



KANSANS FOR CHILDREN IN NATURE

Three Year Plan



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2011

***WHEREAS**, Kansas must renew its efforts to ensure that its children have abundant opportunities to connect with the places they live and grow, to become informed and responsible stewards of the environment, and who are prepared for future environmental challenges and opportunities as individual citizens and as members of the workforce.*

***NOW, THEREFORE**, pursuant to the authority vested in me as Governor of the State of Kansas, I hereby create the Kansas Coalition for Children in Nature (“KCCN”)...*

Excerpt from Kansas Executive Order 09-02 April 13, 2009

(Full text of Executive Order 09-02 found in appendix)

Introduction

Kansas is the second state in the nation to establish a state-based initiative addressing the growing disconnect of children with nature. The Executive Order, which created Kansans for Children in Nature or KCN (<http://kcn.ksoutdoors.com>), designated lead organizations to convene a diverse network and develop a plan which fosters Kansas youths’ appreciation, understanding, and involvement with the outdoors. More specifically, KCN is charged with developing a plan to promote outdoor learning experiences and environmental education for the young people of Kansas and provide ongoing support for these endeavors. KCN is co-chaired by a representative from the Governor’s Natural Resource Sub-Cabinet and the Kansas Department of Education. The co-chairs, along with the conveners named in the Executive Order, formed sub-groups to work on various aspects of the plan. It will take a concerted effort on the part of all Kansans to realize its goals. Our children’s health, cognitive and social development, and the very land which sustains us is at stake.

The Kansas landscape is as varied as the 2.8 million people who live in the state. Encompassing more than 50 million acres of land, Kansas is the 14th largest state in the United States. It is home to eleven different geographic regions: Ozark Plateau, Cherokee Lowlands, Osage Cuesta, Glaciated Region, Flint Hills, Smoky Hills, High Plains, Arkansas River Lowlands, Red Hills, and the Wellington-McPherson Lowlands. Our precious natural resources include two wetlands of international significance for the important role they play in stopover grounds on the central flyway for migratory birds, Cheyenne Bottoms Wildlife Area and Quivira National Wildlife Refuge. Kansas is also home to one of the few remaining stands of native tall grass prairie, which by some accounts is the world’s most endangered ecosystem as well as more than 5.2 million acres of forests, woodlands and other treed areas. Ranking 7th among the states in total agricultural production, Kansans have long been connected to the land.

However, like many states, Kansas is experiencing population growth in urban areas, while populations continue to decline in more rural areas. Coupled with this trend nationwide is an ever increasing reliance on technology in our daily lives. This rising role of technology is especially prevalent with children, who today spend as much as 7.5 hours in front of electronic media on a daily basis (Kaiser Family Foundation, 2010). According to the Kaiser Family Foundation (2005), **our children are spending less than half the time out of doors that their parents did growing up.** Another longitudinal study finds that **children under 13 living in the United States spend on average only about half an hour of unstructured time outdoors each week** (Hofferth & Sadberg, 2001). Clearly, our children today spend much more time indoors than they do outdoors and this leads to some significant impacts.

Nature-deficit disorder is not an official diagnosis but a way of viewing the problem, and describes the human costs of alienation from nature, among them: diminished use of the senses, attention difficulties, and higher rates of physical and emotional illnesses. The disorder can be detected in individuals, families, and communities (Louv, 2005).

In Richard Louv's book, *Last Child in the Woods* (2005), he coins the phrase "nature deficit disorder." His reference correlates the increased lack of contact that our children have with nature and the resulting consequences on their social, cognitive and physical development and health. Research also suggests that this emerging "nature deficit disorder" among our children is linked to an epidemic rise in childhood obesity, increasing social and cognitive delays as children enter the school system, and rises in diagnoses of Attention Deficit/Hyper-Active Disorder (ADHD). The negative impacts of reduced contact with nature are supported in a recently published research article, [Using Nature and Outdoor Activity to Improve Children's Health](#), written by McCurdy, et al. and published in the journal, [Current Problems in Pediatric and Adolescent Health Care](#) (May 2010). In the forward to the article, editor Ruth A. Etzel, MD PhD, states, "Within just one generation, the definition of 'play' has changed dramatically among children in industrialized countries." Gone for many children are afternoons and weekends spent playing outdoors. The authors note "Physical activity is shown to improve children's health, and a growing body of evidence suggests that exposure to natural environments can improve attention and decrease stress in children. Advising outdoor play in nature is a practical method for pediatric health care providers to address chronic conditions such as childhood obesity, as well as mental health; and one that is cost-effective and easily sustainable." McCurdy and colleagues note in the article that if we are not more proactive about getting kids outside, this generation of children may have a shorter life expectancy than their parents' generation.

Outdoor recreational activity plays a vital role in shaping the future health of children. According to the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, researchers predict that if current adolescent obesity rates continue, by 2035 there will be more than 100,000 additional cases of coronary heart disease attributable to obesity. Furthermore, research indicates that unstructured play is an appropriate outlet for reducing stress in the lives of children and that physical activity improves children's attentiveness and decreases restlessness. In addition, there is evidence to show that children who engage in consistent exercise experiences are less likely to face obesity issues and will maintain healthy lifestyles as adults. However, both children and parents consistently

site barriers to getting their kids outdoors. According to a 2010 Report issued by the Outdoor Foundation, “the primary reasons why young people aren’t spending more time outdoors include indoor technologies, time management issues, poor parental influence and the lack of transportation. Expense, dirt and discomfort, as well as the perceived and actual dangers of outdoor adventures are also among the top outdoor recreation barriers youth identified.”

As children spend less and less time outdoors, they become less and less connected to the world around them. Awareness, knowledge and understanding of the environment in which we live are not at a sufficient level for us to make informed and responsible decisions. In a compilation of ten years of survey data, the National Environmental Education Foundation found that the average American cannot pass a basic environmental knowledge test, scoring, on average, only about three out of ten questions correct (NEEF, 2005). This survey was replicated in Kansas with the average Kansas adult scoring marginally better (3.3 out of 10 questions correct) than the national average. Importantly, in this same survey, 98% of Kansas parents indicate they support having environmental education taught in schools (KACEE, 2001).

Providing children with outdoor experiential activities and environmental education (EE) has numerous benefits. The following highlight the key benefits supported by research in providing children with outdoor experiences and learning:

- **Studying EE Creates Enthusiastic Students, Innovative Teacher-Leaders** - EE offers opportunities for rich, hands-on, real world and relevant learning across the curriculum (Archie, 2003).
- **EE Helps Build Critical Thinking and Relationship Skills** - Environment-based education emphasizes specific critical thinking skills central to “good science”—questioning, investigating, forming hypotheses, interpreting data, analyzing, developing conclusions, and solving problems (Archie, 2003).
- **EE Instructional Strategies Help Foster Leadership Qualities** - Environmental education emphasizes cooperative learning (i.e., working in teams or with partners), critical thinking and discussion, hands-on activities, and a focus on action strategies with real-world applications (NAAEE & NEETF, 2001). EE provides opportunities for students to develop and practice leadership skills such as:
 - Working in teams
 - Listening to and accepting diverse opinions
 - Solving real-world problems
 - Taking the long-term view
 - Promoting actions that serve the larger good
 - Connecting with the community
- **EE Schools Demonstrate Better Academic Performance across the Curriculum** - Schools who adopt environmental education as the central focus of their academic programs frequently demonstrate the following results (Lieberman & Hoody, 1998; NEETF, 2000; Archie, 2003):
 - Reading, science, social studies, and mathematics scores improve.
 - Students develop the ability to transfer their knowledge from familiar to unfamiliar contexts.
 - Students “learn to do science” rather than “just learn about science.”
 - Classroom discipline problems decline.
 - All students have the opportunity to learn at a higher level.

- **Exposure to Nature Supports Self Control/Self Discipline and has Benefits for Children with ADD and Inner City Youth** - Taylor and her colleagues found that children with attention-deficit disorder (ADD) benefited from more exposure to nature –the greener a child’s everyday environment, the more manageable are the symptoms of ADD (Taylor, 2001). Taylor also observed that access to either built or natural green spaces for play, and even having views of green settings, enhances peace, self-control, and self-discipline among inner city youth, especially among girls.
- **Nature Promotes Increased Focus/Improved Cognition** - Wells observed that proximity to nature, access to views of nature, and daily exposure to natural settings increases the ability of children to focus and improves cognitive abilities (Wells, 2000).
- **Children Experience Health Benefits from Outdoor Activities** - At the school environment level, Bell and Dymont observed that children who experience school grounds or play areas with diverse natural settings are more physically active, more aware of good nutrition, more creative, and more civil to one another (Bell, 2006).
- **Nature Play Supports Development of Positive Social Skills** - Play in diverse natural environments reduces or eliminates anti-social behavior such as violence, bullying, vandalism, and littering and reduces school absenteeism (Moore, 2000; Coffey, 2001; Malone, 2003).
- **Environmental Education and Time in Nature Promote Conservation Benefits** - Higher levels of environmental knowledge correlate significantly with a higher degree of interest in conserving natural resources. The more people know, the more likely they are to recycle, be energy efficient, conserve water, etc. (NEETF, 2005).

Promoting high quality environmental education in PreK-12 grade classrooms is a critical component of Kansas children’s education. Research suggests that engagement of PreK-12 students in EE as a part of their regular schooling provides benefits to children’s social and cognitive development, academic achievement and overall health. These same connections can have long term environmental benefits for Kansas communities.

The issue and resulting consequences of children’s decreased time in nature is drawing both national and local attention. Recently, Arne Duncan, U.S. Secretary of Education, stated, "I promise you that we will be a committed partner in the national effort to build a more environmentally literate and responsible society...Right now, in the second decade of the 21st century, preparing our students to be good environmental citizens is some of the most important work any of us can do. It is for our children, and our children's children, and generations yet to come (September 2010)." In addition, First Lady Michelle Obama has launched the “Let’s Move” campaign, designed to increase activity levels and improve child nutrition. In Kansas, we have the opportunity to not only do what is best for Kansas children, but to lead the way for the rest of the nation.

Guiding Principles:

The development of this plan is guided by the following principles:

1. From birth, access to nature and adequate time to learn and play outdoors is critical to the health and well-being of all Kansas children.
2. Insuring access to and benefits of time spent outdoors learning and playing for all Kansas children, including those with special needs, will be accomplished through a broad-based coalition of stakeholders.
3. Through the implementation of high quality, research-based programs that promote increased opportunities for time spent learning and playing outdoors, this plan will impact children's health, physical, cognitive and social development.
4. Ongoing comprehensive data collection, research, and analysis is critical to effecting change and enabling more children to spend time outdoors.

GOALS:

Early Childhood Experiences

Goal 1: From the age of birth, Kansas children engage in outdoor learning and naturalistic play within early childhood educational experiences.

Key Strategy 1: Provide high quality professional development for early childhood educators in outdoor/environmental education and naturalistic play using programs like Project WILD's *Growing Up WILD* and Project Learning Tree's *Environmental Experiences for Early Childhood*.

Action Steps:

- a. Work with established early childhood professional development providers (e.g. Childcare Aware of Kansas) to provide high quality professional development that promotes outdoor/environmental learning and naturalistic play as a part of early childhood educational experiences and which are aligned with North American Association for Environmental Education "Guidelines for Excellence for Early Childhood Educators" (<http://www.naaee.org/programs-and-initiatives/guidelines-for-excellence/early-childhood>).
- b. Work with local parks, zoos, nature centers and other outdoor community resources to promote early childhood education opportunities which are aligned with North American Association for Environmental Education "Guidelines for Excellence for Early Childhood Educators" (<http://www.naaee.org/programs-and-initiatives/guidelines-for-excellence/early-childhood>).
- c. Continue to support an early childhood track at the Kansas Environmental Education Conference.
- d. On an annual basis, make available programs such as the "Let's Go Outside" Symposium concept hosted by KACCRRRA (now Childcare Aware of Kansas) in May 2010, which offered insights on how to evaluate and improve outdoor spaces for children and should be considered as mandatory for child care facility certification.

Key Strategy 2: Integrate early childhood EE programs into the Kansas Green Schools Network and provide opportunities for grants and sharing of ideas, resources and information about outdoor learning and naturalistic play between early childhood programs.

Action Steps:

- a. Within the Kansas Green Schools Network, include opportunities for early childhood programs to join the network, resources for early childhood outdoor/environmental learning, and guidelines for “model early childhood green schools programs.”
- b. Explore and pursue funding opportunities to support a grants program for early childhood green schools programs administered through the Kansas Green Schools network. Whenever possible, correlate programmatic efforts with early childhood standards, such as those developed by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).
- c. Develop an assessment tool to collect and analyze data from early childhood programs that includes amount of time spent learning outside, the type and range of outdoor learning in early childhood programs and the impact of these programs on students.
- d. Work with established early childhood networks, such as the Kansas Early Childhood Advisory Council to pursue adoption of policies and practices that support opportunities for young children to play and learn outdoors on a regular basis.

Key Strategy 3: Kansas children aged 0 – 5, including those with special needs, have opportunities to learn and play outside in safe, natural settings.

Action Steps:

- a. Work with pediatricians, Parents as Teachers, and local health departments to teach parents the importance of kids’ playing outside, and provide educational materials and training to increase the comfort level of parents taking their children outside.
- b. Provide early childhood educators and parents with professional development that includes increasing their understanding of the necessity of playing outdoors to the early development of children.
- c. Build model outdoor nature play areas at early childhood centers and preschools, as well as at parks. Provide tours of these model areas for other early childhood educators, parks and recreation staff, and health department staff to illustrate how they are utilized and how the children benefit. (Rainbows United is an example)
- d. Work with early childhood education organizations to increase the amount of daily outdoor physical activity for children ages 0-5.
- e. Develop a support infrastructure that engages parents, community members and organizations and institutes of higher learning in supporting efforts to provide opportunities for all young children in Kansas to learn and play outdoors.

Key Strategy 4: Funding for programs and facilities that support increasing young children’s access to and engagement with nature should be a priority.

Action Steps:

- a. Develop a concept paper outlining current and relevant research related to the importance of young children’s access to and engagement in nature that can be used to build support for these initiatives.
- b. Prepare and submit funding proposals that support efforts for early childhood professional development, site development and program development related to increasing young children’s time spent learning and playing outdoors.
- c. Monitor and evaluate implementation of nature-based programs with early childhood audiences to determine effectiveness of funding and strategies.

K-12 Education Experiences

Goal 2: Environmental literacy for Kansas children will be accomplished through the development and implementation of an Environmental Literacy Plan for Kansas.

An Environmental Literacy Plan for Kansas has been developed and is currently undergoing public review. The plan lays out strategies that support the achievement of environmental literacy throughout the K-12 learning experiences of Kansas students. The plan includes key goals, objectives and strategies that address how students are educated to achieve environmental literacy as well as the necessary professional development support for K-12 teachers and improvements to the learning environment for students to support environmental literacy in Kansas schools. An Executive Summary of the Environmental Literacy Plan for Kansas is found in the appendix of this report and the full plan is available at: <http://www.kacee.org/environmental-literacy-plan-kansas>.

Goal 3: The K-12 schoolyard is an integral part of the educational environment for all Kansas students where natural spaces and gardens provide opportunities for learning and playing outdoors.

Key Strategy 1: At least 90% of K-12 schools in Kansas will identify and utilize outdoor learning spaces and will integrate outdoor learning into their core curricular instruction by 2015.

Action Steps:

- a. Assess current use of outdoor classrooms in Kansas schools, including the number of Outdoor Wildlife Learning Sites (OWLS). Conduct follow up interviews with individual schools based on survey data (both schools that are successfully integrating outdoor learning into classroom curriculum and those that are struggling). Compile data in a report and utilize for additional strategic planning.
- b. Develop a “best practices” guide for schools, demonstrating how to create and use outdoor classrooms for teaching core subjects in outdoor settings. Develop correlations with core learning standards that directly or indirectly relate to outdoor learning.

- c. Work with college/university faculty to research the impacts of outdoor learning on student attitudes, behaviors and performance in schools. A resource for models exists through the Institute for Outdoor Learning.
- d. Increase support for outdoor learning with school boards, administrators, Parent and Teacher Organizations (PTOs) and other community leaders by developing literature, presentations and professional development that provide concrete examples of opportunities and benefits for outdoor learning.
- e. Provide professional development, mentoring, and networking for preservice and inservice teachers utilizing outdoor learning spaces using research-based professional development practices. Include outdoor learning in every EE professional development opportunity.
- f. Create a first-time teacher orientation that includes literature and resources on teaching outdoors. Include a list of outdoor learning spaces, resources, tips for teaching outdoors, and lesson plans that can be provided to school districts.
- g. Work with communities to identify funding and support systems for development of all outdoor learning spaces (OWLS and others). Provide information to schools through established networks.
- h. Consider a requirement that all Kansas K-12 students participate in a “Significant Outdoor Experience” during school time. Establish a committee including representatives from school districts, parents, Kansas State Department of Education, and Kansas State Board of Education to explore the benefits and feasibility of this potential requirement. The “Significant Outdoor Experience” could potentially be tied into a state assessment. For example, a grade level might be selected and regional “capstone” outdoor experiences identified that highlight the significant natural features of Kansas (such as the 8 Wonders of Kansas Geography: <http://www.kansassampler.org/8wonders/geographyresults.php>). The overall goal of this proposed initiative is that at least once during their time in grades K-12, every Kansas student has an outdoor experience in a natural area of significance to Kansas.
- i. Assist schools in identifying other community outdoor learning opportunities. Develop a resource directory that provides schools with opportunities for expanding their outdoor learning experiences for students into the community/state. Include places like Konza Biological Station, Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve, Cheyenne Bottoms Wildlife Area, Quivira National Wildlife Refuge, as well as local parks and forests, etc. with the goal of identifying locations that help to create a sense of place.
- j. Provide networking opportunities/systems for schools within their region to foster outdoor learning opportunities through the Kansas Green Schools Network.

Key Strategy 2: Provide instructional examples to the Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE) to be published on the KSDE website as supporting documents to the standards, connected with research of the benefits of children spending more time out of doors.

Action Steps:

- a. Provide KSDE with examples of outdoor learning experiences as instructional examples of state standards (next revision to be finalized by 2012).
- b. Provide KSDE with examples of high quality outdoor learning lesson plans for KSDE Instructional Resources on website (approval process through the KSDE and Kansas State Board of Education).
- c. Develop interdisciplinary lesson plans for “significant outdoor learning experiences” (see Key Strategy 1, Action Step h. above) that correlate to the state standards and are aligned with the North American Association for Environmental Education “Guidelines for Excellence”

<http://eelinked.naaee.net/n/guidelines/topics/Excellence-in-EE-Guidelines-for-Learning-K-12>. Explore resources that currently exist and adapt when appropriate.

Key Strategy 3: Integrate outdoor classrooms into the Kansas Green Schools Program and provide opportunities for sharing of ideas, resources and information between schools.

Action Steps:

- a. Provide networking opportunities and/or systems for schools within their region to foster outdoor learning opportunities through the Kansas Green Schools Network. (also in Key Strategy 1, Action Step j. above)
- b. Identify and utilize state teacher organizations to promote outdoor learning with presentations, displays, brochures, websites and other informational material.
- c. Explore teacher mentorship programs that support outdoor learning with students.
- d. Incorporate outdoor learning themes as a part of the Kansas Green Schools Conference and the Kansas Environmental Education Conference.
- e. Use the Kansas Green Schools website as a one stop shop for these resources/network and listserv.

Key Strategy 4: Create strategies to identify funding and support opportunities to increase the number of schoolyard habitat programs which place an emphasis on creating natural habitats and school gardens for play and outdoor classrooms.

Action Steps:

- a. Convene a group of educators and program managers to conduct an assessment of existing programs supporting school outdoor learning environments of all types, including OWLS, National Wildlife Federation Schoolyard Habitats, and school fruit and vegetable gardens.
- b. Identify gaps, areas of overlap, and additional resources required to meet schools' needs.
- c. Develop the necessary resources and strengthen the infrastructure to coordinate and expand school outdoor learning environments.
- d. Develop a user-friendly online access point for educators to be aware of and participate in the various programs.

Key Strategy 5: Develop a strategic state park and public lands, waterways and forests *Interpretive and Outdoor Classroom Plan*, which includes the identification of funding needs to support a strong presence of park rangers and seasonal naturalist staff.

Action Steps:

- a. Examine the existing Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks (KDWP) Strategic Plan (<http://kdwp.state.ks.us/news/KDWP-Info/About-KDWP/Strategic-Plan>) for identified efforts supporting interpretive and outdoor classroom activities at State Parks.

- b. Work with KDWP, Kansas Recreation and Park Association, and local parks to identify gaps and develop a comprehensive plan and funding needs supporting opportunities for youth outdoor recreation and environmental education on state and local public lands.

GOAL 4: Schools have the resources to implement high quality green school projects that actively engage students in environmental education, planning and implementation.

Key Strategy 1: Establish a sustainable funding source for the Kansas Green Schools Program, including the grants program for schools.

Action Steps:

- a. Develop a comprehensive budget outlining specific funding needs for the Kansas Green Schools Program. The comprehensive budget should include regular opportunities for professional development, networking, coordination and collaboration between PreK-12 schools and classrooms and partner organizations. In addition, the comprehensive budget should include a robust grants program that supports local PreK-12 efforts to provide high quality green school programs that incorporate “greening” the school (environmental stewardship) and the curriculum (environmental education).
- b. Identify potential sources, including current partners, to fully fund the proposed budget and establish an ongoing commitment for funding support.
- c. Provide funding partners with regular annual reports of accomplishments and achievements of the Kansas Green Schools Program.

Key Strategy 2: Develop a “Model Kansas Green Schools” initiative that establishes goals for engagement of students, teachers, school staff, administration, community and partners in environmental learning and on-the-ground green projects.

Action Steps:

- a. Explore existing model green schools initiatives and identify criteria consistent with high quality green schools programs.
- b. Explore an initiative for Kansas Green Schools which celebrates and recognizes accomplishments of PreK-12 programs that meet the goals of high quality green schools programs.
- c. Develop a comprehensive “Model Kansas Green Schools” guide with sample projects and instructional examples and identifies partners and resources for PreK-12 green school initiatives.
- d. Explore the establishment of an annual celebration which honors high achieving PreK-12 Kansas Green Schools students, teachers, staff, administrators and community partners.

Goal 5: In order to improve children’s health, increase programs to encourage physical activity and outdoor experiences in local schools and on public lands.

Key Strategy 1: Increase the amount of physical activity, especially physical activity undertaken outside, in PreK-12 schools.

Action Steps:

- a. Work with school nurses, physical education instructors, Kansas State Department of Education, Kansas State Board of Education, Kansas Association of School Boards, and others to increase the amount of outdoor physical activity incorporated into the school day.
- b. Encourage K-6 schools to provide at least one outdoor recess each day.
- c. Explore successful program models that encourage children to walk and ride their bikes to school.

Key Strategy 2: Increase the number of outdoor experiences in PreK-12 schools.

Action Steps:

- a. As state curriculum standards are revised, work with curriculum committees to incorporate outdoor experiences throughout the curriculum.
- b. Provide professional development for preK-12 preservice and inservice teachers to incorporate additional outdoor experiences into their classrooms.
- c. Through Career and Technical Education, encourage agriculture, park and recreation, and natural resources professionals to visit classrooms or host tours of workplaces for students.

Community Experiences

Goal 6: Communities develop facilities and programs that encourage opportunities for Kansas children to regularly engage in outdoor activity.

Key Strategy 1: Identify existing bike/pedestrian trails, and determine where gaps in connectivity occur.

Action Steps:

- a. Working with state and local park and recreation agencies and the Kansas Department of Transportation, perform a survey of existing bike/pedestrian trails in communities, parks, and schools, or update an existing survey.
- b. Promote and continue to expand Go Play Kansas (www.goplaykansas.com) to include additional recreation sites and enhanced promotion of the website. Explore a funding mechanism to upgrade the GoPlayKansas website so individual organizations can update and change the information.

Key Strategy 2: Using the survey information, work with the same organizations as well as local health departments, community organizations, local businesses and medical professionals to focus new resources on areas where connecting trails and green spaces would be most beneficial to increased physical fitness and outdoor experiences.

Action Steps:

- a. Assist communities with locating funding sources for new trails and greenways, such as the Kansas Health Foundation, Sunflower Foundation, and United Methodist Health Ministry Fund.
- b. Involve community organizations, places of worship, youth organizations, and service learning students in assisting with building and maintaining trails and green spaces.
- c. Utilize the health departments and physician's offices, as well as schools, Parents as Teachers, and the public library to distribute information about the locations of outdoor spaces.

Key Strategy 3: Adopt programs that encourage kids to walk or ride their bikes to school. (See Goal 5: Key Strategy 1c)

Action Steps:

- a. Work with the Kansas Department of Transportation and Kansas State Department of Education to promote the Safe Routes to Schools Program.
- b. Provide presentations and information about school and community programs that have successfully increased the numbers of students walking or riding their bikes to school.
- c. Involve parents, community planners, architects, and developers in these programs.

Key Strategy 4: Identify and engage local and state parks and community organizations that provide PreK-12 students with service and service learning opportunities involving children in outdoor activity and promoting connections to the land.

Action Steps:

- a. Identify current parks and community organizations that provide services to PreK-12 students.
- b. Provide high quality professional development for parks, programs and organizations on the fundamentals of service learning, including how to develop high quality service learning opportunities for PreK-12 audiences outside of the school setting.
- c. Encourage the inclusion of outdoor-based service learning or service projects in current programs offered by park and community organizations through providing networking and promotional opportunities.

GOAL 7: Encourage and increase collaborations among school systems, community organizations and parks that provide voluntary curriculum-aligned programming and service learning.

Key Strategy 1: Identify and engage local and state park and community organizations that provide K-12 students with service learning opportunities aligned with curriculum and that promote connections to the land.

Action Steps:

- a. Identify current park and community organizations that have an environmental education component in their projects and programs.
- b. Work with the KSDE Kansas Volunteer Commission to identify additional parks, programs and organizations that could provide opportunities for local K-12 schools and classrooms to engage in service learning projects connecting students to the land.
- c. Provide high quality professional development for the staff of parks, programs and organizations on the fundamentals of service learning, including how to develop high quality service learning opportunities aligned with appropriate curriculum, partnering with local schools and classrooms and other community partners, and strategies for ongoing engagement.
- d. Utilize the Kansas Green Schools Network and website to promote opportunities for engaging K-12 students with parks, programs and community organizations in service learning that is aligned with curriculum and connects children to the land.
- e. Collect instructional examples of high quality K-12 service learning projects that may provide schools and service learning community partners with project ideas, examples of successful strategies and curriculum alignment ideas. Provide these examples on the KSDE and Kansas Green Schools websites.

Key Strategy 2: Integrate outdoor/environmental related service learning into the Kansas Green Schools Program and provide opportunities for sharing of ideas, resources and information between schools.

Action Steps:

- a. Expand current grant opportunities to include service learning projects as eligible for funding.
- b. Collect instructional examples of high quality K-12 service learning projects that may provide schools and service learning community partners with project ideas, examples of successful strategies, and curriculum alignment ideas. Provide these examples on the KSDE and Kansas Green Schools websites (also in Key Strategy 1, Action Step e.).
- c. Explore creating voluntary listserv subscription opportunities within the Kansas Green Schools Network that address specific areas of interest such as service learning as a mechanism to share ideas, resources and information.
- d. Explore creating a service learning track at the Kansas Green Schools Conference.

Goal 8: Increase opportunities for all Kansas children, especially in underserved communities, to access and experience state, federal and local parks and other public lands.

Key Strategy 1: Create a State Youth Conservation Corps to involve at-risk youth from across the state to support the needs of Kansas in natural or man-made disaster response, recovery and rehabilitation, environmental restoration and nature-based education in after-school programs.

Action Steps:

- a. Assess the AmeriCorps program utilized by Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks and use “best practices” to design a Youth Conservation Corps for Kansas at-risk youth.

Key Strategy 2: Enhance programs in state, federal, and local parks that offer outdoor opportunities for Kansas children and families, and create new events to encourage increased use of these sites.

- a. Promote and expand components of child nature discovery programs based on the prioritized feedback received from survey respondents from the *2010 Survey of Local Park Programs that Connect Children to Nature* (completed by the KCN Outdoor Experiences Work Group), as follows:
 - i. Walking trails/incorporated guided hikes
 - ii. Water features
 - iii. Naturally shaded play areas
 - iv. Fishing programs
 - v. Summer camps
 - vi. Geocaching/orienteering
 - vii. Nature art
 - viii. Archery
 - ix. Wildlife education
 - x. Habitat/conservation education
- b. Identify individuals and agencies who would encourage more kids to get involved with nature through an Outdoor Mentor Program, which would serve as a resource for schools, Scout groups, YMCAs, YWCAs, camps, nature centers, and at-risk programs.
- c. Establish an annual Kansas Children in Nature Summit designed to assemble advocates and experts – from Kansas and around the country – in an effort to educate and inspire continued expansion of programs that promote connection to nature through outdoor learning and play. In connection with the Summit, promote a Get Kids Outside Day – promoted by the Governor and other leaders – to bring statewide attention to the issue.

Goal 9: Insure impact of the KCN Plan through ongoing monitoring and evaluation.

Key Strategy 1: Create a survey to establish a baseline of available opportunities for children’s outside activities and the assessment of those opportunities.

Action Steps:

- a. Develop a questionnaire to identify available outdoor activities throughout the state and serve as a strategy to promote outdoor activity opportunities for children.
- b. Develop a survey instrument to measure Kansas kids’ participation in outdoor activities and what activities are most popular, underutilized and available to be enhanced.

- c. Engage the assistance of Kansas universities to design the survey instrument.
- d. Work with parks and recreation agencies, schools, state government agencies, and youth organizations to administer the survey to parents and teachers.
- e. Encourage the development of community-based programs that support the KCN Plan through opportunities for children to spend time learning and playing outdoors, similar to the Lawrence area program, Outside for a Better Inside (<http://outsideforabetterinside.org>).

Key Strategy 2: Measure baseline health data and the correlations between time spent in nature and children’s health.

Action Steps:

- a. Work with the Kansas Department of Health & Environment and the Kansas State Department of Education to survey schools about children’s health through the KS-FIT Program.
- b. Alternatively, and/or to cover children younger than school age, submit a grant proposal to the Kansas Health Foundation to fund the study.

Key Strategy 3: Work with the KSDE and KSBE to develop and collect assessment data of outdoor learning experiences in PreK-12 settings on an annual basis.

Action Steps:

- a. Identify currently existing indicators of outdoor/environmental learning within Kansas assessments administered to K-12 students. In addition, explore current data collected as a part of the 21st Century Learning Initiative in Kansas.
- b. Identify gaps in current assessment data related to outdoor/environmental learning in K-12 with KSDE staff.
- c. Work with KSDE staff to design a mechanism for collecting necessary data, based on gaps in current data.
- d. Collect and analyze data on an annual basis to be compiled into an annual report of progress and achievement.
- e. Using assessment data, monitor progress toward goals outlined in KCN plan and modify or adapt the plan as appropriate every three to five years.

Conclusion

We don't inherit the earth from our ancestors; we borrow it from our children.

David Brower

When you ask adults to reflect on their favorite childhood memories, most often they will relate a time spent playing and/or learning outside. Given that today's children spend on average 7.5 hours outside of school on electronic equipment each day, one wonders what they will say when they are asked to reflect on their favorite childhood memories. But there is more at risk than childhood memories—our children's social and cognitive development as well as their health is at stake. The development of the Kansans for Children in Nature Three Year Plan is just a beginning. It is critical that significant investments of time and funding are made to carry out the goals in this plan.

With strong efforts to implement the Kansans for Children in Nature Three Year Plan, we will manifest a more positive future for our children. In Kansas communities, all children will regularly engage in outdoor play in their yards, their local and state parks and on their school grounds. Our children will reap the benefits of learning and playing outdoors and we will see improvements in cognitive and social development coupled with decreases in diagnoses of ADHD and fewer overweight children, suffering the devastating consequences of obesity. Pediatricians will see declining obesity related disease in children such as diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease and sleep apnea. Schools will value and take advantage of the learning opportunities just outside their school rooms and children will develop the skills and understandings necessary to make informed and responsible decisions about the world in which they live. There will be numerous opportunities and resources at the local, regional and state level for learning and playing in nature for all Kansas children, and parents and caregivers will regularly take advantage of those opportunities. Kansas children will be among the first in the nation to decrease time spent in front of electronic equipment and increase their time spent outside. And finally, a strong coalition of individuals, families, organizations, businesses, schools and agencies at the local and state level will work collaboratively to realize the goals outlined in this plan and work to expand and enhance these efforts in the future.

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Appendices:

Appendix 1: Executive Order 09-02



Kathleen Sebelius, Governor

www.governor.ks.gov

EXECUTIVE ORDER 09-02

WHEREAS, the natural world is a successful model for many values that human communities seek: continuity, stability and sustenance, adaptation, sustained productivity, renewal without exhaustion of resources, and thriving in an environment of diversity; and

WHEREAS, the Sunflower State is blessed with an abundance of natural beauty and natural resources which must be protected for future generations; and

WHEREAS, we as Kansans envision healthy vibrant cities, suburbs, rural communities, farms, and ranches committed to environmental stewardship, where sustainable natural resource use and management ensures equal benefits for today's citizens and for future generations; where quality of life engenders a pride of place and includes access to natural resources for all Kansans, while respecting private property interests; and where stakeholders participate as partners to protect our natural resources to assure a healthy economy and quality of life; and

WHEREAS, to sustain the rich natural resources in Kansas—including the tallgrass, midgrass and shortgrass native prairies, the playa lakes of western Kansas, the Wetlands of International Importance of central Kansas, the oak forests of eastern Kansas, and millions of acres of diverse land and habitats—requires the stewardship of future generations of Kansans; and

WHEREAS, stewardship of our natural resources, including water, is not possible without a strong sense of connection to and interaction with the natural world; and

WHEREAS, the positive connection Kansas children have with our natural world is critical in ensuring their quality of life, mental and physical health and appreciation of our natural resources; and

WHEREAS, spending frequent time outdoors in unstructured and structured experiences is the best way to develop a connection to nature and the foundation on which to build an environmental stewardship ethic; and

WHEREAS, there is a need to continue and expand outreach that will engage individuals, organizations and minority communities in partnerships with state government in promoting a high standard of life through the conservation, restoration and preservation of natural resources; and

WHEREAS, environmental education increases student engagement in science, improves student achievement in core subject areas, and increases student awareness about individual actions they can take to restore the health of the natural environment; and

WHEREAS, Kansas must renew its efforts to ensure that its children have abundant opportunities to connect with the places they live and grow, to become informed and responsible stewards of the environment, and who are prepared for future environmental challenges and opportunities as individual citizens and as members of the workforce.

NOW, THEREFORE, pursuant to the authority vested in me as Governor of the State of Kansas, I hereby create the Kansas Coalition for Children in Nature ("KCCN") with the following purposes and charges:

1. The KCCN will promote outdoor experiential activities and environmental education for the young people of Kansas and provide ongoing support for these endeavors. The KCCN will be convened and managed by a Conveners Group which is charged with recruiting KCCN members. The KCCN will be divided into working groups established by the Conveners Group, to provide leadership and input for the major tasks identified under this Executive Order
2. The KCCN Conveners Group shall include the following members:
 - a. The Chair of the Governor's Natural Resources Sub-Cabinet or designee;
 - b. The Commissioner of the Kansas State Department of Education or designee;

- c. The Secretary of the Kansas Department of Health and Environment or designee;
 - d. The Secretary of Agriculture or designee;
 - e. One representative of the Kansas Association for Conservation and Environmental Education ("KACEE");
 - f. One representative of the Kansas Wildlife Federation;
 - g. One representative of the Kansas Recreation and Parks Association;
 - h. One representative of a Kansas business/industry that supports outdoor learning and experiences for children, families and/or communities;
 - i. One representative of a Kansas conservation non-profit organization that supports outdoor learning and experiences for children, families and/or communities; and
 - j. One representative of a Kansas agriculture-oriented organization that supports outdoor learning and experiences for children, families and/or communities.
3. The KCCN membership may include, but is not limited to representatives of:
 - a. Non-profit organizations dedicated to environmental education, including one organization that works with youth in urban areas;
 - b. A Parent Teacher Organization;
 - c. Local governments that have demonstrated leadership in planning for and providing abundant opportunities for outdoor recreation in their communities;
 - d. Kansas Green Schools that have completed a Green School Project (teachers or administrators);
 - e. The formal education community (teacher or principal), to include those that represent urban schools, rural schools and special education interests;
 - f. Organizations representing school administrators and boards of education, such as United School Administrators and Kansas Association of School Boards;
 - g. Early childhood educators;
 - h. Youth-based organizations to include urban youth-based organizations and rural youth-based organizations;
 - i. Governor's Minority Affairs Offices;
 - j. The Kansas Health Policy Authority;
 - k. The pediatric medical field;
 - l. Organizations that provide environmental education in a non-formal setting;
 - m. The business community with demonstrated leadership in supporting children in nature;
 - n. The agricultural community with demonstrated leadership in supporting children in nature;
 - o. Hunting and/or fishing organizations with demonstrated leadership in supporting children in nature;
 - p. Kansas Institutes of Higher Education that work directly in the instruction of preservice teachers and that have demonstrated leadership in supporting environmental/outdoor education;
 - q. Faith-based organizations with demonstrated leadership in supporting children in nature; and
 - r. Additional KCCN members as the Conveners Group and the KCCN deem necessary.
 4. The membership of the Conveners Group identified in this Executive Order shall be appointed by the Governor. Such members shall serve at the pleasure of the Governor for two year terms.
 5. The KCCN shall be co-chaired by the Chair of the Governor's Natural Resources Sub-Cabinet and the Commissioner of Education or designees.
 6. The KCCN shall meet at the call of the Co-Chairs.
 7. A majority of the KCCN Conveners Group constitutes a quorum for the transaction of any business. The Conveners Group may adopt any other procedures and by-laws necessary to ensure the orderly transaction of business.
 8. The KCCN shall consult with and engage leadership and staff from other Kansas Executive Departments and independent agencies, federal and local government representatives.
 9. Staff support for the KCCN shall be provided by the co-chairs' agencies and other state agencies and partners as requested by the co-chairs.
 10. The KCCN shall be supported by working groups, to be established by the Conveners Group, to lead the major tasks identified under this Executive Order.
 11. The KCCN shall promote the well-being of youth by providing opportunities for increased time spent outdoors and environmental literacy through outdoor experiential activities and formal and non-formal environmental education. The KCCN Conveners Group is charged with gathering input and feedback from the working groups to accomplish the following:
 - a. Develop and implement a plan to support the Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights which provides youth with structured and unstructured opportunities for play, outdoor recreation, learning and scientific study to include:
 - i. Strategies that provide increased support for schoolyard habitat programs, such as Outdoor Wildlife Learning Sites ("OWLS") and Kansas Green School programs, which include the conversion of schoolyards to natural habitats and schoolyard gardens for play and outdoor classrooms;

- ii. Strategies providing increased support for Kansas Green School projects that include environmental education in the planning and implementation of those projects;
 - iii. Creation of green corridors or "greenways" to connect communities, parks and schools via systems that encourage walking, biking and increased time outdoors by youth and families;
 - iv. Greening initiatives that create nature play areas within communities to provide outdoor experiences for children close to home;
 - v. Strategies that increase support for the statewide Youth Conservation Corps, to provide at-risk youth with opportunities to serve in conservation crews in state parks and other public lands in Kansas with the Juvenile Justice Authority and community non-profit organizations;
 - vi. School-based programs that provide voluntary curriculum-aligned programming and service learning which promote collaborations across school systems, local parks and non-profit organizations to offer opportunities for children to engage in learning and service helping to better connect them to the land and our precious natural resources;
 - vii. Increased access to naturalists in state parks and other public lands to provide interpretive activities for children and families to enhance their discovery and enjoyment of Kansas' natural resources;
 - viii. Increased opportunities for underserved communities to access Kansas state, federal and local parks and other public lands with organizations that serve minority students; and
 - ix. Early childhood learning which includes more outdoor and naturalistic play;
- b. Develop and implement a State Environmental Literacy Plan to include:
- i. A review of current environmental education efforts in Kansas schools, including student environmental literacy levels;
 - ii. Identification of curriculum necessary to develop environmentally literate students;
 - iii. Identification of model outdoor field and service learning experiences that can be integrated into the regular school curriculum;
 - iv. Professional development opportunities for in-service teachers, pre-service teachers, and non-formal environmental educators;
 - v. Methods to annually measure the progress of public school students toward becoming environmentally literate graduates; and
 - vi. A process for revising or updating the environmental literacy plan every five years, or as needed;
- c. Devise a method of measuring baseline data and increased time spent in nature by children, including an analysis of opportunities and obstacles encompassing the role of parents, schools, community and green space; and using this baseline data, develop an appropriate plan to increase the amount of time children spend in nature;
- d. Devise a method of measuring baseline children's health data and explore correlations between time spent in nature by children and children's health; and
- e. Identify opportunities and barriers to support implementation of programs in local school systems and on public lands.
12. The KCCN Conveners Group will present these plans and a status report on their implementation prior to the end of the Governor's term in office, January 10, 2011.

This document shall be filed with the Secretary of State as Executive Order No. 09-02 and shall become effective immediately.

Governor Kathleen Sebelius

April 13, 2009

Kansas Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights

Every child should have the *opportunity* to:

- ✓ Walk in the footsteps of Kansas History
- ✓ Access a natural environment
- ✓ Camp under the stars
- ✓ Explore nature
- ✓ Learn to swim
- ✓ Play on a team
- ✓ Follow a trail
- ✓ Catch fish and harvest game
- ✓ Participate in the shooting sports
- ✓ Play in a safe environment

Executive Summary

"I promise you that we will be a committed partner in the national effort to build a more environmentally literate and responsible society...Right now, in the second decade of the 21st century, preparing our students to be good environmental citizens is some of the most important work any of us can do. It is for our children, and our children's children, and generations yet to come."

(US Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan, September 2010)

In 2009, Governor Kathleen Sebelius issued an Executive Order creating *Kansans for Children in Nature* (<http://kcn.ksoutdoors.org>) with the charge of creating a comprehensive plan to increase the time Kansas children spend learning and playing outdoors. The Environmental Literacy Plan for Kansas is major component of this comprehensive plan and created with diverse and broad-based input from Kansas educators, state natural resource agencies, businesses and non-profit organizations. The development of this plan comes in response to an increasing body of research suggesting that our children spending less and less time outdoors and suffering the consequences. According to a 2010 Kaiser Family Foundation report, our children are spending up to 7.5 hours in front of electronics on a daily basis. As a result, children, by some estimates, are spending less than a half hour per week in unstructured time outdoors (Hofferth & Sadberg, 2001). This lack of time spent outdoors has been dubbed "nature deficit disorder" (Louv, 2005). Research is suggesting that this decreased time in nature is having alarming impacts on our children including rises in childhood obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, increased childhood asthma, sleep apnea, vitamin D deficiency, attention deficit/hyper active disorder and depression (McCurdy, et. al, 2010).

Coupled with decreased time spent outdoors and in nature, we have decades of evidence that the average American is environmentally illiterate. When given a 10 question environmental knowledge quiz, Americans, on average, answered only 3 out of the 10 questions correctly (NEEF, 2005). The Environmental Literacy Plan for Kansas (ELPK) provides a comprehensive plan for promoting environmental literacy for K-12 students in Kansas while providing increased opportunities for children to learn in and about nature. With an increased understanding and appreciation for nature and the environment, the ELPK will help to encourage children to spend more time outdoors on a regular basis exploring the wonders of nature.

The following outlines the goals and key objectives addressed in the ELPK:

Goal 1: Addressing the Education of K-12 Students for Environmental Literacy

Goal 1: Kansas high school graduates are prepared to be successful in post-secondary, career and life opportunities as environmentally literate citizens who:

- develop attitudes of appreciation and concern for the environment
- take individual and collective action toward addressing environmental challenges in their everyday choices

Structural Components that support environmental literacy education and achievement in K-12 classrooms:

- curriculum content standards
- curriculum content areas

- high school graduation requirements
- curriculum courses or subjects

Key Objective 1:

At least 90% of the Environmental Education Standards for Kansas benchmarks (<http://www.kacee.org/standards>) are evidenced in assessed indicators of core curriculum testing for K-12 students by 2015.

Key Objective 2:

Develop 2-3 instructional examples related to environmental education/literacy for each corresponding assessed indicator and provide to the KSDE for their website as supporting documents to the standards by 2012.

Key Objective 3:

Partner with KSDE to include EE instructional resources within the Instructional Resources page on the Careers, Standards and Assessment Services/Instructional Resources page on the KSDE website by 2014.

Key Objective 4:

Work with the Kansas Board of Regents to include one unit of environmental education as an approved qualified admissions statute in precollege curriculum (required for admission to state regents institutions), in accordance with HCR 5004. Environmental education will be included under the curriculum specifications for Natural Science as one of the three approved units and/or under curriculum specifications for Social Studies (up to one unit selected from i.e. Current Social Issues) required for admissions into a Regent's Institution by 2015.

Key Objective 5:

Enhance the connection to Route 21, the Kansas 21st Century Skills initiative that promotes using environmental literacy as an integrating theme for preparing Kansas students for the 21st Century through assessments of environmental literacy, teaching "maps", documentation models and recognition by 2015.

Key Objective 6:

Establish environmental education as a listed alternative for the three credits of science required for graduation (like anatomy or honors biology) for Kansas High School Graduation Requirements identified by QPA which currently include (3) three units of science, which shall include physical, biological, and earth and space science concepts and which shall include at least one unit as a laboratory course by 2015.

Goal 2: Educator Professional Development for Environmental Literacy

Goal 2a:

Formal Educator Professional Development: Formal educators (pre-kindergarten – grade 12, in-service and pre-service) in Kansas have in place a variety of professional development opportunities that (1) build environmental content knowledge; (2) develop pathways for integration into local curriculum; and (3) use best practices for quality environmental education. With these tools, educators will be better equipped to prepare students to be environmentally literate adults who can take individual and collective action towards addressing environmental challenges.

Key Objective 1:

Develop a “best practices” guidelines document for environmental education teacher professional development, including successful PD models, pedagogy, and practice by 2013.

Key Objective 2:

Increase content knowledge of EE among formal educators using the Guidelines for Preparation of Environmental Educators from NAAEE by 2012.

Key Objective 3:

Develop state guidelines for presentation to Kansas State Board of Education for adoption consideration which integrate EE content into a multi-disciplinary curriculum by 2014.

Key Objective 4:

Increase access, incentive and opportunities for formal educators to learn about and participate in professional development (ongoing).

Goal 2b:

Non-Formal Educator/Formal Educator Program Integration: Non-formal educators (persons teaching outside the framework of the formal education system) in Kansas have in place a professional development system that supports their efforts to (1) provide quality professional development for formal educators; and (2) build on and enrich environmental education in the formal education system. Through this system, non-formal educators will build capacity and ensure relevance of programming and services by partnering with formal educators to achieve an environmentally literate citizenry.

Key Objective 1:

Increase by 50% the number of EE professional development programs and materials that are aligned with the NAAEE Guidelines for Excellence in EE to be offered by non-formal educators for formal educators by 2013.

Key Objective 2:

Assist non-formal educators to interpret state education standards and new initiatives in order to assist formal educators to integrate EE into a multi-disciplinary curriculum (ongoing).

Key Objective 3:

Using Goal 2a Objective 1, develop a certification program for EE PD instructors to provide EE PD for formal educators in accordance with KSDE professional development standards by 2015.

Key Objective 4:

By increasing awareness of EE related opportunities/resources for professional development, at least 35% of certified PreK-12 educators participate in EE related professional development by 2015.

Goal 2c:

Non-Formal Educator Professional Development: Non-formal educators (persons teaching outside the framework of the formal education system) in Kansas have in place a variety of professional development opportunities that (1) assist them in providing quality environmental education; and (2) encourage the use of best practices for environmental education. As a result, non-formal educators will be better equipped to prepare audiences to be environmentally literate citizens who can take individual and collective action towards addressing environmental challenges.

Key Objective 1:

Increase awareness and understanding of NAAEE Guidelines for Excellence and their benefits to non-formal education programs among non-formal educators (ongoing).

Key Objective 2:

Develop opportunities for self-evaluation of EE programs and materials for non-formal education programs and materials in order to increase the number of EE professional development programs and materials that are aligned with the NAAEE Guidelines for Excellence by 2014.

Key Objective 3:

Expand and update infrastructure for ongoing professional development and networking to assist non-formal educators in staying current with new developments, initiatives, and best practices in the field of EE (ongoing).

Goal 3: Learning Environments that Support Environmental Literacy

All schools in Kansas have access to, support for and the necessary resources to create a coordinated network of sustainable schools which foster active, engaging, hands-on and relevant learning experiences in classrooms, schoolyards and communities for students. These learning environments provide the infrastructure for achieving environmental literacy goals. Teachers, schools and school districts have access to diverse resources for creating high quality learning environments including technical assistance with curriculum connections and environmental stewardship projects, funding and professional networking that supports a community of learners.

Key Objective 1:

Evaluate the first two years of the Kansas Green Schools Program (KGSP) to identify challenges and opportunities to expand the program to all schools in Kansas by 2012.

Key Objective 2:

Develop “best practices” guide for sustainable school implementation, to illustrate what types of models have been successful by 2013.

Key Objective 3:

Coordinate and expand opportunities for students to experience an outdoor learning environment at school (ongoing).

Key Objective 4:

Coordinate and expand opportunities and access for children and families to enjoy outdoor experiences throughout the community. (Strategies 3-7 come from the Kansans for Children and Nature Comprehensive Plan with measurement/monitoring with Plan)

Goal 4: Monitoring and Assessing Environmental Literacy

Learning experiences that promote increased connections to the land and a fuller understanding of the environment will be regularly monitored and assessed to determine the range of experiences in PreK-12 learning settings, the quality of those experiences and the impact of those experiences on students’ environmental literacy.

Objective 1:

Work with the KSDE and KSBE to develop and collect assessment data of environmental education learning experiences in PreK-12 settings on an annual basis (ongoing).

Objective 2:

Utilize the Kansas Green Schools Network to collect data on successful school-based models that incorporate

best practices in utilizing outdoor learning, green school-based projects and high quality environmental education on an annual basis (ongoing).

To view the full Environmental Literacy Plan for Kansas, go to:

<http://www.kacee.org/environmental-literacy-plan-kansas>

Appendix 4: Kansas Environmental Education Service Providers

Environmental Education in Kansas

(NOTE: Information will be available and up to date at <http://kcn.ksoutdoors.org> with opportunities for additional EE providers to include their information)

EE Service Provider Name	Location Served	Services Provided	Contact Information (Current at publication of plan)
Allen County Conservation District	Allen County	Educational Materials, Earth Day Festival for 4th graders, Enviroscope	Kelli Kramer, kelli.kramer@ks.nacdnet.net, www.allencountyconservationdistrict.com
A Day at the Farm - Farm Bureau	Lyon County Fairgrounds/Emporia, KS	An educational event held each spring for county 4th & 5th grade students to teach them about farm and agricultural related issues. We provide the station about flooding and erosion using the streambank trailer.	Debbe.schopper@ks.nacdnet.net or Linda Kurzen - Farm Bureau Board
Ag Awareness Day	Saline County	Rainfall Simulator	may.walta@ks.nacdnet.net
Archery in the Schools	Statewide	Archery training in 4th - 12th grade physical education classes	Gary Keehn archeryintheschools@ksoutdoors.com or Mike Rader mike.rader@ksoutdoors.com
Ark River Water Festival	Finney, Kearny, Gray Counties	Youth and adult environmental education	connie.richmeier@ks.nacdnet.net
Arkansas River Coalition	Wichita	Float trips on the Arkansas River, watershed conservation, raise awareness of the history and value of the Ark River	http://www.arkriver.org/index.htm
Becoming an Outdoors Woman (BOW)	statewide - held at Rock Springs 4-H Center	Workshops and training in outdoor skills for women	Ross Robins ross.robins@ksoutdoors.com
Big Brutus, Inc.	Entire State/Nation	Mining Museum, Visitor Center, Self-Guided Tours, and Guided Tours for large groups if requested	www.bigbrutus.org bigbrutus@columbus-ks.com
Botanica, The Wichita Gardens	Wichita	Garden exhibits, presentations, outreach programs	djones@botanica.org
Bourbon County Conservation District	Bourbon County	Rainfall simulator, Enviroscope	cheryl.bennett@ks.nacdnet.net
Boy Scout Eco Fair	Saline County	Water Quality/Water Sampling NPS	may.walta@ks.nacdnet.net
Boy Scouts	Statewide	Gives scouts an opportunity to recreate outdoors and become responsible citizens and stewards of the environment	http://www.scouting.org/
Brit Spaugh Zoo	Great Bend	Animal exhibits, EE focus, classroom visits	(620) 793-4162

Butler County Conservation District	Butler County	Walnut River Water Festival, Summer Camp	sandy.koontz@ks.nacdnet.net
Butler County Conservation District	Entire State	Groundwater Model	sandy.koontz@ks.nacdnet.net
Camp Wood YMCA	Entire State	Outdoor School programs- EE, experiential learning, summer residence camps	Anne Snyder ymca@campwood.org website: www.campwood.org phone: 620-273-8641
Cedar Cove Feline Conservatory	Louisburg	Animal exhibits, group tours, programs on endangered large cats	info@saveoursiberians.org
Chaplin Nature Center	Arkansas City	Trails, interpretive displays, bird observation, classroom programs	cnc@wichitaudubon.org
Cherokee County Conservation District	Entire State	Enviroscape® Watershed/Nonpoint Source Model & Groundwater Kit, Rain Simulator, and Educational Comic Books	Paul W. Bone, District Manager paul.bone@ks.nacdnet.net
Cheyenne County Historical Museum	St Francis	Interpretive Natural History, custom treasure hunts for class groups, guided tours	www.stfrancisks.com then click on St Francis then museum; Marge 785-332-2392
Clay County Conservation District	Clay County primarily, but cooperate with agencies in the surrounding area	Annual Events: 4th Grade Water Festival; 6th Grade Environmental Education Day; Elementary Poster Contest; High School Envirothon and ECO-Meet; Other Community Events: Various activities relating to environmental concerns are held for ag producers and the general public. Resources Available: stream trailer; EnviroScape; Groundwater Flow Model; Other activity kits too numerous to list	Tom Meek, District Manager 785-632-3550 extension 3 tom.meek@ks.nacdnet.net
Cowley County Conservation District	Cowley County	Demonstrations with Stream Trailer, Rainfall Simulator, Native Grasses, Soil & Crop, Recycling, Forestry, and Wildlife & Parks. We also have an EnviroScape and are working on a Soils Demonstration.	Wanda Jackson wanda.jackson@ks.nacdnet.net Website: www.cowleycountyconservationdistrict.com
Crawford County Conservation District	Crawford County	Day on the Farm with 4th Grade Students, Poster and Essay Contest	Diana Hartog, District Manager diana.hartog@ks.nacdnet.net
David Traylor Zoo	Emporia	Animal exhibits, on and off site ee programs	emporiazooed@emporia.ws
Deanna Rose Children Farmstead	Overland Park	farm interaction, vegetable and flower gardens, dairy barn, fishing pond, programs	farmsteadfriends@opkansas.org
Decatur County Conservation District	Decatur County	Groundwater Flow Model	diana.solko@ks.nacdnet.net

Dickinson County Conservation District	Dickinson County	EnviroScape & Groundwater Flow Model	785.263.2787
Dillon Nature Center	Hutchinson	Outdoor education programs, school environmental education opportunities	Jim Smith jsmith@hutchrec.com
Doniphan County Conservation District	Doniphan County	Conservation Education & Contests & EnviroScape	donna.penny@ks.nacdnet.net
Douglas County Conservation District	Douglas County, Kansas	Douglas County Water Festival-Make Every Drop Count, EnviroScape, Soil & Water Jeopardy, Mini-Water Festivals, Stream model trailer, Classroom presentations, Conservation field day	SanDe Fishburn- sande.fishburn@ks.nacdnet.net website: www.dougccd.org
Dyck Arboretum of the Plains	Hesston	Horticulture displays, teacher training for native plantings for schools w/ standard correlations	arboretum@hesston.edu
Eagle Valley Raptor Center	Cheney	On and offsite bird of prey programs	raptorcare@aol.com
EARTH	Participating counties and schools	Curriculum, supply kits, student workshop, teacher training, workshop presenter training, program expansion assistance	Whitney Neely wsneely@ksu.edu
Earth Day at Camp Alexander	Camp Alexander/Emporia, KS	Lyon CCD: Using the enviroscape, I provide a water quality lesson to area 5th grade students. Several rotations for 2 days.	Debbe.schopper@ks.nacdnet.net or Kay Calvert - Camp Alexander/Emporia KS
Earth Day Celebration	Saline County	EnviroScape Presentation	may.walta@ks.nacdnet.net
Eco-Meet	Statewide	Educational program & competition geared toward increasing awareness & knowledge of native Kansas flora, fauna & ecosystems. Grades 8-12.	Mike Rader mike.rader@ksoutdoors.com
Edwards County Conservation District	Anyone that calls	Recycling Program	Stacy Neilson 620-659-3242 Ext. 3
Ellsworth County Conservation District	Ellsworth County and surrounding areas	Wonders of Water, Wetlands and Wildlife field day, poster/essay/limerick contest	Pamela Hays pamela.hays@ks.nacdnet.net
Emporia Middle School Conservation Day	Ross Reservation - Americus, KS	Lyon CCD: Provides 2 hands-on water quality and erosion lessons for Emporia 8th grade students	Debbe.schopper@ks.nacdnet.net or Doug Epp @ Emporia Middle School

Environthon (Local Training/ Regional Competition/State Competition)	County/ Regional/ State	LCCD sponsors and trains 2 high school environthon teams and assists CD's in Management Unit with team training as well. Provides lesson plans, sample testing materials, and coaches for team readiness. Also serve on the state committee to plan and organize the regional & state competitions.	Debbe.schopper@ks.nacdnet.net or Gina Lyon - Northern Heights High School or jenny.jasper@ksnacdnet.net
Envirothon	Entire State	Agriculture education / current events	llyder@ruraltel.net ; lnighswonger@ruraltel.net ; janice.plummer@ks.nacdnet.net
Ernie Miller Nature Center (Johnson County Park & Recreation District)	Johnson County/ KC Metro	Cultural, historical, EE programming. Nature Center -Field trips & outreach programs for pre-schools and elementary schools, Summer camps, special events, youth group programs and exhibits	Bill McGowan Bill.mcgowan@jocogov.org website: www.erniemiller.com and www.jcprd.com
Exploration Place	Wichita	Science education programs, meet science standards	www.exploration.org
Farlington Hatchery	Girard	Fish production and hatchery tours	Randy Nelson (620) 362-4166
Fick Fossil & History Museum	Oakley	Interpretive Natural History	www.discoveroakley.com then click on Fick Museum; fickmuseum@st-tel.net
Finney County Conservation District	SW Kansas	Stream Model Trailer, EnviroScape, GroundFlow Model	connie.richmeier@ks.nacdnet.net
Finney, Kearney & Gray CCD	Finney, Kearney, Gray Counties	Ark River Water Festival	connie.richmeier@ks.nacdnet.net
Flatland Fly Fishers	Wichita	Educate about conservation and wise use of recreational resources, improve fly fishing awareness in the community, volunteer with various community events	http://www.flatlandflyfishers.org/index.html
Franklin County Conservation District	Franklin County and surrounding areas	Professional development through scholarships for local educators to attend EE workshops and conferences	Keri Harris; District Manager frco.conservation@gmail.com Website: www.fccdks.org

Franklin County Conservation District	Franklin County Schools	Classroom Water Festivals; hands-on EE learning experiences for students; Groundwater Flow Model; Model Farm (table top display); Stream Model Trailer; All the Water in The World Kit, Incredible Journey Kit; Pollution in the Water Kit; Search of Pollution Kit; H2O Olympics Kit; Water Quality Hopscotch Kit; Blue Beads of the Missouri River Kit; Bring Your Own Bag Lesson ;Bottle Fish Kit; Edible Aquifer Kit; Edible Soil Profile Kit; Migration Headache Kit; Quail Game Kit; Water Quality Jeopardy Kit; What's in YOUR water? Kit ; Recycle Relay lesson; Poster Liemerick & Essay Contest (focusing on habitats, soil, water, etc); Photo Contest ;Sum of the Parts Kit; Adaptation Artestry Kit; Freddie the Fish Kit; Save the Trees- recycling worksheet; Dig In! Hands-On Soil Investigations lessons & educators guide	Keri Harris; District Manager frco.conservation@gmail.com Website: www.fccdks.org
Franklin County Conservation District	Franklin County Middle Schools	Earth Awareness Researchers for Tomorrow's Habitat (E.A.R.T.H.) science curriculum and hands-on festival	Keri Harris; District Manager frco.conservation@gmail.com Website: www.fccdks.org www.earthkansas.org
g2g Outside!	Sedgwick County and surrounding areas	g2g Outside is a program started by Sedgwick County Extension in partnership with the WATER Center, Wildlife & Parks, City of Wichita Parks & Recreation, Botanica, the Sedgwick County Zoo, and the Great Plains Nature Center that promotes opportunities for children to learn and play outside.	http://g2goutside.org/
Geary County Fish & Game Association	Geary Co. All Fifth Graders in USD 475	Enhanced Environmental Education (EEE). Five days in April. Half day at Sportsman's Acres and half day at Milford Hatchery and Nature Center. 2010 was 23rd year of the event.	Contact Don Garrison Geary Co. Fish & Game Assoc. P.O. Box 631 Junction City, KS 66441-0631 785-238-8727
Girl Scouts	Statewide	Gives scouts an opportunity to recreate outdoors and become responsible citizens and stewards of the environment	http://www.girlscouts.org/
Goessel USD #411	Goessel Elementary School	Outdoor classroom site	Goessel Elementary School

Graham County - Earth Day	Graham County (NRCS - state wide program)	Tree planting w/ tree spade, tree planting machine, and use of weed barrier machine	daniel.moore@nacdnet.net ; brian.schulze@ks.usda.gov
Grant County Conservation District	Ulysses, Kansas	Enviroscape, 5th grade Conservation tours (six)	
Great Plains Nature Center	Wichita	On site and off site programs, guided tours, habitats of Kansas exhibits, trails, wildlife presentations	Bob Gress (Director) bob@gpnc.org or Jim Mason jim@gpnc.org
Haskell County Conservation District	Haskell Co.	5th grade Conservation Tour	Bill Decker bill.decker@ks.nacdnet.net
Hutchinson Underground Salt Museum	Hutchinson	Museum, science and geology interpretive programs	info@undergroundmuseum.org
Hutchinson Zoo	Hutchinson	Live animal programs on and off site, animal exhibits	charlottep@hutchgov.com
Insect Zoo - Kansas State University	Manhattan	Natural history interpretation	insect@ksu.edu ; www.k-state.edu/butterfly/index.htm
Jewell County Conservation District at Mankato, KS	Jewell County	Envirosapes: (1) Wetlands Model (2) Drinking Water & Wastewater Treatment Model. We also bring in programs from Wildlife & Parks: "Skins & Skulls", and "Fish Found in Our Lakes and Streams" We also bring in programs from Wildlife & Parks: "Skins & Skulls", and "Fish Found in Our Lakes and Streams." Forest Service: "The Importance of Trees." Range Specialist for Identification and care of range plants & Stream Flow trailer borrowed from Clay County.	Jan Boyles jan.boyles@ks.nacdnet.net website: jwcoconservation.com
John Barkley Visitors Center	Shawnee	Exhibits on wildlife, archaeology and solar energy, hiking trails, TRIM orienteering course	info@jcprd.com
Kansas Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom (KFAC)	Entire State	Conducting Kansas agriculture classrooms educational programs: farm animals, crops & oil, natural resources.	Cathy Musick, Executive Director, KFAC websites: ksfac@ksu.edu and www.kagclassroom.org
Kansas Alliance for Wetlands and Streams (KAWS)	statewide	Provides demonstration projects, workshops, and field days	Harold Klaege; hklaege@kaws.org ; http://www.kswraps.org/services/kansas-alliance-wetlands-and-streams
Kansas Association for Conservation and Environmental Education (KACEE)	Entire State	EE Professional Development, EE Conference, Kansas Green Schools Program, EE Resources, Networking and Leadership for EE in Kansas.	Laura Downey ldowney@kacee.org 785-532-1902 website: www.kacee.org and www.kansasgreenschools.org
Kansas Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation	Statewide	Provide guided turkey hunts for youth	http://www.ksnwtf.org/

Kansas City Environmental Education Network (KCEEN)	Kansas City Area	EE network for K-12 educators	www.marc.org/keen ; Matt Riggs - mriggs@marc.org , 816-474-4240
Kansas Cosmosphere and Space Center	Hutchinson	Field trips, family outings, education programs	laurieg@cosmo.org
Kansas Forest Service	Entire State with Regional Offices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Champion Trees Program • Kansas Arbor Day Poster Contest • 5th Grade Walk in the Woods Additionally, staff available to participate in activities such as: Local and state Envirothons, local and state EcoMeets , Earth Day and Arbor Day Celebrations, Conservation District youth programs, E.A.R.T.H. Festivals, county and state fair exhibits, water festivals, scouting and other youth local youth organization activities	Kim Bomberger kbomberg@ksu.edu 785-532-3315 www.kansasforests.org
Kansas Heritage Center	Dodge City, USD 443	Social studies resource center, lending library	orders@ksheritage.org
Kansas History Center Nature Trail	Topeka	Nature trails, natural history interpretation	kansasmuseum@kshs.org ; www.kshs.org
Kansas Landscape Arboretum	Wakefield	Arboretum, trails	www.naturalkansas.org/kansas.htm
Kansas Meteorite Museum and Nature Center	Haviland	Meteorite and history education, trails	www.kansasmeteorite.com
Kansas Wetlands Education Center (KWEC)	Entire State	EE school programs, EE family and children's programs, EE resources, EE displays with wetlands focus	Curtis Wolf, cjwolf@fhsu.edu website: wetlandscenter.fhsu.edu 1-877-243-9268
Kansas Wildlife Exhibit	Wichita	Animal exhibits, guided tours, programs onsite and outreach programs	316-337-9211
Kansas Wildlife Federation	Statewide	Outdoor Adventure Camp at Rock Springs Camp Wa Shun Ga. Six day camp the first week of June for kids 10-12 years old	info@kswildlife.org www.kswildlife.org
Kansas Wildscape Foundation	statewide	Education efforts and awareness programs targeted toward youth to encourage conservation and responsible use of natural resources including OK Kids and WildLifer	wildscape@sunflower.com Jenn Rader jennrader@sunflower.com www.kansaswildscape.org , www.kansaswildlifer.com
Kauffman Museum	Newton	School tours, curriculum based, animal displays, materials check-out	asa@bethelks.edu
Kaw Valley Heritage	Lawrence	Facilitated field trips	785-840-0700

Alliance			
KDWP - Fisheries section	Statewide	Aquatic education, fishing clinics, fishing derbies, aquariums in the classroom, mobile aquarium	Tom Lang; toml@wp.state.ks.us (620) 672 - 0722
KDWP - Hunter Education	Statewide	Conservation and safety while hunting	Kent Barrett kent.barrett@ksoutdoors.com
KDWP - Wildlife Education Service - Pratt	Entire State	Coordination of OWLS program, coordination of KS Archery in the Schools program, wildlife educational materials for teachers, professional development opportunities in wildlife education for teachers	Mike Rader mike.rader@ksoutdoors.com www.kdwp.state.ks.us
Kid's Korral	LCCD Annual Meeting	Provide a "kid corner" during our Annual Meeting where we have 10 stations with conservation activities available for children and parents to enjoy. This is very popular!	Debbe.schopper@ks.nacdnet.net
Konza Prairie Biological Station	Manhattan	Natural history interpretation; guided tours; prairie research and ecology, history of Native Americans and European settlers, geology, animals, plants, diversity	kanzaed@ksu.edu; www.k-state.edu/konza/keep
Lake Afton Public Observatory	Wichita	Student programs day or evening, classroom presentation/games/videos, portable editions of exhibits,	observatory@wichita.edu
Lakewood Discovery Center	Salina	Natural history interpretation, trails, fishing, programming	bill.gaskill@salina.org; brian.underwood@salina.org; www.salina-ks.gov
Leavenworth County Conservation District	Leavenworth County	Have a stream trailer, Enviroscape, water testing kits, water jeopardy game, and a water hopscotch game, Outdoor Classroom, Poster contest, Thank-You Farmer Program, EARTH program, and Water Jeopardy	Susan Garrett susan.garrett@ks.nacdnet.net
Lee Richardson Zoo	International	Distance Learning Programs, Zoomobiles/Outreach, Education Center/On-site Programs, Special Events (On & Off-site)	zoo@garden-city.org website: www.http://www.garden-city.org/zoo
Linn County Conservation District	Linn County	Ground Flow Model	www.karen.tuggle@ks.nacdnet.net
Lyon CCD After School Enrichment - Conservation Club	Local Elementary Schools in Lyon County - After School Programs	Various hands-on activities teaching K-4 students Environmental Education Lessons. 2 - 4 days per week/2 hours per session.	Debbe.schopper@ks.nacdnet.net or Stephanie Paige @ Logan Avenue School

Lyon County Conservation District: Project EARTH	Lyon County - Reading Elementary School & Olpe Elementary School	Project EARTH kits & Lesson plans for activities; support & assistance throughout the year & End of the year EARTH festival	Debbe.schopper@ks.nacdnet.net or Peggy Fort - Principal @ Reading School, Reading KS
Lyon County Fair	Lyon County Fairgrounds/Emporia, KS	Lyon CCD: Local County Fair in August. We set up a booth generally dealing with water quality or soil issues, highlighting programs or practices that are available. We always have a childrens activity in the booth as well.	Debbe.schopper@ks.nacdnet.net
Marion County Conservation District	Marion County	Rainfall simulator	Marion Co. CD - District Manager
Marion-Florence USD 408	Marion Elementary School	Outdoor classroom site	Marion Elementary School
Maxwell Refuge Tour Center	McPherson	Bison and elk viewing, guided tours, wildlife displays, observation towers	maxwell@kitusa.com
Milford Nature Center and Fish Hatchery	Junction City	Interpretive Natural History; guided tours; live animals, classroom/meeting	Pat Silovsky pat.silovsky@ksoutdoors.com
Morris County Conservation District	Morris County	EnviroScape - (NonPoint Source)	Jo Bea Titus-Hutchinson jobea.titus@ks.nacdnet.net
Museum of World Treasures	Wichita	Cultural, historical, science exhibits	education@worldtreasures.org
Native grass exhibit	Graham County	9 category native grass exhibit(s)	daniel.moore@nacdn.net
Nemaha County Conservation District	Nemaha County, Kansas	Enviroscape II, Groundwater and Riparian Kits	judy.adams@ks.nacdnet.net
Operation WildLife	Linwood	Wildlife education programs	OpWildlife@aol.com, 785-542-3625
Osage County Conservation District	Osage Co and possibly surrounding counties	Rainfall simulator, outdoor trail in Melvern along Marais des Cygnes	lori.kuykendall@ks.nacdnet.net
Ottawa County Conservation District	Ottawa County	EE Classroom/Group Presentations, Poster/Essay contest, Stream Sampling, 4th Grade Field Day, EnviroScape, Ground Water Flow Model, OWLS site	Jennifer Cleveland, District Manager, 877 E Laurel, Minneapolis KS, 785-392-3393 ext 3, jennifer.cleveland@ks.nacdnet.net
Overland Park Arboretum	Overland Park	Arboretum, Botanical garden, tours, trails	913-685-3604

Party for the Planet	David Traylor Zoo - Emporia, KS	A city wide Earth Day celebration held on the opening weekend of National Stewardship Week. Several organizations have booths and educational activities for Emporia Families to enjoy teaching them about various environmental issues	Debbe.schopper@ks.nacdnet.net or Angela Anderson @ David Traylor Zoo
Pheasants Forever	Statewide	Leopold Education Project (LEP) - environmental educ program that teaches land ethic based on Aldo Leopold's idea	http://www.pheasantsforever.org/page/1/lep.jsp
Phillips County Conservation District	Phillips County	EE Resources, School programs. We also have a ground water flow model and an enviroscape,	jean.stapel@ks.nacdnet.net
Pittsburg State University Nature Reach	Pittsburg	On and off site programs, planetarium, chemistry programs, bird of prey program	naturereach@pittstate.edu
Playa Lakes Joint Venture	western 2/3 of Kansas	Playa festivals, habitat management workshops for landowners, educational materials provided on their website for teachers, provide grants for supporting education and outreach	http://www.pljv.org/cms/education
Prairie Center	Olathe	Environmental education programs and teacher support.	Alaine Neelly-Hudlin at (913) 856-7669 ext. 1
Prairie Oak Nature Center	Leawood	EE programs, all ages	parks@leawood.org , 913-681-0901
Prairie Park Nature Center	Lawrence	Museum, nature preserve, student field trips, school programs	mbirrell@ci.lawrence.ks.us ; 785-832-7980
Pratt Education Center and Aquarium	Pratt	Hands on env edu programs, animal exhibits, fish hatchery,	chriss@sp.state.ks.us
Quail Unlimited	Statewide	Provides education opportunities about conservation, quail; camps; guided hunts	http://www.qu.org/content/youth/summer_camps.cfm
Quivira Natural Wildlife Refuge	Stafford	Wildlife, guided tours, field trips, teacher resources	quivira@fws.gov
Ralph Mitchell Zoo	Independence	Animal exhibits, field trips, offsite programming	www.forpaz.com/zoo.htm
Rice County Conservation District	Rice County	Farm Diorama, Enviroscape - Non-Point Source Pollution	Rena Billington - rena.billington@ks.nacdnet.net
Riley County Conservation District	Riley County	Conservation Poster, Essay, Limerick, Speech and Coloring Contests	Bob Lienemann (785) 537-8764
Riley County Conservation District	NE Kansas	Area Envirothon - High School Environmental Education and Contest	<u>Bob Lienemann (785) 537-8764</u>

Riley County Conservation District	Manhattan Area	Day at the Farm - We will demonstrate Streambank Stabilization using the area Stream Model Trailer.	Melissa Wahl - County Coordinator for Riley County Farm Bureau Ph. (785) 565-0400.
Riley County Conservation District	Riley and Surrounding Counties	Manhattan Area Garden Show - We will feature "Backyard Conservation" Rain barrel, Recycling, Water Conservation, etc.	Bob Lienemann (785) 537-8764
Rock Springs 4-H Center	Junction City	Historical, environmental education, recreational programming, overnights, leadership training, ropes course	administration@rocksprings.net; www.rocksprings.net
Rolling Hills Earth Day Celebration	Entire State		may.walta@ks.nacdnet.net
Rolling Hills Wildlife Adventure	Salina	Zoo, museum, EE programs	vickee@rollinghillswildlife.com; www.rollinghillswildlife.com
Rush County Conservation District	Rush County	5th Grade Field Day, Stewardship Program, World Water Monitoring Day, Lane-Ness-Rush Water Festival	Stephanie Royer stephani.royer@ks.nacdnet.net 785-222-2615 Ext 101
Safari Days	David Traylor Zoo - Emporia, KS	Lyon CCD: Provides a water or soil conservation station for a county wide environmental education day for 4th grade students	Debbe.schopper@ks.nacdnet.net or Angela Anderson @ David Traylor Zoo
Safari Zoological Park	Caney	Animal exhibits, programs, off-site programs	safaripark@terraworld.net
Saline County Conservation District	Saline County	EnviroScape Presentation/Stream Trailer/How Soil is Formed	may.walta@ks.nacdnet.net
Salline County Conservation District	Saline County	Saline County Water Festival	may.walta@ks.nacdnet.net
Schermerhorn Park	Entire State/Nation	Educational Displays, Meeting Facilities, Walking Tours/Trails	Linda Phipps lindalouandtimtoo@yahoo.com
Schmidt Museum of Natural History	Emporia	Animal displays, presentations	wjensen1@emporia.edu
Scott County Conservation District	Scott County	Land Judging Contest, 6th Grade Conservation Tour	katherine.wessel@ks.nacdnet.net
Sedgwick County Zoo	Wichita	Student programs, adult programs, animal exhibits, kits for checkout	ask@scz.org
Shawnee County Conservation District	Shawnee County	NPS EnviroScape, HHW EnviroScape, SCC stream trailer, co-host Topeka Water Festival, co-host History & Environmental Fair, co-host Crop School, 4th grade poster contest, VIP Tour, booths at: Topeka Farm Show - KS Garden Show - Topeka Green Fair - Go Green Fair @ TSC Public Library	Judy Boltman judy@sccdistrct.com website: www.sccdistrct.com

Smoky Hill Bison Ranch	Assaria	Interpretive Natural History on American bison and Kansas agriculture	smoky@bisonfarm.com; www.bisonfarm.com
Southeast Kansas Education Service Center	Greenbush	Seminars, outreach programs, IDL programs, ropes courses; site includes science center, rain forest, space station, astrophysical observatory, archeological dig	lisa.blair@greenbush.org
Southeast Kansas Nature Center	Galena	Animal and play exhibits, ee classes, park, trails,	seknaturecenter@yahoo.com
Splash Celebration	Lyon County Library/Emporia a KS	An event coordinated in conjunction with with the Summer "Make a Splash With Reading" program. LCCD provides a fun water conservation activity day along with the local library staff and Emporia Arts Council Staff.	Debbe.schopper@ks.nacdnet.net or Lori Heller -Lyon County Library
Sternberg Museum of Natural History	Hays	Interpretive Natural History	www.fhsu.edu/sternberg , bcbartels@fhsu.edu
Stewardship Week Lessons	Local Churches	Provide Church Leader Guides to all of the area churches for them to utilize if they choose for Stewardship Week. We also provide bulletin inserts if they want them.	Debbe.schopper@ks.nacdnet.net
Sunset Zoo	Manhattan	Live animals, educational programs, teacher workshops, outreach programs, live animal programs	sunsetzoo@ci.manhattan.ks.us; www.sunsetzoo.com
Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve	Strong City	Guided tours, historical, natural and cultural interpretive tour, curriculum-based field trip on science and prairie, bus tours	www.nps.gov/tapr
Tanganyika Wildlife Park	Goddard	Animal exhibits, edu programs	events@twpark.com
The Giving Tree	Riverside Elementary School - 4th Grade	To celebrate Arbor Day we provide each 4th grade student @ Riverside Elementary School with a bareroot tree. LCCD spends the afternoon with the students teaching forestry and wildlife lessons. The class then plants their trees in their OWLS area and in the neighboring park or if they wish they may take them home and plant them. LCCD staff ends the day performing "The Giving Tree" for school students and staff.	Debbe.schopper@ks.nacdnet.net or Troy Chapman - Emporia High School Counselor/OWLS Coordinator
TimberRidge Adventure Center (Johnson County Park & Recreation District)	Johnson County/ KC Metro	Challenge Course (low & high), Outdoor Recreation skill programs - boating, fishing, & archery.	Lysa Holladay lysa.holladay@jocogov.org www.timberidgeadventure.com

Topeka Zoological Park	Topeka	Zoo and nature programming	ddinwilde@topeka.org; www.topeka.org/zoo
Twin Lakes Water Festival	Council Grove Lake, KS	Committee Member serving a multi county area. 1500 students & 300 presenters come together for a fun filled environmental education day.	Debbe.schopper@ks.nacdn.net or jobea.titus@ks.nacdn.net
University of Kansas Natural History Museum	Lawrence	Plants and animal interpretive programs for school groups, kits to check out, guided tours,	kunhm@ku.edu, 785-864-4450
University of Kansas Ecological Reserve	Lawrence	Ecological education tours	Kansas Biological Survey; 785-864-1500
W. Clement Stone Nature Center	Topeka	Natural history interpretation, field trips, classroom programs, adventure-challenge programs	www.thevillagesinc.org/natureprograms
W.A.C.K.Y. Day: Wildlife Agriculture Conservation Knowledge for Youth Day	Solomon Valley Area (Graham, Rooks, Osborne, Norton, Phillips, Smith Counties)	Educational event for 6th graders. Wildlife, Agriculture, Conservation Knowledge for Youth & Educational Carnival includes stream trailer demonstration	jean.stapel@ks.nacdn.net; daniel.moore@nacdn.net; jean.stapel@ks.nacdn.net
WATER Center	Wichita and surrounding area	Hands-on EE programs, fish observatory, discovery boxes for checkout, science/art/language/history/math	316-337-9262
Wet & Wild Day with Lowther 6th Grade	Camp Alexander/Emporia, KS	Lyon CCD: Using the streambank trailer and the rainfall simulator we provide 2 stations for an "outdoor education" event for Emporia 6th grade students	Debbe.schopper@ks.nacdn.net or Cynthia Paul - Lowther Intermediate School North
Wildwood Outdoor Education Center	LaCygne	Outdoor education, team building, on site programs, overnights available, ropes course	wildwood@peoplestelecom.net
Wilson County Conservation Auxiliary	Wilson County, KS	Wildlife Tree Party, Day Trip to Wichita Garden Show & other educational sites, Monthly Educational Meetings, Plant Swap, Wildflower Tour	Gina Thompson gina.thompson@ks.nacdn.net 620-378-2866
Wilson County Conservation District	Wilson County, KS	Workshops/Tours, Sponsor Area & State Envirothon, Community Water Festival, Wildflower Tour, Newsletters, Quad County Water Festival, 6th Grade Conservation Field Day, Stream Model Trailer, Enviroscape, Lincoln Conservation Field Day, Library of Resources, Sponsor HS students to Range Youth Camp, Sponsor teachers to Ag in the Classroom & KACEE programs, Poster & Limerick Contests, planning stages of Prairie Heritage Exhibit.	Gina Thompson gina.thompson@ks.nacdn.net 620-378-2866

Wolf Creek Environmental Education Area	Burlington	Trails, guided tours,	www.wcnoc.com/enved.cfm
Wonderscope Children's Museum	Shawnee	Class field trips and programs	info@wonderscope.org
Wright Park Zoo	Dodge City	Animal exhibits	dcpr@dodgecity.org
Wyandotte County Conservation District	Eastern Kansas/ Kansas City Metropolitan area	Interactive EE programs and festivals: Student & Adult, Community Based green living programs, Producer Informational workshops, Teacher resource center, EE Kit center, NPS Programs	Cheri Miller wyco.conservation@gmail.com website www.wycoed.com

Outdoor Recreation:

For outdoor recreational opportunities in Kansas, go to www.krpa.org or www.goplaykansas.com

Kansans for Children in Nature Work Group Members:

A special thanks to the following people who spent numerous hours developing components of this plan.

Environmental Education Workgroup Members

Dane Baxa, Coordinator E.A.R.T.H., Sedgwick County Extension
Emily Blank, 7th/8th Grade Science Teacher, Thunder Ridge Middle School
Tonya Bronlewee (Co-Chair), KSU Extension, Sedgwick County and EE Workgroup Co-Chair
Mary Clark, Naturalist, Dillon Nature Center
Pamela Collinge, 6th Grade Science Teacher, Marshall School
Laura Downey, KS Association for Conservation and Environmental Education
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Bronwyn Fees, Kansas State University, Family Studies and Human Services
Cathy Gray, Director, KS Healthy Kids of Kansas Childcare Aware
Chaille Hay, Educator, Sedgwick County Zoo
Linda Jones, Girl Scouts of Kansas Heartland Program Services Manager
Mandy Kern, Agriculture Science Education, Hiawatha High School
Chris King, USD230 School Board
Jill Llyod, Science Instructor, Mill Valley High School
Michele McNulty, Fish & Wildlife Biologist, US Fish & Wildlife Service
Evelyn Neier, Coordinator Junior Master Gardener Curriculum
Dennis Newell (Co-Chair), Albert Einstein Distinguished Educator, National Science Foundation
Pam Paulsen, Horticulture, Reno County Extension
Cherie Riffey, KS Department of Wildlife and Parks
Jeannie Schnellbacher, Consulting Teacher for K-8 Science, USD 501 Topeka
Anne Snyder, Camp Wood YMCA Camp
Adrienne Walker, Kansas State University Clinical Instructor, Manhattan High School
Ken Wold, Camp Wood YMCA Camp

Outdoor Experiences and Recreation Workgroup Members

Brandi Andersen, Grant County Recreation Commission
James Boyd, Ottawa Recreation Commission
Mike Christensen (Co-Chair), Pass It On, Outdoor Mentors, Inc.
Jabeth Coachman, Parks and Recreation of Topeka
Cathy Gray, Healthy Kansas Kids Director
Erika Devore, Kansas City Healthy Kids
Susan Fowler-Hentzler, Shawnee County Parks and Recreation
Andy Kaczynski, Kansas State University
Chris King, Board of Education, Spring Hill USD#230
Janelle Martin, Lawrence Community Health Improvement Program
John McGrew, McGrew Real Estate, Outside for a Better Inside
Bill McGowan (Co-Chair), Johnson County Park and Recreation District/Ernie Miller Nature Center
Debra McKee, Topeka Audubon Society, Keep America Beautiful
Philicia McKee, Keep America Beautiful – Topeka/Shawnee County
Cynthia Rhodes, Kansas Wildlife Federation
Debra Riley, Topeka Audobon Society
Jane Shirley, KS Coordinated School Health
Roger Steinbrock, Lawrence Parks and Recreation

Anne Snyder, Camp Wood YMCA Camp
Ronna Stump, Liberal Parks and Recreation
Mark Thompson, Project Director, KS Coordinated School Health
Doug Vance, KS Recreation and Park Association
Sue Vance, KS Recreation and Park Association
Carol Wehmeyer, Girls Scouts of Kansas Heartland
Cindy Winters, KS Department of Health and Environment

Health Workgroup Members

Libby Albers, the WATER Center
Gary Andersen, USD 500 Kansas City
Barbara Brown, KSMO Girl Scouts
Gretchen Byer, USD 343
Vesa Cunningham, Kansas Girl Scouts
Kirk Cusick, Whispering Cottonwood Farm Educational Center, Inc.
Marcia Dvorak, Kansas Enrichment Network
Dr. David Dzewaltowski, Dept. Head; Physical Activity and Public Health, Kansas State University
Marylee Griffiths, USD 500 Kansas City
J. Harris, USD #343
Kathy Hayes, USD 442
Stacy Huff, Boy Scouts of America
Elaine Johannes, Kansas State University
Joan Leavens, Kansas State University
Ken Lockwood, Eagle Valley Raptor Center
Cindy Luxem, Kansas Health Care Association
Gregory Meissen, Wichita State University
Jim Ogle, WIBW TV
Kelly Rippel, Blue Cross Blue Shield
D. Ross, Kansas City Healthy Kids
Jane Shirley, KS Coordinated School Health-KS Department of Health and Environment
Sue Stinson, KS Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation & Dance
Jeff Usher, Kansas Health Foundation
Shari L. Wilson, KS Association for Conservation and Environmental Education

ENDORSEMENT FOR THE KANSAS FOR CHILDREN AND NATURE PLAN:

As of October 5, 2011:

Governor Sam Brownback

Capitol Building
Room 241-South
300 SW 10th Street
Topeka, KS 66612



phone: 785-296-3232
fax: 785-368-8788
governor@ks.gov

Office of the Governor

Sam Brownback, Governor

October 5, 2011

Kansans for Children in Nature Conveners' Group
c/o Shari Wilson
51 South 64th Street
Kansas City, KS 66111-2002

Dear Kansans for Children in Nature,

Thank you for the important work you do on behalf of Kansas children. I am happy to support your efforts to reconnect our young people with nature and the outdoors.

As a parent, I share the concern that our children are spending less and less time outdoors. With so many technology distractions, it is easier for children to spend their time in front of a video monitor than outside in the sunshine and fresh air. Your plan to get our children to learn and play outside will increase physical activity and produce meaningful results. Achieving the Plan's nine goals will mean we have healthier and more energetic children in Kansas.

I agree with the Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights that every child should have numerous opportunities to enjoy the outdoors from walking in the footsteps of Kansas history to camping under the stars to exploring nature and more. Kansas is a state blessed with natural beauty and it should be easily accessible to our youth.

It is good to see so many groups supporting the Kansas for Children in Nature Plan. Such a broad coalition of like-minded groups is sure to help the Plan succeed. I especially appreciate your understanding of our difficult budgetary times and commitment to build on existing programs and better coordination of resources.

Again, thank you for all of the hard work your group does on behalf of young Kansans. I am proud to support the Children in Nature Plan.

Warmest regards,

Sam Brownback
Governor

Additional Endorsement:

Big Brothers and Big Sisters of Miami County
Boy Scouts of America Troop 289, Springhill, KS – James R. Nemer
Camp Wood YMCA – Anne Clark
Central Plains School District #112, Steve Woolf, Superintendent
Child Care Aware of Kansas – Leadell Ediger
Clifton-Clyde School District #224 – Brian Pekarek, Superintendent
Dillon Nature Center
Douglas County Community Health Improvement Partnership (CHIP) -- Janelle Martin
E.A.R.T.H. (Earth Awareness Researcher's for Tomorrow's Habitat)
Girl Scouts of Kansas Heartland, Inc. – Shelly Chenoweth
Girl Scouts of NE Kansas & NW Missouri – Barbara Brown
Goddard High School – Denise Scribner
Grant County Recreation Commission, Brandi Andersen
Hiawatha High School – Mandy Kern
Johnson County Park and Recreation District
Kansas Association for Conservation and Environmental Education – Laura Downey
Kansas Association of Accredited Zoos
 Topeka Zoo
 Lee Richardson Zoo
 Rolling Hills Wildlife Adventure
 Sedgwick County Zoo
 David Traylor Zoo
 Hutchinson Zoo
 Sunset Zoo
 Great Bend Zoo
Kansas Accredited Zoo Educators
 Topeka Zoo
 Lee Richardson Zoo
 Rolling Hills Wildlife Adventure
 Sedgwick County Zoo
 David Traylor Zoo
 Hutchinson Zoo
 Sunset Zoo
 Great Bend Zoo
Kansas Chapter of the Wildlife Society—Brad Simpson
Kansas Department of Agriculture – Secretary Dale Rodman
Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks – Secretary Robin Jennison
Kansas Forest Service—Larry Biles, State Forester
Kansas Master Naturalist Program
Kansas Recreation & Park Association – Doug Vance
Kansas State Board of Education
Kansas State University, Research and Extension - Gary Pierzynski, Ph.D., Interim Director
 Cooperative Extension and Applied Research- Daryl Buchholz, Ph.D.
 Extension Family and Consumer Sciences Programs-Paula Peters, Ph.D.
 Department of 4-H Youth Development - Gary W. Gerhard, Ph.D.
 Kansas Center for Agricultural Resources and the Environment (KCARE)
 and Kansas Water Resources Institute (KSRI)-Dan Devlin, Ph.D.
 School of Family Studies and Human Services – Elaine Johannes, Ph.D.
Kansas Wildlife Federation – Steven G. Sorensen

Lee Richardson Zoo, Garden City – Kathy Sexson
Marshall Elementary School – Pamela Collinge
Osage County Conservation District – Lori Kuykendall
Osbourne County Conservation District – Mike Slipke
Outside for a Better Inside – John McGrew
Pass It On- Outdoor Mentors, Inc.
Quail and Upland Wildlife Federation – Nick Prough
The Sunflower Foundation—Billie Hale
US Fish & Wildlife Service, Kansas Ecological Services Field Office, Michael LeValley