

# **Mike McGowan**

## **Position Statement**

Crucial to WEA certification being the benchmark qualification for outdoor professionals is agreement upon core standards. I will work hard to facilitate consensus on standards that will form the foundation of a standardized curriculum that allows each affiliate to maintain its individual and unique character. I will continue work for the development of WEA certification protocols that are based upon the best practices in professional certification. One of the things that first attracted me to the old W.U.E.A. was Paul's mission to provide outdoor safety education to recreational users. I believe that mission should always be a significant part of WEA. As a trustee I will work to help develop basic outdoor safety education programs that can be presented by all WEA graduates to environmental groups, clubs, schools, recreation programs, parks, and camps.

## **Biographical Information**

Mike McGowan, WEA member since 1987 and WEA instructor since 1989, has served several times as the WEA affiliate representative for WIU, served on the standards committee for eight years and was the affiliate sponsor for the WEA Colloquium in 2002. His experience includes: instructor Wisconsin Division of Juvenile Corrections S.P.R.I.T.E. adventure based intervention program, Program Coordinator of the Challenge Education program at Bradford Woods Center for Camping and Recreation at Indiana University and Coordinator of the ECOEE semester travel study program at Western Illinois University. He teaches leadership, programming, outdoor adventure recreation education and therapeutic recreation classes, instructs field based skills courses in backpacking, sea kayaking, and canoeing, and chairs the outdoor curriculum team for the Department of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism Administration at Western Illinois University. An area of intense interest for Mike is the role of wilderness experience in spiritual development in which he has published several articles on this topic. In 1999 while visiting scholar at Strathslyde University Glasgow, Scotland he facilitated the conference on "Spiritual Development through Adventure Programmes" at Brathay Hall in Ambelside, Cumbria, England. In 2000 in cooperation with the local community unit school district he developed and directed the Freshman Leadership Expedition, a violence prevention program for high school freshmen. In 2003 he was named the Meyer Visiting Professor to Indiana University.