with summer events! The Crookston Club is still talking with organizations to partner with, but more headway is being made and a location will be decided this month!

The Project GO Mahnomen Club is teaming up with the Boys and Girls Club! The Boys and Girls Club is always looking for fun and engaging activities for their kids, and loved the idea of working with Project GO to get kids outdoors more! Alysa will be working with the high school-aged youth committee board in the boys and girls club to work with the younger kids and host the outings. There is also some interest from the National Honors Society at the Mahnomen High School to possibly get involved over the summer or in the new school year.

Planning for the White Earth Academy of Math and Science is nearly finished! There are amazing field trips planned to places such as Rydell National Wildlife Refuge and Tamarac National Wildlife Refuge. There are terrific professors and experts of the field involved to teach and work with the kids, as well.

Next steps for the Northwest Region is establishing connections and contacts in Fosston and Ada! Now that there is some stability with the Crookston and Mahnomen clubs, planning for Fosston and Ada will be starting this month! Project GO is ecstatic to have all these brilliant people and organizations doing such great work!

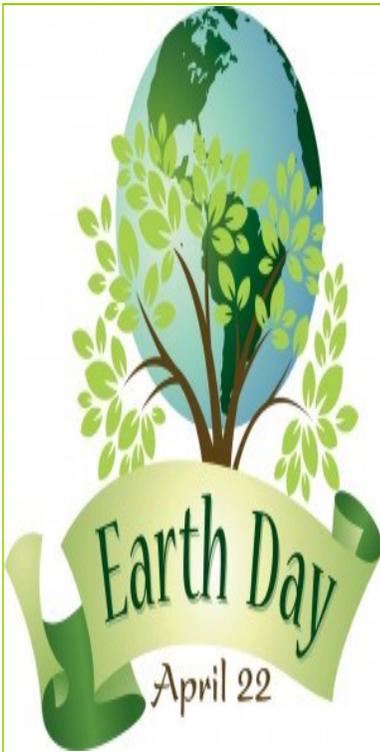


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### SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- Earth Day Celebrations
- Meet Rebecca Richter
- Opportunities to Get Involved!
- A Birding Activity for Kids



## EARTH DAY EXTRAVAGANZA: HOW IT STARTED AND HOW WE CELEBRATED

On April 22nd, we celebrated Earth Days in many ways! Started in 1970 by Wisconsin senator Gaylord Nelson, this day was set aside to bring to light current environmental issues.

To celebrate, Amy participated in a focus group with the US Fish and Wildlife Service collaborating with like-minded organizations to describe barriers to outdoor recreation for urban populations and brainstorm how USFWS can best overcome these obstacles. Afterwards, she tabled on the U of M Twin Cities campus through the Students for Sustainability's Earth Day Event.

Alysa participated in the University of Minnesota—Crookston Earth Day

Event. High school students came to check out exciting vendors doing great things in the name of sustainability and the earth! The high school students learned about career options, ways to become more 'green', and great things communities in this region do to be sustainable.

And to highlight one of our southeastern sites, Rebecca Richter volunteered and lead an Earth Day full line-up of events in Winona. This entailed a mapping activity where kids had to navigate from one station to the next. Activities included crafts, games, and making their own fishing pole!

*“Knowledge without love will not stick. But if love comes first, knowledge is sure to follow.” – John Burroughs*

### VOLUNTEER HIGHLIGHT: REBECCA RICHTER

Rebecca proudly represents us as one of our volunteers. She studies Recreation and Tourism at Winona State University. Besides heading up a student chapter of Project GO, she manages the Co-op on campus and teaches permaculture practices. She works to bring kids from the local daycare KidsFirst outside and connect with nature in their community. Her favorite memories with Project GO so far are getting to know the kids by playing outdoor games with them. If you are interested in volunteering in your community like Rebecca, you could make a difference too!

Thanks Rebecca for all the hard work you do!

### ST. PAUL AREA: APRIL SHOWERS BRING PROGRAM POWER!

With a wet close to our month, we welcome in the sun, new growth and new potential! We are lining up all our ducks in a row to start training local volunteers. The start of opportune weather really fires up the excitement of planning summer programs!

Meanwhile, the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge has done incredible work engaging the teens at Skyline, bringing the kids to the refuge as well as programming on site. Through this past winter and spring, the teens have participated in a river clean-up, gone snowshoeing, watched a movie, done an eagle-watching tour, explored with microscopes, and done some birding activities. Thanks Judy and Ellie for getting the teens outdoors!

Looking ahead in May, I will be representing us at the Big River Journey, a curriculum about the Mississippi River from a riverboat! 4-6 grade students are engaged in birding, life of a river otter, talking with a boat captain, investigating river litter and more! And later in the month, I will be assisting with a river clean-up station as part of an effort to connect Minneapolis and St. Paul youth with each other and the great Mississippi. Stay tuned for a reflection of these events!



More free resources like this downloadable puzzle at [www.birdday.org](http://www.birdday.org)

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Check out the great events happening in the upcoming months! Many amazing organizations are working to better our communities and environment. If you have interest in any event—either to volunteer or get your kids busy with an activity—contact the Project GO coordinator assigned to that event!

### KID'S ACTIVITY:

May 10th was International Migratory Bird Day! There are lots of ways to get your kids involved in the day—making a birds nest, creating bird feeders, and painting pictures of their favorite birds.

There are also lots of opportunities to get children involved in citizen science projects, too! Thanks to wonderful organizations and the Worldwide Web! Keep track of birds nesting in your neighborhood or at school for NestWatch.org! Kids can get a great certificate for the project and help scientists learn more about birds!

Go for a walk with a bird checklist with your children and document the types of birds you saw on your walk at eBird.org! This helps you and your family learn more about different species of birds and helps the scientific community learn where and when birds are!

Volunteer Event	When	Where	Need Volunteers	Activity for kids	Project GO Contact
Early Childhood Meeting	May 15	Rochester, MN	✓		Amy
Festival of Birds	May 15-18	Detroit Lakes, MN		✓	Alysa
The Teddy Bear Band at Castle Park	May 22	Crookston, MN		✓	Alysa
Castle Park Clean-Up	May 20	Crookston, MN	✓	✓	Alysa
Freedom River Event	May 23	Minneapolis, MN		✓	Amy
4-H X-Camp	June 3-5	Crookston, MN		✓	Alysa

## PROJECT GET OUTDOORS

Project GO is a non-profit organization founded in 2006 to assist Minnesota communities in connecting children to nature exploration and outdoor learning during the out-of-school hours.

Project GO was developed in response to Richard Louv's 2005 book, "Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature -Deficit Disorder".

With the help of our project partners, Project GO has developed a free Toolkit to guide communities through the stages of designing, implementing, evaluating and sustaining their own unique Project GO after school programs.

## INTERESTED IN VOLUNTEERING?

Say no more! Just like our kids, we want to get YOU outside and connected with your local community as well!

Do you have a knack for kids? Are you passionate about a particular environmental subject? Would you like to share your love of simply exploring nature with enthusiastic kids? Sign up to volunteer with us today!

Program leaders are needed to organize programs throughout the year. This commitment can be as small as 5 hours/week or can be a full 40 hour/week internship. This is a tremendous way to get involved, enhance your leadership skills and network with many organizations. Even if you are interested in a one-time commitment to test the waters, there's an opportunity for you.

With the support of adult leaders, kids will look deeper, think more creatively, grow more confidently, develop stronger relationships, connect with nature, and be more connected to their community!



### Project Get Outdoors

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