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SCHOOL BUDDIES EXAMINE PRAIRIE PLANTS

By Donna Stehling

Two hundred and sixty Sauk Prairie School District first and fourth grade Buddies went on a field trip October 22 to investigate the prairie plantings at the Badger Army Ammunition Plant. Guides for the day were Sauk Prairie Conservation Alliance volunteers Gary Williams, Mimi Wuest, Mike Putnam, Tim Moermond, and Donna Stehling.

Inside the fence, students learned to walk quietly so they could hear bird songs, they followed deer trails, found deer bones to take back to their classroom and examine under a microscope, measured themselves against Big Bluestem grass, learned about invasive species and how they change habitat, and what people can do to protect native habitat. They will be studying more about prairie plants, animals, birds and habitat back in their classrooms.

The buddies will also be visiting Ferry Bluff and Black Hawk Ridge yet this fall, and their last Buddies trip will be at the August Derleth Park in spring when they will help with the native plant restoration along the riverwalk and in the park.

For more information on prairie restoration at Badger, please visit www.saukprairievision.org.