

Wisconsin Lions / Wisconsin Lions Foundation / Wisconsin Lions Programs

Being active with the deer hide program for several years the same questions come up. What happens to the deer hides and the money that this project raises. To start off let me present some numbers to show the value and growth of this project. These are state wide figures and some are rounded off.

	Hides Collected	Hide Company Paid WLF	Clubs Sold Separately	Total
2016	9272	\$76,785.00		
2017	10,667	\$87,255.00		
2018	20,000	\$88,332.00		
2019	15,100	\$56,527.00	\$6,263.00	\$62,790.0
2020	18,776	\$80,854.00	\$5,487.00	\$86,341.00
2021	18,457	\$80,589.00	\$7,640.00	\$87,929.00
2022	18,000	\$95,789.00	\$12,313.00	\$109,722.00

Plus 1,620 gloves to sell

2023 Unknow at this time

These are substantial figures but when Wisconsin Lions Foundation has a yearly budget in the 2 to 3 million dollars range it is just a small piece of the budget. This can also be considered an environmental project as we prevent 18 to 19 thousand hides (which is a large part of the deer) from being thrown into a ditch somewhere or in our landfills.

What happens to the hides?

Once each lions club delivers their hides to a collection point and the hide company picks up these hides and takes them to their company's location, they are processed further. The hides are unloaded and sorted by size, they are inspected, cleaned more as needed, resalted and piled onto new skids. They are than loaded into containers to be shipped out to other countries. Once they arrive there, they are processed more including the tanning of the hide so they can be made into gloves and other things. The hair from the tails is used in the making of fishing flies.

What happens to the profits from the deer hide project?

The Wisconsin Lions Foundation is the spending arm of the Wisconsin Lions. The profit from the deer hide project goes into their budget to operate our Wisconsin Lions Camp and our other Wisconsin Lions programs.

The Wisconsin Lions camp consists of 440 acres of land with 40 acres of it being s private lake. The camp has a large dining hall, a nursing building that is manned 24 hours a day during the summer months, office buildings, a large outdoor shelter that can be enclosed as needed, equipment storage sheds, and a good twelve cabins for campers. Several of these are available in

the off season as they are designed to be used year - round. The Lions camp is designed to be used by individuals with handi-caps and is free of charge to those campers. We have one week for those that have sight problems, one week for kids with hearing problems, one week for cognitively disabled children, two weeks for kids with diabetis, and one week for older campers with disabilities. Of course, we always start with one week to train and instruct our counselors that we need desperately during the summer. This camp was used by 850 campers last year, who enjoyed fishing, swimming, canoeing, camping, archery, high ropes course, the mud pit, crafts, and game time.

What else goes on at our camp?

We have an eye glass collection facility. Here used eye glasses and sun glasses are brought in by our lions clubs, sorted and inspected. They are read for their prescription and filed into the appropriate place. Broken metal glasses are sent out for the metal value in them. All of these glasses are used during mission trips for distribution to those that need of them after they have been properly screened for the prescription needed.

In the same building hearing aids, hearing aid batteries, print cartridges, and cell phones are collected. These are sent into companies for rejuvenation if possible or just for recycling money. Each Lion District (10 of them) has a chance to contribute to the Hearing and Sight programs and can get eye glasses and hearing aids at reduced cost for someone in their lion district if they meet the financial aids requirement.

Diabetes is another program under WLF. We have much information on this disease at camp and a focus group of lions from around the state. In the past, this group has created educational materials for diabetes and Lions International has adopted some of Wisconsin Lions material.

Environmental projects are also part of Wisconsin Lions and Lions International. This year food waste and composting is our concern and information is being made available on this topic.

Wisconsin Lions Foundation does offer verbal acceptance of other programs offered for Lions clubs but does not budget money for these projects. If they did our camp and the programs we offer would suffer and would not be the quality programs they are. Some of these programs include Leader Dog, Hope House in Madison, Lions Missions, Childrens Cancer Center in Madison, and Wisconsin Eye Bank, where we have ten board members (one from each of our ten districts).