

Northeast Metro Coalition

A Generation Wild Community

INTERIM PERIOD 2024-2025

Working together to provide equitable outdoor programming

We Serve:

Commerce City
Montbello
Northeast Park Hill
Northwest Aurora

We envision a future

where everyone—
wherever they live and
regardless of resources—
has abundant
opportunities to connect
with nature in ways that
inspire, transform, and
empower them to
become lifelong stewards
of the outdoors.

OUR PARTNERS

Nonprofit organizations:

Bluff Lake Nature Center
Boys & Girls Clubs of Metro Denver
Environmental Learning for Kids
Friends of the Front Range Wildlife Refuges
Groundwork Denver
Mile High Youth Corps
Sand Creek Regional Greenway Partnership
The Urban Farm

Government entities:

City of Aurora
City of Commerce City
Colorado Parks & Wildlife
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service



Our Collective Impact

2024 Programs and Events	2025 Programs and Events	2024 and 2025 Combined
418	432	850

Core Programming

01 Environmental/ Outdoor Education

02 Gardening/ Farming

03 Water Recreation (boating, fishing)

04 Stewardship and Service Learning



Youth Council members tabling at the community event Boo on the Bluff



Green Team youth learning about beekeeping

Additional Unique Event Offerings

1. Archery
2. Yoga, meditation, and forest bathing
3. Rock climbing
4. Backpacking/ camping
5. Horseback riding

Our Collective Impact

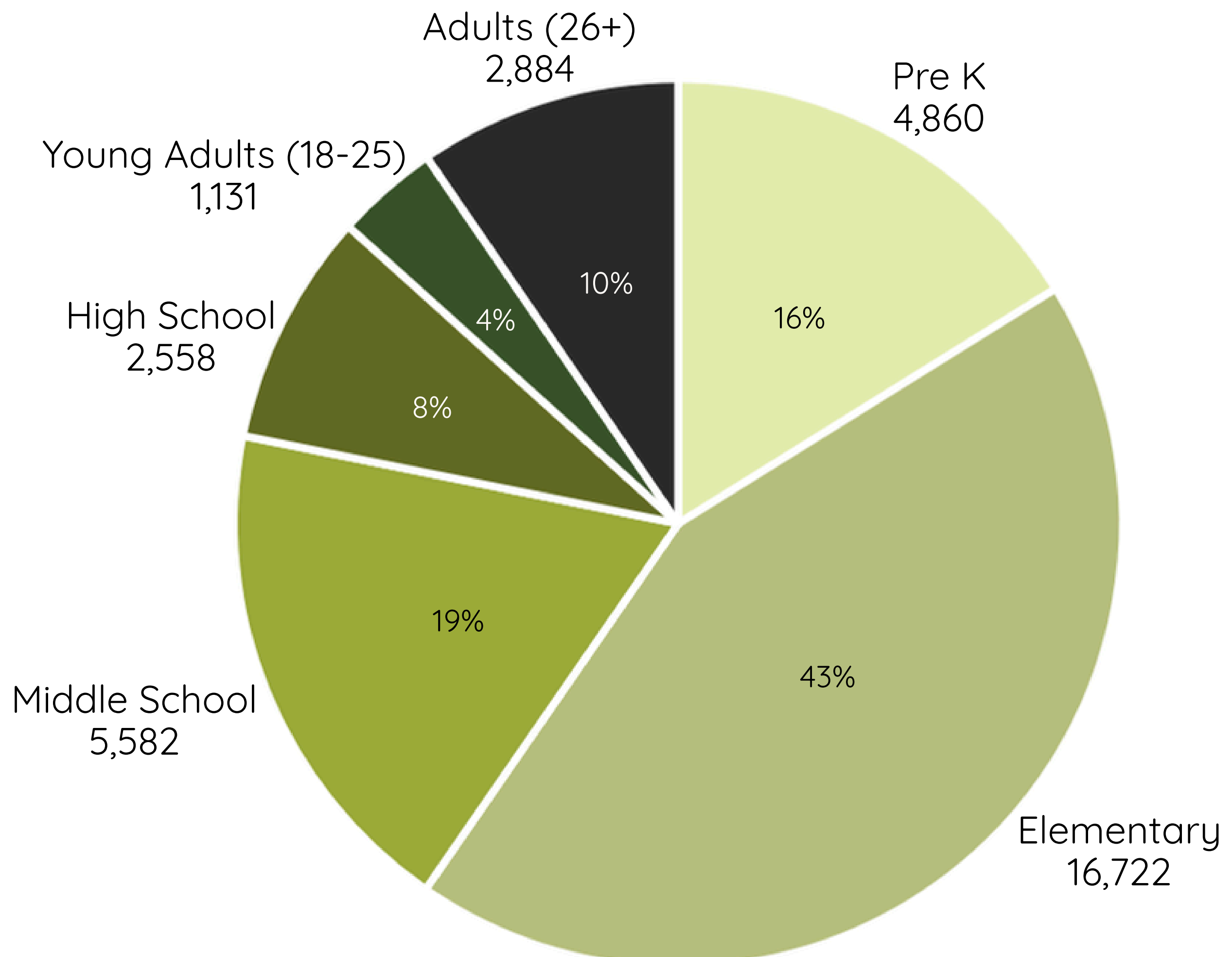
5,000+
Programming Hours



Urban Rangers in the Mountains

Our Participants

We Serve All Ages



NEMC Youth Council



Removing invasive weeds by Lake Mary

We recruited a group of 11 middle and high school youth from the surrounding community to learn about and support our partner organizations through hands-on projects.



Visiting The Urban Farm to support an invasive weed removal project



Trash pickup at Montbello Open Space Park

Events	19
Hours	54
Locations	9

THE CITY OF AURORA



Two teens on a field trip with YAASPA pose with the crawdads they caught

“As a Title I school-based administrator, I trust and rely on this program to support our students. We want our kids and families to have **a connection to green space and the natural world**. When students recall their elementary years, we know they will remember the live snake and turtle that visited their classroom, their field trips to the Aurora Reservoir, and the team’s interactive activities at our Community Nights.”
-Community School Coordinator



Nature's Next Gen: Learning from Diverse Voices in the Natural Resources a lunch and learn series

“This unique program allows our students to connect with the great outdoors, which is often unsafe or inaccessible. The **thoughtfulness and energy** Ara Metz puts into each monthly group demonstrates **a deep commitment to our students** and a passion for providing access to nature for all. A few of our Generation Wild favorite activities include nature walks at Utah Park, morning yoga sessions, learning about snakes on the trail, and incorporating nature into art. Our students not only enjoy but eagerly look forward to the groups each month.”
- Licensed school-based therapist



Students participating in a mindful movement program called Nurtured by Nature

BLUFF LAKE NATURE CENTER



"This is the **best experience of my entire life!** But my legs are tired." - Student



Aurora Science and Tech Students
Taking Water Samples



Crawford Elementary students learning
about animals at Bluff Lake

"The best part was witnessing our students' joy in exploring the outdoors. They loved seeing wildlife (a snake, heron, eagles' nest, turtles), building with giant sticks, and pretending to be prairie dogs in the tunnels. Every student was thrilled to be outside in nature." - Teacher

"I have never been on a hike before. This is **the best day ever!**"
- Student



Crawford Elementary students learning
about animals at Bluff Lake

BOYS AND GIRLS CLUBS OF METRO DENVER



A group of Club Members with a preying mantis statue outside the Butterfly Pavilion

In March 2024, Members of Outdoor Adventure Club at Suncor participated in a butterfly observation program as part of their STEM program. The staff created an opportunity for members to witness caterpillars undergoing metamorphosis and transforming into butterflies. Throughout the program, they completed observation sheets several times each week while learning about **responsibility, teamwork, and how meaningful change takes time**. During spring break, participating members were rewarded for their consistency with a field trip to the Butterfly Pavilion. They enjoyed exploring the exhibits and discovering a wide variety of invertebrates. This engaging experience helped Suncor youth build a deeper appreciation for the complex and fascinating process of metamorphosis, making the program educational and memorable.



Members of BGC Outdoor Adventure Club posing with a Bison at the Rocky Mountain Arsenal Visitor Center



Club Members excited for their first whitewater rafting trip in Buena Vista

Boys & Girls Clubs across Colorado participated in a free rafting trip to kick off the summer in both 2024 and 2025 through a special partnership with the Arkansas River Outfitters Association. Teens from several Club locations traveled to Buena Vista to spend the day **rafting, connecting, and enjoying the incredible beauty of the Arkansas River Valley**. Participating rafting companies generously volunteered their time, expertise, and resources to provide lunch and an unforgettable whitewater rafting experience. For many youth, this was their first time rafting or visiting the mountains. Although it was a long and busy day, it was filled with laughter, teamwork, and lasting memories.

THE CITY OF COMMERCE CITY



"Leaders are great! Love their enthusiasm and energy."



Learning to fly fish at the Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge



Learning to fly fish at the Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge



Horsebackriding with the Horse Trek Program

"Being outdoors, having new, fun, adventurous experiences, BEING AWAY FROM TECHNOLOGY, meeting new friends, making memories!! **We absolutely love CC CAMP!!!!!!**"

"Getting to do the outdoor activities that aren't as common for teens to participate in."

ENVIRONMENTAL LEARNING FOR KIDS



2025 Snowboarding Trip

"What I love most about volunteering with ELK is how much I get to learn about the environment and all the ways we can help sustain it. It's **opened my eyes to new career paths** and given me **incredible opportunities to see beautiful places** I might never have experienced otherwise. Plus, being surrounded by people who share the same passion makes it even better."
- ELK youth (high-school aged), volunteer, and Urban Ranger, 2025

"For me personally, ELK has been a place where I can learn and experience. ELK has given me a lot of my firsts. I remember the first time I went fishing, it was with ELK. One of the first times I went camping, it was with ELK. Anytime I've stayed in a cabin — just **so many experiences that we don't usually get here in the city area**, I've gotten with ELK, and I'm so grateful for that because it's just been so lovely."
- ELK youth (high-schooled aged), 2025



2025 LEAF Hiking Program



2024 LEAF Kayaking Program

"I love ELK because I like exploring nature, but I've never done it. When I was a child, we never could afford to do things like that, so I don't know how to fish or where to hike, and so it's nice to have this opportunity that I can bring my son, and **I don't have to worry about not knowing because ELK gives us the tools**; they provide everything we need; and there's a sense of community. There's other kids here, so he can have a good time, too. It's just a really great program, and I'm very happy it exists. We get to hang out in nature without all the stress of knowing how to do stuff."
- ELK Parent

FRIENDS OF THE FRONT RANGE WILDLIFE REFUGES



FRIENDS
OF THE
FRONT RANGE
WILDLIFE REFUGES



Build a Bison Activity

“The Refuge is an open protected space, it’s a place for **education/learning about the environment, the ecosystems we have right here in Colorado** - and how people have to interact with it every day and keep it protected.”
- Monaco Elementary Teacher



RMANWR Park Ranger Leading a Field Trip



Wheels to Wildlife Field Trip at RMANWR

“We see lots of Spanish-speaking students through our Wheels to Wildlife programming and you can definitely tell how much of a difference it makes to have a Ranger who looks like them or can speak their language. I’ve gotten lots of excited comments from kids telling me I look like someone they know or that they have the same last name as me - and it is through those conversations and connections that they start **feeling more comfortable** and get **the courage to ask lots of questions during their field trips**. Teachers have also mentioned they’ve seen their students be a lot more engaged, and in the past, have been surprised by their participation, which goes to show representation in these programs also matters.” - RMA Park Ranger

GROUNDWORK DENVER



Youth working together to complete trail maintenance

"It was **very pleasing** to be a part of a welcoming team, working hard and helping our community."
- Summer Green Team Member

"I learned how to plant a tree and **surrounded myself with a lot more mother nature.** I feel as if I taught myself more responsibility and life skills."
- Summer Green Team Member



Green Team youth enjoying a hike in the mountains at Cal-Wood Education Center



Green Team youth working with staff at Bluff Lake

"Being a part of the Youth Team isn't just a job, it's much more, **it's a community.** It's a family that's going to be there for you...it's honestly **an amazing experience.** I got to get my hands dirty, plants trees, help my community, and I learned more about my heritage. I even become friends with someone who I can already tell is going to be with me through the thick and thin."
-Summer Green Team Member

MILE HIGH YOUTH CORPS



2025 Timber Trekkers Crew

“My experience with MHYC was the **most fulfilled I’ve ever felt at a job!** I can say with certainty that it has changed my perspective on the world and helped me to greatly develop as a person.” - Land Conservation Corpsmember



Corpsmember Utilizing their Chainsaw Training

“It’s been a **meaningful experience** that’s helped me build **practical skills** and deepen my interest in conservation stewardship.” - Energy & Water Conservation Corpsmember



Land Conservation Corpsmember in the field

“The crew was so **wonderful and hardworking.** Continued to work hard even through tough days. They were such a joy to work with and get to know!” - Field Coordinator, RMFI; Land Conservation project partner

Quinn A. returned to MHYC for another term as a Program Mentor in 2025 after serving as a Land Conservation Leader in 2024. Quinn joined MHYC for the first time in March 2024 and fit in quickly. They co-led two very successful crews over the course of 2024. They returned year-long term in 2025 to serve as a mentor for incoming Land Conservation crew leaders. Three of Quinn’s own former crew members enjoyed their experience with Quinn and MHYC so much that they decided to come back as crew leaders starting in March 2025. MHYC staff were excited to see Quinn help their own former crew members to excel as crew leaders!

SAND CREEK REGIONAL GREENWAY PARTNERSHIP



A teacher from Boston P8 mentioned one of the Nature Club students was not doing well in school, since he had just arrived from Venezuela never having gone to school before. With little English and lower than standard performance in 4th grade, he was consistently being bullied by other students and decided not to come to school some days. On those days, he decided to come to Nature Club, where he felt safe and could communicate in Spanish with peers. The teacher expressed much gratitude for being able to provide this safe space for him outdoors.

“This was **the best day of my life.** It is a treasured memory.”
- Montview Elementary BGC Student on a Field Trip



Looking for bird friends with BGCMD



Folks from the community joined SCRGP staff for a fun water-bugs program in the Sand Creek



Bug Program at Sand Creek Park with youth from The Storytellers Project

Collaborated with

16

Partner Orgs

Offered

103

Programs

THE URBAN FARM



Our first Dia De Los Muertos was one of TUF's largest events to date. The high attendance speaks to the lasting legacy of Latinx heritage in today's Colorado.



We lost Edna this year, but, before Edna passed away, she got to travel the state and meet some of Colorado's most interesting characters!

We had over
20,000
visitors each year

In 2025, we
toured over
500
groups



Tour of The Urban Farm

Gen Wild Programs Include:

- Horsemanship, Beginner and Intermediate
- Spring Break Camp
- All Around the Farm
- Service Learning Opportunities
- Traveling Farm

Several local schools and partner organizations either visited the farm for a field trip or participated in a traveling farm program, making The Urban Farm a special place for the entire NEMC community.

Thank you for reading about our work
in 2024 and 2025. We can't wait to share what
we accomplish in 2026!



Partner Convening at The Urban Farm

