**Student: Kim Duong Assignment: Research Background Report Date: 9/26/2018**

**Introduction**

Researching about an organization overview and mission is critical for background research before data preparation and analysis began. External parties or individuals can get basic information about how Linda Loring Nature Foundation starts as a nonprofit organization. Throughout this individual report, the written content provides description of Linda Loring Nature Foundation with subtopics situating around the overview and mission of the organization.

**LLNF Overview & Mission**

Linda Loring Nature Foundation (LLNF) is a nonprofit which ‘promote environmental literacy through research, education, and stewardship empowering our community to develop a sense of place by deepening their connection to the natural world.’ The mission of LLNF is to ‘improve the understanding and appreciation of Nantucket’s fragile flora, fauna, and wildlife by providing education, information, and support to children, educators, researchers, organizations and individuals. LLNF provides stewardship of the land property for learning, environmental promotion, community engagement, and nature knowledge.

LLNF locates on the Nantucket Island near south of Cape Cod, Massachusetts with estimated size of roughly about 30 miles long (Wikipedia). There are three main programs operating under the organization include research, education and stewardship. The land property belongs to LLNF provides a ‘living laboratory’ to serve as a research ground, education advancing support, and environmental understanding. With a focus in education, the foundation staffs can help connect people from all ages and diverse background to nature of the property. Throughout the years, there are three main areas which LLNF focuses which are ecological research, environmental education, and land stewardship.

**LLNF History**

LLNF was found by Linda Loring, a ‘woman with a vision’. She describes herself as a conservationist and wildlife advocate with a strong passion in giving young individuals the opportunity to study and benefit from the natural world (‘History’). In 1957, she started to purchase land piece by piece at a time between Eel Point Road and Madaket Road without a thought of sell nor develop her property. Linda Loring Nature Foundation was established in 1999 as a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization starting out with five acres and became operative in 2007 after Kitty Pochman was hired as the Executive Director. Linda treasures the plants and animals on Nantucket island that she is conserving the land to protect the wildlife home for many plants and animals. Her objective was to protect her land and create a foundation to achieve her dream of building a nature center on Nantucket (‘History’). She started the foundation’s property with five acres donated from her property. Currently, Linda is residing on Nantucket and continuously contribute an important role within the Foundation.

In 2006, the organization was given 18.5 acres by The Nature Conservancy, the largest conservation organization in the world (Bois, 2016). TNC entrusted the acres include sandplain grassland and heathland habitat for LLNF to manage for land conservation for many threatened or endangered species on the island. There is an open space with estimated size of 104 acres which is made up mainly of vegetated wetlands, coastal heathlands, and sandplain grasslands.

**Island Nantucket Geography History**

Historically, the Nantucket island was impacted by the geological changes from the glacier which covered New England area more than 21,000 years ago which started to melt (‘Nantucket Pond Geology’). The meltwater brought the geologic debris south to the ocean along with the rising sea level. Hence, this occurrence created an opportunity for Nantucket to be separated from the mainland. Outwash plains, glacial moraine and kettle ponds make the island landscape as seen nowadays.

**LLNF Focus**

The LLNF focuses mainly on research, education, and stewardship (‘Home’). For research, they have current projects, research projects, citizen science, collaborations, outreach, and invasive species (‘Research’). Recently, on Instagram LLNF posted a photo of a snake to inform about a collaborative research with Nantucket Conservation Foundation and Maria Mitchell Association known as Nantucket Snake Consortium. The project goal is to assess the health of snake populations throughout the island. LLNF encourages anyone with interested in learning about the health of snakes online to stop by the Snake Slithers program to learn more about the research project.

Citizen science is defined ‘research collaborations between scientists and volunteers’ that increase opportunities to permit access to ‘scientific information among community members’ and ‘scientific data collection’ (Cornell Lab of Ornithology). The purpose of citizen provides collaborative experience between scientists and volunteers responding to real-world questions. LLNF has been providing the property to collect precipitation data to understand the patterns on the island and where the findings compared with regional and national results. LLNF claims as the precipitation center and has been taken daily precipitation measurements in collaboration with Community Collaborative Rain, Hail & Snow Network (CoCoRaHS) since 2014. The precipitated data is available for public usage online. CoCoRaHS found out from the collected data that the Nantucket island was not having any severe drought with more rain precipitation in July and August (‘Measuring Rainfall on Nantucket’). Moreover, LLF has been providing student from University of Nebraska Omaha enrolling in ISQA 8086 taught by Dr. Wiggins with soil and plant data to understand the topology and climate change pattern impact on the growth of plants.

LLNF partners up with variety of organizations with similar values in conservation and research. These organizations work with LLNF to provide expertise in in research area aiding current or research projects ongoing. A few organizations for mentioned include Nantucket Biodiversity Initiative, Invasive Plant Species Committee, and Nantucket Prescribed Fire Program (‘Partner Organizations’). The full list can be found on LLNF Partners online page. LLNF provides exploratory grounds for visitors through hiking tour toward nature with an interest in research opportunities with LLNF. LLNF provides learning and researching ground for any interested individual or group.

**Year/Summer Programs**

The Foundation has summer programs created for families, kids and adults include nature walks, bird walks, and snake slithers (‘Summer Programs’). Every program is led by a staff member which runs from late May until beginning October when the weather starts to cool down rapidly. There are hiking trail event with the naturalist, Peter Brace where visitors can discuss about the geologic and natural history. Moreover, they can explore plant and animal life along the tour hike. LLNF provides variety of events such as science picnic which visitors can bring food for picnic and the Foundation provides the science talk. The Foundation makes the property as a sanctuary for not only plants and animals but a place to meditate with free cost to members and ten dollars admission for nonmember. There are children programs with listed events for children in category of ages six to nine or ten to thirteen with dates availability.

**Membership & Social Media**

In addition, LLNF provides visitors to become member of the foundation by providing a form directly on homepage which supports outdoor recreational opportunities, environmental education program, and protection of open spaces (‘Becoming a Member’). LLNF utilizes Facebook to stay in touch with members or visitors and present themselves openly toward the public. They often uploaded pictures from events, make announcements, update warnings about variety of animals for safety. The active level of Facebook is more active than Instagram for LLNF. LLNF does not market themselves on public media and keep themselves as an educated nonprofit organization. They want to encourage individuals to come to different events or programs to get hands-on experience and start on a research project with a known interest aligning with what LLNF can provide.

**Conclusion**

Throughout this report, the overview of LLNF is written information regarding mission, history, geography history, focus, public programs, and social media. LLNF provides different programs with learning opportunities for the public while fostering a learning environment for external organizations with similar values or interests.

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