Leap into action...
lead the way to a greener tomorrow
The Colorado Alliance for Environmental Education wishes to thank the Colorado State Forest Service, White Water Foods, H2M2Hill and SunCor Energy, USA for their generous support of the Tenth Annual Awards Celebration.

CAEE 2007 Environmental Education Awards

Environmental Education Program Awards

Initiated in 1996, CAEE Environmental Education Program Awards honor leadership in developing effective, cooperative, cross-sector environmental education programs. The 2007 recipients have demonstrated success in implementing innovative environmental education programs and partnerships.

Enos Mills Lifetime Achievement Award

This award for significant achievement is named after Enos Mills, “founder” of Rocky Mountain National Park, and is presented by CAEE to individuals for their long-term, outstanding achievements and contributions to environmental education. Enos Mills spent his life discovering and experiencing nature, and working tirelessly to preserve it by sharing its benefits with others through gardening, writing and photographs. Like Enos Mills, award recipients have demonstrated leadership and commitment to the field of environmental education through a significant body of work.

Julie Wrend President’s Award

Each year, the CAEE board of directors selects one individual or organization to receive the CAEE President’s Award. Julie Wrend, our current board president, has demonstrated leadership and commitment to the field of environmental education through a significant body of work.

New! Award for Outstanding Retired Educators

CAEE is excited to present for the first time a new award in recognition of outstanding environmental educators who are retiring from their careers in education.

New! Award for Outstanding Retired Educators

Please join us in congratulating Carol Stansfield, the first recipient of this award.

Call for Nominations! 2008 Environmental Education Awards

Do you know of a successful environmental education program in a school, public business, or nonprofit or local community? Do you know of individuals or organizations working together to provide quality environmental education? If so, please nominate your program or theirs for a CAEE Environmental Education Award! Award categories include: PreK-Elementary Education, Secondary Education, Higher Education, Citizen/Community, Media, Business, Nonprofit, Agricultural, Religious/Spiritual, Government, and Best New Program.

Pick up a nomination form today, or visit http://www.caee.org to download a nomination form. Contact CAEE at 303-279-9527 or caee@caee.org for more information.

Enos Mills Lifetime Achievement Award

Ray Tschillard has been described as a visionary thinker and a talented and dedicated teacher and speaker. He is an outstanding leader and dedicated environmentalist. One of his students said, “Through his knack of leading people with the inquiry process, Ray has sparked the flame of excitement of the outdoors in my life.” Ray is also one of the most tenacious persons on the planet. He sets his sights on a goal and doggedly pursues that goal until it is accomplished.

Ray has VISION, and his dream was to establish a comprehensive, community-based outdoor learning center for Northern Colorado kindergarten-12 grade school children and teachers. For more than two decades, he single-mindedly pursued a unique combination of processes: approaching environmental issues as systems problems, using the outdoors to encourage scientific inquiry, mentoring teachers - enabling them to improve their content knowledge and teaching skills, sharing his passion for water education, imparting his knowledge of Colorado’s grasslands and riparian systems, and planning an environmental laboratory for students and teachers from rural agricultural communities in northeastern Colorado.

He achieved his vision through the preservation of a unique piece of river and grassland habitat for future generations. The Poudre Learning Center (PLC) is the culmination of Ray’s dream. His tireless 22 years of effort laying the groundwork in the region’s educational, political, economic, and social networks now serves four school districts. PLC provides an outdoor experiential learning environment for the general public, kindergarten-college students, and teachers.

Currently, Ray is Director of the PLC, Coordinator for Weld County School District 6, and President of the PLC Board of Directors. Before PLC, Ray worked with the Biological Science Curriculum Study in Colorado Springs focusing on the reformulation of science education through the selection and implementation of inquiry-based instructional materials in school districts nationwide.

Throughout his career, Ray has made significant contributions to environmental education and addressed great challenges and needs. He assembled a collaborative group of educators, water users, and scientists to develop a curriculum addressing the unique water issues in rural Weld, Morgan, and Adams counties. Their creation, Water Wise Colorado, was the Poudre Learning Center for 4th graders located on 640 acres in the Black Forest. Each year, the School in the Woods provides students with a unique, engaging “living classroom” and a curriculum centered on learning from the land and the ecosystems where the school is located. Carol worked diligently for 2 years to make her dream of a School in the Woods a reality, and after the school opened in 1999, she continued to teach at the school for 8 years before retiring. Carol was responsible for everything from curriculum development to materials acquisition, and in all her endeavors, she demonstrated great vision, creativity, resourcefulness, perseverance, commitment, optimism and leadership. Carol’s dedication to environmental education is evident throughout her career. In both her professional life, Carol has inspired many – including her students, and their parents, her colleagues and her friends – and she has created a legacy that will continue to impact learners for years to come.

Please visit the displays to learn more about these outstanding programs and individuals.

For more information, please contact Ray Tschillard at 970-352-1267 or RTschillard@GreeleySchools.org.
President’s Award
Congressman Mark Udall

The Board of Directors of the Colorado Alliance for Environmental Education (CAEE) is proud to honor Colorado Congressman Mark Udall with the 2007 President’s Award in recognition of his leadership in environmental protection and conservation. This award recognizes Congressman Udall for his work addressing energy, climate change and other environmental issues important to Colorado, as well as the importance of education for a successful future.

Mark Udall is serving his fourth term representing Colorado’s Second Congressional District. Udall is a member of the House Armed Services Committee, the House Science Committee and the House Resources Committee. He previously served on the Small Business and Agriculture Committees. His committee assignments have given him a platform to address many issues important to Colorado, including national security, energy, education, health care, technology, environment and transportation. Udall serves as the ranking member on the Committee on Science Space and Aeronautics Subcommittee. In addition, he is the co-chair of the House Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Caucus, and is a recognized national leader in promoting a balanced national energy plan.

Udall’s operating style has been to avoid burning bridges with people, including those with whom he has philosophical differences. “You can disagree without being disagreeable,” says Udall. This style has allowed him to work in a bipartisan fashion to pass legislation to turn Rocky Flats, the former nuclear weapons facility, into a wildlife refuge, protect many of Colorado’s wilderness areas, establish a math and science scholarship program, and secure transportation funding for high-priority projects in Colorado.

Mark has spent his entire adult life in Colorado. After graduating from Williams College in 1972 with a bachelor’s degree in American Civilization, he moved to Colorado’s western slope and began a long and successful career with the Colorado Outward Bound School, as a course director and educator from 1975-85 and as the organization’s Executive Director from 1985-95. Taking the challenges of his career into his own life, Mark is an avid mountaineer and has climbed or attempted some of the world’s most challenging peaks, including Mt. Everest.

As a native Westerner, Congressman Udall is passionate about preserving the natural environment and quality of life. He has a deep attachment to the West, its landscapes and way of life, which is one of the primary reasons he sought public office. In Congress, he has fought to protect our natural resources. He was able to work with colleagues from both sides of the aisle to enact legislation to designate the James Peak area as wilderness and to provide other protection for the rest of this 40,000 acre area astride the Continental Divide. Udall also supported protection of the remaining roadless parts of our national forests. He has supported bills and efforts to preserve the Front Range Mountain Backdrop, establish most of Rocky Mountain National Park as wilderness and transfer U.S. Bureau of Land Management Lands to Boulder County’s Open Space program.

Udall is also committed to public education. He has said, “Our public school system is one of the cornerstones of our society. I believe nothing is more important than ensuring that our nation’s children are given the opportunity to receive a quality education.”

CAEE’s Board of Directors is honored to recognize Congressman Udall for his efforts to protect the environment and improve education throughout Colorado.

PreK-Elementary Award
City of Aurora Parks and Open Space Department
AWQUA (Aurora Water Quality Understanding and Appreciation) Lounge

City of Aurora Parks and Open Space Department’s mission is to be a steward of outdoor places essential for people and nature to thrive in our community. The AWQUA Lounge at Aurora Reservoir is much more than an interpretive center; it is a water quality education experience! Located steps away from the popular swim beach at Aurora Reservoir, this space was transformed from a dull white room to a beautiful hands-on learning environment in just five months.

Visitors enter the Lounge through a water delivery pipe and are transported into a blue and shimmery world inside. A belly boat is suspended from the ceiling, giant duckweed floats overhead, and a fish eye lens dangles downstairs. Bubbles trail up the walls and the sound of glub, glub, glub surrounds.

The AWQUA Lounge has several learning stations designed to help visitors understand and appreciate water resources and water conservation. Visitors can hit the AWQUA Bar for “All the information they can drink,” including facts about where their drinking water comes from, watershed etiquette, water conservation, and more. Kids and families love the macroinvertebrate observation station, where microscopes and a video scope make tiny harbingers of good water quality larger than life! The watershed roulette wheel allows players to discover “winners” and “losers” for watershed care. Fish costumes teach children and adults about adaptations for underwater life. “Extra chunky soup” and “benthic buffet” coloring sheets allow kids to get to know the tiny creatures that speak volumes about water quality. Coming soon, a talking storm drain will remind visitors that stormwater connects our streets, backyards, and communities to our local waterways.

In addition to self-guided discovery, the AWQUA Lounge offers AWQUA Tween Day Camp, Wet and Wild Wednesdays, Scout Badge Days, Family Fishing Workshops, as well as water quality testing and macroinvertebrate investigation for middle and high school students. In just six months of operation, over 1800 casual visitors have waded into the AWQUA Lounge and over 3400 Scouts, families, adults and school-age students have participated in formal water education programming.

The City of Aurora Parks and Open Space Department thanks Aurora Water and Arapahoe County Open Space for their essential support of the AWQUA Lounge.
Secondary Education Award
Bookcliff Middle School and James M. Robb Colorado River State Park Partnership

For almost twenty years, Bookcliff Middle School seventh graders and their instructors have loaded up in a school van every other week to arrive at a pre-determined site in the James M Robb – Colorado River State Park complex. Students selected to attend this workday earn the privilege of being on the week’s work team by demonstrating responsibility in their schoolwork and actions. The selected 12 to 14 students work hard at the park for 4 hours planning and completing projects. When the students return to school they make up the schoolwork missed while working at the park.

Many teachers, all park staff, and several park volunteers have been involved with this program over the years. Each year seven teachers integrate portions of this community service program into their curricula and take turns attending the work days. The Colorado Riverfront Foundation has been vital to the success of this program by providing funding for the student’s transportation expenses.

This voluntary service-learning project provides students with many skills in leadership, math, communication, and problem-solving. They also learn the intrinsic value of volunteering, working with others, and giving of themselves. Specifically, they develop an awareness of the natural resources and environment of Mesa County and the importance of the Colorado River ecosystem to the entire Grand River Valley. For example, within one week after having built habitat teepees with a tamarisk removal project, youth noticed quail utilizing the teepees.

The youth participating in this program develop emotional ties to nature and may potentially pursue careers in natural resources. At a recent celebration of this project it was discovered that three of the seasonal park staff had been participants in the program when they were Bookcliff Middle school students.

“Bookcliff Middle School partnership has worked so well because it is a winning scenario for all of us. The teachers from the school love to reward the students, the students like to get their hands dirty, and we all like smiling faces!”

Brad Taylor, Park Manager

Citizen/Community Award
Denver Zoo
Community Leadership Project (CLP)

Two second graders cling to the handle of a bucket of splashing water. On the count of three, they carefully tip it beside a native perennial whose flowers are a deep shade of blue. Further up the hill a group of students are still digging holes, continuously checking to see if their plants fit yet. Soon the mulchers will pass by, scattering chunks of bark over the grounds to hold in the precious water.

Though just one of many planting days for Community Leadership Project (CLP) staff members, the opportunity to immerse themselves in the natural world and beautify their school grounds is a unique and unusual experience for many children growing up in the Denver metro area. CLP aims to educate urban youth with existing curriculum, provide an opportunity for students to address environmental needs within their school community, and build leadership and problem solving skills through hands-on participation in a service-learning project. Prior to their planting day, students work together to make decisions about the garden based on their research, including measuring, designing scale maps, and selecting plant species. Sustainability plans are created to assist schools with long-term maintenance in their projects.

Planting Xeriscape and habitat gardens are just one of many ways students and teachers involved with CLP have chosen to enhance their communities. Building birdhouses to hang, initiating school-wide paper recycling, mulching school grounds to conserve water, stenciling storm drains with messages to prevent water pollution, and creating indoor worm composting boxes are additional ways children in the Denver metro area have positively impacted their schools and surrounding communities.

CLP emerged as an extension of the Denver Zoo and the Colorado Division of Wildlife’s award winning wildlife conservation program, Wonders In Nature-Wonders In Neighborhoods (W.I.N.-W.I.N.) and is currently funded by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Department of Energy, Colorado Division of Wildlife, and the Colorado Department of Education. CLP serves at-risk students from diverse backgrounds and provides funding for qualifying schools. Of the 1,777 students participating during the 2002-2003 school year, 65% qualified for free or reduced lunch. CLP strives to create long-term cultural change.

Essential 2002-2003 Partnerships
Non-Profit Award
Colorado Energy Science Center and Energy Outreach Colorado
Energy Hog Traveling Road Show

The Energy Hog Traveling Road Show is a collaborative program between the Colorado Energy Science Center (CESC), a nonprofit organization that provides energy education programs and resources that promote economic and environmental benefits, and Energy Outreach Colorado (EOC), an independent nonprofit organization that raises money to help limited income Coloradans afford home energy. CESC is responsible for raising funds and delivering the Road Show, and EOC is the primary funder and administrator for the program.

The Energy Hog Traveling Road Show is a fast, fun and highly participatory school assembly-style program that teaches students about sources of energy with an emphasis on behaviors that conserve energy. Students meet the Energy Hog, a life-size mascot who loves to waste energy and the students are encouraged to change the Energy Hog’s attitude and behaviors. During the assembly program at least fifteen students are called up on stage to participate in skits such as the ‘Power Path’ where they reenact the steps necessary to mine coal and transform it into energy. The ‘Wheel of Energy’ portion of the presentation is modeled after the game show ‘Wheel of Fortune’, and is used to reinforce the lessons and energy saving behaviors presented earlier in the program. After the school assembly, each student receives a poster with lessons that reinforce messages about energy conservation and efficiency. In addition, the poster is designed so students can create their own energy conservation slogan for a school wide poster contest.

- The program has reached 30,000 students since it began in 2003.
- The program has been invited, and funded, to give presentations to thousands of students in Wyoming, Michigan, Texas and Georgia.
- CESC and EOC were invited to give a presentation about the program at the 2006 NAAEE conference.

Program Success
For the last two years, classrooms were visited following the Energy Hog Traveling Road Show assembly to measure what information the students retained from the program.

Program Goal 1: to develop an awareness of energy sources
Based on survey results, on average of 65% of the students could name a renewable and nonrenewable source of energy.

Program Goal 2: to develop awareness of how energy is used in the home or at school
Over 67% of the students correctly recognized heating and cooling as using the most energy in the home. Over 75% of the students responded correctly when asked about the best thermostat setting to save energy and money in the winter.

Program Goal 3: to promote behaviors that reduces energy consumption and lessen negative environmental impacts
Students were asked to list 3 ways to save energy at home. The most popular answer mentioned was ‘turn lights off’ with 71% responses. ‘Taking shorter showers’ and ‘turning off the TV’ were the next most popular answers with 41% of the responses each. ‘Closing the refrigerator door’ (36%), and ‘lowering the thermostat (24%)’ were mentioned next. These outcomes indicate that students know what behaviors are necessary to save energy at home.

Government Award
Larimer County Solid Waste Department
Garbage Garage Education Program

The Garbage Garages is one of only a few education centers nationwide devoted exclusively and extensively to waste education. As the cornerstone of the Larimer County Solid Waste Department’s education program, it welcomes thousands of visitors each year, most from within the county, but many from the Denver or Greeley area, or even as far away as Nebraska and North Carolina. Everyone from preschoolers to senior citizens learns something new from the colorful and interactive displays that showcase reducing, reusing, recycling, landfills and hazardous wastes. Students use ‘scavenger hunts,’ developed with help from local teachers, to guide them through the displays. Patty Packrat, Garbage Garages spokesrat, is pictured on several of the displays and also helps guide visitors. Participants range from groups of over 100 to a single person, with never a fee charged.

The center is located on the same site as the Larimer County landfill, recycling center and hazardous waste facility, all of which can be incorporated into tours.

Three dedicated volunteers help the department’s part-time education center attendant and full-time environmental educator guide tours and run special events. The annual Earth Day open house coincides with the department’s student “Reusables Art” contest. Free summer classes for kids use fun, hands-on activities to educate them about waste issues. For the most recent fall/winter season, the Garbage Garages offered Saturday classes targeting families. The education center opened in 2003 with funding assistance from local municipalities, businesses and a community foundation.

In addition to the Garbage Garages, the Larimer County Solid Waste Department owns and operates the county landfill (co-owned with the Cities of Fort Collins and Loveland), recycling center, hazardous waste collection facility, four rural waste transfer stations and six rural recycling drop-offs. The department is an enterprise fund; therefore, it receives no tax money or general fund money, but instead is supported by landfill and recycling revenues.
Best New Program Award
Eco-Cycle
Green Star Schools Program

In 1976, Eco-Cycle was founded as a community-based, grassroots organization. Today it is one of the oldest and largest non-profit recycling organizations in the United States. Over the past five years, Eco-Cycle has broadened its efforts—both locally and internationally—to go beyond recycling to Zero Waste. It partners with businesses, municipalities, schools and individuals to create a Zero Waste community and provide a Zero Waste model for the rest of the world. Eco-Cycle has also coordinated Boulder County School Recycling and Environmental Education Program for the last 21 years. This program provides over 1,300 environmental education presentations to over 37,000 students annually in the 80 Boulder County public schools. In addition, these schools are diverting one-third of their waste through their recycling efforts. In an effort to further Eco-Cycle’s Zero Waste mission, the Green Star Schools Program was launched in 2004, taking an innovative approach to changing school culture through waste reduction, enhanced recycling, large-scale composting and increased environmental awareness.

The Green Star Schools program is the first of its kind in the nation. Composting of all food waste and non-recyclable paper is carried out in every part of the school waste stream (classrooms, lunchrooms, kitchen, offices and restrooms.) Eco-Cycle provides the schools with waste monitoring, compost and recycling collection, kick-off assemblies, classroom and staff training, lunchroom monitoring, elimination of disposables in the cafeteria, waste reduction activities, Zero Waste event support and school rewards and incentives, making this the most comprehensive Zero Waste program in schools today.

The Green Star Schools Program is currently impacting 5,100 students at 14 schools with three additional schools joining each year. Green Star Schools achieve, on average, a total waste diversion rate of 66% through recycling and composting, while fostering the development of environmentally-informed, responsible individuals who take pride in the efforts they are making to protect our environment.

“Beginning in kindergarten, children at our school learn the ins and outs of composting and recycling. By fifth grade this slice of environmental awareness has become a positive habit. Kids believe in our Green Star efforts here at school and are anxious to carry the ideas into their own lives.”
Ms. Leann Mullineaux, 5th grade teacher, Douglass Elementary School

Government Award
Mesa County Solid Waste Management
Instructional Strategies in Waste Management

Mesa County Solid Waste Management does not believe it is sufficient to simply provide solid waste management programs. In order for these programs to work to the benefit of Mesa County residents and the environment, the public must be educated to the value and use of the Solid Waste Campus and associated programs. Mesa County Solid Waste Management has supported efforts to provide the local school district with a comprehensive education program related to waste management methods since 2000.

Mesa County Solid Waste Management developed and provides school district teachers and resource educators with a school curriculum and supplemental resources related to modern solid waste management activities. The curriculum is provided at no cost to the school or teacher and topics include landfill management, household hazardous waste and chemical safety, organic materials composting, recycling, and resource conservation. Mesa County Solid Waste Management can tailor the basic curriculum to the specific needs of individual teachers in their math, engineering, biology, chemistry, geology, environmental science, social sciences, and vocational classes.

Solid Waste Campus tours are also provided to school groups and civic organizations where individuals have the opportunity to see the engineering and management necessary to maintain an environmentally friendly waste management system. A campus tour consists of the Household Hazardous Waste Collection Facility, Organic Materials Composting Facility, and the landfill. Bus transportation is arranged by Mesa County Solid Waste Management and there is no cost to the school district or organization.

In 2007, over 1,600 school students and residents participated in Solid Waste Campus tours and fifty “Instructional Strategies in Waste Management” curricula have been handed out to local teachers and resource educators over the last year and a half.

“The highlight of our school year is taking the tour of the Hazardous Waste Facility, landfill, and composting site. Seeing the facility makes a huge impact on students; parents report that their kids pass on information involving environmental issues.” Denise Clark, Mesa County Valley School District S1

Cameron Garcia
Mesa County Solid Waste Management
P.O. Box 20,000
Grand Junction, CO 81502
970-255-0754
http://www.mesacounty.us/swm/
Agriculture Award
Rio Grande Watershed Conservation Education Program

The Rio Grande Watershed Conservation Education Program has been a leader in conservation-agriculture education in the San Luis Valley and Upper Rio Grande Basin since the mid 1990’s. A project of the five partners of the Rio Grande Watershed - Center, Conejos, Costilla, Mosca-Hooper and Rio Grande Conservation districts – the Conservation Education Program has been offered through unique collaboration with partners like the Rio Grande Water Conservation District, San Luis Valley RC&ED, San Luis Valley Water Conservancy District, Colorado Potato Administrative Committee, San Luis Valley County Commissioners Association and the Natural Resource Conservation Service.

The program provides a variety of conservation education options for both children and the community at large. The Conservation Curriculum gives K-12 teachers an avenue to access the outdoors with hands-on activities tied to the Colorado Content Standards. Farm and agriculture tours demonstrate how science and agriculture come together to feed our country. Windbreak planting gives students the opportunity to not only have an active hand in community service, but to see the importance of trees as windbreaks and long-term habitat. And finally, riparian and river trailer presentations allow for hands-on manipulation of a river channel to explore watersheds, riparian areas, wetlands and other changes that occur in a river corridor.

The Watershed also sponsors a series of annual events that encourage learner participation. Centered on conservation and an ethic that promotes the long term sustainability of our natural resources, participants experience the science of conservation through real world activities and experiences. Participants may also attend the summer Water Festival, Conservation Poster and Essay Contest, Beaver Creek Youth Camp Range and Soil Expedition, Project Learning Excursions, Youth and Teacher Workshops and Community Fundraising Golf Tournament.

By keeping with their beliefs and following their vision, the Rio Grande Watershed brings conservation education to life for 7,400 children and approximately 1,500 community members each year.

"Conservation – Collaboration – Education"

"By getting kids outside, on the landscape, we help them invest not only in all of our futures, but in themselves and our communities." Judy Lopez, Rio Grande Watershed Conservation Education Specialist

"Conservation Districts are about conservation, kids are about our future; what a great mix for us to get together" Brian Nuefeld, Rio Grande Watershed President

Higher Education Award
Durango Nature Studies

The Nature Year Project

Since 1994, Durango Nature Studies has provided nature, science, and environmental education to the communities of the Four Corners. With a vision of inspiring positive personal relationships with the natural world through outdoor learning, thereby enhancing respect for nature, more than 50,000 Southwest Colorado schoolchildren have participated in DNS programs at the Durango Nature Center and locations across the region.

Targeting at-risk fifth and eighth graders, the Nature Year Project focused on topics of winter habitat, snow physics, and animal adaptations to teach youth about the scientific method and how humans and animals adapt to winter. As part of a regional collaborative effort, the project also involved Fort Lewis College students and Southwest Conservation Corps AmeriCorps participants as volunteer naturalists.

The college students and AmeriCorps participants were not necessarily versed in education, ecology, or environmental studies. The college students were enrolled in a senior-level English course with a key goal of participating in service learning projects that enhanced civic engagement. The AmeriCorps participants used the experience as an introduction to the area for later work with at-risk youth. Both groups trained with DNS to learn hands-on methods of demonstrating knowledge, values, and ideals of land ethics, critical thinking, and stewardship.

With schoolchildren as their focus, the FLC students and AmeriCorps participants became both learners and educators, empowering them as community contributors and youth mentors. As one college student said, “I went into my paper with an idea of interconnectedness and my research found even more evidence to affirm it.”

"Conservation - Collaboration - Education"

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Judy Lopez
Rio Grande Watershed Conservation Districts Conservation Education Specialist
101 South Craft Drive
Alamosa, CO 81101
719.589.3907 X117
judy.lopez@rcdnet.net

Allison Pease
Executive Director
Durango Nature Studies
P.O. Box 3808
Durango, CO 81302
970.382.9244
allison@durangonaturestudies.org
www.durangonaturestudies.org
Non-Profit Award

Environmental Learning for Kids (ELK) Youth in Natural Resources (YNR)

Environmental Learning for Kids (ELK) ELK was established in 1996 by two wildlife biologists who saw a growing need to introduce and educate Colorado’s urban youth about science, leadership, and careers. This need arose from the realization that all young people need strong educational support, good role models, and opportunities for positive community action in order to become engaged, productive, and successful members of society. For the past twelve years, ELK has successfully achieved its goals by providing both classroom and experiential field activities to more than 40,000 youth and families across the Denver metro area, including Aurora and Commerce City. ELK has maintained a strong working partnership with the CO Dept. of Natural Resources since its inception, and specifically the CO Division of Wildlife, Division of Reclamation & Mine Safety, and CO State Parks provide Youth in Natural Resources with natural resource professionals to mentor students, field trip sites, and many in-kind resources.

The YNR program was established in 1991 by Senator Ken Salazar while he was serving as the Executive Director of the CO Dept. of Natural Resources. Both co-founders of Environmental Learning for Kids were products of the YNR program and vowed to continue on the legacy that Senator Salazar had created. YNR, ELK’s core program for youth ages 14-25, is a year-long, multi-year learning experience structured to provide well-rounded education in both science and leadership. The program is for youth who are ready to explore career options and gain work experience in the natural resource and science fields. By immersing students in science education and leadership development through hands-on field activities, local excursions, and overnight wilderness experiences, YNR is able to successfully ignite curiosity and inspire students in their academic studies and career searches. Allowing for an in-depth study of careers in science, conservation, and natural resource management through youth leadership and development activities ensures students are prepared to succeed in college and eventually the workforce.

YNR builds a community of learners that becomes a strong support network to young people, similar to that of a family. YNR’s long-term, year-round mentoring by scientists, and the community of learners it creates, makes it unique. The YNR program is innovative in that it creates a learning environment that becomes a catalyst for positive peer pressure for students to succeed and even exceed their expectations of what they are capable of in life. YNR’s success in reaching out to communities of color and females to engage them in nontraditional activities and keep them engaged for multiple years has received national attention. YNR has students who started in the program in middle school and are now college graduates. Each summer, through partnerships, 10-15 YNR students work in the field of natural resources for three months, gaining work skills and developing career options, all through environmental education activities.

When I was young I had a love for wildlife, but my Mom was very busy and there was no one was ever able to take me to natural places. YNR gave me a taste of my dream job, I was able to talk to wildlife biologists and learn about what they did. I am now attending CO State University in Ft. Collins to become a zoologist. YNR has helped me realize my dreams and set my goals towards my career.” Ashley Stewart, age 19, YNR member 6 years.

Stacie Gilmore, Founder and Executive Director
Environmental Learning for Kids (ELK)
14460 E. 50th Avenue
Denver, CO 80239
303.371.8658
sgilmore@elkkids.org
www.elkkids.org

Jeff Rucks, Manager of Education and Outreach
CO Division of Wildlife
6060 Broadway
Denver, CO 80216
303.291.7271
jeff.rucks@state.co.us
www.wildlife.state.co

Stacie Gilmore, Founder and Executive Director
Environmental Learning for Kids (ELK)
14460 E. 50th Avenue
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The YNR program was established in 1991 by Senator Ken Salazar while he was serving as the Executive Director of the CO Dept. of Natural Resources. Both co-founders of Environmental Learning for Kids were products of the YNR program and vowed to continue on the legacy that Senator Salazar had created. YNR, ELK’s core program for youth ages 14-25, is a year-long, multi-year learning experience structured to provide well-rounded education in both science and leadership. The program is for youth who are ready to explore career options and gain work experience in the natural resource and science fields. By immersing students in science education and leadership development through hands-on field activities, local excursions, and overnight wilderness experiences, YNR is able to successfully ignite curiosity and inspire students in their academic studies and career searches. Allowing for an in-depth study of careers in science, conservation, and natural resource management through youth leadership and development activities ensures students are prepared to succeed in college and eventually the workforce.

YNR builds a community of learners that becomes a strong support network to young people, similar to that of a family. YNR’s long-term, year-round mentoring by scientists, and the community of learners it creates, makes it unique. The YNR program is innovative in that it creates a learning environment that becomes a catalyst for positive peer pressure for students to succeed and even exceed their expectations of what they are capable of in life. YNR’s success in reaching out to communities of color and females to engage them in nontraditional activities and keep them engaged for multiple years has received national attention. YNR has students who started in the program in middle school and are now college graduates. Each summer, through partnerships, 10-15 YNR students work in the field of natural resources for three months, gaining work skills and developing career options, all through environmental education activities.

When I was young I had a love for wildlife, but my Mom was very busy and there was no one was ever able to take me to natural places. YNR gave me a taste of my dream job, I was able to talk to wildlife biologists and learn about what they did. I am now attending CO State University in Ft. Collins to become a zoologist. YNR has helped me realize my dreams and set my goals towards my career.” Ashley Stewart, age 19, YNR member 6 years.

Stacie Gilmore, Founder and Executive Director
Environmental Learning for Kids (ELK)
14460 E. 50th Avenue
Denver, CO 80239
303.371.8658
sgilmore@elkkids.org
www.elkkids.org

Jeff Rucks, Manager of Education and Outreach
CO Division of Wildlife
6060 Broadway
Denver, CO 80216
303.291.7271
jeff.rucks@state.co.us
www.wildlife.state.co

Colorado Alliance for Environmental Education

What is CAEE?

Within the enormous array of environmental education (EE) programming, the effectiveness of that collective effort is as important as are the separate results of any individual program or project. CAEE enhances Colorado’s EE community by providing professional development opportunities, coordinating support services and facilitating communication and networking between Colorado’s EE providers and the public. CAEE was incorporated as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization to serve the shared interests of public agencies, businesses, teachers, community organizations and individuals distributing and using EE.

Priority Programs and Activities

CAEE is a national leader in innovative, state-of-the-art approaches to statewide EE capacity building. CAEE is a vibrant and growing community of more than 700 members, including teachers, non-formal educators, community organizations, public agencies, businesses, non-profits, and individual stakeholders who support a common vision of improving environmental literacy in Colorado. CAEE provides professional development opportunities, coordinates support services, and facilitates communication and networking between educators, Colorado’s EE providers and the public. To fulfill this role in the wide-ranging EE community, CAEE manages several programs and projects, including:

- Electronic Information Clearinghouse - the state’s on-line "yellow pages" of EE resources
- Resource Review System - a quality assurance review process for EE programs/materials
- Teaching OUTSIDE the Box - the annual statewide EE professional development conference
- EE Program Awards - a statewide, annual recognition program
- EE InfoLink - A monthly newsletter containing upcoming events, trainings, job announcements, resources, etc.
- Correlations Project - managing centralized correlations between EE programs and the state academic standards
- Stewardship of Colorado’s Environmental Education Master Plan project
- Hosting the state’s EE Advisory Council - made up of key leaders from Colorado’s EE community
- Establishing a state training center for EE
- Maintaining close working relationships with community-based regional EE networks
- Hosting the Colorado Environmental Film Festival - a celebration of the inspirational and educational power of film

CAEE Membership

You are invited to join the largest professional organization for environmental educators in Colorado. By supporting CAEE as a member, you will receive the following benefits:

- Monthly newsletter
- Announcements of upcoming EE events and EE job openings
- Discounts to CAEE functions
- Invitations to networking functions
- Professional development workshops
- Free placement on the Colorado Environmental Education Directory (for organizational members)

CAEE Staff

Ali Gouldstone Sweeney, Executive Director
Amanda Peterson, Program Coordinator
Kate Gardner, Program Assistant

2007 CAEE Board of Directors
President: Julie Wrend
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Director: Linda Hamilton, Colorado State Parks
Director: Karen Hardesty, Colorado Division of Wildlife

Director: Diane Simmons, Colorado Academ

Membership Rates

Student or Teacher: $15/year
Individual: $35/year
Organizational: $65/year
Corporation: $500/year

A membership form is available at www.caee.org or by contacting the CAEE Office.

15260 South Golden Road
Golden, CO 80401
303.273.9527
info@caee.org
www.caee.org