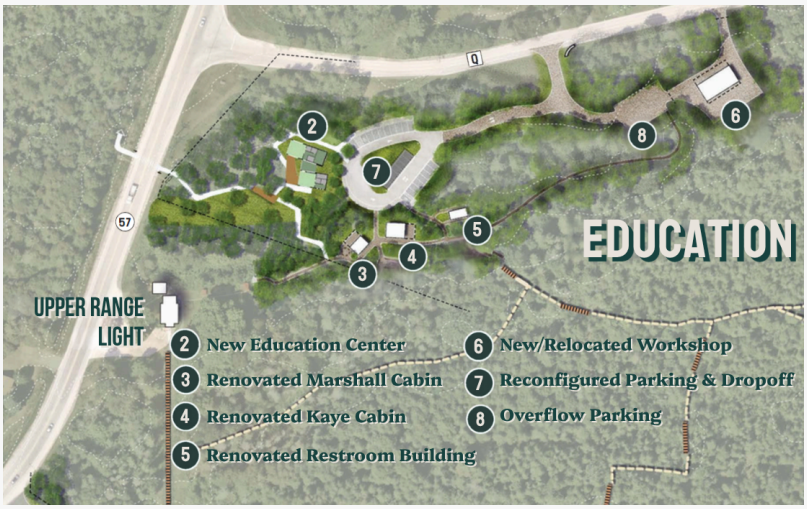
The Ridges Sanctuary Celebrates Year-Round Upgrades and Looks Ahead to New Volunteer Workshop

"Phase Zero" demonstrates The Ridges' commitment and capacity to implement its award-winning Master Plan.



The site plan for upgrades at North Campus of The Ridges Sanctuary


Renovations at historic Kaye Cabin include an overhang to provide covered, outdoor space for programming, Photo by Ed Miller

BAILEYS HARBOR, WI, UNITED STATES, September 29, 2026 / EINPresswire.com/ -- In May 2023, The Ridges Sanctuary (TRS or The Ridges) Board of Directors unanimously approved a Master Plan to guide the organization's next 20 years. The Plan provides a comprehensive blueprint for sustainable organizational growth, with a clear focus on advancing The Ridges' mission. It was shaped by extensive input from Ridges members, staff, board members, and partners. Nearly two and a half years later, implementation is well underway.

Over the past year, TRS has taken major steps to implement key elements of its Master Plan. This includes efforts that support sustainable organization management, such as updating the organizational chart and aligning board committees, as well as recommended capital improvement projects. The Ridges identified a set of projects to be funded and completed ahead of a significant capital campaign, collectively known as Phase Zero. These projects address immediate infrastructure needs, support growing education

programming, and expand the capacity of The Ridges' current facilities.

These projects are:
1. Renovating the rustic restroom to become a year-round facility
2. Renovating the historic Kaye and Marshall Cabins for year-round use, while adding indoor/outdoor classroom space
3. Constructing a new volunteer workshop


The new restroom unlocks year-round access for the entire campus, Photo by Ed Miller

TRS is pleased to announce that these projects have been fully funded through grants, generous private donations, and its own Master Plan Implementation Fund. Grant funds were received from the Community Investment Fund, which is administered by the Door County Community Foundation and funded through room tax dollars. The Raibrook Foundation also provided grant funding to support completion of Phase Zero. Even better, these projects are well underway, with construction expected to be completed this year. Local contractor Peil Construction is leading work on the restroom and new workshop, while Ahnapee Construction completed enhancements to the historic Cabins.

The Kaye and Marshall Cabins now have new windows, insulation, and roofs. New mini split units provide air conditioning and heat pumps. The second floor of the Kaye Cabin has been updated to provide valuable teacher office and prep space. Both Cabins also feature new overhangs that provide covered outdoor space. These strategic upgrades will provide year-round programming space and immediately relieve pressure on existing facilities.

The new restroom is nearly unrecognizable, with new siding and clerestory windows. The mechanical systems were rerouted and insulated to protect against freezing, and a mini split provides conditioned air. The reconfigured floor plan provides restrooms to support year-round educational programs, summer camp, and the beloved event Natural Christmas. While restroom improvements may not sound particularly exciting, these upgrades unlock the entire area, currently referred to as North Campus, for new opportunities. As envisioned in the site plan, this work lays the groundwork for the transformation of North Campus into an official Education Campus.

In mid-September, ground was broken on the construction of a new volunteer workshop. Volunteerism is critical to supporting operations at The Ridges. More than 200 volunteers contributed over 7,500 hours of their time in 2025, representing more than $250,000 in value to The Ridges through their various activities. As the organization continues to grow, there will be

an increased emphasis on and need for volunteer operations. A new workshop will accommodate increased capacity while honoring the vital contributions of Ridges volunteers.

Phase Zero demonstrates to Ridges members, donors, and partners that the organization is committed and capable of implementing its Master Plan. At the same time, it establishes the foundation for major capital investments to come through a capital campaign. Phase One implementation will include renovations to the Cook-Albert Fuller Nature Center to address growing staff and program needs, construction of a new Education Center to expand and enhance year-round educational programming, and the adaptive reuse of the former Ridges Inn & Suites to provide lodging for research partners and space for citizen science programs.

Through Phase One, The Ridges will invest in the infrastructure necessary to support and grow the impact of its mission areas in research, education, and preservation. For more information about these projects or the campaign to support them, please contact Executive Director Katie Krouse at katie@ridgessanctuary.org or by calling 920-839-2802 ext 101.

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