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LOCAL NON PROFIT RECEIVES FUNDING FOR YOUTH STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

By Heidi Royal

The Sauk Prairie Conservation Alliance, a nonprofit organization working to restore native ecosystems at the former Badger Army Ammunition Plant, was recently awarded a sponsorship of \$2,500 to support its *Education Through Restoration* youth stewardship program.

The award was received from the Ho Chunk Nation, one of several future landowners of the former munitions property.

Funds will be used to expand the Alliance's successful classroom and outdoor program to help bring hands-on, place-based education of the Sauk Prairie's cultural and natural resources to additional school districts in Sauk, Juneau, and Columbia counties. Participating classrooms receive a visit from the Alliance, including a short presentation on the natural and human history, geology, and ecology of the greater Sauk Prairie area. Classrooms then travel to the Badger lands to visit remnant prairie sites where they learn to identify prairie flowers and grasses, collect seed, walk deer trails, measure themselves against Big Bluestem grass, and learn about invasive species, how they change habitat, and what people can do to protect native habitat.

The Badger Army Ammunition Plant rests on the Sauk Prairie landscape in the rolling countryside of southern Wisconsin; decommissioned in 1998, this 7,354 acre industrial facility is being transferred to new owners and will be converted to conservation, restoration, recreational, and agricultural land uses.

The Sauk Prairie Conservation Alliance was incorporated in 2002 to advocate for and involve local communities in restoration activities at Badger. The Sauk Prairie Conservation Alliance's mission is to promote conservation of the former Badger Army Ammunition Plant lands and the greater Sauk Prairie landscape through ecological restoration, education, research and recreation, providing opportunities for individuals and partner organizations to pursue these activities guided by the values and goals of the Badger Reuse Plan, the document which guides all future land use at Badger.

For more information on the Sauk Prairie Conservation Alliance's Education Through Restoration Program, please visit their website at www.saukprairievision.org.