

Perspectives Timeline

Events that have Influenced EE in the United States

1800's

- Louis Agassiz "Study Nature Not Books"
- Landholder Stewardship
- Native American Land Ethics

1891

- Wilbur Sackman's "Nature Study for the Common Schools"
 - ◆ First definition of nature study movement

1900's

- Nature Study – Natural History of plants and animals – Rousseau supported
- NOW – Awareness and appreciation for nature – learning discovery
- Cornell University – Rural School Leaflets – Teacher Education in Nature Studies starts.

1920's

- Ecology – recognized as a scientific field

1930's

- Soil Conservation (Dust Bowl)
 - ◆ Then – focus on soils, erosion, flooding
 - ◆ Law to teach lost funding
 - ◆ John Dewey – Progressive Education Movement "Learning by Doing"
- Junior Audubon Club for elementary schools started – source of nature education

1935

- National Education Association (NEA) assumes leadership position
 - ◆ Now – Focus on National Resources
 - ◆ Importance of natural resources and use
 - ◆ Concerns for urban youth
 - ◆ Outdoor education encourages outdoor experiences

1950's

- Concerns about environment are shown greater public attention.

1953

- Conservation Association formed

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1962

- "Silent Spring" by Rachel Carson
- Oil Spills

1969

- National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (P.L. 91-190).
The purposes of this Act are: To declare a national policy which will encourage productive and enjoyable harmony between man and his environment; to promote efforts which will prevent or eliminate damage to the environment and biosphere and stimulate the health and welfare of man; to enrich the understanding of the ecological systems and natural resources important to the Nation; and to establish a Council on Environmental quality."
- Environmental education (EE) defined by Dr. William Stapp, University of Michigan.
- Professor Clay Schoenfeld begins the journal, Environmental Education, later to be renamed The Journal of Environmental Education.

1970

- National Environmental Education Act of 1970 (P.L. 91-516)
The Act authorized the following initiatives:
 - ♦ Creation of Office of EE in U.S. Dept. of Health, Education and Welfare:
 - ♦ National Advisory Council for EE; and
 - ♦ The establishment of a domestic grants program.(P.L. 91-516 was not reauthorized by Congress in the 1980's.)
 - ♦ Definition is evolved to show that information alone is not enough
Goals: Knowledge, Skills, Commitment
Applied through participation
- The Western Regional Environmental Education Council (WREEC) (now the Council for Environmental Education (CEE)) is created. "A unique effort to create a partnership and network between education and natural resource professionals in support of environmental education."

1971

- National Association for EE (now the North American Association for EE – NAAEE) founded. NAAEE is a professional association for environmental educators.

1972

- United Nations Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm, Sweden
Recommendation 98 calls for the provision of environmental education as a means to address environmental issues worldwide.
- Alliance for Environmental Education founded (AEE was disbanded in the mid 1990's). "A broad coalition advocating environmental education...made up of

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many diverse national, international, and regional groups – conservation and education organizations, corporations, and organized labor.”

- UNESCO/UNEP
 - ♦ Workshops/conferences
 - ♦ Implementation

1975

- The Belgrade Charter written in Belgrade, Yugoslavia by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) – outlines the basic structure of EE.
- Snowmass Conference, “Environmental Education: Perspectives and Prospectives,” sponsored by the Alliance for Environmental Education and WREEC (now the Council for Environmental Education.).
- Federal Interagency Commission on Education (FICE) Subcommittee

1976

- Project Learning Tree (PLT) developed by the Western Regional Environmental Education Council, Inc. (WREEC, now the Council for Environmental Education) and the American Forest Institute (now the American Forest Foundation). “PLT helps students (K-12) gain awareness and knowledge of the natural and built environment, their place within it, as well as their responsibility for it.”
- St. Louis International Regional Conference on Environmental Education (A Report on the North American Regional Seminar on Environmental Education). (Alliance for EE) Among other papers, this report included John Hug’s “Two Hats” essay and Gary Harvey’s “A Conceptualization of Environmental Education.”

1977

- UNESCO/UNEP
- Intergovernmental Conference on EE in Tblisi, Republic of Georgia – the goals, objectives, guiding principles, and target outcomes of EE are laid out. Supported worldwide EE.
 - ♦ Awareness, knowledge, attitudes, skills, participation

1978

- “From Ought to Action,” A Report on the national Leadership Conference on Environmental Education, March 28-30, Washington, D.C.

1980

- Closing of Office of EE

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- NAAEE President Clay Schoenfeld creates the National Commission on EE Research (renamed in 1987-88 to the North American Commission on EE Research and in 1999 to NAAEE's Research Commission.)
- "Goals for Curriculum Development in Environmental Education," by H. Hungerford, R. Petyon, and R. Wilke in *The Journal of Environmental Education*, 11 (3), 42-47.

1981

- "Research in Environmental Education, 1971-1980," published by the National commission on EE Research.
- National EE Act not reorganized
- Real friends are not formal educational agencies, but environmental and protection agencies.
- States are developing legislation and standards.

1983

- "Policies and Practices," The First National Congress for Environmental Education Futures, August 12-17, Burlington, VT. (Alliance for EE).
- Project WILD developed by the Western Regional Environmental Education Council, Inc. (WREEC, now the Council for Environmental Education, CEE) and the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies. Project WILD sponsors conservation and environmental education programs with a focus on wildlife for grades K-12.
- North American Association for Environmental Education has definition.

1984

- "A Summary of Research in Environmental Education, 1971-1982. The Second Report of the National Commission on EE Research," published by the National Commission on EE Research.

1987

- The Brundtland Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development. Also known as "Our Common Future," this report introduced the idea of sustainable development in which environmental protection and economic growth are viewed as interdependent concepts.
 - ♦ View environment within context of human influences, social equity, economics, culture and political structure
- United Church of Christ's Commission for Racial Justice (CRJ) issues report: "Toxic Wastes and Race in the United States: A National Report on the Racial and Socioeconomic Characteristics of Communities with Hazardous Waste Sites."

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1989

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- The affiliation of 55 state and provincial EE Associations with NAAEE began. These 55 state and provincial Associations have over 15,000 members.

1990

- National Environmental Education Act of 1990 (P.L. 101-169). The Act authorizes the following:
 - ♦ An Office of Environmental Education in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA);
 - ♦ An environmental education and training program;
 - ♦ Environmental education grants;
 - ♦ Student fellowships;
 - ♦ The President's Environmental Youth Awards;
 - ♦ The Federal Task Force and National Advisory Council;
 - ♦ The National Environmental Education and Training Foundation (NEETF).
- Project WET (Water Education for Teachers) becomes a national program co-sponsored by the Council for Environmental Education (CEE, formerly the Western Regional Environmental Education Council, WREEC) and The Watercourse. Project WET facilitates and promotes awareness, appreciation, knowledge, and stewardship of water resources in students K-12.

1991

- The National Environmental Education Advancement Project (NEEAP) was founded at the University of Wisconsin Stevens Point.
- First National People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit, Washington, D.C. Summit participants adopt the Principles of Environmental Justice.

1992

- Council of State Governments, Environmental Education Subcommittee, National Environmental Task Force, Model Environmental Education Act (Lexington, KY).
- U.S. EPA EE training program awarded to the National Consortium for Environmental Education and Training (NCEET), a cooperative partnership led by the University of Michigan.
- United Nations conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. (UNCED) "Earth Summit" Chapter 36 of Agenda 21 focuses on EE's role "reorienting education towards sustainable development; increasing public awareness; and promoting training." Public participation/decisions.
- U.S. EPA establishes the Office of Environmental Justice.
- National Consortium for EE – First phase
- ECO/ED, Canada – Focus on accuracy, quality and delivery of education

1993

- Report of the AD Hoc Working Group on Environmental Education and Training to the Federal Coordinating Council for Science, Engineering, and Technology's (FCCSET) Committee on Education and Training (CET). September 17. Interagency review of Federal EE Programs.
- National Project for Excellence in Environmental Education (NPEEE) is initiated by the North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE).
- The National Association for Interpretation (NAI) creates their "Environmental Education Section."

1994

- The National Forum on Partnerships Supporting Education about the Environment," a demonstration project of the President's Council on Sustainable Development, is held at the Presidio, San Francisco, California. The report, "Education for Sustainability: An Agenda for Action," was produced as a result of this meeting.
- President Clinton issues Executive Order 12898 "Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority and Low-Income Populations." Topics addressed include: "Agency Responsibilities; Research, data Collection, and Analysis; Subsistence Consumption of Fish and Wildlife; and Public Participation and Access to Information."

1995

- Second U.S. EPA EE training program awarded to the North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE) to establish the Environmental Education and Training Partnership (EETAP).
- The National Environmental Education Advancement Project's Survey of Environmental Education in the United States.
- National Consortium for EE – Second phase
- UNESCO, Paris
Girls & women, funding, teacher cooperation, international EE for 21st century

1996

- Reauthorization of the National Environmental Education Act passes in the Senate, but was not acted upon in the House before the end of the 104th Congress.
- Report by the George C. Marshall Institute's Independent Commission on Environmental Education (now the Environmental Literacy Council), "Are We Building Environmental Literacy?"

1996 (cont.)

- Issue of The Environmental Education Advocate, the newsletter of the National Environmental Education Advancement Project, University of Wisconsin, Stevens Point, responds to negative reviews of EE programs and materials.
- U.S. EPA's National EE Advisory Council releases the "Report Assessing Environmental Education in the United States and the Implementation of the National Environmental Education Act of 1990" [PDF 405K] in December of 1996.
- "Environmental Education Materials: Guidelines for Excellence," prepared by the National Project for Excellence in EE (NPEEE), a project of NAAEE. "A set of recommendations for developing and selecting environmental education materials."
- "Research in Environmental Education, 1981-1990," T. Marcinkowski and R. Mrazek (eds.), published by the North American Commission on Environmental Education Research (formerly the National Commission on EE Research).
- National Environmental Education Summit, Burlingame, California. A gathering of more than 50 organizations to focus attention on critical issues in the field of EE in the U.S. and to build networks and collaboration across the country. Papers developed at the Summit included:
 - "EE in the United States: Definition and Direction," by M. Archie and E. McCrea.
 - "A Summary of Survey and Research Findings on Environmental Literacy in the United States and the Effects of Environmental Education," by M. Paden, K. Pickering, and T. Volk.
 - "Nine Guiding Principles: Professional Responsibilities of Environmental Educators," by S. Bissell, M. Hillard, D. Hollums and K. McGlaufflin.

1997

- Reauthorization of the National EE Act passes a Senate committee, but was not introduced in the House in the 105th Congress.
- Leading Environmental Organizations respond to the Marshall report "Are We Building Environmental Literacy?"
 - ◆ Sierra Club
 - ◆ Zero Population Growth – "Are They Building Environmental Literacy?"
 - ◆ Environmental Working Group; a CLEAR View, "Special Issue: Assault on Environmental Education." (January 27)
- "From Classroom to Community and Beyond: Educating for a Sustainable Future," Report of the public Linkage, Dialogue, and Education task force of the President's Council on Sustainable Development.
- National Public Radio's Talk of the National and All Things Considered look at the "controversy over EE."
- NEETF/Roper Survey – National Report Card on Environmental Knowledge, Attitudes and Behaviors: The sixth Annual Survey of Adult Americans.

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- "Environmental Literacy in the United States: What Should Be...What Is...Getting from Here to There," by T. Volk & W. McBeth is published.

1998

- NEETF/Roper Survey – National Report Card: Environmental Knowledge, Attitudes and Behaviors: The Seventh Annual survey of Adult Americans.
- The State Education and Environment Roundtable (SEER), releases its report "Closing the Achievement Gap: Using the Environment as an Integrated Context for Learning."
- HENSE, the Higher Education Network for Sustainability and the Environment, is created. HENSE is a national network of individuals and organizations from academia, associations, government, non-profits, community interests and business who are dedicated to improving the quality of life for all through the realm of higher education.
- Reauthorization of the National EE Act is still pending.

1999

- NEETF/Roper Survey – "Environmental Readiness for the 21st Century: The Eighth Annual National Report Card on Environmental Attitudes, Knowledge and Behavior." (December).
- The National Environmental Education Advancement Project's (NEEAP) Survey of Environmental Education in the United States.
- "Excellence in Environmental Education: Guidelines for Learning (K-12)," prepared by the National Project for Excellence in EE (NPEEE), a project of NAAEE. "Provides students, parents, educators, home schoolers, policy makers, and the public a set of common, voluntary guidelines for environmental education."
- Reauthorization of the National EE Act is introduced and passed by a senate committee; introduction in the House and action in the Senate is expected in early 2000 for the 106th Congress.

2000

- Guidelines for the Initial Preparation of Environmental Educators, prepared by the National Project for Excellence in EE (NPEEE), a project of NAAEE. A set of recommended guidelines for the preservice preparation of environmental educators.
- Reauthorization of the National EE Act passes Senate (April 27) with amendments by Unanimous Consent and is sent to the House.
- Dr. Bora Simmons, Northern Illinois University, testifies before a congressional committee on behalf of the North American Association for Environmental Education in support of the reauthorization of the National Environmental Education Act. Simmons appeared on June 27th before the House Subcommittee

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on Early Childhood, Youth and Families, and explained how the Act has benefited students and improved environmental literacy in the United States.

- "Classroom Warfare," by Ted Williams is published in Audubon magazine. The article responds to popular criticisms of environmental education.