

Environmental Education CONNECTIONS

Winter/Spring 2009



No Child Left Inside Act Update

As many environmental educators and concerned citizens are aware, the No Child Left Inside Act (H.R. 3036 and S. 1981) passed in the U.S. House of Representatives last September. This huge victory is proof that Americans both want and need environmental education in their schools.



Unfortunately, the victory of the Act passing in the House was short lived. Because

there is a new Congress, the bill must now pass the House again, and pass the Senate.

Additionally, there are some changes. The most notable change is that although the No Child Left Inside Act (NCLI) passed as a stand-alone bill in the House last year, the push now is to have it included in the re-authorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (also known as No Child Left Behind). You may remember that the No Child Left Inside Act was initially an amendment to the re-authorization of the No Child Left Behind Act, but because the re-authorization was moving so slowly, it was pulled out to be a stand-alone bill. Now that the re-authorization of NCLB is moving forward, the hope is to have the NCLI Act included again as an amendment.



What is the timeline? The first step is to have the NCLI Act introduced in both the House and Senate. Supporters of NCLI are hoping to have as many co-sponsors as possible in both the House and Senate when the Act is introduced.

Once it is introduced, it will then be pushed to be included in the NCLB re-authorization bill.

What can you do to help? Call, e-mail, write, or fax your Senator and Congressperson to sign-on as a co-sponsor. More information and sample letters are available on the NACEE website – www.nacee.org.



For more information on the NCLI Act, visit www.eenclb.org or www.naaee.org/ee-advocacy.

National Environmental Education Act Set for Re-authorization

Another bill to be watching for is the re-authorization of the National Environmental Education Act. This Act is important for supporting life-long learning dealing with environmental education and also environmental education in the non-formal setting. This Act is also responsible for the creation of the EPA's Environmental Education grants. For more information on the re-authorization of the National Environmental Education Act, visit www.epa.gov/enviroed/whatis.

EE Connections is mailed free of charge to persons who have participated in a Project WILD, Project WET, Project Learning Tree, Leopold Education Project, or Food, Land, and People, workshop in Nebraska, and NACEE Members.

Printing and mailing of the newsletter is funded by the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission.

Layout is done by the Nebraska Alliance for Conservation and Environment Education.

EE IN THE NEWS

National EE Week promoting literacy and stewardship

National Environmental Education Week, made possible by Canon, promotes environmental literacy and stewardship among over 3.5 million students annually by creating a full week of environmentally-themed lessons and activities for students in K-12th grade classrooms, home schools, nature centers, zoos, museums and aquariums.

Each year, thousands of educators from across the country use EE Week's online resources



National Environmental
Education Week
made possible by Canon
Canon

to incorporate environmental learning into their classrooms in an

educational week-long prelude to Earth Day. Registration for EE Week is free.

EE Week educators have access to a number of resources, including:

A full week's worth of online environmental education preparation, curricula, and activities; Monthly EE Week E-Newsletters that offer tips on planning for EE Week, as well as new curricula, funding sources, and professional development opportunities; Opportunities for online communication and knowledge-sharing with educators from across the country who are also interested in promoting environmental education in the classroom.

This year, National EE Week will be celebrated April 12 - 18, 2009. For more information, visit www.eeweek.org



2009 NAAEE Conference: Call for Presentations

The 2009 NAAEE Conference in Portland, Oregon, will be here before we know it. Submit your papers early and spread the word! We expect a record number of submissions to present with the announcement of 12 conference strands and the Research Symposium's return to a two-day schedule. The CFP will close February 1, 2009. For more information, or to submit a presentation, visit <http://www.naaee.org/conference/call-for-presentations>.



The twelve 2009 Conference strands are:

1. Climate Change Education
2. Coastal & Marine Education
3. Conservation Education
4. Early Childhood & Environmental Education
5. Environmental Justice & Cultural Diversity
6. Innovative Programs and Practices
7. Leadership & Organizational Development
8. Place-based Education
9. Religion, Spirituality and Environmental Education
10. Service Learning & Community Education
11. Teaching & Learning Sustainability
12. The Arts & Environmental Education

Young Naturalist Awards

The American Museum of Natural History's Young Naturalist Awards program is a science-based competition inviting students (grades 7-12) to plan and conduct their own scientific investigations. The project will include questions, hypotheses, and trips into the field to gather data. Students will then write about their investigations in essays that include artwork and/or photographs that help illustrate their findings. Teachers can use this program to incorporate science curriculum into their classroom. Deadline for submissions is March 2, 2009. Learn more by visiting the website: www.amnh.org/nationalcenter/youngnaturalistawards.html

EE IN THE NEWS

Nominations for the 2009 Richard C. Bartlett EE Award

Nominations accepted through January 31, 2009. The Richard C. Bartlett Environmental Education Award is awarded annually by the National Environmental Education Foundation to an outstanding educator who has successfully integrated environmental education into his or her daily education programs. The award is given to a 5th-12th grade educator who can serve as an inspiration and model for others. A \$5,000 cash award is provided for the recipient to continue their work in environmental education.

Do you know a teacher who stands out among the rest? If so, please nominate him/her for the 2009 Richard C. Bartlett Award. For more information, visit <http://www.neefusa.org/bartlettaward.htm>

Dinosaurs Coming to Nebraska!

Coming soon... A forest adventure unlike any other... DinoQuest! Join Fontenelle Nature Association in Bellevue, Nebraska as they welcome dinosaurs into the forest! Search for creatures of the ancient past as you stroll along the Riverview Boardwalk at Fontenelle Forest Nature Center. Natural history will come to life with more



than thirty captivating creatures above, beside and below you. The dinosaurs' amazing lifelike features will blend into a woodland landscape to take you on an amazing journey back in time. Join us for dino digs, paleontology programs and prehistoric parties! The dinosaurs will be in the forest from August 1 through October 31. For more information, visit www.fontenelleforest.org.

Environmental Health Science Education

The EHP Science Education Program offers high-quality science and interdisciplinary lessons based on selected news and research articles published in Environmental Health Perspectives,

a leading environmental health science journal. Lessons advance critical basic skills through the context of engaging, current environmental health topics.

The Environmental Health Perspectives (EHP) environmental health science lessons are aligned with National Science Education Standards in biology, chemistry, environmental science, geology, and physical science, and are targeted at students in high school and undergraduate college. All EHP news articles and lessons can be downloaded for free from this Web site: <http://ehp.niehs.nih.gov/science-ed/>

New Coordinator for Nebraska PLT and WET

Christina Hoyt will be the UNL 4-H PLT/WET State Coordinator. She can be contacted at 402-472-5049 or by e-mail at choyt2@unl.edu.

Now is the time to schedule pre-service, in-service and non-formal educator workshops for 2009! Also, facilitators are needed to lead these workshops. If you would like to host a workshop, or you would like more information about becoming certified to teach PLT/WET curriculum please contact Christina.



Climate Discovery Online Courses for Educators

The National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR) is offering a series of six- and seven-week online courses for middle and high school teachers that combine geoscience content, information about current climate research, easy to implement hands-on activities, and group discussion. The courses run concurrently from January 23 through March 15, 2009. For more information, visit <http://ecourses.ncar.ucar.edu>.

EE IN THE NEWS

Encyclopedia of Earth

Encyclopedia of Earth is a new electronic reference about the Earth, its natural environments, and their interaction with society. The Encyclopedia is a free, fully searchable collection of articles written by scholars, professionals, educators, and experts who collaborate and review each other's work. The articles are written in non-technical language and are useful to students, educators, scholars, professionals, as well as to the general public.

Interested in writing for the EoE? Or, having your students write articles for the EoE? Check out the Student Science Communication Project (SSCP). The Student Science Communication Project (SSCP) is a faculty-supervised science writing initiative in which students develop writing skills through the preparation of articles for publication in the Encyclopedia of Earth (EoE).

Writing projects can take many different forms, but they all have these essential features:



1. A faculty member identifies a specific set of topic(s) for students to write on, and then recruits a manageable number of qualified students.

2. Students write a research-based review paper or article under close supervision of the faculty member.

3. Papers are reviewed via the normal EoE review process, with qualified papers being published in the EoE.

For more information, visit the project webpage at: www.eoearth.org/article/Student_Science_Communication_Project or contact Emily Monosson at emonosson@verizon.net.

Future City Competition

The 2009 National Engineers Week Future City Competition, for seventh and eighth grade students, encourages interest in science, technology, math, and engineering among young people, by challenging them to design and build a city of tomorrow. The 2009 essay competition centers on ways to improve water use by creating a home system that minimizes the use of externally supplied water. For more information, visit <http://www.futurecity.org/competition.shtm>

Groundwater Festival in its 21st year

The 21st annual Nebraska Children's Groundwater Festival will be held Tuesday, May 12th, at Central Community College and College Park in Grand Island, Nebraska. This year's theme is "Get A Clue About GW" (groundwater).



The Festival is held annually as a one-day event at the Central Community College and College Park in Grand Island, Nebraska. The Nebraska Children's Groundwater Festival was first organized in 1989 to educate Nebraska students about all aspects of groundwater, and therefore providing students the ability to choose good stewardship of groundwater in the future. In the last 20 years, over 31,000 children have attended the Festival and learned about groundwater and related resources through hands-on activities, interactive displays and entertainment led by water experts, environmental educators and performing artists.

Students in 4-5th grade throughout the state of Nebraska are invited to attend the annual event. Over 1,200 students are invited to attend each year and the remaining schools are placed on a waiting list to attend. For more information, visit www.cpnrd.org, scroll down to the Education section.

EE IN THE NEWS

Meeting Standards Naturally

The CD-ROM titled "Meeting Standards Naturally" was developed for K-12 educators to promote academic excellence and environmental literacy. It was developed by the Environmental Education and Training Partnership (EETAP), which is funded by U.S. EPA's Office of Environmental Education. The CD-ROM explores how teaching about the environment can be used to achieve national education standards for core disciplines such as math, science, and social studies. The CD-ROM also discusses what environmental literacy means and how it helps prepare students to effectively make environmental decisions that impact their daily lives. "Meeting Standards Naturally" includes 43 sample K-12 curriculum activities that demonstrate how environmental lessons can support specific grade level education standards.

The CD-ROM compliments "Advancing Education through Environmental Literacy," a publication developed by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development in collaboration with EETAP. The publication focuses on how education and the environment can be linked to advance student learning. Included are descriptions of schools that are successfully implementing environmental education programs

and summaries of research documenting how schools have raised test scores of their students by using the environment to help teach content in subject areas such as social studies, science, reading, and math.

To view the Online Version of 'Meeting Standards Naturally' CDROM, visit http://eetap.org/html/meeting_standards_naturally.php

To receive a free copy of "Advancing Education through Environmental Literacy" booklet, visit http://eetap.org/html/order_form.php?product_id=cdrom, click on "Advancing Education through Environmental Literacy."



Acorn Acres now open

Acorn Acres is a one-acre natural playscape that offers children a unique place for unstructured play and outdoor learning. Located within the Riverview Boardwalk at Fontenelle Forest Nature Center in Bellevue, Nebraska, Acorn Acres offers children a chance to be delightfully boisterous, physically active, and wonderfully creative.



Inspiration for Acorn Acres was based upon Richard Louv's book Last Child in the Woods; Saving Our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder. Louv emphasizes that children in our society are becoming more disconnected from nature due to a loss of green space, increasing urbanization of our population, and an ever-increasing use of electronic media.

Each area in Acorn Acres is designed to foster the development of observation skills, fine and/or gross motor skills, and problem solving abilities. Whether you are a parent, grandparent or caregiver of children, you will enjoy Acorn Acres. Open daily from 8am to 5pm.

Online EE Courses work to advance Environmental Education

Although several popular online courses are full for the spring 2009 semester, there are still three more great online courses available to you through the University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point. Classes include Biodiversity and Conservation Biology (1 credit, February 4 - March 3), Teaching about the Environment Outdoors (1 credit, March 1 - April 4), EE Teaching Methods (1 credit, March 23 - May 1), and Water Resources in Society (1 credit, April 1 - April 29).

For more information, visit the UWSP Environmental Education Online Courses webpage at <http://www.uwsp.edu/natres/eetap/index.aspx>.

EE IN THE NEWS

Summer Camps focus on Science for Middle School Students

More than just a summer camp, the statewide Young Nebraska Scientists (YNS) camps integrate research and education to address Nebraska's science education and outreach goals. Nebraska EPSCoR Young Nebraska Scientists Residential Summer Science Camps are a great way for middle school students to learn and have fun with science. Students from all across Nebraska are welcome to apply!



Camps are fee based, but scholarships are available. Everyone is encouraged to apply! Applications will be available through the Young Nebraska Scientist website in February 2009, <http://yns.nebraska.edu>.

For questions about the Nebraska EPSCoR Program or the YNS Camps, contact Sarah Zulkoski-Benson at (402) 472-8946 or szulkoski-benson2@unl.edu.

Summer 2009 Camp Schedule:

- July 5-11: "Energy in the 21st Century" for rising 8th and 9th graders at UNL,
- July 12-18: "Energy in the 21st Century" for rising 10th and 11th graders at UNL, 8th and 9th graders at UNO,
- July 26-Aug 1: "Water and Water Systems" for rising 10th and 11th graders at UNO
- For Lincoln Public School Students Only!
July 19-August 1: "Water and Water Systems" Bernard Harris Summer Science Camp for current 5th, 6th, and 7th graders at UNL

Nebraska science teachers interested in becoming paid YNS instructors should contact Nebraska EPSCoR at epscor@unl.edu to become part of the pool of potential instructors. Interviews will begin in March 2009. All certified middle school and high school science teachers are welcome to apply!

Artistic Rain Barrel Program launches in Lincoln

The City of Lincoln Watershed Management is sponsoring the Artistic Rain Barrel Program in an effort to increase public awareness about the use of rain barrels.

The Program is designed so that individuals or groups can apply to paint a rain barrel any way they choose and have it displayed in Lincoln-area businesses and libraries. At the end of the public display, the barrels will be auctioned off to benefit Pioneers Park Nature Center. This is a great opportunity to get involved in a public art project, display your work, and encourage environmental education.

For more information, please visit lincoln.ne.gov, keyword: rain barrel.

What Weird, Wonderful, and Needs Help?

What does a Black Warrior waterdog look like? How about a fine-lined pocketbook or spectacled eider? *Weird & Wonderful Wildlife*, our new Endangered Species poster for kids and the young at heart, answers these questions and more. The free poster features 14 strangely-named or otherwise unusual plant and animal species. Most are endangered or threatened, and several are candidates for listing under the Endangered Species Act. Inspired by their names, fanciful artwork illustrates what you might imagine the species to look like. The other side features photos of the same species with some fun facts.

The dimensions of the poster are 24 X 21 inches. It's folded to fit into a standard notebook pocket (8.5 X 11 inches). **The poster is free.** The general public can get a copy by calling 1-800-344-WILD or by going to http://library.fws.gov/fws_posters.html. Educators may order up to five copies per classroom.



EE IN THE NEWS

Prairie Loft Center for Outdoor and Agricultural Learning



Prairie Loft is a new nonprofit organization in Hastings, Nebraska. Prairie Loft's mission is to teach agriculture appreciation, outdoor education, cultural traditions, and the wise use of natural resources. The eight-

acre program site is located three miles west of downtown Hastings. Buildings on site are currently undergoing renovations to provide energy-efficient, multi-purpose indoor space for programs and events. Go to www.prairieloft.org for more info.

Little Green Books

Keep America Beautiful, Inc. (KAB) is proud to announce its partnership with leading publisher Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing to promote Little Green Books, a new eco-friendly line of Little Green Bookschildren's



novelty and storybooks aimed at parents and children looking to learn more about the environment.

The theme of Little Green Books focuses on improving the environment and preserving habitats, aiming to get little ones and their parents interested in going green. From recycling and replanting to creating an awareness of endangered animals, Little Green Books plant the seeds for earth-friendly living at an early age. Each book will be made out of recycled materials and printed with soy ink and will include tips for kids on what they can do to become more "green."

Little Green Books launched in 2008 include:

- I Can Save the Earth!: One Little Monster Learns to Reduce, Reuse and Recycle,
- The Polar Bears' Home: A Story About Global Warming, and
- Little Panda and Little Monkey (a cloth book made of cotton and recycled Polartec® fleece).

KEEPING IT GREEN: Environmental Awareness Series

Explore Nature while learning about the connection between 4-H projects and possible careers!! Youth ages 8-18 are invited to explore 4-H projects and careers that will get them outdoors and into nature. The UNL Extension 4-H Environmental Education and Plant Science work team is hosting a web-based educational series at Extension Offices across Nebraska.

Each session introduces 4-H manuals and activities in that project area, explores majors that are offered at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, covers careers youth can pursue after graduation, showcases

entrepreneurs in that focus area and concludes with an activity or hands-on project that could possibly be entered at their county fair.



The sessions will be held on the following Monday nights from 7:00 - 8:30 pm CST.
January 26th - Wildlife and Fisheries
February 2nd - Horticulture
February 9th - Crop Production
February 23rd - Entomology

Sessions are directed toward Middle School age youth but are appropriate for anyone interested. The informational portion of the sessions are free. The cost for the activity will vary by session. To locate an Extension Office near you that is hosting the series, contact the Hall County Extension Office at 308-385-5088 or email cburnett2@unl.edu. Registration deadline for each session is the Wednesday prior to that session. Go Green with nature and 4-H!

EE IN THE NEWS

2009 Write On! Wetlands Challenge

Environmental Concern has kicked off Part 1 of our 5th annual Write On! Wetlands Challenge. This competition, designed to celebrate American Wetlands Month in May, challenges students to create a book written and illustrated by kids for kids!



Part 1, for grades 6-8, is the Writers Challenge. Students write and submit a children's story based on a wetlands theme. And there's something

suspicious in the swamp for this year's theme.. all entries must be in the form of a mystery story. The winning entry will be illustrated in Part 2, and published by Environmental Concern as a children's book.

For more information, visit our website www.wetland.org/education_contest.htm or email educate@wetland.org. Deadline is March 1, 2009.

Facing the Future Releases New High School Curriculum

How do economics, history, and democracy relate to sustainability? Students learn to answer questions like these through engaging hands-on lessons in Facing the Future's new high school social studies unit, "Understanding Sustainability" geared towards grades 9-12.

Each lesson in the two-week unit is designed for Social Studies classes and is aligned to National Council for the Social Studies' curriculum standards for easy classroom integration. Through real-world lessons, students come to understand such timely issues as: ecological footprint, sustainable civilizations, and media awareness.

"Understanding Sustainability" includes sequenced activities for each day, student readings, homework assignments, critical thinking questions, action project and service learning extension, and links to additional web resources.

For more information, visit www.facingthefuture.org, click on "Curriculums."

Nebraska Public Power District (NPPD) offers Student and Educator Resources

Come explore the world of electricity. Take an educational journey to learn how we make electricity and deliver it to your home. Discover how electricity plays an important role in our lives today! Learn about wind energy... and much more!

The Nebraska Public Power District's Energy Education webpage (www.nppd.com/EnergyEducation) is filled with resources for both students and educators. For



students, the website is filled with games, a glossary of electrical terms, and great information. For educators, the website offers over 17 downloadable booklets and activities as well as kits for check-out.

For more information, visit www.nppd.com/EnergyEducation or contact Diana Luscher at (308) 236-2230 or dllusch@nppd.com.

International Migratory Bird Day

Created in 1993, International Migratory Bird Day aims to focus attention on one of the most important and spectacular events in the life of a migratory bird – its journey between its summer and winter homes. Today, it is celebrated in Canada, the U.S., Mexico and Central America through bird festivals, walks and education programs! We invite you to join in this important celebration by attending a local event, or planning one yourself!

IMBD officially takes place on the second Saturday in May each year. Festivals and events typically occur sometime in April or May.



The 2009 International Migratory Bird Day theme is "Celebrating Birds in Culture." For more information on IMBD, festival ideas, activities, free downloads, and to search for local events (or register your event), visit www.birdday.org.

NATURAL HAPPENINGS

Sanhills Cranes take over Nebraska!

Every year it happens. Thousands – hundreds of thousands – of Sandhill Cranes (*Grus canadensis*) migrate through Nebraska. Using the Central Flyway, the Cranes migrate from their wintering grounds in southern Texas and northern Mexico to their summer or breeding grounds in Canada and Alaska.

There are six sub-species of Sandhill Cranes – three migratory and three non-migratory. The non-migratory sub-species include the Florida, Mississippi, and Cuba Sandhill Cranes. Both the Mississippi and Cuba subspecies are endangered.



The migratory sub-species include the Lesser, Canadian, and Greater Sandhill Cranes. All migratory sub-species pass through Nebraska during their journey.

The stop over along the Platte River is a necessary break for the long, challenging flight. While in Nebraska, Sandhill Cranes feed primarily on seeds and grains including corn left in agricultural fields. They also eat small crustaceans and vertebrates living in the river.

The Cranes typically arrive in Nebraska in late February or early March. They usually depart for their breeding grounds in early April. Once they reach their breeding grounds, they build a nest in open meadows or bogs. Their nest consists of a large mound of vegetation either floating in water or connected to vegetation along the shore.

Sandhill Crane chicks are able to walk soon after hatching and feed themselves within one day!

When the time comes to migrate to their wintering grounds, mated pairs and their offspring travel

together. Mating pairs remain together year round. Sandhill Cranes can live to be 20 years.

Visit the Cranes as they Migrate Through Nebraska

There are several locations to view Sandhill Cranes (and other waterfowl) during the spring migration.

- Rowe Sanctuary, Audubon Center, Gibbon, NE

Information: www.rowsanctuary.org
(308) 468-5282

Services: Viewing blinds, gift shop, knowledgeable staff.

Charge: call for pricing

- Fort Kearny State Historical Park, Kearney, NE

Information: (308) 865-5305

Services: Expert staff, river viewing site, gift shop, narrated migration program.

Charge: photography blinds: no charge (reservations required)

- Crane Meadows Nature Center, Alda, NE

Information: (800) 658-3178 or www.visitgrandisland.org.

Services: Viewing blinds, gift shop, expert staff

Charge: call for pricing.



NACEE UPDATE

Message from the President

Since ringing in the New Year, I've taken some time to think about what really matters to me; family, friends and living the good life.

Over the years I've been very fortunate to have worked in some amazing places with wonderful people. And yet however far away some of those jobs took me, I've always returned to Nebraska. Some people have wondered why I would come back from places like California or Minnesota. Honestly, it's because what I love is here; my family, my friends, beautiful skies, amazing prairies, dynamic rivers, and millions of birds. And even though Nebraska doesn't have mountains or the ocean, it is a beautiful place filled with strong and dedicated people who care about living the good life.

The other day I reconnected with a former high school counselor, Mrs. Johnson, who was one of many supportive and inspirational people who encouraged me to pursue outdoor education. She reminded me of my second grade teacher, Mrs. Burns, who told me her favorite color was sky blue pink. Ever since, I've searched the sunsets for that perfect combination of coral and deep blue. These two educators and many more were mentors to me and encouraged me to pursue a life of education and natural beauty. They inspired me with their passion, dedication and knowledge. I only hope that I too can be that inspiration for someone else.

It is vitally important that Nebraskans realize the simple beauty, pleasures and endless possibilities that are here in our state. From Sandhills cranes and Tallgrass prairies to prairie dog colonies and saline wetlands, Nebraska is filled with amazing natural resources! We need to appreciate and invest in our state and its unique ecosystems.

In this New Year I encourage you to think about what really matters in your life. Take time to enjoy the natural beauty that surrounds you and work to appreciate and conserve Nebraska's amazing natural resources.

— Andrea Faas, NACEE President

Join the NACEE listserv

The NACEE listserv is dedicated to enhancing conservation and environment education in Nebraska. Use the listserv to announce your environmentally related workshops and events. Or, e-mail the listserv to seek help or advice on a new environmental education project. By joining the listserv, you will also receive NACEE updates, announcements of workshops and events across the state, and network with other educators across the state.



To join the listserv:

Send a message to: listserv@unl.edu. Type in the Message section: subscribe NACEE; do not put anything in the subject field. If you have an automatic signature file, YOU MUST TURN IT OFF. The only thing in the message body should be "subscribe NACEE" (with no quotes).

To unsubscribe from the listserv, follow the same procedure, but substitute "unsubscribe NACEE" for "subscribe NACEE."

If you have questions or problems regarding the listserv, please contact Lindsay Rogers at lindsayannrogers@yahoo.com.

We look forward to "seeing" on the listserv soon!

2009 NACEE CONFERENCE

**Location, Location, Location:
Explore Nature in Your Neighborhood**
May 29-30, 2009 Kearney, Nebraska

Concurrent session, field trips, and the chance to network with educators and resource professionals from across the state. Educator scholarships are also available!

Go to www.nacee.org for more information.

EE GRANTS

Funding Opportunities

Among all the challenges environmental education faces, often funding is the single largest. Below are a list of *some* of the grant available for environmental education.

Nebraska Environmental Trust Public Information and Education (PIE) MiniGrants Deadline: February 6 and again on May 22

The Nebraska Environmental Trust offers a minigrant program for projects under \$2,500. The grants are intended for projects dealing with education such as environmentally related workshops and events. The grants are awarded on a quarterly basis. For more information, visit www.environmentaltrust.org.

Toyota TAPESTRY Grants Deadline: January 29, 2009

Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A., Inc. and the National Science Teachers Association are pleased to announce the 19th Toyota TAPESTRY Grants for Science Teachers program. This year, 50 large grants of up to \$10,000 each and 20-32 mini-grants of up to \$2,500 will be awarded to K-12 teachers of science in the United States. The categories are Physical Science Application, Environmental Science Education, and Integrating Literacy and Science. For more information, visit <http://www.nsta.org/pd/tapestry>.

2009 Volvo Adventure Awards Deadline: January 31, 2009

In collaboration with the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP), the Volvo Adventure Award rewards young people creating their own environmental projects. There are two competitions for the 2009 awards. The Adventure Award is for youth, ages 13-16, working in groups of two to five, that are actively involved in devising and managing the project. For more information, visit <http://www.volvoadventure.org>.

Intel Schools of Distinction Awards Deadline: February 17, 2009

The 2009 Intel Schools of Distinction Program awards schools that exemplify the best of the best and serve as role models to other schools across

the nation.

For more information, visit <http://www.schoolsofdistinction.com/>

Planet Connect High School Challenge Grants Deadline: January 20, 2009

Planet Connect is a new online network for high school students to learn about the environment, green college, and career options, from the National Environmental Education Foundation (NEEF) in partnership with The Weather Channel. Planet Connect is seeking creative ideas to fix local environmental problems and will award 25 students (ages 14-19) \$1,000 each, to support their ideas and provide them with local environmental internships. For more information, visit www.planet-connect.org.

Do Something Weekly Grants Deadline: weekly

Did you recently create a sustainable community action project, program or organization or have a great idea for helping your community? Do you need \$500 to further the growth and success of your program or turn your idea into reality? If you answered, "YES!", you are eligible to apply for a Do Something Grant. Over the course of 2009, 52 \$500 Do Something Grants will be awarded. To be eligible, the applicant must be 25 years old or under and a U.S. or Canadian citizen, Do Something Grants can not be used to fund: travel costs, individual sponsorships, shipping costs, individual school fees, or fundraisers. For more information, visit www.dosomething.org/grants.

National Geographic Young Explorers Grants

Enhancing efforts to foster the next generation of researchers, explorers, and conservationists, National Geographic now provides seed grants to individuals through the Young Explorers Grants. The grant is open to individuals between 18-25 to pursue research, conservation, and exploration-related projects, including: the Committee for Research and Exploration, the Expeditions Council, and the Conservation Trust. For more information, visit www.nationalgeographic.com/field/grants-programs/young-explorers

EE WORKSHOPS & EVENTS

WORKSHOPS

January 20 & 22

Project WILD Workshop

UNO, Omaha, NE

10:00 am – 12:40 pm both days

Contact: Michelle Koch

michelle.koch@nebraska.gov

(402) 471-5363

January 22

Project WILD Workshop

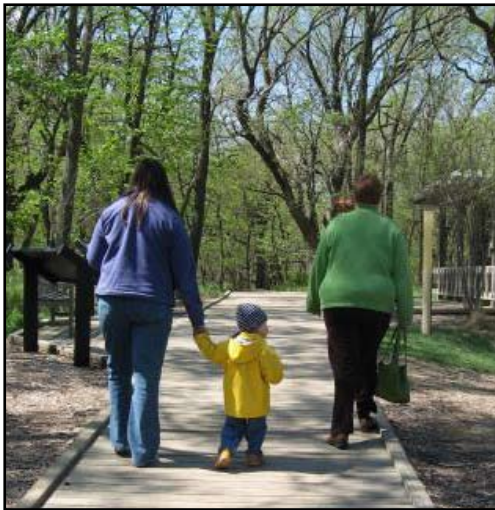
UNO, Omaha, NE

4:15 pm – 8:45 pm

Contact: Michelle Koch

michelle.koch@nebraska.gov

(402) 471-5363



January 26

Keeping it Green

Environmental Awareness

Series: Wildlife and Fisheries

Extension Offices around NE

Explore Nature while learning

about the connection between

4-H projects and possible

careers!!

Youth ages 8-18

Cost: varies with session

Contact: Christy Burnett, 308-

385-5088 or cburnett@unl.edu

February 2

Keeping it Green

Environmental Awareness

Series: Horticulture

Extension Offices around NE

Explore Nature while learning

about the connection between

4-H projects and careers!!

Youth ages 8-18

Cost: varies with session

Contact: Christy Burnett, 308-

385-5088 or cburnett@unl.edu

February 7

Straw-bale Design and

Construction Seminar

SCC-Lincoln Entrepreneurship

Center, Lincoln, NE

9am – 4pm

Cost: \$49 per person. AIA CEU

Approved.

Pre-registration required -

contact SCC, 402.437.2712 or

1-800.828.0072, ext. 2712.

Contact: Joyce at 402.483.5135

or jc10508@alltel.net

February 9

Keeping it Green

Environmental Awareness

Series: Crop Production

Extension Offices around NE

Explore Nature while learning

about the connection between

4-H projects and possible

careers!!

Youth ages 8-18

Cost: varies with session

Contact: Christy Burnett, 308-

385-5088 or cburnett@unl.edu

February 12, 2009

Project WILD workshop

Hall County Extension Office,

Grand Island, NE.

9am – 3pm

Contact: Michelle Koch, 402-

471-5363 or michelle.koch@

nebraska.gov



February 19 & 24

Project WILD Workshop

2pm – 3:50pm, both days

UNL City Campus, Lincoln, NE

Contact: Michelle Koch

michelle.koch@nebraska.gov

(402) 471-5363

February 23

Keeping it Green Environmental

Awareness Series: Entomology

Extension Offices around NE

Explore Nature while learning

about the connection between

4-H projects and possible

careers!!

Youth ages 8-18

Cost: varies with session

Contact: Christy Burnett, 308-

385-5088 or cburnett@unl.edu

March 12

Project WILD Workshop

9am – 3pm

Ainsworth, NE, exact location

TBA

Contact: Michelle Koch

michelle.koch@nebraska.gov

(402) 471-5363

EE WORKSHOPS & EVENTS

March 14

**Nature Explore Workshops:
“Moving to Learn” and “Joyful
Movement”**

Lied Lodge in Nebraska City
9am – 4pm
Cost: \$100, lunch included
Contact: JoAnn Rall at
402-467-6112 or joannr@
dimensionsfoundation.org

May 2

**Nature Explore Workshops:
“Developing Observation
Skills” and “Art and Nature”**

Lied Lodge in Nebraska City
9am – 4pm
Cost: \$100, lunch included
Contact: JoAnn Rall at
402-467-6112 or joannr@
dimensionsfoundation.org

EVENTS

February 1

Winter Free Day

Fontenelle Forest, Bellevue, NE
10am -3pm
FREE admission, guided hikes,
woodcarving demos
www.fontenelleforest.org
Contact: Julie Huffman, 402-
731-3140, jhuffman@fontenelle.
org



February 7

Snug As A Bug

Spring Creek Prairie Audubon
Center, Denton, NE
10am – noon
Using magnifiers & microscopes,
adult/child teams will probe
through leaf litter & logs to
discover a variety of wonders.
Registration required by Feb 5.
Cost: \$6/adult, \$4/child 12 and
under.
www.springcreekprairie.org
Contact: Deb Hauswald, 402-
797-2301; scp@audubon.org

February 14

Great Backyard Bird Count

Pioneers Park Nature Center,
Lincoln, NE
9am — 11:30am
Free! Help track bird numbers
and locations.
Contact: PPNC at 402-441-7895

February 28

Basket Weaving

Spring Creek Prairie Audubon
Center, Denton, NE
9am – 3pm
Local artist and basket weaver
Judy Hart will facilitate hands-on
basket weaving workshop.
Registration required by Feb 26.
Cost: \$35/adult
www.springcreekprairie.org
Contact: Deb Hauswald, 402-
797-2301; scp@audubon.org

March 4

**Keep Scottsbluff/Gering
Beautiful “Butt” Program
Unveiling**

Call for more information.
Contact: Kathy Kropuenske,
308-632-4649.

March 14

**Women at the Spring
Workshop Series**

Workshop 1: “I am Creator”

Spring Creek Prairie Audubon
Center, Denton, NE
9am – 3:30pm
Cost: \$50/person/workshop
www.springcreekprairie.org
Contact: Deb Hauswald, 402-
797-2301; scp@audubon.org



March 21

**In Search of A Season: A
Spring Treasure Hunt**

Spring Creek Prairie Audubon
Center, Denton, NE
9am -12:00 noon
Starting times for teams every
30 minutes from 9-11:30 a.m.
Teams of 2-10.
Registration by March 19.
Cost:
\$15 per team
www.springcreekprairie.org
Contact: Deb Hauswald, 402-
797-2301; scp@audubon.org

EE WORKSHOPS & EVENTS



April 18
Keep Scottsbluff/Gering Beautiful E-Waste Recycling Project

Panhandle Co-op, Scottsbluff
8am – 4pm
Bring in your electronic waste (computers, faxes, printers, tv, etc.) for recycling, also recycling residential tires and batteries, giving away free trees from NRD, swap a bag of plastic bags for a re-useable shopping bag.
Contact: Kathy Kropuenske, 308-632-4649.

April 18
Nature's Market

Pioneers Park Nature Center, Lincoln, NE
9am — 1pm
Shop for nature related crafts, String Beans Children's Music group, kid's crafts.
Contact: PPNC at 402-441-7895

April 19
Spring Free Day

Fontenelle Forest, Bellevue, NE
8am – 5pm
FREE admission, guided hikes, family activities.
www.fontenelleforest.org
Contact: Julie Huffman, (402) 731-3140, jhuffman@fontenelle.org

April 22 & 23

NGPC Platte River Expo
Platte River State Park
4th - 5th graders; focuses on outdoor careers & activities
Contact: Julie Plugge, (402) 471-6009, julie.plugge@nebraska.gov

April 25

Backyard Composting
Pioneers Park Nature Center, Lincoln, NE
10am — noon
Free. Learn the basics of backyard compsting, receive a free compost thermometer or plastic compost bin.
Contact: PPNC at 402-441-7895

April 26

Spring Open House
Spring Creek Prairie Audubon Center, Denton, NE
1:00-5:00 p.m.
Free Admission
www.springcreekprairie.org
Contact: Deb Hauswald, 402-797-2301; scp@audubon.org



May 2

Recycle Your Cycle
NPPD Parking Lot, Scottsbluff
8am – 4pm
Bring your unused bicycle to be recycled.
Contact: Kathy Kropuenske, 308-632-4649.

May 6 & 7

NGPC Panhandle Expo
Scottsbluff YMCA Trails West Camp, Scottsbluff, NE
5th - 7th graders; focuses on outdoor careers & activities
Contact: Julie Plugge, (402) 471-6009, julie.plugge@nebraska.gov

May 9

Missouri River Clean-up
Yankton, SD
8am – 3pm
Contact: Vicki Richmond, Vicki@riverrelief.org or 816-812-5166

May 12

Nebraska Children's Groundwater Festival
Central Community College, Grand Island, NE
www.cpnrd.org
Contact: Marcia Lee, lee@cpnrd.org

May 16

Nebraska Free Parks Day
Wildcat Hills Nature Center, Scottsbluff, NE
Time TBA
FREE admission, nature activities for youth and adults.
Contact: Anne James, 308-436-3777, anne.james@nebraska.gov

May 16

Keep Scottsbluff/Gering Beautiful Pharmaceutical Collection
Panhandle Co-op, Scottsbluff
8am – 4pm
Bring in your unused prescriptions and pharmaceuticals to be disposed of properly.
Contact: Kathy Kropuenske, 308-632-4649.

EE WORKSHOPS & EVENTS

May 29 & 30

Missouri River Clean-up

Omaha, NE

8am – 3pm

Meet at the marina at Lewis and Clark Landing on Riverfront Drive.

Contact: Vicki Richmond, Vicki@riverrelief.org or 816-812-5166

June 27

Missouri River Clean-up

Sioux City, IA

8am – 3pm

Meet at the boat ramp on the Iowa side, I 29 exit 149 (Hamilton Ave), turn left and follow the signs.

Contact: Vicki Richmond, Vicki@riverrelief.org or 816-812-5166



CONFERENCES

Feb 10 & 11

Annual Nebraska American Fisheries Conference

Ak-Sar-Ben Aquarium, Gretna

<http://www.nebraskaafs.org>

March 20 – 22

Rivers and Wildlife Celebration

Holiday Inn Convention Center, Kearney, NE

Contact: Audubon Nebraska, (402) 797-2301 or www.nebraska.audubon.org

May 29 & 30

NACEE Annual Conference

Location, Location, Location:

Exploring Nature in Your Neighborhood

Kearney, NE

www.nacee.org

SUMMER CAMPS

Nature Discovery Day Camps

Fontelle Forest, Bellevue

June – August, Registration begins February 1

Toddlers – 8th graders

www.fontelleforest.org

Contact: Deb Woracek,

dworacek@fontelleforest.org



**Widerness Nature Camp
Pioneers Park Nature Center,
Lincoln, NE**

June — July, Registration begins March 1

Toddlers — 13+ years old

www.lincoln.ne.gov, keyword: nature

Contact: Nancy Furman, 402-441-7895 or nfurman@lincoln.ne.gov

Are you planning or hosting an environmentally oriented workshop, festival, conference, or event?

Let the *EE Connections* newsletter, and the NACEE website, advertise for you. E-mail event details including title, date, time, location, and contact information to Lindsay Rogers at lindsayannrogers@yahoo.com.

JANUARY - MAY 2009

National Environmental Education Week

April 12 -18, 2009

For more information, visit <http://www.eeweek.org>

Earth Day

April 22, 2009

Look for events and festivals in your community.

International Migratory Bird Day

May 9, 2008

Look for events and festivals in your community. Or, plan one yourself!

Environmental Education

CONNECTIONS

Nebraska Game & Parks Commission
P.O. Box 30370
Lincoln, NE 68203-0370

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Environmental Education CONNECTIONS

