

## 1. National Science Foundation (NSF)

NSF grants nearly \$1B/year for science education, of which NSF staff estimate that \$29 million in 1998 and now perhaps as much as \$50 million of these funds go to environmental education (only estimates are available because NSF has no program that specifically targets environmental education). In addition to this amount, significantly greater amounts of NSF funding go to underwrite the costs of graduate and postgraduate students on NSF-supported environmental research projects.

NSF funding has limits for the EE community. Funding primarily focuses on teacher training and materials development; funding for other areas, such as critical core institutional support, capacity building, or advancing the field, is rare. And by definition, NSF is focused on science; while they have broadened their scope to include aspects of social science and even economics as it relates to science, this still does not fully bring them into synch with the broad scope of environmental education.

## 2. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

Since 1990, the Congress has appropriated approximately \$100 million to EPA's Office of Environmental Education. Of the \$9 million or so appropriated on average each year for the past decade, the following is available in competitive grants:

- The \$2-3 million **Environmental Education Grants Program** provides teacher enhancement, materials development, and student support by providing grants to states and non-profit organizations to fund their environmental education programs. Demand is huge: only 200 or so of the 1,300 proposals are funded each year. Since the beginning of the program in FY1992, EPA has awarded roughly 1,700 grants for a total of approximately \$28 million in funding.
- The \$1.5 - \$2.0 million annual **Environmental Education and Training Partnership (EETAP) contract**, rebid every 3-5 years, provides teacher training as well as materials development and dissemination. EETAP contracts have trained over 75,000 education professionals and delivered a wide array of support services to teachers since 1990.
- The federally chartered foundation, the **National Environmental Education and Training Foundation (NEETF)**, receives approximately \$750,000/year from this appropriation. Since 1991, the foundation has awarded \$3.7 million of federal funds in matching grants, leveraging an additional \$5.4 million in non-federal dollars for a total of \$9.1 million to support EE.

While EPA's Office of EE attracts the most attention from the EE community, it actually comprises only a portion of EPA environmental education activities. Examples of some of the many EPA programs that include public outreach, communication, and education elements are:

- Children's Health Protection Grant Program
- The Air Pollution Training Institute

- Global Warming Education Program
- Sunwise School Program
- Environmental Justice Grants to Small Community Groups
- Pesticide Environmental Stewardship Program
- WasteWise Program
- Watershed Outreach Program
- Wetland Program Development Grants
- Wetlands Education Program
- P3 (People, Prosperity, and the Planet) Higher Education Competition
- Drinking Water For Kids, and
- the Youth and the Environment Training and Employment Program.

### 3. Department of Commerce

- The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Office of Education oversees the following (primarily funding) programs: Education Partnership Program for Minority Serving Institutions, Environmental Literacy Grants Program, Hollings and Foster Fellowships, B-WET Programs (Chesapeake Bay, California, Hawaii, Narragansett Bay), the National Undersea Research Program Education, and the Alliance Education Program for the Gulf of Mexico.

### 4. Department of Agriculture

- From FY 2000-2002, the Forest Service Conservation Education Program offered a \$1 million grant program that funded 200 field conservation education projects reaching underserved youth and forest visitors, delivering educational messages on sustainable forestry, invasive species, water and watersheds and wildlife. They continue to support a small conservation education staff of 4-6 people in Washington as well as regional staff, and are developing a new plan for conservation education.
- Natural Resource Conservation Service's *Partners in Resource Education - Hands on the Land* is a multi-agency initiative which brings the educational, historical, cultural and environmental resources of our country's public lands into the nation's schools.

### 5. Department of the Interior

- The National Park Service has a substantial informal education mandate and conducts numerous education and interpretation programs largely directed towards park visitors.
- The Fish and Wildlife Service's biggest investment in education is perhaps made in the National Conservation Training Center which conducts courses for DOI employees as well as the public. *Learning and the Environment* is a national initiative to improve environmental education outside the classroom. The overarching goal is to apply the best and most current understandings of how the

public learns about the environment through non-formal learning experiences to the development of frameworks for improving the practice, evaluation, and future research efforts of the environmental education community

## 6. Department of Education

While the programs authorized by the original National Environmental Education Act in 1970 were housed briefly at one point in the Department of Education, DoE apparently has never supported an environmental education initiative, has no grant program that specifically targets environmental education, and has no staff whose portfolio includes environmental education. Nonetheless, DoE grant programs have been successfully accessed by the EE community (though no data is available about the extent to which this has occurred).

## 7. Other Federal Programs

- The federally funded Morris K. Udall Foundation awards 80 undergraduate scholarships of up to \$5,000 to juniors and seniors in fields related to the environment as well as two Ph.D. dissertation fellowships.
- The GLOBE Program (Global Learning and Observations to Benefit the Environment) is a worldwide hands-on, primary and secondary school-based education and science program. GLOBE promotes and supports students, teachers and scientists to collaborate on inquiry-based investigations of the environment and the Earth System working in close partnership with NSF and NASA Earth System Science Projects and supported by the U.S. Department of State. 36,000 GLOBE-trained teachers with over a million primary and secondary students from 19,000 schools have contributed 15 million measurements to GLOBE.

**National Overview:  
Federal Environmental Education Reports**

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2. *Setting the Standard, Measuring Results, Celebrating Successes: A Report to Congress on the Status of Environmental Education in the U.S.* (EPA 240-R-05-001), EPA National Environmental Education Advisory Council, 2005.  
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3. *Executive Summary: Advancing Environmental Education at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency: An Analysis of Program Characteristics, Workforce, Needs, and Obstacles*, 2005. [www.epa.gov/enviroed/pdf/EE at EPA ExecSum.pdf](http://www.epa.gov/enviroed/pdf/EE_at_EPA_ExecSum.pdf)
4. *Environmental Literacy in America*, National Environmental Education & Training Foundation, 2005. [www.neetf.org/pubs/ELR2005.pdf](http://www.neetf.org/pubs/ELR2005.pdf)
5. *Complex Environmental Systems: Synthesis for Earth, Life, and Society in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, NSF Advisory Committee for Environmental Research and Education, National Science Foundation, 2003. [www.nsf.gov/geo/ere/ereweb/ac-ere/acere\\_synthesis\\_rpt\\_full.pdf](http://www.nsf.gov/geo/ere/ereweb/ac-ere/acere_synthesis_rpt_full.pdf)
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9. *Education for Sustainability: An Agenda for Action*, President's Council on Sustainable Development, 1995. ISBN 0-16-048783-8  
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