

## OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

This Newsletter updates the items covered in the [Summer 2002 newsletter](#).

- **No Subject Left Behind: Service-Learning**

[The No Child Left Behind Act](#) creates several funding opportunities for service-learning, a form of experiential learning through service. While not specifically mentioned as a discrete program, EE-based service-learning can be used as a strategy for implementing nearly every aspect of the NCLB Act. For example, it can be funded as a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center, a means of meeting academic achievement standards, a drop-out prevention program, or any of a wide variety of funded programs. A report on our website, [No Subject Left Behind](#), now contains an additional section discussing opportunities in the No Child Left Behind Act for obtaining funding for service-learning projects with EE components. Other funding opportunities exist through the federal [Learn and Serve America](#) program.

- **Comprehensive School Reform Demonstrations (CSRD) Publication**

NEETF has recently created a publication, *A New Opportunity for Environment-Based Education*, focusing on the federal Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration program, which presents numerous opportunities for implementing EE-related reform models. The grants program provides funding for schools, especially high-poverty and low-achieving schools, that wish to customize proven reform models to fit their own special circumstances and needs. FY'02 funding is \$310 million, which is distributed to the states, which in turn distribute it to individual schools.

- **After-school and Environmental Education**

The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers program (<http://www.ed.gov/21stcclc/>), the federal after-school program created by the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), is an exceptionally natural fit for environmental education programs. The NCLB Act includes an authorized spending level – in other words, a ceiling on what Congress may actually appropriate – of \$1.5 billion in FY '03 for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center program. The authorized spending level for the program will rise by \$250 million each year until 2007.

NEETF has compiled some examples of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers that incorporate EE into their programs, which are available online at [www.neetf.org/education/CCLC.pdf](http://www.neetf.org/education/CCLC.pdf).

### NEEP Executive Committee

- American Association of Museums
- Environmental Education and Training Partnership
- Environmental Council of the States
- National Environmental Education & Training Foundation
- Office of Environmental Education - U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- State Education and Environment Roundtable

### ECOS AND EE

#### States Closer to Formal Resolution Supporting EE

The Environmental Council of the States (ECOS) moved closer to adopting a resolution calling on its members to work with state authorities to incorporate EE into No Child Left Behind Act. Speaking at a meeting of the North American Association for Environmental Education, Massachusetts Secretary of Environmental Affairs Bob Durand announced his intention to introduce the resolution at an upcoming ECOS meeting. Durand appeared with Massachusetts Commissioner of Education David Driscoll, with whom he drafted a statewide EE plan.

## ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AT THE NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION: A 10 YEAR ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH AGENDA

Despite the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) recommendation to Congress to abolish the EPA's EE program and transfer its funding to the National Science Foundation (NSF), the Senate Appropriations Committee recommended maintaining level funding of the EPA EE program.

Regardless of whether or not this shift in funding takes place, the NSF plans to devote extensive time, energy, and resources to sponsoring research on EE. A recently released draft of their 10 year environmental education research agenda reflects a deep commitment to exploring some of the fundamental research questions surrounding EE. The NSF will post the final version of its 10 year environmental research agenda at <http://www.nsf.gov/home/ehr/>.

## FORUM AT THE SMITHSONIAN: THE ACADEMIC BENEFITS OF ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

On November 13<sup>th</sup>, NEETF and the Association for Supervision & Curriculum Development will coordinate a forum at the Smithsonian Institution on the academic benefits of environmental education. EPA's Office of EE, EETAP, and the Smithsonian Center for Education and Museum Studies will co-sponsor the event. NEETF plans to produce proceedings of the conference and distribute them to recipients of this newsletter.

## WHAT'S UP IN THE ENVIRONMENT? WINS A NATIONAL AWARD!

*What's Up in the Environment?* (WUE), a television show and web resource produced by WNET Channel 13 and funded by the Toyota USA Foundation and NEETF, recently won an award from the EPA through the 2002 Clean Water Act Program. Specifically, WUE garnered first place for Public Acceptance Activities related to Biosolids Exemplary Management. This award is given annually to the individual, group, or organization that has done the most to promote the beneficial use of biosolids in the country.

WUE chronicles four feature stories describing personal efforts to save and restore the environment. Additional information can be found at <http://www.thirteen.org/edonline/wue/>.

NEETF will continue the Channel 13 partnership into 2002 with a grant for the development of *What's Up with Water?*, a multimedia package designed to teach middle school students about the environment and environmental careers.

## OTHER NEWS: NEETF AWARDS EE GRANTS

Every year, NEETF awards grants to organizations that improve the state of EE in American schools. In addition to Channel 13/ WNET, *What's Up with Water?*, the 2002 NEETF grantees included the Environmental Institute of Houston and the Smithsonian Institution.

In partnership with the Environmental Education and Training Partnership (EETAP) and the North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE), the Environmental Institute of Houston will host an EE Certification Regional Conference about professional development for environmental educators. The Smithsonian Institution has joined forces with the Telluride Institute to develop the Forest Biodiversity Monitoring Project, a series of community-based workshops. Congratulations to these organizations for being among the many significant contributors to increasing the environmental literacy and academic success of America's children.

## ABOUT THE NATIONAL EDUCATION & ENVIRONMENT PARTNERSHIP

The National Environmental Education & Training Foundation (NEETF) and several partner organizations have formed the **National Education & Environment Partnership** (NEEP). The Partnership's purpose is to help mainstream environmental education by fostering connections among formal and informal policymakers and organizations.

For more information on the National Education and Environment Partnership, please feel free to contact Andy Finch ([finch@neetf.org](mailto:finch@neetf.org)) by email or phone 202-261-6475.