

NORTHERN PIEDMONT COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

Rapp Nature Camp 30 Penny Lane Sperryville, VA 22740

Visit Date- Spring 2021

Bio- Formerly operating under the auspices of the Piedmont Environmental Council and Headwaters Foundation, Rapp Nature Camp is a newly established nonprofit organization, certified as 501c3 in September 2016. They are called “a Rappahannock County treasure” by parents of campers. At Rapp Nature Camp, they discovered that "Nature lessons are life lessons." Plants and animals, stars and clouds, rivers and ponds all reveal something to us about our own nature. But this is only true if we take the time to observe living plants and animals in their own habitats. All of their natural history lessons are aimed at motivating children to observe the real things of nature in context. This kind of observation is the only means of allowing children, and all of us, to come closer to the question, "What is life?" Rapp Nature Camp has been made possible by tremendous volunteer support. The camp's director provided the facility free of charge since 1995. Neighbors allow use of their properties, and volunteers have built the camp barn, a footbridge over the Hazel River, and the Frog Pond which is the focus of their habitat studies. So, Rapp Nature Camp is a true community effort!

Notes:

- This non-profit organization is fairly small with an operating budget on average of \$30k.
- It operates on the Executive Director's property totaling 11 acres.
- They have a very small, but mighty, volunteer base that helps manage the property and assists with program activities
- They operate a Perennial Campers Program for adults offering day trips and Summer Camp sessions for children and teenagers
- Currently their biggest challenge is trying to build a space for residential campers to ease travel burdens for parents which would also bring in more campers
- They also expressed concerns over the branding of the organization in the community limiting their growth. They would like to elevate the status of the organization
- In the coming year Lyt Wood, the current camp director, will be replaced by Associate Director Greg Czekaj. This transition was outlined in their Lykes Grant proposal
- They need funds for general operating expenses over camp scholarships because of the flexibility they provide.
- The majority of their income comes from camp fees and private donations

Visit rappnaturecamp.org for more information and check out the Singing Creek News!

