April 8, 2013

The Honorable Michael Simpson
Chairman
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment,
and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
United States House of Representatives
B-308 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jack Reed
Chairman
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment,
and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
131 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jim Moran
Ranking Minority Member
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment,
and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
United States House of Representatives
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Ranking Minority Member
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment,
and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
125 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

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 Patrick Fitzgerald of the National Wildlife Federation at (202) 797-6821. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

National and Regional Organizations:

African American Environmentalist Association, Center for Environment, Commerce & Energy

Afterschool Alliance

Alliance for the Great Lakes

American Forest Foundation

American Recreation Coalition

Appalachian Mountain Club

Appalachian Trail Conservancy

Arbor Day Foundation

The Association of Nature Center Administrators

Association of Science-Technology Centers

Association of Zoos & Aquariums

Audubon Maryland-DC

Audubon Naturalist Society

Biodiversity Project

BlueGreen Alliance

Campaign for Environmental Literacy

Chesapeake Bay Foundation

Chesapeake Bay Trust

Children & Nature Network

Choose Outdoors

City Parks Alliance

Council for Environmental Education

The Corps Network

Dimensions Educational Research Foundation

Earth Day Network

Earth Force

EarthEcho International

Ecological Society of America

Endangered Species Coalition

Friends of the Earth

Great Lakes Fishery Trust

Great Smoky Mountains Institute at Tremont

Izzak Walton League of America

The Jane Goodall Institute

Keep America Beautiful

Living Classrooms Foundation

National Center for Science Education

National Council for Science and the Environment

National Park Foundation

National Project for Excellence in Environmental Education

National Recreation and Park Association

National Wildlife Federation

Nature Explore

NatureBridge

North American Association for Environmental Education

The Ocean Project

Odysseus

The Outdoor Foundation

Project WET Foundation

Public Lands Service Coalition

Second Nature

Sierra Club

Society for Public Health Education

Southwest Conservation Corps

Trout Unlimited

U.S. Green Building Council

University of Wisconsin-Madison Arboretum Earth Partnership Program

US Play Coalition

The Wilderness Society

Will Steger Foundation

State and Local Organizations:

Arkansas Wildlife Federation (AR)

Friends of the Petaluma River (CA)

Green Schools Initiative (CA)

Inverness Associates (CA)

San Diego Zoo Institute for Conservation Research (CA)

Colorado Alliance for Environmental Education (CO)

Connecticut Outdoor & Environmental Educators Association (CT)

Solar Youth (CT)

Clean Air Partners (DC)

DC Environmental Education Consortium (DC)

DC Greenworks (DC)

Saturday Environmental Academy (DC)

Delaware Nature Society (DE)

Common Ground for Conservation - America Verde (FL)

Greening Youth Foundation (GA)

Sustaining Urban Villages Inc. (GA)

Zoo Atlanta (GA)

Conservation Council for Hawai'I (HI)

Iowa Wildlife Federation (IA)

Wagner Conservation Coalition (IA)

Catalyst Group Global (IL)

Chicago Zoological Society (IL)

Omicron Technologies, Inc. (IL)

Openlands (IL)

YouthMuse (IL)

Kansas Association for Conservation and Environmental Education (KS)

Eastern Kentucky University Center for Environmental Education (KY)

Bayou Land Conservancy (LA)

Louisiana Wildlife Federation (LA)

Anacostia Watershed Society (MD)

Environmental Stewardship Strategies (MD)

Maryland State Department of Education (MD)

Montgomery County Department of Recreation (MD)

National Aquarium (MD)

Kalamazoo Nature Center (MI)

Crow River Trail Guards, Inc. (MN)

Minnesota Division Izaak Walton League of America (MN)

Conservation Federation of Missouri (MO)

Minnesota Association for Environmental Education (MT)

Geographic Educators of Nebraska (NE)

Nebraska Association of Conservation and Environmental Educators (NE)

Otter Brook Farm Environmental Education Program (NH)

Alliance for NJ Environmental Education (NJ)

Jenkinson's Aquarium (NJ)

New Jersey Geographic Alliance (NJ)

The Wetlands Institute (NJ)

Woodford Cedar Run Wildlife Refuge (NJ)

Eco Think LLC (NM)

Environmental Education Association of New Mexico (NM)

Green Alliance (OH)

Teaching & Learning Collaborative (OH)

Association of Northwest Steelheaders (OR)

CEN/Environmental Education Project (OR)

Environmental Education Association of Oregon (OR)

Friends of Outdoor School (OR)

Oregon Coast Aquarium (OR)

PennFuture (PA)

Pennsylvania Association of Environmental Educators (PA)

Riverbend Environmental Education Center (PA)

Audubon Society of Rhode Island (RI)

Hilton Pond Center for Piedmont Natural History (SC)

South Carolina Wildlife Federation (SC)

South Dakota Wildlife Federation (SD)

Memphis Botanic Garden (TN)

Tennessee Aquarium Conservation Institute (TN)

Tennessee Geographic Alliance (TN)

Warner Park Nature Center, Nashville Metro Parks (TN)

Artist Boat (TX)

REAL School Gardens (TX)

Texas Conservation Alliance (TX)

Travis Audubon Society (TX)

Virginia Conservation Network (VA)

Virgin Islands Conservation Society (VI)

E3 Washington (WA)

Friends of the Upper Mississippi (WI)

Good for Business (WI)

Wisconsin Association for Environmental Education (WI)

Wisconsin Center for Environmental Education (WI)

Wisconsin Environmental Education Board (WI)

Wisconsin Environmental Education Foundation (WI)

West Virginia Rivers Coalition (WV)

Wyoming Association for Environmental Education (WY)