

# CAMPAIGN FOR ENVIRONMENTAL LITERACY

Honorable Frank R. Wolf, Chairman  
Honorable Chaka Fattah, Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Honorable Barbara Mikulski, Chairwoman  
Honorable Kay Bailey Hutchison, Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

March 16, 2012

Dear Chairman Wolf, Ranking Member Fattah, Chairwoman Mikulski and Ranking Member Hutchison:

We write first to thank you for your past support of the important education programs provided by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). For fiscal year 2013, we respectfully request that you maintain funding for the NOAA's **Environmental Literacy Grants (ELG)** Program at the fiscal year 2012 level of \$8 million. We further request that funding for **Bay-Watershed Education and Training (B-WET)** programs be sustained at \$7.2M

Authority for these programs is provided by the America COMPETES Reauthorization Act of 2010 (Public Law No: 111-358 Section 302). Over the past seven years, these NOAA education programs have been essential to advancing ocean, atmospheric, and environmental literacy in the United States, a major goal of both the *U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy Report* and the *National Policy for the Stewardship of the Ocean, Coasts, and Great Lakes*.

As is increasingly recognized by business leaders, environmental literacy provides critical knowledge that is essential for the success of a 21st Century workforce—equipping students with the skills to understand complex environmental issues, thus enabling them to both make better informed decisions as citizens and help find solutions for the challenges facing our nation. Studies have demonstrated that environmental literacy is fundamental to improving student achievement in STEM (science, technology engineering, and math) education, to creating a stronger economy through green jobs, and to promoting environmental stewardship (a key objective in all of NOAA's strategic plans).

ELG grants have given more than 20 million people access to compelling up-to-date weather, atmospheric, and ocean information through the Science on a Sphere and Ocean Today Kiosk. ELG grants to the National Science Teachers Association have also provided thousands of teachers access to the most accurate scientific information on climate, corals and hurricanes. The full impacts of the ELG program are significant, including:

- 8,000 teachers annually who receive professional development in STEM concepts related to environmental literacy,
- 2,600,000 students who benefit from more highly qualified teachers in STEM fields each year, and
- 300 jobs which are fully or partially supported by these grants.

The B-WET program supports locally relevant, experiential learning in the K-12 environment, with the purpose of increasing understanding of how the quality of the watershed affects the lives of the people who live in it. B-WET supports programs for students as well as professional development for teachers, while supporting regional education and conservation priorities. The impacts of the BWET program include:

- 120 projects funded in six regions of the country, impacting 21 states, and
- More than 57,000 students and 2,400 teachers and community leaders reached each year.

Yet millions of teachers and students across the nation have yet to benefit from these proven, successful programs. Continued funding at \$8 million for ELG and \$7.2 million for B-WET will ensure that NOAA continues to reach teachers and students to further develop the public's understanding of key ocean, atmospheric, and environmental concepts as part of its stewardship mandate.

We commend you for your leadership in sustaining these programs in prior years. They have enabled NOAA, as the nation's leading expert on weather, coastal and ocean information, to partner with the nation's top non-profit organizations and educators to put this information to good use. They have demonstrated their effectiveness, as well as their value to stakeholder communities. And as our nation begins to grapple with the complexities and challenges of diminishing ocean, coastal and watershed resources, they are timely and highly relevant.

Thank you for your consideration of our requests. If you have any questions about this letter, please contact James Elder, Director, Campaign for Environmental Literacy, at 978-526-7768, or [elder@FundEE.org](mailto:elder@FundEE.org) or Danielle Moodie-Mills, Sr. Manager Environmental Education, National Wildlife Federation, at 202-797-6634 or [moodied@nwf.org](mailto:moodied@nwf.org).

Sincerely,

National and Regional Organizations:

National Wildlife Federation	National Council for Science and the Environment
Afterschool Alliance	National Estuarine Research Reserve Association
American Forests	National Project for Excellence in Environmental Education
American Recreation Coalition	North American Association for Environmental Education
Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education	North American Marine Environment Protection Association
Association of Polar Early Career Scientists	Ocean Alliance, Inc.
Association of Zoos & Aquariums	Ocean Conservation Society
Earth Day Network	Ocean Project
EarthEcho International	Pheasants Forever
Earth Force	Quail Forever
Eco Think LLC	Student Conservation Association
Ecological Society of America	
Engaging Every Student LLC	
Hispanic Access Foundation	
Institute for Global Environmental Strategies	

State and Local Organizations:

Acorn Group, The (CA)  
Adventure WILD Summer Day Camp (OR)  
Alaska Natural Resource and Outdoor  
Education Association (AK)  
Aldo Leopold High School (NM)  
Alliance for New Jersey Environmental  
Education (NJ)  
Anacostia Watershed Society (MD)  
Arizona Zoological Society (AZ)  
Artist Boat (TX)  
Audubon Naturalist Society (MD, VA)  
Back Bay Science Center (CA)  
BOAT CAMP Nature School (MA)  
BridgeWater Education Consulting, LLC  
Carolina Forest High School (SC)  
Camp SEA Lab (CA)  
Cache Valley No Child Left Inside (UT)  
Catamount Center (CO)  
Chattahoochee Nature Center (GA)  
Chesapeake Bay Trust (MD)  
Coastal Studies Program of Hood College (MD)  
Creative Energetics (OR)  
Dauphin Island Sea Lab (AL)  
DC Greenworks (D.C.)  
Discovery Center at Murfree Spring (TN)  
Eastern Kentucky University's Center for  
Environmental Education (KY)  
EcoScapes Landscaping (NM)  
Edith Bowen Laboratory School (UT)  
Environment Education Connections of South  
Dakota (SD)  
Environmental Center, The (OR)  
Environmental Dynamics Program, University  
of Arkansas (AR)  
Environmental Education Association of  
Alabama (AL)  
Environmental Education Association of New  
Mexico (NM)  
Environmental Education Association of  
Oregon  
Environmental Learning for Kids (CO)  
Friends of Edgewood Natural Preserve (CA)  
Friends of Kaena (HI)  
Friends of Outdoor School (OR)  
Friends of the Manitowoc River Watershed  
(WI)  
Georgia Wildlife Federation (GA)

Gila Conservation Education Center (NM)  
Gloucester High School (VA)  
Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy (CA)  
Great Smoky Mountains Institute at Tremont  
(TN)  
GREEN Community Schools, a program of the  
Marilyn G. Rabb Foundation (IL)  
Hilton Pond Center for Piedmont Natural  
History (SC)  
Houston Wilderness Inc (TX)  
Hui Malama na Mea a Kane (HI)  
Idaho Environmental Education Association  
(ID)  
Institute for Biomedical Philosophy (FL)  
Johnson Creek Watershed Council (OR)  
Kalamazoo Nature Center (MI)  
Kentucky Association for Environmental  
Education (KY)  
kidsGROWkentucky, Inc. (KY)  
Kodiak Ocean Science Discovery Lab (AK)  
Kohala Center - Hawai'i Island School Garden  
Network (HI)  
Living Planet Aquarium (UT)  
Maine State Aquarium (ME)  
Maryland Association for Environmental and  
Outdoor Education (MD)  
Maryland Project Learning Tree (MD)  
Michigan Technological University Center for  
Science & Environmental Outreach (MI)  
Mililani High School Science Learning Center  
(HI)  
Minnesota Association for Environmental  
Education (MN)  
Missouri Environmental Education Association  
(MO)  
Mountain Kids (NM)  
Museum of Science and Industry, Chicago (IL)  
New Hampshire Children in Nature Coalition  
(NH)  
New York State Marine Education Association  
(NY)  
Ocean Discovery Institute (CA)  
One Ocean Consulting (CA)  
Openlands (IL)  
Pacific Education Institute (WA)  
Papahana Kuaola (HI)  
Parks & People Foundation (MD)

Place-Based Education Northwest (OR)  
Pleasant Valley School (OR)  
Potomac Environmental Research and  
Education Center, George Mason University  
Potomac Valley Audubon Society (WV)  
Reef Relief (FL)  
Return of the Natives Restoration Education  
Project of the Watershed Institute, California  
State University Monterey Bay (CA)  
Rhode Island Environmental Education  
Association (RI)  
Save The River (NY)  
Science Kids (WY)  
Seacoast Science Center (NH)  
Seattle Aquarium (WA)  
Shoreline Education for Awareness (OR)  
Siskiyou Field Institute (OR)  
South Coast Watersheds (OR)  
Southern Oregon Regional Environmental  
Education Leaders (OR)  
Southwest Conservation Corps (AZ, CO, NM)  
Springfield Township Parks and Recreation  
(MI)  
Sustain Forest Grove (OR)  
TahoeFuture (NV)  
Transportation Committee, The Emerson  
School (OR)  
Utah Society for Environmental Education  
(UT)  
Utah State University Water Quality Extension  
(UT)  
Warner Park Nature Center (TN)  
Winter Green Farm (OR)  
Wisconsin Environmental Education  
Foundation (WI)  
Zoo Atlanta (GA)