



provides quality medical care and rehabilitation for all injured, sick and orphaned wild animals, and shares its knowledge with the people who care about them.

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My name is Phil Jenni. I retired a year ago after 21 years as Executive Director of the Wildlife Rehabilitation Center of MN to devote all my energy and time to raising money, designing and building a new cutting-edge facility, which will be a blueprint for the future of wildlife medicine and rehabilitation in the future.

Our request before you is for the construction of a new wildlife rehabilitation facility that sets a standard for sustainability.

WRC mission is to provide quality medical care and rehabilitation for all injured, sick, and orphaned wild animals and share its knowledge with the people who care.

WRC was founded in 1979 as a student organization of the University Veterinary School and became an independent 501(c)(3) non-profit org in 1996 but remained on the St. Paul campus until construction of a new wildlife emergency hospital in Roseville in 2003.

In the last decade the demand from the public for our services has skyrocketed. Our patient **admissions have grown nearly 50% since 2019**. WRC is an important resource for the community. We are one of the busiest wildlife hospitals in the world and train veterinarians from around the world at our Roseville clinic.

Our operating budget is funded entirely by public donations: We have 30,000 individual donors and an annual budget of \$2.6M.

We are out of room at our Roseville hospital. In 2019, WRC purchased a 22-acre farm in the city of Grant, in Washington County, to provide sufficient space for injured and orphaned wild animals after their health and recovery progressed to need less human contact and more space and quiet.

In August 2022, the WRC Board of Directors approved the construction of a \$13.5 million sustainable facility on the Grant rehabilitation campus.

WRC sets the global standard for wildlife medicine; we think our new rehabilitation facility should set the standard for environmental protection too.

Medical facilities of all types face tremendous challenges with waste management and removal, and excessive water and energy use. Managing these issues is complicated in areas of unique natural beauty such as the St. Croix Valley and White Bear Lake where groundwater issues have been intensifying.

We have assembled a team of nationally recognized sustainable building experts. Alex Haecker, AWH Architects is the lead designer, and brings others with expertise in the latest technological developments in environmentally sensitive design and construction.

The new structure is designed to LEED standards, and will be built from renewable, recycled, and recyclable materials. The general contractor, Ancoats, led by David Wood, will manage construction of the project and ensure LEED standards from all of its subcontractors.

Most notable of the cutting-edge sustainability features is the use and reuse of water. Washington County has been beset by groundwater quality issues and falling water levels.

Our innovative, groundbreaking water treatment plan includes 56 in-ground pools, which when filled, contain 165,000 gallons of water. Water in those pools is drained, filtered and recycled every day.

The annual savings is astonishing – WRC’s water management system conserves and recycles 37.5 million gallons of water annually, preventing the overuse of aquifers and eliminating waste-water runoff. Our system has been approved by the Watershed District, the State and the County.

A geo-thermal system, incorporating technology created at the University of MN and designed by local company Darcy Systems, provides 100% fossil fuel-free, heating and cooling. The HVAC system recycles the air 14 times an hour – about the same as a COVID emergency room – which is critical for biosecurity for people and animals in the building.

We are collaborating with another MN company, Apadana Solar, to bring the very latest technologies. Their solar system alone will save nearly 2.5M pounds of CO2: the equivalent to 38,000 trees growing for 10 years.

The building itself has a high-performance envelop for the maximum savings in energy use.

We are pursuing a silver LEED certification classification and have engaged a contractor to commission the systems. WRC is fully committed to innovative, next generation technologies.

Statewide significance

Last year, more than 12,000 members of the public (many of them families) from throughout the state brought nearly 20,000 injured and orphaned animals from 200 species to WRC. Nearly all our patients are brought to us by the public. People from more than half of the State’s 87 counties bring patients to WRC.

People in Minnesota care about wildlife. WRC is an important partner for the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Department of Health and other State and Federal organizations from issues ranging from disease surveillance, sampling collections and public education about wildlife. WRC works directly with DNR Conservation Officers to help the public react to finding wild animals. Call the DNR with a wildlife question and they say, “call WRC.”

WRC has enormous public education outreach. Each year WRC staff respond to about 60,000 calls from the public. More than 100 social media posts engage more than 300,000 people. WRC collaborates with numerous media partners and other natural resource outlets.

Wildlife medicine is a rapidly growing profession, yet there is little organized curriculum to respond to student interest. WRC provides hands on training in wildlife medicine to dozens of vet students annually and provides internships to more than a dozen vet students from around the world. In 2023 WRC provided about 12,000 hours of teaching.

Perhaps most important, WRC fosters a culture of hope, compassion and kindness. People, especially children, avoid and abhor suffering; WRC provides an outlet for people to act on their instincts to assist and model compassion for next generations. Rescuing an injured wild animal serves as a portal to a larger concern for our world and our environment.

WRC sets the global standard for investing in animals - and the environment.

The project is “shovel ready” but will not begin until all the money is available. We have a \$5 million lead gift and the rest will come from individual and foundation donors.

This is truly a unique project that speaks to the heart of MN values for protecting our natural resources, preserving our wild neighbors and recognizing the imperative of creating renewable energy sources.

Thank for your time and for all your work on behalf of MN citizens.

We have more detailed descriptions of the project and a short video presentation. We would appreciate the opportunity to talk further. I can be contacted at 612-270-8481, pjenni@wrcmn.org or at 2530 Dale Street, Roseville, MN.

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Former E.D. (2002-2023)