



ICEEC
IOWA CONSERVATION
EDUCATION COALITION

Annual Report 2014-2015

An overview of activities and accomplishments

2014 was a very good year for the Iowa Conservation Education Coalition.



Grants and Conference Wrap-up

The 2013 Midwest Environmental Education Conference (MEEC) grant was wrapped up. Evaluations showed that twice as many respondents were generally more positive than neutral or skeptical about Next Generation Science Standards, however comments were still across the full range.

ICEEC also wrapped up an Environmental Protection Agency - Region 7 grant. We were working with Kansas, Nebraska, and Missouri on E Literacy.

After the exhaustive work on MEEC 2013, ICEEC did not have hold Winter Solstice workshop in 2014.

Learning continued!

ICEEC did sponsor a workshop on January 24, 2014, "Exploring Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) and Environmental Education," at the Story County Conservation Center near Ames, Iowa. This one-day workshop started by introducing the NGSS standards and its development process, framework, and architecture. The morning introduction was followed by a participant question and discussion period to compare the conceptual shifts between the NGSS and previous science standards. After lunch, participants broke into groups to examine and discuss an NGSS topic by reviewing the new standards relevant to their specific work situation. By the end of the day, groups came back together to develop a master list of guidelines to begin the first steps in NGSS implementation.

Winter Workshop 2015

ICEEC also began planning the 2015 workshop. The winter workshop was designed to form the seeds of new networks with ICEEC serving a central role in coordinating and disseminating information about real world conservation in Iowa. The workshop used water resources as an initial focus topic to help organize the networks.

The workshop committee decided that a change was needed from the old format. Winter Solstice became "Winter Workshop - Diving into Networking." The workshop was held February 6-7, 2015 at Springbrook Conservation Education Center. Registration costs for all participants could be reduced by a grant from the REAP-CEP program.



Instead of keynotes and then different sessions, the workshop offered discussions on the water issues.

ICEC enlisted the help of network coaches, two from each Area Education Agency (AEA) region. AEA Science Consultants and naturalists would serve as coaches. After the speakers introduced a water topic or project, discussions led by coaches were held on best science practices, to introduce these practices to conservation professionals and water projects with data that educators could use in the classrooms.

ICEC partnered with Natural Resource Conservation Service, Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, county conservation board naturalists, and Science Consultants from Iowa's Area Education Agencies. In 1958, ICEC was set up as a networking group between conservation groups in the state of Iowa. It feels like we are returning to our roots. Remember it takes care and feeding to put down solid roots!

The workshop committee members included: Jean Eells and Phyllis Anderson, E Resources; Yvette McCulley, Science Consultant for the Iowa Department of Education; Judy Martinson, Natural Resources Conservation Service Resource Conservationist; Mary Skopec, Iowa Department of Natural Resources IoWater Coordinator; Linda Zaletel, Executive Director

for ICEC; Rosemary Peck, Christopher Soldat, Peggy Christensen, AEA Science Consultants; Gail Barel, Linn County Conservation and Lora Kanning, Cass County Conservation; plus High school educator Joplyn Cannon.

November 2014 REAP-CEP Grant received!

ICEC also partnered with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) on a grant involving Project WILD, Aquatic WILD, Growing Up WILD, and KinderNature. Iowa DNR trainers will continue to present workshops and the new partnership will make it easier to plan, coordinate, evaluate trainings and provide support to trainers and trainees.

The KinderNature website was housed within the Story County IT department until a system upgrade. The KinderNature website was recreated through a contract with Blue Lake Websites with input from Missy King Smith, former naturalist for Warren County Conservation. The site will go live in August of 2015. KinderNature is a great resource for early care and education professionals and parents along with being a resource for Growing Up WILD trainings.



ICEC Supports REAP and REAP-CEP

REAP stands for Resource Enhancement and Protection. It is a program in the State of Iowa that invests in, as its name implies, the enhancement and protection of the state's natural and cultural resources. Iowa is blessed with a diverse array of natural and cultural resources, and REAP is likewise diverse and far reaching. Depending on the individual programs, REAP provides money for projects through state agency budgets or in the form of grants. Several aspects of REAP also encourage private contributions that help accomplish program objectives.

REAP is funded from the state's Environment First Fund (Iowa gaming receipts) and from the sale of the natural resource license plate. The program is authorized to receive \$20 million per year until 2021, but the state legislature sets the amount of REAP funding every year. REAP funds go into eight different programs based upon a percentages that are specified in the law.

The first \$350,000 each year goes to Conservation Education! Many past and current ICEC projects and activities have been supported by REAP-CEP grants.

Please support REAP!



ICEC–IAN Award Winners 2014

Aldo Leopold Environmental Education Award for Lifetime Achievement in EE Excellence and Leadership

Chuck Ungs

For over 25 years Chuck Ungs has been a passionate naturalist in the state of Iowa. From his earliest days as an intern at Osborne Nature Center to his most current job as an education specialist for Wickiup Hill Learning Center; Chuck has worked diligently to connect people to the landscape of Iowa. Chuck takes pride in not only sharing his knowledge and stories of natural resources with people but also educates them by hosting innovative workshops like fishing rod building, snowshoe construction, and long bow building. Chuck has also been a hunter's education instructor for 26 years and has served on numerous habitat improvement boards including Pheasants Forever and the Ruffed Grouse Society. Chuck stands up for the land ethic and has been a five-time REAP delegate. His knowledge, experience and passion for all things outdoors make him an excellent winner of this award!

Bohumil Shimek Environmental Educator Award for Outstanding Efforts by an Environmental Educator

Benton County Naturalists

Karen Phelps and Aaron Askelson, Benton County Conservation Board Naturalists, have received this award for their efforts to build new displays and an outdoor classroom. After several years of meeting with design specialists, obtaining quotes, and sketches, and multiple years of fundraising, they realized the "studio" built displays were simply not within their budget. Shortly after Aaron was hired, he and Karen sat down to hatch a plan to construct the much needed displays in house. They were not allowed to give up any programming and there was a minimal amount of money in the budget for displays. But they did it, and with the majority of the displays completed in 2014, an open house was held and to rave reviews! Benton County Naturalists also worked with other staff members to develop an outdoor play area. They constructed a balance log area, made entirely with logs from trees destroyed in the devastating windstorm (derecho) of 2011. They have also made a Wickiup area out of willows, a slide-balance discovery area, children's discovery garden, butterfly gardens, and a prairie reconstruction.

Chris Holt Youth EE Award for an Outstanding EE Program for Youth or Conducted by Youth (PreK-12)

Dallas County Conservation Board's Wilderness Trek

Dallas CCB's, Wilderness Trek to the Selway Bitterroot Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness is unique. First, this program targets high school learners. EE programming for this demographic is rare, it is extremely under served, and in dire need of more attention. For 21 years DCCB has been immersing youth into 4.5 million acres of wilderness, 1500 miles away from home. Everything about this experience is rigorous, from the application process to the actual event of carrying all of their gear on their backs, hiking miles into a wilderness;

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Fiscal Year Profit and Loss

April 1, 2014 – March 31, 2015

provided by Kuda Tax and Accounting

Income	
Donations Received	350.00
FOSTERING NETWRK REAP CEP GRANT	1,750.00
MEEC SWAP GRANT	8,665.39
Memberships	
Membership Dues	1,770.00
Total Memberships	1,770.00
PROJECT WILD/KIND REAP CEP GRANT	27,512.50
WINTER SOLSTICE 2015 INCOME	
Auction	1,192.00
Lodging	700.00
Registration	3,457.90
Scholarship	100.00
WS2015 REAP CEP Grant	15,250.00
Total WINTER SOLSTICE 2015 INCOME	<u>20,699.90</u>
Total Income	60,747.79
Expense	
Administration	
Insurance Expense	1,311.00
Marketing	2,865.32
Mileage	184.05
Office Supplies	486.78
Postage	140.22
Printing/Copying	5.35
Travel	137.40
Total Administration	5,130.12
Contracted Services	
Accountant	2,400.00
Admin Allocation to Grants	-2,000.00
Administrative Assistant	10,500.00
Total Contracted Services	10,900.00
Member Services	
Plaques	162.00
Total Member Services	162.00
Organizational Memberships / Conference	
Iowa Academy of Science	90.00
Iowa Environmental Council	125.00
Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation	100.00
Iowa Association of Naturalists	48.00
NAEYC	60.00
National Association for Interpretation	75.00
Total Organizational Memberships	498.00
PayPal Fee	69.05
Programs	
REAP-WS	600.00
Total Programs	600.00
PROJECT WILD/KINDER NATURE	
Labor	2,585.00
Trainers	299.50
Total PROJECT WILD/KINDER NATURE	2,884.50
WINTER SOLSTICE 2015	
Lodging	1,320.00
Misc Expense	79.83
REAP CEP	8,091.09
Total WINTER SOLSTICE 2015	9,490.92
Winter Solstice 2015 Scholarship	<u>620.00</u>
Total Expense	30,354.59
Net Ordinary Income	30,393.20
Other Income/Expense	
Other Income Interest Income	118.18
Net Other Income	<u>118.18</u>
Net Income	30,511.38

sleep on the ground, [defecating] in the woods, eating marginal meals, and WORKING on building trails. Yet every year applicants are turned away. Second, it is a joint effort between Dallas CCB, a federal agency– United States Forest Service, and a private, non-profit foundation– Selway-Bitterroot Frank Church Wilderness Foundation, the latter two being located in Idaho. Even though this experience is anything but easy, it is easy to see why this Wilderness Trek is being honored with this award.

**“Ding” Darling Environmental Education Award
Buena Vista County Conservation, “Discovery
Outdoors”**

The *Discovery Outdoors* program, coordinated by the Buena Vista Naturalist, is part of the Genesis program, a non-profit adult day program that specializes in providing activities for people with disabilities. *Discovery Outdoors* provides monthly programs that offer outdoor opportunities for this group. Fishing is a favorite activity during the summer months. Additional activities include; hiking, insect hunting, bird watching, and monarch tagging. When the weather turns, participants make bird feeders and snowflakes, learn about mammals and touch furs and live animals. This winter, they will try snowshoeing.

**Outstanding County Conservation Board EE Program
(2 or less interpreters)**

Winneshiek County Conservation Board

Winneshiek CCB concentrates on providing science and outdoor recreation presentations. Since 2008, the education department has increased annual presentations given by an average of 22% per year and annual program contacts by an average of 20% per year, nearly tripling their program and contacts outputs. In 2014, they have given and are scheduled to give 500+ programs reaching over 15,000 people. That is 71% of the county’s population! Along with the regular EE programming they have implemented unique opportunities to the citizens and tourists of the county to explore nature areas through scavenger hunts, which has now been duplicated in other counties. They have also provided training for primarily PE and science teachers around the state to get their students outside and active through a program called Fit Environment.

**Outstanding County Conservation Board EE Program
(3 or more interpreters)**

Clinton County Conservation Board

The Clinton County Conservation Board has been and continues to be a pioneer and a leader in interpretation in Iowa. Throughout 2014, staff delivered 2,686 programs to over 65,000 participants. (That is more people than actually live in Clinton County.) Along with their programs, the staff maintains four interpretive sites including the “Blue Heron,” an outdoor classroom solidly situated on a pontoon boat. Their new facility, the Mississippi River Eco Tourism Center, has been well received and has hosted over 100 programs and dozens of fish/turtles.

**Outstanding Interpretive Print Media Award
Henry County Conservation Board**

Three times a year HCCB sends out a colorful newsletter to over 650 individuals. It not only looks fantastic but has been effectively promoting programs for many years.

**Sylvan Runkel Environmental Education Award for
Outstanding Whole-School EE Program
North Cedar Community Elementary School in
Mechanicsville, Cedar County**

The North Cedar Community Elementary School in Mechanicsville and Cedar County Conservation have received this award for their work on installing a prairie outdoor learning area behind the school. The entire school (preK - 4th grades) has been involved. Cedar County Naturalist, Sarah Subbert, has helped with 34 planting programs at the Mechanicsville School since the spring of 2011. This has involved 498 kids and 49 adults. Every year, students and teachers help by planting prairie seeds or plants, as well as collecting prairie seeds. The afterschool program uses the outdoor learning area for free play and several bird houses and feeders have been put up. Teachers use the area for plant/insect life cycles as well as soil, rock, plant id, and tree lessons.

Outstanding Volunteer

Laura Anderson

Laura Anderson has been a volunteer for the Buena Vista County Conservation Board for the past two years, in addition to being a junior high science teacher at St. Mary’s Catholic School for three years. Laura is passionate about environmental education and volunteers her time in a variety of ways including - starting a friends group, volunteering at annual events, helping coordinate seasonal youth camps and promoting BVCCB programming wherever she goes including the grocery store.

**Ada Hayden Conservation Education Award for
Outstanding Efforts to Educate About Preservation,
Land Management, or Natural Resource Conservation
Kay Neumann**

Kay Neumann has been rehabilitating sick and injured raptors since before she started her nonprofit SOAR – Saving Our Avian Resources, in 1999. For Kay, educating others about the natural world around them has often included a non-releasable raptor. Kay’s belief that the incorporation of live animals into educational programming makes lasting impressions on the audience and can help people make personal connections with the topic, with the land, with their surroundings. While research and education is the core of SOAR’s mission, Kay also tirelessly works to collect data on lead-affected eagles, educating others about the impacts of lead on bald eagles and simple ways to eliminate lead exposure. Her message - to use personal connections with individuals and wild animals to bring attention to important natural resource conservation projects and issues - will continue as long as raptors need her help.