

Boxerwood Education Association VA DCR MWEE Grant 23-24



BOXERWOOD

Boxerwood's 23-24 grant-funded project was a capacity-building request with the goal of sustain advancing the success of the MWEE implementation model in Rockbridge County (western Virgi to share this effective partnership model with others.

Boxerwood programs during school year 23-24 connected more than 2,500 local students preK – HS in field-based learning. Of this total, 1,000 gr. 4 – 12 students participated in MWEEs, and 930 of these students (plus their 27 teachers) attended schools whose program fees were supported in full or part by DCR funds. The targeted DCR MWEE award was a pivotal investment as it enabled us to allocate other funds to other high-need Boxerwood programs, thus strengthening the entire K – 12 continuum.

Sites for the field-component of the MWEEs included Boxerwood Nature Center, as well as streams and rivers associated with Natural Bridge State Park, and the municipal parks of Glen Maury (Buena Vista) and Jordan's Point (Lexington). During these half to full day programs, students worked in teams to complete abiotic and biotic assessments of their local waterways as well as related activities, as aligned with classroom SOLs and other school goals.

As part of the Boxerwood approach, students also completed additional conservation linked to watershed protection. These activities included community tree-planting (400 gr. 4, 7-12 students); student led, school-based lunchtime composting (400 gr. 4, 5, & 6 students), and public anti-littering pledges (200 gr. 5 students). The number of students and schools participating in these complementary activities was significantly higher than 2022-23. We had a great year!

The VA DCR funds supported much needed Boxerwood staff development, curriculum development as well as consulting stipends with essential MWEE partner teachers. The funds also enabled us to restock supplies necessary to conduct our MWEE work at scale.

Thank you, Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation and Office of Environmental Education. Together we are making a difference!



