



METROPARKS TOLEDO

March 17, 2023

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to express my support for the expansion of the Project WILD and WILD School Sites programs. As an Environmental Education Council of Ohio (EECO) Region 2 director and programs manager for Metroparks Toledo I have been privileged to personally see the impact Project WILD provides for young folks to get outside and experience increased connectivity to their local natural areas. These experiences truly provide a unique means to instill preservation efforts in future generations while bolstering and contributing to a student's overall educational experience from an interdisciplinary perspective.

In recent years we have had a marked increase in educators seeking out training on the Project WILD curriculum. Last year Metropark's Project WILD facilitators trained 35 formal educators so that the curriculum could be utilized in classroom studies. The Project WILD curriculum, with lessons already aligned with the Academic Content Standards, makes these lessons simple yet meaningful to implement. I have personally been witness to seeing these lessons leave lasting impression on students that cannot be attained through other methods. In some cases it has even sparked a new personal interest in the STEM career pathway for students resulting in student internship and seasonal employment opportunities for further career investigation.

Thank you very much for allowing me to express my support for the expansion of the Project WILD and WILD School Sites programs. I sincerely appreciate all you do in providing opportunities to enhance public awareness and understanding of our natural areas here in Ohio.

Jennifer Elsworth
Manager of Requested Programs