

# Partnership Resource Center - CONSERVATION EDUCATION

Conservation education helps people of all ages understand, appreciate, and conserve our country's natural resources. Through structured educational experiences and activities, people can better understand environmental issues affecting our public lands.

Recent studies document that children are gravitating away from outdoor experiences and towards a virtual indoor reality. This disconnect from nature has serious long-term implications for the cognitive, physical, social and emotional well-being of children and adults. It has serious implications for public land stewardship as well; as this disconnect from nature may lead to a lack of conservation and public resource professionals in the future.

Local partnerships involving school districts, state and federal agencies, universities and local conservation organizations are often critical in developing and maintaining conservation education programs. Broad-based partnerships ensure that the programs developed are balanced and focused on teaching "how to think" rather than "what to think".

## Organizations and Resources

While conservation education includes learners of all ages, many programs focus on school age children. Below is a listing of programs that offer both lifelong learning and youth-focused education resources and opportunities.

- In the spring of 2007, the U.S. Forest Service launched **More Kids in the Woods**, a pilot program aimed at connecting kids with nature through experiential learning and recreation programs, held mainly on national forests.
- **The Children and Nature Network**, founded by Richard Louv (author of *Last Child in the Woods*), is working to create an informed public through a collaborative Web portal **and** news service. The Network's mission is to give every child in every community a wide range of opportunities to experience nature directly, reconnecting our children with nature's joys and lessons, its profound physical and mental bounty.
- **EE-Link ~ Environmental Education on the Internet**, is a resource designed to support students, teachers and professionals that support K-12 environmental education offered by **the North American Association for Environmental Education** (NAAEE).
- NAAEE's "**Guidelines for EE Materials**" set standards for the development of balanced, scientifically accurate, and comprehensive environmental education programs.
- NAAEE's **Affiliates Partnership** is a network of professional environmental education associations in 55 states, territories, provinces, and regions throughout North America and around the world.
- **Project Learning Tree** and **ProjectWild** are highly regarded conservation education curricula that offer materials and workshops for educators.
- **GreenWorks!** is the community action, service-learning component of Project Learning Tree, built around action projects that partner educators, students, and communities. GreenWorks! **grants** are

also available.

- Cooperative associations, interpretive associations and friends groups enhance the experiences of millions of people who visit public lands. They operate bookstores, develop publications and support interpretive and educational programs. The [Association of Partners for Public Lands](#) (APPL) is the umbrella organization for these non-profit partners and provides training, networking and other resources.
- [Hands on the Land](#) is a national network of field classrooms connecting students, teachers and parents to their public lands and waterways. The site provides links to lesson plans, activities and long-term monitoring and assessment projects.
- The Bureau of Land Management offers [BLM Learning Landscapes](#), an online collection of learning opportunities associated with the 261 million acres of public lands managed by the BLM.
- The [Forest Service Conservation Education Program](#) strives to connect American people with their environment. This Web page provides links to forest conservation curricula for different ages of school children



[Migration Science and Mystery](#) offers webcasts, lesson plans, and videos about the 6,500 mile journey from Panama to the Arctic and back again of millions of migrating shorebirds. [More...](#)

## Funding

For funding opportunities related to Conservation Education, visit the [PRC Funding page](#).

## Key Forest Service Contact

For more information on the Forest Service's work in Conservation Education, please visit the [Conservation Education web site](#). Find [Key contacts](#) here »

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