

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Ice Age Trail Alliance Received National Park Foundation
Open OutDoors for Kids Grant to Get Fourth-Graders on Trail**

Cross Plains, Wis. (December 20, 2022) The Ice Age Trail Alliance received an [Open OutDoors for Kids](#) grant from the National Park Foundation (NPF). This grant funds the Alliance's *Think Outside* program, which gets fourth-grade students outside on the Ice Age Trail for a hands-on learning experience.

"Think Outside introduces the Ice Age Trail to teachers and students who are looking to experience the Trail and surrounding landscape first hand," says Amy Lord, Outreach and Education Manager for the Ice Age Trail Alliance.

"It also helps students develop lifelong healthy habits that reduce childhood obesity, improve mental health, and builds a system for continuing to utilize the Ice Age Trail as a medium for personal wellbeing throughout participants' lives," she says.

Think Outside is the Ice Age Trail Alliance's primary vehicle for engaging youth in exploring the glacial landscape of Wisconsin via the Ice Age National Scenic Trail. The program directly aligns with Wisconsin curriculum standards and includes:

- Classroom presentation (in person or virtual) covering Wisconsin geology and the effects receding glaciers had on the landscape, the Ice Age National Scenic Trail, and National Park service.
- One-Day Field Experience for students, including a guided hike on the Ice Age Trail to put students face-to-face with history.

The Open OutDoors for Kids grant provides 100% transportation reimbursement to partner schools, along with planning assistance and support, educational resources and lesson plan activities, and hike leaders for the field experience.

10,000 Fourth Graders to Hike Ice Age Trail this School Year

Since its launch in 2019, 12,000 fourth-grade students from districts across the state have participated in Think Outside. COVID-19 and continuing issues with busing impacted participation rates in recent years.

However, for the 2022-2023 school year, the Alliance expects to engage 10,000 fourth-graders.

Think Outside Enrollment is Ongoing

Any school can participate in Think Outside. Transportation costs are covered for participating fourth-graders. For more information, visit IceAgeTrail.org/Think-Outside or call 608-798-4453.

Since 2011, NPF has engaged more than one million students in educational programs connecting them with national parks across the country. NPF's goal is to connect another one million students to parks by 2024.

The NPF Open OutDoors for Kids program is made possible by private philanthropy, including support from [Youth Engagement and Education](#) premier partner Union Pacific Railroad. Additional support is provided by Apple, Sierra, Columbia Sportswear, Parks Project, The Batchelor Foundation, Inc., Humana, and many individual donors.

ABOUT THE ICE AGE TRAIL ALLIANCE

The Ice Age Trail Alliance is a non-profit, member and volunteer-based organization which conserves, creates, maintains, and promotes the Ice Age National Scenic Trail. For more information visit iceagetrail.org.

ABOUT THE NATIONAL PARK FOUNDATION

The National Park Foundation works to protect wildlife and park lands, preserve history and culture, educate, and engage youth, and connect people everywhere to the wonder of parks. We do it in collaboration with the National Park Service, the park partner community, and with the generous support of donors, without whom our work would not be possible. Learn more at www.nationalparks.org.

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