

Ohio Environmental Education Fund Mini Grants Awarded in SFY 2001



During the Fall, 2000, and Spring, 2001, grant rounds, the OEEF awarded 21 mini grants, for a total of \$88,073.20.

Lima Kiwanis Club, *James A. McDonell Arbor Memorial*, \$5,000.00, May 2000 - October 2000, Allen County, Audience K-12 (Elementary), #01M-001

Provides a seedling to 2300 1st grade students in Allen County, accompanied by directions for its planting and care to help the children and their parents learn about the importance of trees and plants to their environment. After observing the growth and caring for the seedling for a year, students will be asked to complete a survey and write an essay describing their tree and the benefits it provides to the environment.

Westerville City Schools, *Woodswalk*, \$4,739.20, August 2000 - June 2001, Franklin County, Audience K-12 (Elementary), #01M-006

Incorporates educational activities from the classroom to outdoors for three seasonal woodswalks. Each walk will be led by instructors as well as parent volunteers who will receive training appropriate to the topics to be discussed for each walk. The goal for each "Walk" is to expose students to the elements that make up their environment and to note seasonal differences within the wooded area. "Birds: Dancers of the Sky", has been chosen as the theme for Woodswalk 2000-2001. Grant monies will provide equipment for the woodswalk, including binoculars, a digital camera and equipment, bird field guides, learning materials for bird identification, and funding for the Ohio Wildlife Center live bird presentations. Involves 3,500 elementary school students and 250 teachers and parent volunteers.

The Grand River Academy, *Watershed Vegetation Management*, \$5,000.00, October 2000 - May 2001, Ashtabula County, Audience K-12, #01M-007

Utilizes for outdoor learning a parcel of land set aside as wetland mitigation from the Millennium industrial site in Ashtabula. Project will enable students to conduct seasonal studies on a watershed and note impacts to the watershed from society. Students will also have the opportunity to investigate the purpose of wetlands and to identify species that are found. Students will create multi-media presentations regarding their studies of the watershed site. Grant monies will provide a digital camera and additional sampling supplies and equipment.

Hamilton County Soil and Water Conservation District, *Hamilton County Waterfest 2001*, \$5,000.00, July 2000 - April 2001, Hamilton County, Audience K-12 (Elementary), #01M-008

Waterfest is a highly successful annual event held by Hamilton County Soil and Water Conservation District to educate students regarding the importance of water quality and conservation. Due to construction in the Spring of 2001, the usual location for Waterfest is unavailable. Grant funds will be used to rent the Cincinnati Convention Center as the site location for the event. Waterfest is a one day conference with an attendance of 2000 5th and 6th graders involved in 25-minute, hands-on workshops designed to educate students about the water cycle and the importance of water for life. Fifteen collaborating partners are involved, including the Hamilton County Department of Environmental Services and the Cincinnati Zoo.

Sustainable Energy for Economic Development (SEED), *Clean Energy Education Program*, \$3,908.00, December 2000 - October 2001, Franklin County, Audience General Public, #01M-009

Provides an energy forum seminar in Columbus to educate 75 participants on the value of alternative energy sources. SEED will provide information regarding ways to purchase green power and help determine if solar power is the right choice for the participants' residences or businesses. Participants will be identified through a collaboration with William A. Spratley and Associates (WASA), who have been conducting workshops around the state on renewable energy. Two brochures will also be produced.

National Audubon Society, *Expanding Economic Development through Environmental Education: Ohio Birding Trails and Festivals*, \$5,000.00, October 2000 - October 2001, Adams County, Audience General Public, #01M-012

Proposes a workshop in Adams County to educate community leaders on the Birding Trails and Festivals project, with a goal of replicating the success of Lake Erie Wing Watch activities in southern Ohio communities. Focuses on the importance of habitat preservation, and the use of wildlife observation and ecotourism as tools to promote economic development.

Ironton City Schools - Ironton Middle School, *Conservation in Cane*, \$4,807.00, October 2000 - October 2001, Lawrence County, Audience K-12 (Middle School), #01M-014

Proposes to reintroduce River Cane to the Ohio River Valley. River Cane once attracted a variety of animals and insects and provided a resource to prehistoric people for numerous uses. Project will provide students a hands-on learning experience aided by a botanist and personnel from Ohio University's Southern Campus. Includes historical uses and habitat of river cane and causes of the decline of the species over time. Students will gain an appreciation and understanding of endangered species and ways to protect them.

Rural Action Inc., *Environmental Learning Program - Improvement Project*, \$4,619.00, December 2000 - June 2001, Vinton County, Audience K-12 (Elementary & Middle) and General Public, #01M-016

Teachers will be trained through hands-on outdoor classroom experiences, and return to establish environmental education curriculum units and resources at their home school. College students and community leaders will also be invited to attend the learning project seminar to develop environmental education programs in their communities. Primary focus of educating the educator is to increase environmental literacy in under-served Appalachian communities. Grant funds will be used to purchase a laptop, binoculars and field equipment, and support two interns who will help plan the workshops. This project will indirectly affect 2500 1st - 8th grade students in Vinton County.

Warren Local Schools, Cutler Elementary, *Cutler Outdoor Environmental Education Outpost*, \$5,000, April 2001 - October 2001, Washington County, Audience K-12 (Elementary), #01M-018

Equips an outdoor environmental education center for use by students and teachers at a K-3 elementary school and by community groups in western Washington County. Provides microscopes, bird house and butterfly habitat kits, seeds and equipment for outdoor gardening project, a shelter house, and a storage unit for outdoor science supplies. Labor is donated by local parents, teachers and a construction firm. National curriculum materials from Project Learning Tree will be utilized, along with programming provided by the Washington County Soil and Water Conservation District, OSU Extension Master Gardeners, Ohio's Hill Country Heritage Area, and the Marietta College Department of Geology.

Agricultural Incubator Foundation, Conservation Summer Day Camp, \$4,474 July 2001, Wood County, Audience K-12 (Elementary), #01M-019

Provides a week-long conservation summer day camp for 80 fifth grade students to study the interconnectedness of water, soils, forestry and wildlife. Programming includes the use of EnviroScape and ground water models, water quality test kits, soil pits, student-created compost piles, tree and forest plot measurement devices, observation and documentation of wildlife and habitat, and student journaling. Collaborators providing programming include the Wood County Soil and Water Conservation District, ODNR Division of Forestry, and Wood County Parks District. The Wood County Educational Service Center will assist in recruiting students and teachers.

Friends of the Lower Olentangy Watershed (FLOW), Olentangy Biological Survey: Educating a Responsible Vision for Ecosystem (OBSERVE), \$4,840, May 2001 - June 2001, Franklin County, Audience K-12 (Elementary) and General Public, #01M-020

Joint venture between FLOW and the Worthington School District to monitor portions of the Olentangy River and adjacent tributaries within the boundaries of the school district. 350 fifth grade students and 16 members of the general public will kick-seine for benthic invertebrates in ten riffle zones of the river on three separate occasions, sorting and identifying organisms collected. In addition to biological monitoring, periodic physical and chemical sampling will be conducted to monitor water levels, stream flow, temperature, pH, turbidity, dissolved oxygen, conductivity, and nutrient levels. Data will be used to calculate a cumulative stream quality index based on the types of organisms present, their abundance, and their relative sensitivity to pollution. In addition to the field collection experience, computer software and hardware provided by the school district will allow for the development of a shared database, thereby increasing the water quality monitoring information now provided by FLOW to the public on its Web page, and to the Ecological Assessment Group at Ohio EPA and the Division of Soil and Water Conservation at ODNR. Grant provides sampling equipment, teacher stipends, and bus transportation for a summer training workshop for teachers and citizen volunteers.

Madison Soil and Water Conservation District, *Land and Water Tour*, \$625, April 2001 - August 2001, Madison County, Audience General Public, #01M-021

Forty-eight Madison County citizens with responsibility for present and future land use decisions and water quality issues will tour four sites within Madison County's three major watersheds (Darby Creek, Deer Creek, Paint Creek) to learn about zoning, water quality, voluntary land stewardship and public resource management. Resource professionals from the SWCD and the federal Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) will discuss regulatory and voluntary measures such as deed easements, and point out historical sites and conservation practices along the route, such as filter strip tree plantings and streambank stabilization measures. A goal of the project is to have the participants implement voluntary conservation measures, increasing the acreage enrolled in NRCS conservation programs and leading to an overall improvement in water quality. Grant funds transportation, fact sheets, and promotional and recruitment materials.

Ohio Chemistry Technology Foundation, *Teachers, Industry and Environment Conference*, \$3,133.76 October 2001, Franklin County, Audience K-12 (Elementary and Middle School), #01M-023

Supports a two-day conference for 50 Ohio elementary and middle school science teachers to learn hands-on classroom experiments to teach environmental chemistry, and environmentally safe usage and disposal of chemicals in industry and in the classroom. Grant provides printed materials, presenter costs and substitute teachers for the participants. Collaborators include Miami University's Center for Chemical Education, Ohio EPA, and the Science Enhancement for Science Advancement (SESA) partnership between Allen County Schools, BP Chemicals, Premcor Lima Refinery, and Akzo Nobel Functional Chemicals.

Elyria Kindergarten Village, *Kindergarten Village GLOBE Study Site*, \$967, April 2001 - May 2002, Lorain County, Audience K-12 (Kindergarten and Middle School), #01M-025

Supports participation by 315 Kindergarten students and 16 teachers in the *Global Learning and Observations to Benefit the Environment (GLOBE)* Program, collecting data on local atmospheric and environmental conditions to share via the Internet with more than 9,000 participating schools worldwide, and federal agencies monitoring climate change. Kindergartners taking measurements will be escorted and assisted by up to 90 seventh grade students also participating in GLOBE at Westwood Junior High. Teacher training, instructional materials, technical support and Website are already in place; mini grant provides a secure atmosphere study site for installation of weather monitoring instruments. (Note that the junior high science teacher collaborating on the project became a certified GLOBE franchise trainer through a previous OEEF grant to Seventh Generation, #00G-028. OEEF has also funded the GLOBE program in several Ohio counties, in Grants #99G-064, #99G-108, and #00M-034.)

Community 20/20, *Living Rivers Environmental Education*, \$5,000, April 2001 - November 2001, Washington County, Audience K-12 and University, #01M-026

Provides sampling and instructional equipment for students from Washington State Community College, Marietta College, and local schools to study water quality, native aquatic life, and local history on the Muskingum and Ohio Rivers. Equips a pontoon boat for student experiments, conducted under supervision from biology faculty at the two colleges and the Washington County Soil and Water Conservation District.

Upper Arlington School District - Wickliffe Elementary, *Wickliffe Informal Alternative Outdoor Learning Environment*, \$4,999.15, April 2001 - June 2002, Franklin County, Audience K-12 (elementary) and General Public, #01M-028

Expands an outdoor education learning environment for 500 students at Wickliffe Elementary, and adults from the surrounding community. New niches to be added include a bird sanctuary for identification of bird species and habitats, a butterfly garden where students will research, identify and plant vegetation to attract butterflies, and an Ohio forest study area featuring native perennials for data collection on plants, insects and wildlife. Enhancements are also provided for an existing organic vegetable garden, for studying composting, mulching, and the use of natural herbicides, with produce donated to a local food bank and homeless shelter. Conceptual designs were developed with assistance from The Ohio State University.

Mahoning Valley Northeast Ohio Camp Fire Council, *Preschool Ecology*, \$3,790.09, May 2001 - December 2001, Geauga, Lake, Mahoning, Summit and Trumbull Counties, Audience K-12 (Preschool), #01M-029

Provides an ecology program consisting of six 30-minute lessons and related hands-on activities for 300 preschool children in a five-county service area. Topics include Plant A Tree, Let's Keep the Air Clean, Recycling, Water, Turn It Down (noise), and Saving Our World (conservation). Mini grant provides staffing, supplies, equipment, and travel expenses.

Ohio State University Extension, Community Development Department, *Ohio Parks Districts and Extension: Partnerships for Environmental Education Programming*, \$5000, April 2001 - August 2001, Statewide, Audience General Public, #01M-030

Brings together 40 county extension agents and 40 metro and district park staff for an intensive joint planning summit to strengthen and diversify environmental education programming at the local level. Participants will create specific action plans to address program gaps and opportunities, for implementation and follow up within 6-9 months. Collaborating partners include the Ohio Parks and Recreation Association, and Five Rivers Metro Park as host of the summit. The resulting statewide Action Plan and benefits of this collaboration will be shared at one regional, two state, and two national professional conferences for nature interpreters and environmental educators.

Loveland School District, *Wetland Outdoor Laboratory*, \$2,269.00, August 2001 - May 2002, Hamilton and Clermont Counties, Audience K-12 (high school), #01M-031

Equips an outdoor classroom and wetland aquatic ecosystem for use by high school biology, chemistry, and environmental science classes. A local construction company is donating equipment and tools for the construction of the wetland area, and a bridge and pier area for student observation and sampling activities. Construction will be completed by students, parents and volunteers from International Paper's Cincinnati Technology Center, using natural drainage to create a stream and shallow wetland. Mini grant provides field collection supplies, sampling equipment, and spreadsheet software for continuing data sheets, to enable students to carry over their laboratory research projects into each new science class taken in high school.

Columbiana County Recycling and Litter Prevention, *Windows on Waste*, \$4,902, May 2001 - September 2001, Columbiana County, Audience K-12 (Elementary), #01M-032

Provides a student worker to assist CCRLP staff in presenting the Ohio Department of Natural Resources' "Windows on Waste" curriculum to approximately 800 elementary-age students during summer programs in day camps, Head Start programs, home school groups, 4-H clubs, and Boy Scout/Girl Scout/Camp Fire troops. The student worker will use the curriculum's materials list to develop two project kits for each of the ten curriculum units. The kits will be tested and evaluated in a minimum of 40 presentations over a ten-week period. They will then be made available to Columbiana County teachers for classroom use during the school year. The staff and student worker will also train 10 volunteer facilitators to help implement the "Windows on Waste" curriculum. ODNR-Division of Recycling and Litter Prevention will provide materials, recommend modifications in the kits, and consult in the development of assessment instruments.

WSOS Community Action Commission, Inc., *Sandusky River Watershed Festival*, \$5,000, May 2001 - September 2001, Sandusky County, Audience General Public, #01M-036

Supports a summer festival conducted by Sandusky River Watershed Coalition to raise public awareness of the impacts of point and nonpoint source pollution on water supplies, solutions through individual stewardship, and the benefits and recreation opportunities of a healthy river ecosystem. Collaborating partners include: Heidelberg College, OSU Extension, four county Soil and Water Conservation Districts, Tiffin Water Pollution Control Center, ODNR Scenic Rivers Program and Division of Wildlife, Ohio American Water Company, Franciscan Earth Literacy Center, Crawford Park District and Sandusky County Parks. Mini grant provides planning supplies, publicity, and cost for COSI to present a hands-on water quality display. Event seeks to attract 1000 local citizens, as a pilot for future festivals in Crawford, Seneca, and Wyandot Counties.

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