



2025

Annual Report

Location:
Glacier National Park

PHOTO: SCOUT TROM

Dear Friends,

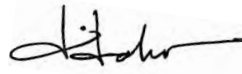
2025 brought moments of true connection to nearly 40,000 people—across age and regardless of ability, and within families and communities—all through time spent in nature.

Just like the people who adventure with us, we are made stronger through partnership and collaboration. Our community of partners, supporters, and champions help us forge the path that allows everyone to feel like they belong in the outdoors. A move to our new headquarters brought deepened collaboration within our team and better service to the thousands of people who adventure with us.

Everything that we accomplished in 2025 is thanks to our generous supporters who believe in our mission. This is a celebration of your impact last year. We can't thank you enough!



Erika Rivers,
Executive Director



Louis Lambert,
Board Chair



2025 Board of Directors

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Our gratitude to Beth Finch and John Butler, who both served full terms on our Board of Directors between 2016 and 2025, and to Cecile Bedor, for her service as Board Chair in 2024 and 2025.

New Members in 2026

Rachel Hamlin
Alison Spencer
Rob Wudlick

2025

By The Numbers

In 2025, **38,312** people joined us for immersive and life-changing outdoor adventures.



1,970

individuals and families joined extended and near-nature adventures, as they paddled, hiked, and camped along rivers, mountains, and sea caves.



35,939

youth, families, and community members paddled, learned, and explored outdoors through Canoemobile day and multi-day programs, engaging communities from Albuquerque, NM to Washington, D.C.



403

individuals participated in training, leadership and career pathways, including our fellowship programs.

Locations:
Arches National Park (left)
Voyageurs National Park (middle)
Apostle Islands (right)

CONNECTION

Across Age



Participants ranged in age from 91 years to just 15 months old.



⬆️ The 2025 fall Canoemobile tour was our largest ever, serving 30,000 people in 80 communities across the country.

↻ We were proud to partner with MIGIZI, the Loppet, and Project Success on a series of skill-building day experiences to provide their youth participants with hands-on learning around science, history, culture, and geography.

⬅️ Lifelong connection to the outdoors was made possible through lodge-based trips that provide the best of both worlds; adventure during the day and indoor comfort at night.

Locations:
Bountiful Lake, Utah (top),
Lake Nokomis, Minnesota (middle),
Glacier National Park (bottom)

CONNECTION

Across Ability



Accessibility is at the core of our mission.

- ➔ Trip participants like Matt (above), who lost his vision in 2023, enjoyed time spent in nature thanks to accessible, welcoming spaces and adaptive equipment.
- ➔ Partner organizations like Shriners and Metro Deaf School spent time on trail with Wilderness Inquiry. Hiking, swimming, kayaking, and more helped build confidence and belonging.



Location:
Apostle Islands

CONNECTION

With Families



Military Families Outdoors (MFO)

In partnership with Blue Star Families, we continued to expand critical access to nature for service members, veterans, and their loved ones, with funding and support from the Defense Health Agency and the National Park Service.



Locations:
Black Hills (top and middle)
Yellowstone National Park (bottom)

CONNECTION Through Food



2025 saw the grand opening of our new headquarters building, complete with a commercial-grade kitchen. Thanks to this increased capacity, we can continue to provide high-quality, nutritious meals that meet every participant's needs. We welcomed community and corporate partners alike for meal kit preparation volunteering.



Location:
Wilderness Inquiry Headquarters
Bloomington, Minnesota

Financial Summary

"Wilderness Inquiry closed 2025 on strong financial footing. We continue to take our fiscal responsibility to donors and stakeholders seriously, maintaining conservative accounting, financial, and governance practices to protect these resources. This disciplined approach is reflected in Wilderness Inquiry's consistently high ratings from Charity Navigator, underscoring our trustworthiness, transparency, and efficiency.

Audited financial statements are prepared by Carpenter, Evert & Associates, Certified Public Accountants, and reflect our financial position as of December 31, 2025." —JOHN HINCK, TREASURER

Consolidated Balance Sheet

Assets	2025	2024
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$456,660	\$1,552,557
Short-Term Investments	\$3,490,472	\$1,634,205
Other Current Assets	\$2,433,365	\$2,799,424
Property and Equipment and Right of Use Asset	\$6,551,879	\$6,326,059
Endowments and Investments	\$3,315,267	\$2,809,031
Long-Term Investment - WI Foundation	\$4,024,557	\$3,725,898
Total Assets	\$20,272,200	\$18,847,74
Liabilities and Net Assets	2025	2024
Current Liabilities		
<i>Accrued Expenses</i>	\$270,918	\$425,994
<i>Deferred Revenue</i>	\$153,900	\$259,480
<i>Lease Liability and Note Payable</i>	\$135,715	\$123,166
Total Current Liabilities	\$560,533	\$808,640
Total Liabilities	\$3,303,155	\$3,715,574
Net Assets	\$16,969,045	\$15,131,600
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$20,272,200	\$18,847,174

"In our opinion, the consolidated financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Wilderness Inquiry, Inc. as of December 31, 2025 and 2024 and the changes in its net assets and its cash flows for the years then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America." —CARPENTER, EVERT & ASSOCIATES, CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS, MARCH 2026

Financials

Consolidated Statement of Activities

Support and Revenue	2025	2024
Grants, Contributions, Gifts	\$3,661,264	\$4,787,625
Government Grants	\$4,078,664	\$2,915,187
Program Fees	\$1,268,949	\$1,189,013
Endowment Payment	\$120,000	\$100,000
Special Event and Miscellaneous Income	\$285,853	\$251,106
Investment Income	\$380,101	\$682,453
Total Support and Revenue	\$9,794,831	\$9,925,384
Expenses		
Program Services	\$7,151,611	\$5,595,874
<i>Day and Multi-Day</i>	\$4,103,158	\$3,681,067
<i>Extended Adventures</i>	\$2,616,491	\$1,624,862
<i>Training, Learning, and Career Pathways</i>	\$431,962	\$289,945
Management and General	\$1,133,209	\$1,276,395
Fundraising	\$260,085	\$323,045
Total Expenses	\$8,544,905	\$7,195,314
Financial Adjustments		
Change in Value of Endowment	\$706,519	\$193,266
Less: Endowment Payout for Operations	-\$120,000	-\$100,000
Endowment Contributions	\$1,000	\$2,450
Change in Net Assets	\$1,837,445	\$2,825,786
Net Assets - Beginning of Year	\$15,131,600	\$12,305,814
Net Assets - End of year	\$16,969,045	\$15,131,600

930 E 80th St, Bloomington, MN 55420

wildernessinquiry.org





Financial Supporters

Our generous supporters and talented partners are behind each and every moment of impact. We are deeply grateful to the many individuals, families, and corporate, foundation, and government partners who help make our mission possible.



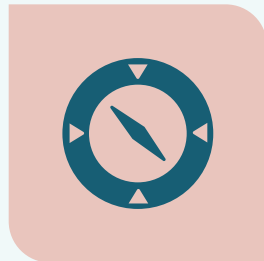
Location:
Chattahoochee River

A

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Every effort is made to ensure accurate listings. If we did not attribute your donation correctly, or if you have other questions or comments, please contact Development Director Sheila Swift at 612-286-0763 or development@wildernessinquiry.org.



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 Peter Tanghe

**Legislative-Citizen Commission on
 Minnesota Resources (LCCMR)**

Canoemobile’s “floating classroom” engages youth across Minnesota to experience place-based, environmental, and STEM learning in the outdoors. Since 2017, with support from the Minnesota Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund, as recommended by the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR), more than 58,000 youth from across Minnesota have explored local ecosystems and the species that depend on healthy watersheds in our headquarters state.



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Legacy

Support from the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund of the Clean Water, Land and Legacy Amendment provides place-based, hands-on experiences for Minnesota youth to learn about the history, culture, and geography of our state's natural resources. Since 2016, more than 46,500 youth have explored Minnesota's rich outdoor heritage through immersive learning on local waterways and public lands.





Beartooth Mountains

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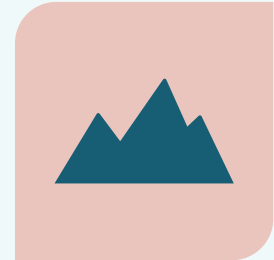
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Federal Partners

Meaningful partnerships make outdoor connections possible. Thank you to our federal partners, agencies, and their staff for paddling alongside us in 2025. Through valued public-private partnerships, Wilderness Inquiry is able to scale our programs to serve thousands of youth and adults, provide inclusive adventures from coast to coast, and ensure that our nation's public lands, waterways, and national parks and forests are accessible for all.





Namekagon River

Judy Ostendorff and
Ron Jensen
Kelly Ottman
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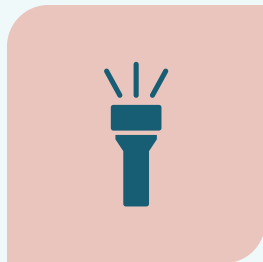
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Great River Race

In 2025, our 15th annual Great River Race brought together friends and supporters for a day of purpose, impact, and paddling fun. More than 300 people raced and cheered along the mighty Mississippi River in support of closing the outdoor opportunity gap for youth. Thanks to The Minnesota Star Tribune, Thomson Reuters, Cargill, and Nature Valley, for their presenting sponsorships and to all of the sponsors and partners who joined us to create equitable and inclusive outdoor opportunities!



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EVERYONE BELONGS IN THE OUTDOORS

OUR MISSION: Connecting people of all ages, backgrounds, identities, and abilities through shared outdoor adventures so that all people can equitably experience the benefits of time spent in nature.

wildernessinquiry.org



Location:
Shady Oak Lake, MN

PHOTO: CORRINA STADLER