ICEC News and Updates August 2024

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Member Newsletter August 2024

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From the Chair

Greetings!

Wow! What happened to summer? For me, the Iowa State Fair has always been the bellwether for the end of summer as I knew it, and it is here. I hope you have enjoyed opportunities to explore and appreciate our natural resources, encouraged others to do the same, and learned something new along the way!

As a former classroom teacher, August always meant big changes were coming. For me, the bad news was my daily routine was going to have to change. The good news was each new school year was a fresh start, a new beginning. There are not many occupations in which that happens every year! Best wishes classroom teachers. Your work is important!

This past spring and summer, the ICEC Executive Committee (ExCom) has begun the task of updating the long-range plan for our organization. One of our organization's important yearly activities is the election of new ExCom members. If a leadership role within ICEC interests you, I would encourage you to complete nomination materials to serve for up to two 3-year terms. Watch for a separate email in September announcing the 'Call for Nominations.' Elected ExCom members begin their roles at the Annual Meeting held during the 2025 Winter Workshop. Planning has begun for Winter Workshop 2025. **Watch for more details on the ICEC website**.

Meanwhile, enjoy the change of seasons!

Louis Beck
ExCom Chair, Iowa Conservation Education Coalition

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ICEC Leadership Opportunity

Share your passion and leadership on the ICEC Executive Committee (ExCom)! The call for nominations will go out in September with paperwork due back to ICEC by the end of October. **Learn more about ICEC and the Executive Committee on our website**.

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CTOY Awards

ICEC sponsors the Conservation Teacher of the Year Award as part of the Iowa Soil Conservation Awards Program. ICEC honors two outstanding teachers (one K-8 and one 9-12) who are creating awareness of soil conservation and water quality in their classrooms. The 2024 awardees will be honored at the Annual Conference for Soil and Water Conservation District Commissioners on 19 August! The 2024 awardees are:

- Barb Lemmer from Linn-Mar High School
- Rosa Sondag from Central Decatur High school

Read about past Iowa Conservation Teachers of the Year!

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2024 DE Regional Science Trainings

The Iowa Department of Education, the Iowa DNR, AEAs, and other regional institutions are hosting three regional science trainings for teachers, coaches, preservice teachers and informal educators. These events will be held in-person to help facilitate teacher networking and the delivery of a consistent message to science educators across the state. To accommodate travel and substitute issues, the regional trainings will be held three times across the state from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Register for Fall Science Workshops

October 1 @ **Drake University**
October 8 @ **UNI**
October 24 @ **Morningside University**

- Admission is free
- Lunch is provided by the Iowa DNR / Izaak Walton League

If you have any questions, please contact Chris Like at **chris.like@iowa.gov**

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Iowa Science Phenomena Events

Iowa Science Phenomena from Iowa PBS offers a growing collection of local standards-aligned phenomena, unique and relevant to the students and teachers of Iowa. In Fall 2024, Iowa PBS will be offering two Phenomena Blitz events. Each event will include a FREE general public event where you are invited to explore an outdoor education environment and learn valuable tips and tricks to help improve your own amateur nature photography skills. Each event will be followed by an educator-only workshop where participants will:

- Review and select regional phenomena.
- Practice strategies to align selected phenomena to Iowa science standards.
- Work alongside other educators to create standards-aligned classroom resources featuring the unique nature of the region.
- Have an opportunity to share your created resources with Iowa teachers and students through publication on the Iowa Science Phenomena website.

Thanks to generous support from ICEC, Iowa PBS is able to offer a limited number of honorariums to support Iowa conservation educator attendance at each teacher workshop. If you are a classroom teacher, naturalist or other non-formal educator, AmeriCorps Service Member, a pre-service teacher/ college student, or otherwise involved in engaging students in conservation education, you qualify! While details for these events are forthcoming, one event will be held in Southeast Iowa and the other will be held in Southwest Iowa. Check the Iowa Science Phenomena website for more details and registration soon! **iowaphenomena.org**

Funded by the Resource Enhancement and Protection Conservation Education Program (REAP CEP)

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Iowa Envirothon

Curious about Iowa Envirothon, but are not sure what it is all about, please check out this video from a new advisor and team from the 2024 state competition.

Watch this video from the Bettendorf Club advisor and students about their first Iowa Envirothon experience.

Congratulations to Team DNR (Decorah Nerd Republic) and Team Advisor Larry Berland for their placing 13th among very good competition from the 48 other teams at the 2024 NCF-Envirothon New York.

Decorah Nerd Republic, L-R: Larry Berland, team advisor; team members Gabriel, Connor, Aiden, Lucas, Anders; and Allison Lovestuen, Decorah High School math teacher (and mom to Anders)

Envirothon is an environmental and natural resource

conservation problem-solving, team-building, and leadership experience and competition for 9th – 12th grade students across the U.S. In Iowa, the Conservation Districts of Iowa (CDI) manage this competition, with support from ICEC.

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Game Jam 2024-25 registration opens soon

Educational Game Jams provide opportunities for students to develop games around a theme. They can inspire curiosity, creativity, collaboration, optimism, and problem-solving skills at any grade level.

ICEC Game Jam Registration will open October 1, 2024! The Iowa Environmental Game Jam is a program of ICEC and highlights conservation topics of interest in Iowa.

An informational webinar is archived and available here.

ICEC Game Jam Registration will open October 1, 2024! **Please complete this form so we can communicate with you about the jam and opportunities**.

Congratulations to these Game Jam 2024 Teams! This year 10 teachers / schools participated and their grade 3-12 students submitted 41 games. **Please visit page** to see the list of winning teams and to learn more!

Contact ICEC for additional questions!

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PEEPs

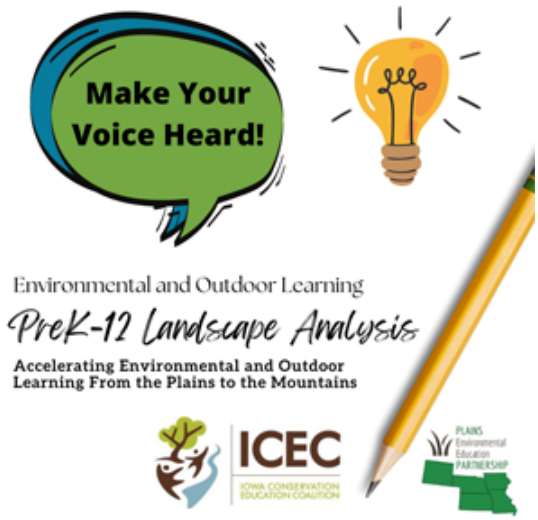
PreK-12 Teachers and Administrators: Make your voice heard through our eeLandscape Analysis Survey!

https://bit.ly/PreK-12OutdoorLearning

In just 15 minutes, by completing the survey, you will help us understand more about the needs and challenges you face in engaging students in outdoor and environmental learning

Learn more **here from this ICEC post**!

Thank you to the Pisces Foundation for supporting this work!



Pisces Foundation

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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.
- **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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Student Scholarships and Research

Project Dragonfly
Apply now for courses through Miami University's Project Dragonfly for graduate courses and master's degrees that offer extraordinary experiences through zoos and botanical gardens. Click here to learn about their **Advanced Inquiry Program**, **Global Field Program**, and **Earth Expeditions**. Learn more from their **2024-25 Information Webinar**!

Upper Iowa University
Grant received - ICEC member and UIU faculty member, Barb Ehlers has received an EPA grant to support a teacher professional development course, Learning and Living in A Changing Climate! Learning and Living In A Changing Climate project aims to educate project participants on the impacts of climate change and actions that can be taken to improve air quality and revitalize land through immersive three-day educator workshops and virtual follow up sessions. Workshops will be dispersed throughout Iowa (Fayette, Mt. Vernon, Marshalltown, and Davenport). The target audience for this project is Pre-K – post-secondary teachers and their students, student teachers, and informal environmental educators in Iowa. IUI aims to train 88 educators, impacting up to 4,800 Pre-K – 12th grade students, with most participants living and/or working in underserved communities. Participating educators will practice stewardship through lifestyle practices, incorporating practices into their classrooms and implementing community projects. By the end of the project period UIU hopes to improve teacher skillsets and their understanding of climate change and land revitalization at the local level. The long-term outcome of the project is to improve environmental education by disseminating and supporting environmental education practices, methods, and techniques throughout Iow

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**.

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Professional Development

Project WILD
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.**

University of Northern Iowa
The University of Northern Iowa MA Science Education graduate program is the only online program in Iowa for K-12 teachers that integrates theory, application, and content, plus allows you to update pedagogy, add endorsement areas or update content knowledge in your specialty area. Learn more at **online.uni.edu/science-education**. If you have any questions, please contact Dawn Del Carlo, UNI Science Education Graduate Coordinator (**sciedgradcoord@uni.edu**)

Iowa Water Summit, Iowa Nature Summit 2024
Iowa Water Summit, October 8, 2024 in Des Moines. The focus of this event will be volunteer water quality monitoring, and the goal is to bring together organizations and individuals from across the state with a shared interest in water quality to strengthen connections and share ideas. Learn more about the event and register at **www.iwla.org/watersummit**. Bonus - this event is taking place in coordination with the Iowa Nature Summit on October 9-10, 2024 At Drake University Olmsted Center. Learn more here **https://www.iowanature.org/**

Iowa Water Center
2024 Iowa Water Conference: Life Depends on Water. Water Depends on You.
Save the date - This year's conference will be September 10-11, 2024, with a pre-conference tour on September 9, 2024. **Check this portal for updates**. Registration closes August 30, 2024.

NAAEE - Conference 2024: Building Bridges
November 6-9, 2024
Registration is open for the NAAEE's 53rd Annual Conference and 21st Annual Research Symposium, to be held in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, November 5–9! Early bird registration ends September 13, 2024. Learn more at the conference website. Learn more at **conference.naaee.org**.

Blank Park Zoo
Check out these teacher workshops from the **Blank Park Zoo** in November 2024, January and March 2025! These academic year workshops run 4:00 to 9:30 p.m. on Friday and 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturday. Each class cost is $65.00 to help cover materials and meals, payable to Blank Park Zoo online; plus AEA credit fees (information regarding AEA registration will be sent to participants prior to each class). Workshops held in either the Events Center or Discovery Center Conference rooms at the zoo. Registration and prepayment are required. **Register here!**

Harbinger Consultancy offers high-quality, hands-on and inspiring skill-building courses. These courses are geared toward the needs of small towns, rural communities, neighborhoods, and those organizations that partner with or serve these areas. **Check out the Fall 2025 offerings** and new courses.

Children & Nature Network - 2024 Nature Everywhere Conference
Recap of the recent Nature Everywhere Conference

PLT, WET, and WILD
Check out the PLT-WET-WILD **Annual Conference Recap**

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Resources from NAAEE

Have you checked out eePRO to see all the fabulous resources and opportunities? **Bookmark this page and visit when needing inspiration**. Also check out the **Youth Outdoor Policy Playbook** and the **Environmental Education and Civic Engagement**

Calling all school administration to check out the **Superintendents' EE Collaborative** (SEEC) - learn more about SEEC, the collaborative, and download the toolkit.

The NAAEE campaign Outside for 5 encourages 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

Conservation Outcomes Webinar Series | Natural Resources Conservation Service
Check out the webinars upcoming and the past recorded webinars! Registration is not required. Access instructions are available on the **Conservation Outcomes Webinar Series webpage**.

Edutopia - Several good reads!

- Why Kids Should Nature Journal at All Grade Levels - **Read about this 2023 review**!
- **Integrating Loose Parts Play Into Recess**
- **6 Ways to Unplug from Classroom Technology in Our Digital Age**

Learn more about **2022 Conservation Teacher of the Year, Margaret Hogan**!

To save their soil, Kansas tribe shifts to regenerative agriculture - **and transforms their farms** - from the American Heart Association News. Be sure to watch the video at the end!

2024 Spirit of Water Contest Winners from the **Iowa Water Center**

NOAA

- The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration has created the **Planet Stewards Education Project** for students and instructors interested in climate change issues. Check out the webinars, resources, and book club here.
- **Climate Emergency: Feedback Loops** - Check out these five short films to learn why natural warming loops have scientists alarmed.

Iowa PBS Phenomena Project
Iowa Science Phenomena is a website and service dedicated to supporting classrooms through a curated collection of user-generated, Iowa-focused science phenomena. Explore **videos** highlighting Iowa master teachers modeling phenomena-based strategies and practices in their classroom as well as elementary, middle and high school students sharing their experiences learning with Iowa-based phenomena. Explore these videos and learn how you can use and contribute to the **Iowa Science Phenomena website** today!

National Science Teaching Association - Watch this recorded webinar, " **Making Climate Science Matter: Expanding the Use and Reach of the Fifth National Climate Assessment**."

IDALS-Division of Soil Conservation & Water Quality and Conservation Districts of Iowa
April 27–May 4, 2025 is Soil and Water Conservation Week. The theme is "Home is Where the Habitat is!" Check with your local Iowa soil and water conservation districts for a list of planned activities or events. The Iowa celebration is in conjunction with **Stewardship Wee**k, sponsored by the National Association of Conservation Districts

Soil and Water Conservation Society

- **Emerging Leaders Program**, Share this program with those in your network in the first five years of their career. Applications for the 2025 program are due August 15, 2024.
- DEI Guidebook for Conservation Professionals - **this is a free download here**.

Community Commons
Community Commons is a robust online platform that supports change-makers working to advance equitable community health and well-being. For over a decade, this group has connected those driving

change to the best tools, resources, data, and stories to support this work. Explore the **Community Indicator Library**!

Children & Nature Network (C&NN)

- New report from former Federal Reserve economist Rob Grunewald, *How Green Schoolyards Create Economic Value*. **Download the report here**.
- Kids can spend more time outdoors when provided with shade, **study finds**
- Colorado's outdoor preschools trade chalkboards and desks for crawdads and mud - A new Colorado law will allow outdoor preschools to accept state child care subsidies, making them more accessible to low-income families. This unique form of early education draws on research that demonstrates improved mental well-being and confidence in kids who learn outside. Colorado follows Washington as the second state to license outdoor preschools, with other states considering similar measures. **NPR**.
- Nature Everywhere Communities Action Challenge - **recorded info session**

National Environmental Education Foundation (NEEF)
The Mental Health Benefits of Spending Time in Nature, **read the article here**.

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Other News

August 26th is Women's Equality Day
In 1973, Congress designated August 26 as "Women's Equality Day" to commemorate the certification of the 19th Amendment to the Constitution on August 26, 1920, which granted women the right to vote. Women's Equality Day reminds us of the hurdles overcome by the heroic women who faced violence and discrimination in their efforts to advance the Women's Suffrage movement, which formally began in 1848 in Seneca Falls, New York, but had been building for much longer. For inspiration on how to honor and celebrate Women's Equality Day, **check out this list of resources** from the National Women's History Alliance, **this article** from the National Women's History Museum, and **this guide to the 19th Amendment** from the National Park Service.

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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

Executive Committee Members

Louis Beck, Chair
Retired, FFA / Agriculture Education

Tiffany Morgan, Vice-Chair, Secretary
Iowa PBS

Heather Gamm, Treasurer
Bremer County Conservation

Kyla Burns
Johnston High School

Dave Conrads
UI WILD, University of Iowa College of Education

Jared McGovern
Director, Wanderwood Gardens

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Jim Pifer
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Clark Porter
Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship; Farmer

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Peg Steffen
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