

## C2E2 History



The environmental concerns that face North Dakota demand that together we think deeply about how to maintain a future that is sustainable, healthy, prosperous, and equitable for this generation and generations to come. Developing and implementing solutions to these challenges requires an environmentally literate citizenry that has the skills to understand, think critically about, and address existing and future natural and cultural resource issues.

C2E2 was established in 1995 as a public/private partnership made up of over sixty representatives from governmental agencies, organizations and individuals with an interest in supporting conservation and environmental education. The Coalition for Conservation and Environmental Education (C2E2) formed a nonprofit 501(c)(3) with a mission to "*prepare stewards of all ages with the skills to make informed decisions that maintain a sustainable environment.*" To achieve our goals today, we still need the collaborative support and resources of a broad cross-section of the state, including educators and administrators from the formal education system; nonformal educators from agencies and organizations; parents and community members who understand the needs of their students; and leaders from higher education. We must all invest our very best efforts and people for the future of our children and for North Dakota's prosperity, equity, and resource sustainability.

The interest and need for environmental literacy has continued to grow over the years. Effective environmental education does not advocate any particular viewpoint on environmental issues. Rather, environmental education promotes a full understanding of environmental and cultural issues through the education process. The focus of environmental education is on the processes that enhance critical thinking, problem solving, and effective decision making. Through these processes, individuals can better understand the complexities and interrelatedness of environmental issues and weigh the various sides to make informed, balanced and responsible decisions as an individual or collectively.

Many of the skills emphasized in effective environmental education are the same skills fostered in the North Dakota State Education Standards for Science and Social Studies; Next Generation Science Standards; as well as through the requirements of the Title IV "Every Student Succeeds Act—21st Century Schools." This calls for a "well-rounded education" utilizing STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) activities, including "hands-on learning" and "field-based or service learning." By utilizing the environmental education materials sponsored by C2E2, Scouts, 4-H, clubs, schools and school districts can meet all the requirements and provide stimulating, challenging, and fun activities for their PreK-12 students.

It's essential North Dakota's state agencies, organizations, and individuals continue to offer quality conservation and environmental programs for use in classrooms until all students, all schools or school districts have an opportunity to develop an environmental literacy program. C2E2 can apprise teachers – formal and nonformal – schools, and districts of what unbiased materials and training are available, as well as offer technical guidance on integration.

We welcome your support and participation in our efforts. Join us today!