

Children and Nature Connection

Monthly Update - January 2012

You will find event announcements, job opportunities, grant opportunities and research and resources pertaining to children and nature. If you are interested in a posted item, please contact the individual(s) or group(s) sponsoring the item(s). If you would like to be added to the e-mail distribution list, contact gerhard@mnrecpark.org



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Announcing 2012 Work for Water Art & Design Contest for High School Students

The Freshwater Society is sponsoring the 2012 Work for Water and Design Contest. This contest will provide high school students the opportunity to inspire Minnesotans to protect our waters through graphic design, short videos, photos, paintings, drawings, etc. Each item must be accompanied by an essay relating the applicant's work to the theme of urban runoff. Winning entries will be featured on billboards, in PSAs, websites, yard signs, t-shirts, etc. throughout the state and will also receive cash prizes. All entries must be submitted to <http://freshwater.org/ArtDesignContest/> by midnight on April 30, 2012. For more details, see <http://www.freshwater.org/index.php/art-contest>



America's Great Outdoors: Developing the Next Generation of Conservationists

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) in cooperation with federal partners announced a request for proposals for financial support of new conservation job training programs. In addition, it will address the need to put young people, especially urban and minority youth, back in touch with the natural world. For more information and to apply, go to:

http://www.nfwf.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Charter_Programs_List&CONTENTID=22339&TEMPLATE=/CM/ContentDisplay.cfm

REI Funds Initiative to Get Kids Outside

The REI Foundation has recently funded The Mountaineers Youth and Family Initiative. This organization's goal is to get young people to value outdoor adventure and to shape the future of youth education, recreation and conservation in the Pacific Northwest. The money they received from REI will help to increase staff and volunteer resources and provide additional programs and outdoor experiences to more children.

For more information, go to: http://findout.rei.com/blog_detail/?contentid=5797801599299826419

C&N Network Releases *Together in Nature: Pathways to a Stronger, Closer Family*

This free, downloadable toolkit was recently released by the C&NN to provide an overview of research and offers family-friendly, age-appropriate suggestions for outdoor activities that support parent-child activities and healthy child development. Available for download at: http://www.childrenandnature.org/downloads/C&NN_FamilyBondingToolKit_Pilot.pdf

Green Ribbon Schools Recognition - Deadline February 22nd

Minnesota will be participating in the U.S. Department of Education's Green Ribbon Schools program. Green Ribbon Schools will have achieved or made considerable progress towards: 1) energy efficient buildings; 2) healthy students and school environments; and 3) environmental literacy of all graduates. The combined achievement in these three areas will be the basis for the Green Ribbon Schools award. The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) will be nominating up to four Minnesota schools to be forwarded to U.S. DOE for the final recognition. Applications are due to MDE by February 22, 2012. For information about the program, visit <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/green-ribbon-schools/index.html>

Minnesota Science Teachers Association is Accepting Nominations for *Teacher of the Year Award*

The Minnesota Science Teachers Association (MnSTA) Teacher of the Year Award, funded by the Medtronic Foundation, provides winners with \$1000 grants for use in their classroom. Each award winner will be recognized at the Minnesota Conference on Science Education, March 2, 2012 in Duluth. Previous winners have received funds for environmental projects, classroom inquiry, and recording devices for a high-atmosphere balloon launch. Application deadline is **February 1st**. For more information or to apply, go to: <http://www.mnsta.org/awards.html> or by contacting John Olson mde.contactus@state.mn.us

National Environmental Education Foundation (NEEF) Announces *Planet Connect Student Grants for High Schoolers*

Planet Connect Student Grants 2012: Empowering youth to make a difference. Planet Connect is giving grants of \$1000 to high school students to participate in wildlife conservation-focused internships and implement problem-solving projects. Winners will receive \$500 for the project and \$500 at the close of their internship served during the summer of 2012. Applications are due **February 1, 2012**. For more information or to apply visit http://www.neefusa.org/grants/pc_grants.htm

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RESEARCH

Playgrounds too Safe to Keep Little Kids Active

In a research study published in the February issue of *Pediatrics*, it was found that boring playgrounds may be one reason young children aren't getting enough exercise. Through interviews with childcare providers, safety concerns and emphasis on early academic readiness were all reasons given for preschoolers to not engage in physical activity. To read a review of the study, go to:

<http://www.medpagetoday.com/Pediatrics/GeneralPediatrics/30493>

C&N Network has Released *Updated Health Benefits to Children from Outdoors*

A collection of research and studies on the health benefits of outdoors and nature for children that were originally published as part of their annotated bibliographies:

<http://www.childrenandnature.org/downloads/C&NNHealthBenefits2012.pdf>

Children's Contact with Outdoors: A Focus on Educators and Educational Settings

Taken from five volumes of research developed by the C&NN, this research summary focuses on education and educational settings as related to outdoors and nature. To download the research summary, go to:

<http://www.childrenandnature.org/downloads/C&NNEducationBenefits2012.pdf>



NEWS

Minnesota School Wins Local Emmy for Recycling Video

"Boxes, Bottles and Banana Peels," a fun recycling tutorial created by students at Parkview Center School in Roseville, Minnesota won them first place in the 2011 Upper Midwest Regional Emmy Awards in the "education/schools — program/special/series" category. This ten-minute video was a collaboration of the school, the City of Roseville and Ramsey County Public Health. For more information and to watch the video, go to:

<http://www.seek.state.mn.us/compact2.cfm?ItemId=2072>

EVENTS

Spring 2012 Online Course: Measuring Environmental Education Outcomes

Cornell University's Civic Ecology Lab announces an online course offered through EECapacity, the EPA-funded national environmental education training program. This 12-week, non-credit professional development course will focus on identifying individual, community, and ecosystem outcomes of environmental education and exploring quantitative outcome measures, such as environmental behaviors, sense of place, and connectedness to nature. The course is offered for educators from the U.S., Canada and Mexico.

Additional Information:

Apply: Jan 2, 2012 - Feb 3, 2012

Acceptance notification: Feb 13, 2012 Course dates: Feb 20 - May 13, 2012

Limited to 16 participants Course fee: \$100 (scholarships available)

Instructor: Tania Schusler Co-instructor: Marianne Krasny

Course flyer: <http://civicecology.org/doc/2012-meeo-flyer.pdf>

Course webpage <http://civicecology.org/course-meeo.php>

Questions? Please email Tania Schusler tms23@cornell.edu



Submittals: If you would like to submit an item for listserv posting, email details no later than the last Monday of the month to: cyfc@umn.edu
Please note that we need all event/update details as email text. Due to potential formatting difficulties, MN CNC does not distribute word document attachments or PDF documents. We are happy to accept web pages and links for distribution.
Thank you!