ICEC News and Updates April 2023

Iowa Conservation Education Coalition <exec@iowaee.org>
Reply-To: Iowa Conservation Education Coalition <exec@iowaee.org>
To: exec@iowaee.org

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Member Newsletter April 2023

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2023 Midwest EE Conference

To Hinųkwaseja: Restoring connections to land and each other

November 2-4, 2023 - La Crosse, Wisconsin

Place and Land (with a capital 'P' and 'L') have always been relevant to environmental education. This year, our conference will highlight the increasing importance of place-based relationships to a sustainable future. This requires particular attention to justice for Indigenous people. The theme serves as a call to support communities that must fight against displacement. Likewise, we must address the linkages between such displacement and environmental degradation. Hinųkwaseja is the Ho-Chunk name for the settlement at La Crosse. With this language, we show gratitude to our meeting Place.

Please submit your proposal by April 15, 2023

Please review the **MEEC 2023 Accessibility & Inclusion: Agreements & Recommendations**

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Change for the Climate

Addressing and adapting to climate change is not a one-size fits all approach. Change for the Climate recognizes that community members know best what their community needs. This project aimed to provide five organizations an opportunity to learn and apply some of the best social science and research that has been adapted to help conservation causes throughout the world. These methods are offered through a real-time virtual course led by Dr. Doug Makenzie Mohr who developed Community Based Social Marketing (CBSM). Participants from the organizations took the course in January 2022 to learn CBSM methods and try them on projects that could spark action and behavior change.

The specific process used in CBSM throws a different timeline and procedures at project leaders who completely rethink what they will do and when and how. Although CBSM methods are not overly complex,

the process involves taking more time to research the barriers and benefits that community members perceive to the adoption of new behaviors. The case studies provided show areas where educators had to take more time – sometimes more than expected – to apply the methods.

- Learn more by reading the participants' case study report, plus read an overview of CBSM. **Click here to download the report as PDF!**
- You can learn more about Community Based Social Marketing in this **presentation from Doug Makenzie Mohr.**

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C-STEM

ICEC ExCom has convened an Ad Hoc Committee to develop an Iowa C-STEM Framework (C for Conservation). This new conservation framework will include clear references to mathematics, science, and literacy standards along with the resources that clearly accomplish educational goals to help teachers meet Iowa Core standards in STEM. It will delineate key disciplinary core ideas, science and engineering practices, and cross-cutting concepts with conservation education topics appropriate to Iowa. The objectives of this framework are to:

- Increase educator understanding that conservation themes related to STEM in upper elementary and middle school classrooms can be used to support standards-based learning.
- Increase the use of field investigations and project-based learning in STEM applications of conservation topics in upper elementary and middle school classrooms.

The first phase will focus on middle school and we will be looking for formal and informal educators who can help us identify exemplary materials during Summer 2023 in addition to offering professional development on approaches that have been tested. Watch your InBox for details!

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Awards

2023 Conservation Teacher of the Year

Annually, ICEC and the Iowa Soil Conservation Awards Program, presents two awards to outstanding teachers who are creating awareness of soil conservation and water quality in their classrooms. The Iowa Soil Conservation Awards Program, co-sponsored by the Iowa State Soil Conservation Committee (SSCC) and the Conservation Districts of Iowa (CDI), is presented to two educators (one K-8, other 9-12) during the Annual Conference for Soil and Water Conservation District Commissioners.

Download the award application here. Nominations need to be submitted by June 9, 2023, to **Sadi Hawk**, Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship—Division of Soil Conservation and Water Quality.

Read about the 2022 Conservation Teachers of the Year!

IAN-ICEC Award Recipients

The 2022 IAN-ICEC awards have been presented at various professional development events across the state this winter. **Download this PDF to learn about the 2022 winners**.

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PEEPs

The PEEPs (Plains Environmental Education Partnership) group continues to work with the Gen:Thrive

group to develop a comprehensive survey to provide a baseline of data on the scale, scope, success, and shortcomings of the current conservation education / environmental education programming across each state and the region. Best laid plans were to have this survey already launched, but coordination across five states is always challenging! Please watch your Inbox for further information and ways you can help!

This project has been possible with funding from the Pisces Foundation secured on behalf of the region by the Kansas Association for Conservation and Environmental Education.

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WILD AmeriCorps

ICEC is hosting two AmeriCorps members this spring and early summer! Read on to see what these members are working on!

My name is Maggie Voyles and I am a Green Iowa AmeriCorps member serving at ICEC. I graduated with a degree in Biology and have spent the last few years working on environmental education efforts in many different places. I am happy to have the opportunity to use what I have learned to support conservation education in my home state! The majority of our time during our beginning few weeks with ICEC was dedicated to making promotional materials for the 2023 Environmental Game Jam, and we are eager to start reviewing submissions and preparing for the awards ceremony at the Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge! I have been working remotely from the Ottumwa area, and am excited about the several new relationships being formed between local educators, ICEC, and Green Iowa AmeriCorps. Most notably, I have been connecting with several area libraries and am beginning to plan collaborative projects through these connections. We will be representing ICEC and Project WILD at the Protect Our Planet Festival in Fairfield on Earth Day, April 22. We will have an informational booth at the festival and will also be hosting a nature poetry writing station and contest! We have been meeting with members of the Executive Committee about developing a C-STEM framework and are beginning to brainstorm ideas for this project. As the summer months approach, we are looking forward to getting involved with teacher workshops, summer reading programs, and service projects.

My name is Ellie, a first time AmeriCorps member working with ICEC while based in Iowa City. A cool part of my Green Iowa AmeriCorps term thus far has been getting to work on projects, expand my professional development experience, and meet people across Iowa; all while being a full-time student at the University of Iowa (go-hawks!). I am an International Relations and Poetry Writing major which allows me to take classes that explore a variety of environmental and educational issues across countries. What I found it hard to incorporate in my classes was how to best educate students on the importance of environmentalism. This is important to me because often what I was learning in school made science either boring or hard to conceptualize, when it is frankly - the total opposite. Working with ICEC has allowed me to expand my communication experience via local education in a fun and interesting way! Some of the projects my co-AmeriCorps member Maggie and I have been up to include:

- Getting trained in teaching the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies' (AFWA) conservation curriculums: Project Wild, Aquatic Wild, and Growing Up Wild
- Promoted ICEC's annual Game Jam!!
- Created various materials for Earth Day events hosted by city governments
- Reaching out to local libraries on giving readings to elementary students
- … and many more in the works

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Game Jam

Video submissions of student team's games have all been submitted and are currently being reviewed by the Game Jam judges! A Game Jam celebration will be held for the participating schools on 25 April at the

Prairie Learning and Visitor Center at Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge near Prairie City, Iowa. Watch the ICEC website after the event for pics and details of the day.

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ICEC Resources

Check out these resources available on the ICEC website!

- **Calendar of events** and courses from ICEC, co-sponsored by ICEC, our partner organizations, and others.
- **Equity and Inclusion in Environmental Education** - Visit this page for links to the on-demand videos from Winter Workshop 2021
- **WILD Resources**
    - **Monthly email** to support Project WILD and Aquatic WILD (**sign up here**)
    - **Book search** for PK-12 and parents / educators
    - **Project WILD and Aquatic WILD Workshops and Courses**
- **KinderNature** includes on the homepage weekly tips in "Max's Corner" and highlighted activity from the activity bank in KinderNature
    - **Monthly email** to support Growing Up WILD (**sign up here**)
    - **Book search** for PK-2 and parents / educators
    - **Growing Up WILD Workshops and Courses**
- **Authentic Iowa Data Resources**

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Professional Development

Check out these Iowa Project WILD Online Training Modules, available with or without re-certification credit to receive the new Project WILD and Aquatic WILD guides! The goal of Project WILD is to develop awareness, knowledge, skills, and commitment resulting in informed decisions, responsible behavior, and constructive actions concerning wildlife and the environment. Each online module includes an overview of the guide and resources for **Aquatic WILD** and **Project WILD**; you may order a copy of the guide upon completion of the activities included in the "modules" on this site. **Click here to learn about re-certification credit** through Iowa AEAs for Project WILD / Aquatic WILD. **Email the state coordinator for more info on the credit option.**

Environmental Issues Instruction and Upper Iowa University will offer Nourishing Our Soil and Water Through Sustainable Agriculture at the Hampton Inn & Suites in Marshalltown, Iowa, Friday, April 14 (5:00-8:30), Saturday April 15 (8:30-6:30), and Sunday, April 16, 2023 (8:30-2:00). The update session will be a virtual Zoom session on June 6, 2023 (9:00-12:00). This interdisciplinary hands-on workshop spans all levels and content areas, PreK-14. Registration fee is $275 and includes food, lodging, teaching materials, 2 graduate credits and sub-grants for classroom projects. Contact Dr. Barbara Ehlers at ehlersb@uiu.edu for more information. The professional development is open to all educators PreK-14. Feel free to share this information with your colleagues. **Click for more information and the registration link.**

Introduction to Citizen Artist and Art-Based Research Methods
Citizen Artist, a participatory science research platform employs alternative, art-based research methodologies, empowering citizens who might not otherwise participate in scientific field research to get involved, with the potential of positively transforming our current environmental problems. Next Class starts May 23, 2023.

Biotechnology Outreach Education Center Opportunities

RET for Educators - Research Experiences for Teachers (RET) provides middle and high school teachers with research experiences and ongoing relationships with career scientists, enabling them to share the latest developments in STEM fields with students and inspire their students to learn more about science, math, and engineering and their related career paths. Application by teams of STEM teachers is also encouraged. **Go the the RET website** and scroll down for Application information! Program dates: June 14 – July 26, 2023

REU Research experience for Undergraduates - The Research Experience for Undergraduates (REU) program provides opportunities for future STEM teachers to engage in a research project in the plant, soil, and environmental sciences by providing them a hands-on research experience alongside an Iowa State University faculty member and their research team. **Scroll to the bottom of their page** for application information!

Click to check out all the BOEC professional development offerings!

Lakeside Lab Courses for Summer 2023

Check out all of the summer offerings or scan the QR Code to go to website. Most courses are at Lakeside Lab on West Lake Okoboji.

Google Map link

Climate Generation's Summer Institute for Climate Change Education is a three day climate change education conference structured to allow time for learning and networking. During the first two virtual days hosted by Climate Generation, educators can select from keynote presentations and concurrent workshops. During the third day, educators will attend a cohort workshop facilitated and hosted by a regional cohort leader to focus on place-based climate change education and the need for ongoing support throughout the year. Cohort days may be in-person or online, depending on educator and cohort leader needs in that region. Each group of 20-50 educators will explore local impacts, actionable solutions, connections to local experts, and planning and networking. July 17 & 18, 2022, plus one day on July 19th, 20th, or 21st

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Resources from NAAEE

NAAEE 2023: Together We Thrive - **The call for presentations is open**.

Have you checked out **eePRO** to see all the fabulous resources and opportunities? **Bookmark this page and visit when needing inspiration**.

NAAEE has launched a pledge campaign called **Outside for 5** encouraging teachers and educators to engage in outdoor learning for at least five minutes a day, five days a week, or any meaningful amount of time. **Learn more at the Outside for 5 website**.

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Resources and Links

Project WILD - Project WILD invites educators and wildlife management professionals to the April 2023

Earth Month Webinars. This series of four webinars will take place each Wednesday in April from 3-4 PM Eastern Time. Dates and Topics are:

April 5 - Scales and Slime: Exploring the Roles of Amphibians & Reptiles
April 12 - Nature-based Solutions for People and Wildlife
April 19 - Renewable Energy Development
April 26 - How Soil Health Impacts a Greater Ecosystem

For more information and to register, **visit the Project WILD's Earth Month info**!

Project Learning Tree

Early Childhood Education for Earth Day - Go to **this PLT webpage for links** to an educator webinar and links to the Trees & Me: Activities for Exploring Nature with Young Children.

2023 Soil Stewardship Week, April 30 to May 7, 2023

The National Association of Conservation Districts 68th Stewardship week will focus on watersheds and the theme of "One Water." Check out the poster contest, curriculum, and more. If you are interested in learning about your watershed and need local information, reach out to your local Soil & Water Conservation District. **Click to learn more and see all the resources available**!

Amphibian Week 2023 is May 7-13!

It's HOP-PENING! **Have you heard of #AmphibianWeek**?! Have you thought about hosting your own Amphibian Week? It could be as simple as posting amphibian-related content on social media or as big as hosting your own events relating to amphibians and their conservation. Find a social media toolkit, graphics, and other resources on the Amphibian Week 2023 page. In addition, **check out their brand new Amphibian Education and Outreach page**.

Iowa Environmental Council Pro H2O Awards

IEC's **Pro H2O awards are open for nominations**, nominations need to be submitted before April 15, 2023.

Iowa Groundwater Act Guidance for Middle Schools

This REAP-CEP funded project's task was to update the guidance about what water issues should be addressed in middle school and which resources are available to support teaching about these issues. The original guidance came about because of the Groundwater Protection Act that was passed in 1987. **Read about the information-gathering process and find the final report and resources on the UNI STEM page**!

Global Teach Ag Network (GTAN) is housed at Penn State University and empowers educators to address global food systems transformation and shares agricultural science and technology resources with educators. GTAN connects global experts, practitioners, organizations, and businesses to educators around the world and empowers educators to connect learners to the world's most pressing issues through quality professional development in global agriculture and food security. The Global Teach Ag Network hosts the **Global Learning in Agriculture Community** (GLAG), which is available at no cost to any educator across the globe. **To join the community, follow this link**. *Check out this site and you will find Iowa represented!*

Upper Iowa University Noyce Grant

Please share this information with aspiring science teachers in high school or early in their college career. Upper Iowa University was awarded a grant by the National Science Foundation and the Robert Noyce Teacher Scholar Program. The "Mentoring Awesome Science Teacher Education Recruits" (MASTER) project will prepare 15 UIU All Science majors to teach science in high-poverty, high-need, and rural schools in Iowa. **Learn more on the UIU website**.

Children & Nature Network (C&CN)
Children & Nature Network Inside-Out International Conference
Green Schoolyard Pre-Conference tour in Denver
Monday, June 12, 2023, 9 am - 5 pm
Children & Nature Network is offering a Green Schoolyard Pre-Conference tour featuring some of Denver Public School's most inspiring green schoolyards, including food forests, outdoor classrooms and climate-resilient features. Participants will hear directly from **Learning Landscapes** and Denver Public Schools partners about how they scaled this model to every elementary schoolyard in Denver and about the partnerships, planning, design and maintenance that enable these projects. Tickets for the pre-conference tour are now available through the registration link. **Register today**.

Cities Connecting Children to Nature (CCCN) - CCCN is a joint initiative of the National League of Cities and the Children & Nature Network that supports municipal leaders and their community partners to connect children to the benefits of nature more often and more equitably. **Check out their website**. Community Development Block Grants, or CDBG, is one of the longest-running programs at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Cities have leveraged CDBG funds to create opportunities to connect children to nature in public school grounds, libraries, recreational facilities, parks, and playgrounds open to the general public. Deadlines vary but cities should contact their local Department of Housing & Economic Development. **Read more details in this new CCCN guide to block grants to support Green Schoolyards**.

Download this factsheet (PDF) from CCCN, C&CN, and The Regional Plan Association shows the the potential synergy in policies and practices to foster children's connection to nature while meeting sustainability goal and resilience goals!

National Environmental Education Foundation (NEEF) - Greening STEM Hub helps you do just that! **Check this link to learn about the Greening STEM Approach and more**!

Climate Literacy & Energy Awareness Network (CLEAN)

- **Browse the CLEAN Collection by NGSS Topic** - CLEAN supports teaching and learning about climate and energy with 850+ free peer-reviewed, scientifically accurate, and classroom-ready resources.
- **Explore the CLEAN Collection of climate and energy learning** - Accurate education about climate and energy topics has never been more important, and it can be challenging to locate reliable, vetted educational materials to use in your classroom.

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Other News

Soil and Water Conservation Society Partners with NRCS to Create Guidance for Equitable and Inclusive Delivery of Conservation Technical Assistance
Through the project, "A Conservation Professionals' Guide to Diversity, Equitable and Inclusive Conservation Delivery Among the Historically Underserved," the Soil & Water Conservation Society (SWCS) will activate its diverse conservation community, listen and learn through virtual roundtables and the use of inclusive facilitation methods that identify barriers, opportunities, successes, and solutions for how conservation professionals can better deliver USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) conservation programs to historically underserved producers to address local natural resource concerns. Recommendations from roundtables will be used to develop a Guidebook with guidance on how conservation professionals can better partner, reach and provide technical assistance to historically underserved individuals and groups.

To assist historically underserved farmers and ranchers in implementing natural resources conservation practices that will introduce conservation planning alternatives to address air quality, aquatic habitat, erosion control, plant condition, nutrient management, livestock production, water quality, water quantity, irrigation water management, soil quality, and other resource concerns that mitigate excessive climate change and the impact to their farming operation and the environment.

The project Guide to Diversity, Equitable and Inclusive Conservation Delivery Among the Historically Underserved will:

- Strengthen the conservation professional's ability to build meaningful relationships and partnerships with historically underserved individuals and groups.
- Provide meaningful and useful resources, support and training to do this which are created with input from historically underserved audiences and the conservation professionals who serve them.
- Convene the conservation community, listen and learn from diverse voices, turn learnings into useful recommendations, resources and trainings, support conservation professionals to implement recommendations
- Institutionalize the body of work for accessibility to the entire conservation community in the form of a Guidebook, which may include a guiding mission statement, examples of current activities serving project goals, an inventory of potential partners to collaborate with on future projects, an assessment of current conservation assistance delivery mechanisms, and recommendations for guiding future outreach activities.

For more information about the project, please contact Joe Otto, SWCS Director of Special Projects and Partnerships, at joe.otto@swcs.org

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The Iowa Conservation Education Coalition (ICEC) is a 501(c)3 Iowa non-profit first organized in 1958! We have a long-standing tradition of providing professional development to formal and non-formal educators in conservation and environmental education. ICEC is the unifying voice for conservation and environmental education in Iowa.

ICEC needs you! **If you need to renew your membership, visit our website.** Memberships expire on December 31 and should be renewed by January 31. Your membership supports excellence in conservation education through networking with formal and non-formal educators and their support services, and conservation professionals!

Remember to visit the **ICEC Facebook page**, like it, and share it! The more you comment on a page's post, the more that page will show in your news feed!

Sincerely,
Linette Bernard, Project Coordinator
Iowa Conservation Education Coalition
exec@iowaee.org

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Retired, FFA / Agriculture Education

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