

Building a Web that Lasts:

Washington State's Comprehensive EE Plan Update

By Abby Ruskey

The process to develop a statewide comprehensive environmental education plan works hand in hand with the EEAW goal to develop our organization and strengthen our service to the EE profession. This includes our role as the collaborative facilitator of the comprehensive planning process itself.

Several noteworthy developments have taken place this spring and are planned. Highlights include:

The prototype local-level event was held and evaluated in Tacoma on March 31st (see Pierce County article). A follow-up meeting to develop a strategic plan in Tacoma-Pierce County will take place on June 22nd at the University of Puget Sound. Coordination of events modeled after the Tacoma-Pierce County event will take place spring of 2007.

The Washington Comprehensive EE Plan Advisory Council kick-off will take place July 11th in Tacoma. The Advisory Council is co-chaired by Governor Christine Gregoire and William Ruckelshaus. The members of the council are regionally, professionally and culturally diverse representatives from the environmental education field and its stakeholders broadly defined.

The development of local and state-level frameworks and tools to professionalize and guide the planning process will include state-of-the-art internet communications tools. The testing, evaluation, completion and packaging of these frameworks and tools will take place over the course of this summer and fall.

To date, the central underlying question that has emerged to guide development of the frameworks and tools is "What can be done today to ensure that all Washington residents have a healthy, vibrant, prosperous, and livable community tomorrow and, specifically, what role should education play?" With the Washington Comprehensive EE Planning process, we are weaving a web with many threads and layers to not only answer this question, but to ensure that we have the "on the ground" capacity to make our recommendations a reality.

To get involved please contact us at eeaw@eeaw.org or 360-943-6643.

Message from the President

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Members receive the EAW newsletter, a subscription to *Clearing: Environmental Education in the Pacific Northwest*, and information on EAW's annual conference. To become a member, send us your name, organization, address, email and telephone number to EAW, Box 1264, Bellingham, WA 98227. Please note if you already subscribe to *Clearing*. Individual \$35; Student \$25; Family \$50; Group \$125; Supporting \$125; Life \$500.

PUBLICATION AND SUBMISSIONS

EAW is published in February, May, August and November. The deadline for receiving items for publication is the 30th of the previous month. submissions are subject to editing.

Your EAW President: Heath Packard

Not Your Grandmother's EE

Recollections of my Grandmother and her sister blur and flicker like old home movies in my minds eye. We allowed an instinctual inquiry set the pace for our walks together. Decades later, I still treasure the stones and fossils collected and the memory of wonder at an examination of insect larvae dwelling within the stems of Queen Anne's lace.

Both women taught in one-room school houses in the rural Northeast. Simpler and more modest times dictated their use of outdoor classrooms long before the first formal articulations of environmental education (EE).

Today's students, families and communities are bombarded with challenges of a fast-paced, high-tech modern age, challenges which compete with traditional unstructured outdoor exploration previous generations were virtually guaranteed.

Fortunately, a maturing and professionalizing environmental education field is increasing its stock and relevance in the face of these challenges. New terms are coined like nature deficit disorder (Richard Louv, 2005) to represent the sophisticated and amassing articulations of EE's benefits to children's health, learning and a sustainable future for all.

EAW is playing a key role in this transformation. We are on the cusp of launching a statewide comprehensive planning process for EE in Washington where we facilitate local and statewide visioning, strategy development and capacity building to provide quality EE for every child, family and community. We are in the throws of an EAW strategic planning process that will chart a bold new path to advancing our support for the field.

EAW has once again emerged as the leading EE advocate in the state legislature securing a \$150,000 increase for EE grants and ensuring passage of HB 2910, a study of EE's affects on career development, citizenship and service learning—information useful to advancing the statewide plan. We also supported the passage of SB 6161 enabling the issuance of group fishing permits to students and groups working in partnership with and participating in Department of Fish and Wildlife outdoor education programs (see related story p. 4).

It is an honor and privilege to assume leadership of EAW's impressive board and ambitious agenda for 2006/2007 (see Board Announcement on p. 3). Together, you—the EE beneficiaries and providers and Washington's professional EE Association are poised to continue to raise the stock and demand for quality EE!

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Announcement: 2006 Board Election Results

After an exciting and competitive board election, EEAW has seven strong new leaders, and several returning board members who will continue to serve EEAW and EE in Washington. In addition, virtually all of the runners-up have committed to working with EEAW's committees in the year to come.

Please join us in welcoming our new board members, an impressive lot. Here's a peak at their new expertise and perspectives they bring to EEAW:

Jonas Cox, Faculty, Gonzaga University, Spokane. Jonas is on the faculty of the School of Education at Gonzaga University in Spokane and he promotes environmental education as a powerful educational model to help young people begin to understand the complexity of the world around them.

Ray Cramer, Naturalist, Islandwood, Bainbridge Island. Ray is an environmental educator with 23 years of teaching experience in residential outdoor settings across the country, and has direct experience as a past president of the Association for Environmental and Outdoor Education (EEAW's California counterpart).

Sue Fisk, Manager, Chewelah Peak Learning Center, Chewelah. Sue is the catalyst for an immense program at Chewelah Peak that engages students in hands-on inquiry based lessons, designed especially for them. Her program includes the creation and delivery of programs and services to the students, teachers, and has been instrumental in developing the Chewelah Peak Learning Center.

Jami Ostby-Marsh, Environmental Educator, West Valley Outdoor Learning Center, Spokane. Jamie was the lead organizer of very successful 2006 EEAW Conference in Spokane. Her personal belief is that students learn best when their learning is based on personal experience and environmental education gives students a better understanding of their environment and how they are interconnected with nature and not separate from it. Jamie says "by building these connections we are helping develop better a better community."

Kevin Powers, Director, 4-H Forestry Education Program, WSC Extension, Wenatchee. As director of the WSU Extension, 4-H Forestry Education Program in Chelan County Kevin has created and nurtured a unique partnership with five school districts providing both in-school and out of school educational programs. These programs have received both regional and national recognition for providing outstanding environmental educational content. Kevin is interested in implementing changes in how natural resource education will be delivered within our schools and communities.

Yalonda Sinde, Executive Director, Community Coalition for Environmental Justice, Seattle. Yolonda has been the director of CCEJ for 10 years and was a volunteer board member for three. Yolonda has a commitment to ensuring that environmental education includes learning about environmental justice and that learning about the environment interests and inspires young people of color. She believes this is possible if people of color are involved in the work of groups such as EEAW.

Saul Weisberg, Executive Director, North Cascades Institute, Sedro-Woolley. Saul is a national leader and entrepreneur for EE with expertise in field-based and residential education programs, nonprofit business leadership, community outreach, planning, marketing and development. His experience on three national boards – Association of Nature Center Administrators, Alliance for Wilderness Education and Stewardship and The Dudley Foundation – will complement EEAW's growing vision for the future.

E.E. Across The State

Tacoma Students Help win Passage of Bill

By Kevin Patterson, Tahoma School District

Four Tahoma High School students and their Outdoor Academy classmates are being given much of the credit for passage of a bill in the 2006 legislative session that makes it possible for teachers working with teens involved in outdoor education to apply for a group fishing permit as part of their school program.

Students Tyler Pierce, Raelynd Tarnove, Tara Sanborn and Jeff Henkel did research and wrote speeches that they delivered in support of the bill to legislative committees. The students argued that not all students could afford a fishing license and that should not be a barrier to providing them with an opportunity to learn about the natural environment. Their classmates, as well as representatives from three other school districts, wrote letters of support. The reward for their work came when the bill was passed unanimously in both the House of Representatives and Senate and signed by Gov. Chris Gregoire.

The students were chosen to represent the Outdoor Academy class by its teachers, Mike Hanson, Tracy Krause and Jamie Vollrath, who found a willing ally in the state Department of Fish and Wildlife to obtain special fishing permits for students. Fish and Wildlife got behind the special fishing license after being inspired by Tahoma's Outdoor Academy program, which integrates English, science and physical education.

"Tahoma really was why we decided to pursue this," said Nicole Ricketts, conservation education program coordinator for Fish and Wildlife. "If they hadn't asked WDFW would not have realized the need."

Ricketts said her agency and the Pacific Education Institute worked with Tahoma's students and

teachers, including Dawn Wakeley, Associate Director of Teaching and Learning, and School Board member Tami Henkel, to develop presentations and attend hearings before Senate and House committees.

"When we went up to speak, they all sat up and paid attention," Jeff Henkel said. Ricketts agreed. "The kids really brought it home," she said. "I feel it's why it passed unanimously."

Ricketts praised Tahoma for providing environmental education through the Outdoor Academy. She said the reason the department endorses the group fishing license for teens is "so we can effectively teach about aquatic ecosystems and fish ecology. That's why we did this. It's not about a free day of fishing . . . Tahoma, through the Outdoor Academy, demonstrates the success that these kind of opportunities can provide. They (Tahoma) showed it would be worthwhile to make this happen."



Four Tahoma High School students pose with Gov. Chris Gregoire, Sen. Bob Oke and representatives of the state Department of Fish and Wildlife as the governor signs a bill sponsored by Oke that provides group fishing privileges for outdoor education programs. The students who testified in legislative hearings that helped win passage of the bill are Tara Sanborn and Raelynd Tarnove (left) with Tyler Pierce and Jeff Henkel (right). Among the Fish and Wildlife representatives working with the students are Nicole Ricketts, far right, and Margaret Tudor, far left. Lynn Ferguson, of PEI, left, also participated.

E.E. Across The State

OPPORTUNITY FOR HIGH SCHOOL MARINE BIOLOGY FIELD STUDIES IN SEATTLE AREA for 2006-7 School Year

The Seattle Aquarium Citizen Science program is a long-term intertidal monitoring program that collects scientific data in Seattle's marine reserve areas while providing an opportunity for local high school students to participate in field-based scientific work. The project is in its 2nd year of a projected 15-year duration. Citizen Science utilizes motivated high school students to collect data on seven of Seattle's marine reserves in the spring (May and June) each year. Training materials, classroom, field, and evening training sessions at the Aquarium are provided free of charge. In addition to collecting data, students have the opportunity to analyze the data they and other students collect and present their findings at a spring symposium.

Participating students and teachers are encouraged to develop their own inquiry-based opportunities to gain experience in field-based experimental design, data collection, and data analysis. The program's education staff provide hands-on assistance to students and teachers to assist them in developing their own research projects and analyzing the data.

We are currently seeking interested schools and teachers for the 2006-2007 school year. Participating teachers and students are expected to attend all training sessions, participate fully in the symposium, and develop their own inquiry-based learning projects in addition to the Citizen Science project. No marine biology background or program is necessary for students and teachers to participate; what is important is your enthusiasm and willingness to participate fully in the program.

The selection process for the Citizen Science school teams will be completed by June 2006, with

initial teacher training in October. Teachers and students will receive free access to the Aquarium during business hours from January through June, training sessions and all materials to conduct the study, as well as support throughout the project by Aquarium staff. All teachers will receive a stipend for their participation in this program.

Please contact Karen Matsumoto, Marine Science Education Coordinator at karen.matsumoto@seattle.gov for an application and more information.



President's Message Continued from Page 2

While EE has come a long way, it has a way to go. This is not your grandmother's EE! As we stand on the shoulders of those conservationists, educators, visionaries, ancestors and stewards who came before us, we all have an opportunity to face off with challenges of our modern age—An obligation to leave strong shoulders for those who will follow.

I urge you to actively engage with EEA as we forge a bold, exciting and sustainable future for Washington. Please support your local EE providers, planning efforts, and your statewide association so we can be sure to leave no child inside! Please contact me directly if you are interested in getting more involved in advancing EE in Washington (360) 786-8020 x205. See you in the field!

Calendar of Events

Columbia River Camp for Educators - August 14-18, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. This 5 day fun hands-on educator workshop will be held had 4 different sites using different activities guides to help you integrate environmental education into your curriculum. The first four days of the workshop will be exploring different sites using multi-discipline curriculum guides. Each one of the tools needed for the Inquiry Process will be introduced and on the last day we will bring it all together. Registration fee \$50

Adventures in Nature, Technology, and Science (ANTS), July 23rd-28th, a residential summer camp experience for youth in grades 8 – 12. Located at the Lazy F Camp and Retreat Center outside of Ellensburg. This is a small camp that will provide hands-on opportunities to explore our natural world with experts. Four scientists with specialties ranging from large carnivores to reptiles to endangered species to geology will spend one day each with the campers to explore and learn about the local environment. Lazy F Camp and Retreat Center is a ministry of the United Methodist Church and open to all people. For more information go to www.lazyfcamp.org or call 509-962-2780.

Art of Mentoring: A Unique Approach to Nature Education-August 20-26 (6 p.m. Sun. – 12 p.m. Sat.) In this new, more experiential version of our popular Art of Mentoring workshop, you will be taught to lead many of our favorite activities, games, and stories in the same, hands-on way we train our staff. Linne Doran, Duvall, WA; \$685 (includes food and camping)

Canoes/Voices Institute, The Journey, A Teacher Workshop, August 13-20, Puget Sound Energy's Baker Lake Lodge. A weeklong educators institute combining the strengths of two *successful* workshops into one integrated format: Canoes Upon Our Waters and Voices Along the Skagit A \$125.00 non-refundable pre-registration fee is required to reserve a spot. To register for the workshop call (425) 462-3455 or email susan.paull@pse.com

Help with Beach and River Clean-ups this June, July and August! Help the Stilly-Snohomish Fisheries Enhancement Task Force clean up local beaches and riverfronts around Snohomish County. Gloves, other tools and snacks will be provided. Dates and locations are below. Call, email or see our website for more information: (425) 252-6686, info@stillysnofish.org or www.stillysnofish.org

The WSU King County Extension Watershed Stewardship Program is now accepting applications for the September 8th to November 3rd autumn volunteer training. Selected participants will receive over 70 hours of research-based training in exchange for 60 hours of volunteer stewardship and outreach in a project of their choice. The training emphasizes practical watershed stewardship, and focuses on connections between urban, rural and wild landscapes of King County. *Completed applications are due August 4th.* For more information and an application please contact Tara Zimmerman at 206-205-3203 or tara.zimmerman@metrokc.gov, or visit our website at www.metrokc.gov/wsuce/land&water

Streamkeeper Academy Presents Rediscovery: An Environmental Educators Institute, July 27–28. The Rediscovery Environmental Educators Institute with Thom Henley offers educators a rare opportunity to fully immerse themselves in experiential learning skills, to develop keener insights into cross-cultural understanding and to discover new ways to bring environmental concepts and lessons into the classroom. (www.rediscovery.org) Located at the Northwest Stream Center – 600 128th ST SE – Everett WA. Enrollment fee of \$125. Call 425-316-8592 for reservations.

King County Hazards on the Homefront Wednesday August 9, 8:00am-4:00 pm. Teach your students how to make real-world decisions as they gain important academic skills. Leave with everything you need to start teaching the very next day! Fulfill Science, Health and Fitness GLEs with *Hazards on the Homefront* lessons. FREE workshop for 4th-12th Grade Teachers. Located Kohlwes Education Center, Renton WA To register, please call Erin McGourty at 206-583-0655 or email workshops@triangleassociates.com. For more information, visit <http://www.metrokc.gov/dnr/swd/education/hazwaste.asp>.

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Yes! Sign me up for an EEAW yearly membership.

- Individual (\$35)
 Fixed Income (\$25)
 Family (\$50)
 Group (\$125 - two people)
 Supporting (\$125)
 Life (\$500)

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Membership renewals are due each spring.

Please return to:
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- I'd like to serve on, or learn more about, the following committees:
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The next EEAW Newsletter submission deadline is July 30th.

Spring 2006

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North Cascades Institute Natural and Cultural History Field Seminars- July and August 2006-From backyard to backcountry, get outdoors, learn in small groups, and celebrate your place through exploration, literature and the arts. The naturalist tradition defines North Cascades Institute and how you'll spend your time with us. Locations include our new Learning Center in North Cascades National Park as well as camps and lodges throughout the Northwest. Clock hours or academic credit are available for most seminars. And, if you've never taken a field seminar with us before, you're eligible for a 20 percent discount! Register today at www.ncascades.org

Arts-in-Nature Festival - Sat. August 26th, (from 11am-9pm) and Sun. Aug. 27th (from 10am-6pm), produced by the Nature Consortium. Locally renowned dancers, musicians and artists come together to perform and celebrate Art in Nature. This year, the multidisciplinary event is offered simultaneously on two sites, Camp Long and the newly renovated Youngstown Cultural Arts Center (4408 Delridge Way SW). Camp Long will host the ambient & acoustic side of the event and Youngstown will provide a space for amplified performances, visual art displays and open artist studios. Admission is by donation with \$5.00 per person, \$10.00 per family suggested. Contact the Nature Consortium at (206) 923-0853 or www.naturec.org/festival.