



**ICEC**  
IOWA CONSERVATION  
EDUCATION COALITION

# Annual Report Fiscal Year 2021

## *An Overview of Activities and Accomplishments of ICEC*

### Highs and Lows of 2021

2021 was...a year. Like everyone, ICEC had to navigate the twists and turns of Covid disruptions to our work and services, as well as reckoning with our role as an organization striving to make conservation education inclusive and accessible for all. You can read more about ICEC's 2021 work and projects below, but as I look over the past year's accomplishments, I am struck by one thing: we have

an incredibly dedicated and passionate network of individuals and organizations working together to further conservation education in Iowa. That network is what enabled ICEC to not just make it through 2021, but to close out the year with a strong financial footing, exciting new ways of supporting our members, and hope for continued excellence in conservation education across the entire state.

### Virtual Winter Learning Series 2021 - Equity and Inclusion in EE

Over the month of January 2021, ICEC provided a series of self-guided readings, modules, webinars, speakers, and panel discussions to lay a foundation for understanding and further conversation and dialogue around making Iowa's conservation education community more inclusive and welcoming to all, as well as conservation education resources designed and/or modified to be more inclusive for all. Topics included implicit bias, use of pronouns, STEM and equity, and honoring beliefs, attitudes, languages, and values of individuals while we strive to promote diversity, inclusion, and equity in all that we do.

Iowa educators could earn one recertification credit through AEA Learning Online by participating in seven of the offered sessions. Some sessions and resources remain available for on-demand access on our website here: <https://iowaee.org/ee-science-in-iowa/virtual-winter-learning-series-january-2021/>.

*Thank you to the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation and the North American Association for Environmental Education for supporting this learning series.*

The series started with a Keynote from Dr. Carolyn Finney.



Iowa  
Natural Heritage  
Foundation



**naaee**

North American Association  
for Environmental Education



### Midwest EE Conference Recap

This biennial Midwest Environmental Education Conference was hosted by ICEC on July 26-29, 2021 at Luther College in Decorah, Iowa, with the theme of "Exploring Community: Land, Water, People!"

**Thank you to all!** Upon reflection of MEEC 2021, we couldn't be happier or more invigorated. The ICEC network of members, sponsors, volunteers, and friends truly demonstrated the knowledge, breadth, passion, and creativity of environmental and conservation educators across Iowa and the Midwest.

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## Midwest EE Conference, cont'd

There are many people and organizations to whom we owe our gratitude:

- The conference planning committee members, who put in many hours over the 18 months of planning, shifting, planning, and shifting again! It is thanks to their work, creativity, and enthusiasm that MEEC 2021 happened.
- The 90+ presenters and field trip/off-site session leaders who shared their knowledge, work, and expertise over the four days of the conference. We all left the conference with new ideas and new enthusiasm thanks to their generosity and dedication to making environmental and conservation education better for all.
- Our 2021 conference sponsors, who enthusiastically demonstrated their commitment to valuing and supporting our natural resources and the people working to protect it and connect others to it.
- Our conference host, Luther College and the Center for Sustainable Communities, who supported MEEC 2021 not only with physical space but also innovative ideas, enthusiastic volunteers, and moral support.
- The attendees, who rolled with us over the last year of preparation and ultimately came together enthusiastically and joyfully. MEEC 2021 was a success thanks to you.

ICEC will continue to share news and information on the next MEEC, scheduled for 2023, as we receive it.

## PEEPs Collaboration Work Started, Postponed Twice



The Plains Environmental Education Partnership is working on building capacity and inclusivity for environmental education in the central states environmental education organizations (KS, MO, IA, NE +WY) to individually and

collaboratively build momentum, advance policy, strengthen the EE profession and grow EE programs and delivery through targeted organizational and leadership development. As part of this work, ICEC ExCom completed an organizational assessment tool and met with a consultant. The original plan was to bring a team from each state together in 2020, then in November 2021. We hope to have this in-person work session in early 2022.



## WILD Resources

ICEC, in partnership with Iowa Department of Natural Resources, continues to offer Project WILD, Aquatic WILD, and Growing Up WILD (GUW) trainings. WILD training is offered both in person and online. Workshop style formats are offered for GUW with Department of Human Services early childhood training hours available. The KinderNature website supports GUW.

## ee360 grant

Iowa Project WILD received funds from NAAEE as part of an ee360 grant. Funds supported training for pre-service educators, as well as practicing teachers and non-formal educators. Six institutions have agreed to offer WILD / Aquatic WILD through their educator training courses. 52 pre-service educators who participated in the fall of 2021 and five educators who beta tested the online modules were funded by the ee360 grant.



## Game Jam

ICEC hosted Game Jam in Spring 2021 focused on soil. Teams were encouraged to incorporate field investigation data and observations, online data resources, and investigations in a new game idea. Thirty-five games built around the theme were submitted for judging. A virtual award ceremony was held in early April 2021.



### Grades 3-5 Digital Game

1. *Jurassic Jam* by Hunter, Nevada Middle School

### Grades 3-5 Analog Game

1. *Super Soil* by Lucas and Dominic, Decorah Home School Assistance Program
2. *Soil* by Czandrya, Charli, and McKenna, Sidney Elementary
3. *Tie - Build a Plant* by Hailey, Nevada Middle School AND *Worms Go Down the Stream* by Kinsley, Alexander, Aniyah, Jaslyn, Legyn, Cedar River Academy at Taylor

Honorable Mention to *Wheel of Soil* by Keegan, Addison, Natalie, and Kesler, Edgewood-Colesburg Elementary School

### Grade 6-8 Digital Game

1. *Cowgirl Soil Park Rangers* by Myler, Adysen, Audrey, Hayden, and Maddy, Sidney Elementary
2. *Soil Sim* by Kane, Will, Logan, and Carter, Sidney Elementary
3. *Soil Scapes* by Addy, Foster, Maleigha, and Hayley, Sidney Elementary

### Grades 6-8 Analog Game

1. *Farming Fun* by Isaiah and Eston, Decorah Home School Assistance Program

Learn more about Game Jam here:

<https://iowaee.org/ee-science-in-iowa/game-jam/>.

## Statement of Financial Position

as of December 31, 2021 and December 31, 2020

### ASSETS

Current Assets	Dec. 31, 2021	Dec. 31, 2020
<b>Cash</b>		
Veridian Checking	\$ 4,372.02	\$ 6,391.88
Veridian Savings	\$ 56,220.55	\$ 49,088.38
Veridian MEEC Checking	\$ 137.55	\$ 3,943.60
PayPal Balance	\$ 1,119.13	\$ 676.62
<b>Total Cash</b>	<b>\$ 61,849.25</b>	<b>\$ 60,100.48</b>

### Other Current Assets

	\$ -	\$ -
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>

**TOTAL ASSETS \$ 61,849.25 \$ 60,100.48**

### LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

#### Liabilities

Outstanding Checks	\$ -	\$ 526.68
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 526.68</b>

**Net Assets \$ 61,849.25 \$ 59,573.80**

Net Assets without Restrictions \$ 33,756.81 \$ 20,990.46

#### Net Assets with Donor Restrictions

WILD Resources	\$ 24,739.13	\$ 29,951.18
Big Trees Fund	\$ 1,797.76	\$ 3,697.24
Scholarship Fund	\$ 1,418.00	\$ 1,518.00
MEEC	\$ 137.55	\$ 3,943.60

#### Total Net Assets w/Donor Restrictions

**\$ 28,092.44 \$ 39,110.02**

**Total Net Assets \$ 61,849.25 \$ 60,100.48**

**TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS \$ 61,849.25 \$ 60,100.48**

MEEC funds revert to unrestricted for 2022

### ICEC Executive Committee FY2021

**Lilly Jensen, Co-Chair** - Winneshiek County Conservation Board

**Tony Vorwald, Co-Chair** - Jackson County Conservation Board

**Louis Beck, Secretary** - Retired FFA / Ag Ed Instructor

**Barb Gigar, Treasurer** - Iowa Department of Natural Resources

**Mary Bulger** - Iowa County Conservation

**David Conrads** - Director, UI Wild, University of Iowa College of Education

**Tiffany Morgan** - Instructional Media Designer, Iowa PBS

**Ted Neal** - Clinical Professor Science Education, University of Iowa College of Education

**Kelly Schott** - Environmental Branch - Coordinator, Meskwaki Natural Resource Department

**Craig Edmondson, Ex Officio** - Heartland Area Education Agency

**Jerry Neppel, Ex Officio** - Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship

## ICEC–IAN Award Winners 2020

These awards recognize the contributions of conservation educators, partners, and supporters to the advancement of environmental education in Iowa. Full winner bios here: <https://iowaee.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/IAN-ICEC-2020-Award-Winners.pdf>

### “Ding” Darling Environmental Education Award

**Virtual Outdoor Cooking Series from Shawnell Richter, Lydia Goehring, Christina Roelofs, Megan Wisecup, and Rachel Alis**

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

**Bev Wagner, Dubuque Metropolitan Area Solid Waste Agency**

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

**Polk County Conservation Youth Corps**

### Sylvan Runkel Environmental Education School Award: For Outstanding Whole-School EE Program

**Holmes Junior High School (Cedar Falls, Iowa) - Holmes Helps**

### Outstanding Interpretive Print Media

**Kristen Bieret, Sac County Conservation**

### Outstanding Non-Print Media

**Michelle Wilson, Anne Riordan, Christina Roelofs**

### Outstanding Volunteer

**Olivia Brown, Louisa County Conservation**

### Outstanding Environmental Education Program (three or more full-time equivalent naturalists) for excellence in environmental education programming by an agency or institution

**Scott County**

### Outstanding Environmental Education Program (two or less full-time equivalent naturalists) for excellence in environmental education programming by an agency or institution

**Floyd County**

## 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.

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 2026, 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!*

## Conservation Teacher of the Year

ICEC and the Iowa Soil Conservation Awards Program [co-sponsored by the Iowa State Soil Conservation Committee and the Conservation Districts of Iowa (CDI)], annually presents an award to two educators who are creating awareness of soil conservation and water quality in their classrooms.

### Division I (K-8 teacher) Recipient:

**Amy Hoover, Guthrie Center Elementary School**

Amy incorporates STEM activities with her 3rd grade students that focuses on conservation issues that can be seen locally and globally, like soil erosion, natural disaster devastation, hail damage to crops. water pollution, and more! As part of her social studies and science lessons, she advocates and incorporates the local Soil and Water Conservation District poster contests each year.

### Division II (7-12 teacher) Recipient:

**Doug Gaul, Manson Northwest Webster High School**

Doug teaches Crop Science and Environmental Science. Doug grew up on a rowcrop / livestock farm and still helps his dad and brother with their farming operations. Utilizing conservation practices like terraces, waterways, and no-till, Doug focuses his teaching on sustainability, erosion control, and being good stewards. Doug assists in the soils judging contest at the sub-district and district level, plus is on the state committee. As an FFA instructor, Doug encourages his students to take on projects that teach them to live off the land - trapping, farming / gardening, and animal husbandry. Within the classroom his students learn how to raise fish and chickens, run a greenhouse where they grow vegetables and flowers, plant and manage corn and soybean test plots, plus maintain an arboretum on the edge of town. Doug’s students have advanced to the National Land Judging competition four times and he has had students go on to be soil scientists, agronomists, and farmers. All a testament to his teachings!