March 16, 2012

Keep America Competitive by Funding Environmental Education at EPA

Dear Chairman Simpson, Congressman Moran, Chairman Reed, and Senator Murkowski:

On behalf of our millions of members and supporters across the country, we thank you for your past support of environmental education and urge you to sustain funding for the National Environmental Education Act (NEEA) programs at the Environmental Protection Agency at the FY 2012 level of $9.7M.

In order for the U.S. to remain competitive in the global economy, our citizens must have an education that is unparalleled in the world. An education that will enable them to make informed, scientifically sound environmental decisions. An education that includes outdoor experiential learning, which research indicates increases critical thinking and problem solving skills, skills that are necessary to foster innovation and keep America competitive in the global economy. Research indicates that environmental education improves student achievement in STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) subject areas. This investment in environmental education is vital to America’s economic future.

The EPA’s Office of Environmental Education supports life-long environmental education and stewardship through several highly-leveraged, but under-resourced programs including the National Environmental Education Training Program to provide professional development for teachers, the National Environmental Education Foundation to leverage public/private partnerships, and an environmental education grant program to support local environmental education providers. Students in all 50 states benefit from these successful programs that accomplish so much in our communities.

In addition, these programs and environmental education more broadly has overwhelming public support. Fully 95 percent of American adults and 96 percent of parents support...
environmental education being taught in the schools according to an environment survey conducted by Roper Starch Worldwide.

We look forward to working with you and your staff in the coming year. Should you have any questions about this letter, please have your staff contact Danielle Moodie-Mills of the National Wildlife Federation at (202) 797-6634 Jim Elder of the Campaign for Environmental Literacy at (978) 526-7768, or Rita Hite of the American Forest Foundation at 202-463-2594. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

National and Regional Organizations:

Afterschool Alliance  
Alliance for Climate Education  
Alliance to Save Energy  
American Forest Foundation  
American Forests  
American Public Gardens Association  
American Recreation Coalition  
Association of Polar Early Career Scientists  
Association for Science Teacher Education (ASTE)  
Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE)  
Audubon Naturalist Society  
Back Country Horsemen of America  
Bioneers  
BlueGreen Alliance  
Campaign for Environmental Literacy  
Chesapeake Bay Trust  
Children and Nature Network  
Earth Day Network  
Earth Force  
Eco Think LLC  
Ecological Society of America  
Ecology in Classrooms & Outdoors (ECO)  
Elemental Sustainable Landscape Planning and Design  
Engaging Every Student, LLC  
Green Living Project  
Hispanic Access Foundation  
KyotoUSA  
Mississippi River Wild  
Mud Pie Planet  
National Council for Science and the Environment  
National Estuarine Research Reserve Association  
National Project for Excellence in Environmental Education  
National Science Teachers Association (NSTA)  
Nature Connections  
NatureBridge  
North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE)  
Ocean Alliance, Inc.  
Ocean Conservation Society  
One Ocean Consulting  
Parks & People Foundation  
Pheasants Forever Quail Forever  
Place-Based Education Northwest  
Project Indigenous  
Reef Relief  
Restore the Earth Foundation  
Return of the Natives Restoration Education  
Second Nature  
Sierra Club  
Southwest Conservation Corps  
Student Conservation Association  
Sustainable World Coalition  
The Acorn Group  
The CLEO Institute  
The Ocean Project  
The Wilderness Society  
Trout Unlimited  
YouthMuse
State and Local Organizations:

- Alaska Natural Resource and Outdoor Education Association (AK)
- Aldo Leopold High School (NM)
- Alex Grant & Company (IL)
- Alliance for New Jersey Environmental Education (NJ)
- Alliance for Sustainable Colorado (CO)
- Anacostia Watershed Society (MD)
- Associated Students of Pacific Lutheran University: Outdoor Recreation Program (WA)
- Audubon Society of Rhode Island (RI)
- Back Bay Science Center (CA)
- Bosque Ecosystem Monitoring Program (NM)
- BridgeWater Education Consulting, LLC (VA)
- Cache Valley No Child Left Inside (UT)
- California Association for Environmental and Outdoor Education (CA)
- Camp SEA Lab (CA)
- Cape Fear River Watch, Inc. (NC)
- Chattahoochee Nature Center (GA)
- Catamount Center (CO)
- Centennial School District, Portland, Oregon (OR)
- Johnson Creek Watershed Council, Portland, Oregon (OR)
- Coastal Studies Program of Hood College (MD)
- Colorado Alliance for Environmental Education (CO)
- Creative Energetics (OR)
- Dauphin Island Sea Lab (AL)
- DC Greenworks (DC)
- Discovery Center at Murfree Spring (TN)
- Dream Catcher Yachts (CA)
- Eagle River Watershed Council (CO)
- Eastern Kentucky University Center for Environmental Education (KY)
- Edith Bowen Laboratory School (UT)
- Environmental Dynamics Program, University of Arkansas (AK)
- Environmental Education Association of Alabama (EEAA) (AL)
- Environment Education Connections of South Dakota (SD)

- Environmental Education Alliance of Georgia (GA)
- Environmental Education Association of New Mexico (NM)
- Environmental Education Association of Oregon (OR)
- Environmental Educators of North Carolina (NC)
- Environmental Program University of Vermont (VT)
- Flint River Wild Ones (MI)
- Friends of Dinosaur Ridge (CO)
- Friends of Edgewood Natural Preserve (CA)
- The Friends of the Gardens On Spring Creek (CO)
- Friends of the Manitowoc River Watershed (WI)
- Georgia Wildlife Federation (GA)
- Gila Conservation Education Center (NM)
- Gloucester High School, Gloucester Virginia (VA)
- Great Smoky Mountains Institute at Tremont (TN)
- GREEN Community Schools (MN)
- Green Power for Sustainability Club (MN)
- Harper College (IL)
- Hawaii Environmental Education Alliance (HI)
- Hawaii Nature Center (HI)
- Hilton Pond Center for Piedmont Natural History (SC)
- Houston Wilderness Inc (TX)
- Hui Malama na Mea a Kane (HI)
- Idaho Environmental Education Association (ID)
- Impact Conservation Services (CO)
- Institute for Biomedical Philosophy (FL)
- Kalamazoo Nature Center (MI)
- Kansas Association for Conservation and Environmental Education (KACEE) (KS)
- Keep Carbondale Beautiful, Inc. (IL)
- Kentucky Association for Environmental Education (KY)
- Kentucky Division for Air Quality (KY)
- kidsGROWKentucky, Inc. (KY)
- Maine State Aquarium (ME)
Maryland Project Learning Tree (MD)
Mattawan Later Elementary Native Prairie Garden Committee (MI)
Merry Lea Environmental Learning Center of Goshen College (IN)
Miami University Hamilton Environmentally Conscious Organization (OH)
Mid-State Technical College's Students Environmentally United for a Sustainable Society (W)
Mililani High School Science Learning Center (HI)
Minnesota Association for Environmental Education (MN)
Minnesota Naturalists' Association (MN)
Missouri Environmental Education Association (MO)
Monroe County Solid Waste Management District (IN)
Mountain Kids (CO)
Muller Field Station (NY)
Natural Resources Council of Maine (ME)
Net Impact Undergraduate Chapter at the University of South Carolina (SC)
New Hampshire Audubon (NH)
New Hampshire Environmental Educators (NH)
New Jersey Audubon Society (NJ)
New York University Office of Sustainability (NY)
NH Children in Nature Coalition (NH)
Northern Michigan University Greenpeace (MI)
Openlands (IL)
Pacific Education Institute (WA)
Pennsylvania Association of Environmental Educators (PA)
PeterCares House (DC)
Phoenix Zoo (AZ)
Potomac Environmental Research and Education Center, George Mason University (VA)
Potomac Valley Audubon Society (WV)
Puerto Rican Ornithological Society, Inc. (PR)
Project of the Watershed Institute, California State University Monterey Bay (CA)
Rhode Island Environmental Education Association (RI)
Roaring Fork Environmental Education Network (CO)
Save The River (NY)
Seacoast Science Center (NH)
Seattle Aquarium (WA)
Shoreline Education for Awareness (OR)
Siskiyou Field Institute (OR)
South Coast Watersheds (OR)
Southern Illinois Center for a Sustainable Future, Inc. (IL)
Southern Oregon Regional Environmental Education Leaders (OR)
Student Environmental Action Society of the University of West Florida (FL)
Students for Environmental Action of MTSU (TN)
Suffolk County Community College - Earth & Space Sciences at Ammerman Campus (NY)
Sustain Forest Grove (OR)
Sustainability Now Radio (PA)
Sustainability Studies Program Ramapo College of New Jersey (NJ)
Tahoe Future (CA)
Taylor University - Stewards of Creation Club (IN)
Tennessee Environmental Education Association (TN)
The Kohala Center - Hawai'i Island School Garden Network (HI)
The Living Planet Aquarium (UT)
The Utah Society for Environmental Education (UT)
Transportation Committee, The Emerson School (MI)
University of Rhode Island Outreach Center and Ecological Landscaping Association (RI)
Utah Conservation Corps (UT)
Utah State University Water Quality Extension (UT)
Vecinos del Rio - Mesa Prieta Petroglyph Project (NM)
Wallowa Resources (OR)
Warner Park Nature Center (TN)
West Michigan Environmental Action Council (MI)
West Virginia University Sierra Student Coalition (WV)
Wild Rhythms, LLC (CO)
Will Steger Foundation (MN)
Winter Green Farm (OR)
Wisconsin Environmental Education Foundation (WI)
Wisconsin K-12 Energy Education Program (WI)
Wisconsin K-12 Forestry Education Program, LEAF (WI)
Worcester State University (MA)
Wyoming Association for Environmental Education (WY)
Yampatika (CO)
Youth Service Hawaii (HI)
Zoo Atlanta (GA)