



Team Accomplishments 2021-22

15th Season of YES!

During the 2021-22 school year, 265 students on 14 YES! teams across the state of Minnesota worked on 49 eco-action projects. Their projects impacted an additional 46,445 students and adults from more than 100 communities.

Since its inception in 2007, YES! has supported over 4,700 students in working with more than 7,250 local businesses, organizations and experts to impact an additional 345,848 students and community members.



Three students at Fall Summit in Spicer, Minnesota.



Three students from WWG paddling canoe at Fall Summit in Spicer, Minnesota.

During the 2021-22 season, students:

- Volunteered for over **1,443 hours**
- Developed and provided **45 educational events** in their school or community
- Interacted with **52 experts** who provided them with training, project support, and exposure to green careers

YES! empowers youth to create solutions to today's ecological challenges through hands-on action projects.

www.yesmn.org



2021-22 YES! Teams

Crosslake

1st year team

Taught preschool students and community members about the lifecycle of white pine and how to plant the seeds. Planted seeds for 267 trees which are expected to remove approximately 2,736 pounds of CO2 from the atmosphere each year. Educated younger students about why and how to reduce, reuse and recycle waste.

Discovery Woods (Brainerd)

3rd year team

Focused on the water quality of the Mississippi River. Tested water from a single location on the river during the fall and then again in the spring. Stenciled "No Dumping - Drains to River" on storm drains that flow from their neighborhood into the Mississippi.

Lac qui Parle Valley

14th year team

Learned about aquatic invasive species and water quality while canoeing on the Lake Florida sloughs at Prairie Woods Environmental Learning Center. Collected prairie seeds to be used for their prairie restoration project.

Mankato West

(Runner-Up State Champion)

11th year team

Successfully lobbied city council to join the Minnesota Cities Climate Caucus. Protected water quality in the Minnesota River by developing a response plan for hazardous spills on school property. Organized clean-up events where students collected 30 pounds of garbage and 10 pounds of recyclables from school grounds.

MACCRAY

1st year team

Addressed many environmental concerns in their community and around their school building. Met with the Clara City council, their superintendent, and a construction site manager about projects that the team wants to implement after school construction is complete.

Minnewaska

5th year team

Worked to increase plastic recycling and reduce waste going to the landfill. Students collected waste from local businesses, their school, and the community. Team members found alternate ways to use their recycled products and help keep Lake Minnewaska clean.

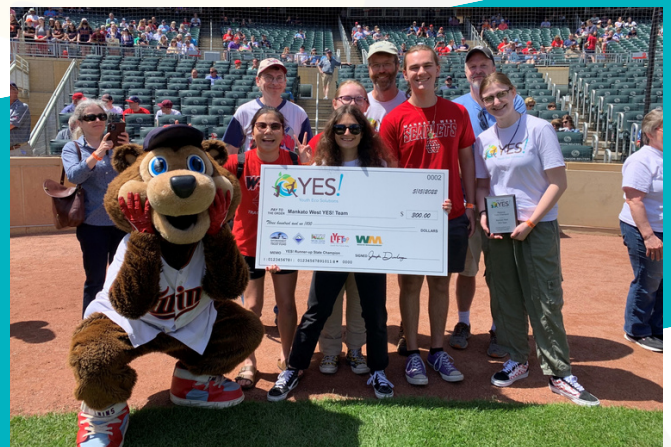
New London-Spicer (Water Stewardship Award)

15th year team

Continued a legacy project of spreading prairie seeds to help contain and buffer water from their parking lot at school. Worked with the Middle Fork Crow River Watershed district to paint "No Dumping - Drains to River" on storm drains in their community.



New London-Spicer - Water Stewardship Award



Mankato West - Runner-up State Champion

Northern Lights (Warba)

5th year team

Fought climate change and expanded forest habitat by planting 130 native trees on school property. Taught elementary students about the impacts of human actions on local ecosystems and things we can do to protect Minnesota's native plants, wildlife, and habitats.

Parkers Prairie

5th year team

Completed water quality testing of Lake Miliona and other local lakes. Conducted a lakeshore clean-up. Started a school lunch compost project, which is the first organic composting project in Ottertail County.

Royalton

10th year team

Tested water quality in school Hydration Stations. Handed out Arbor Day trees to elementary students and planted trees and prairie plants on school grounds. Installed solar-powered LED lights.

Sleepy Eye (State Champion)

11th year team

Expanded pollinator habitat at a golf course by planting prairie seeds on 2.7 acres. Developed and installed educational signs for pollinator gardens. Collected 70 pounds of used crayons, pens, and markers and 1,078 pounds of used holiday lights for recycling.



Sleepy Eye - State Champion

Springfield

14th year team

Protected water quality in the Cottonwood River by picking up litter and installing two pet-waste stations in a park. Recycled 287 pounds of used holiday lights collected from community members.

Westbrook-Walnut Grove

10th year team

Taught 35 elementary students about recycling and helped them make birdhouses. Upcycled more than 40 used jars to create and sell beautiful LED-powered solar lights. Created an educational display using trash and recyclables collected from roadside ditches.

Yellow Medicine East

9th year team

Was awarded monies for projects. Brought recycling bins into elementary school and art room to promote marker recycling. Reduced waste at school by displaying signs for recycling at sporting events and on garbage bins in school parking lots.



Westbrook-Walnut Grove pop-tabs collection



Student from Royalton identifying bumblebees at Prairie Woods Environmental Learning Center in Spicer, Minnesota.



The YES! State Award Ceremony was held at Target Field on May 15, 2022. YES! organizes the Spring Competition and Awards so that students can showcase their accomplishments and be publicly recognized for their hard work on projects during the school year!

YES! Program Manager Joe Dunlavy presented awards to the students near home base during the Twins pre-game show. Sleepy Eye was awarded the 2021-22 State Champion and Mankato West was named Runner-Up State Champion. New London-Spicer Middle School was recognized with the 2021-22 Water Stewardship Award. Congratulations to all of our amazing students and coaches for a successful YES! season!

**"I learned so much about the opportunities I have to help the planet within my very own community. Although I didn't get to go to all the [events], I learned a lot from others on the Team. I liked feeling so connected with others over saving the planet."
(Junior Student, Sleepy Eye YES!)**



Two students assembling solar cars to learn about renewable energy at Fall Summit in Spicer, Minnesota.



Four students exploring native prairie on fat-tire bikes.

Major funding for the 2021-22 season of YES! was provided by the Minnesota Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF), Launch Your Future Today (LYFT), Waste Management, and Great River Energy. Thank you!



**For more information
about YES! visit yesmn.org
or call (320) 354-5894.**