



# Hands on the Land

A National Network of Field Classrooms Linking Students, Teachers, and Parents to their Public Lands and Waterways

## Featured Site

### Appalachian National Scenic Trail



The Appalachian National Scenic Trail is a world-renowned resource stretching across the eastern United States from Georgia to Maine. Approximately 2,000 miles of trail and 185,000 acres of corridor lands are managed through a cooperative management system involving more than 100 federal, state, and non-profit agencies, as well as more than 5,500 volunteers. People of all ages and abilities are able to enjoy short walks, day hikes, and long-distance backpacking journeys. The Trail also offers a variety of opportunities to view spectacular scenery, explore, exercise, study nature, and experience personal renewal.

The Appalachian Trail Conservancy and the National Park Service are always seeking new ways to engage citizens from adjacent communities, especially youth who may become future volunteers. Educating local youth about the Trail is critical as the Trail's volunteer base ages with fewer young people volunteering their time. With current research showing that adults who volunteered as youth are twice as likely to volunteer as adults as those who did not volunteer when they were younger, service-learning is more important than ever as an education strategy that could help engage youth, promote future volunteerism, and build a sense of stewardship for the Trail within the adjacent communities.

With limited staff and a resource spanning 14 states, they have developed a professional development program empowering teachers and community partners to create and implement a service-learning curriculum focused on Appalachian Trail resources and management strategies. Modeled after the highly successful *Forest for Every Classroom* program in Vermont, *A Trail to Every Classroom* was piloted in 2006 through a very successful week-long summer institute attracting 40 teachers from Georgia to Maine. Future plans for the 2007 program include adding pre and post local workshops.

In the spring teachers are introduced to the trail locally through sessions on hike leadership and *Leave No Trace*. The summer institute focuses on service-learning and curriculum development. In the fall the program focuses on program sustainability, partnerships, and grant writing. The teacher recruitment strategy emphasizes two or more teachers participating from the same school or district to serve as peer mentors to each other. As teachers come together for the local workshop, they form regional teams of support. At the summer institute, they realize the thread of the Trail connects them to a growing network of teachers and management partners from GA to ME.



Students during a service-learning project use GPS units to develop a Trail brochure in Harpers Ferry, WV.

For more information on the Appalachian National Scenic Trail please contact Rita Hennessey at [Rita\\_Hennessey@nps.gov](mailto:Rita_Hennessey@nps.gov), or visit the HOL site profile [http://www.handsontheland.org/profiles/profile\\_details.cfm?sitecode=apna](http://www.handsontheland.org/profiles/profile_details.cfm?sitecode=apna).

## Member News

### A Tongass National Forest Site addition: The Stream Team Project in Sitka, Alaska

Students from Sitka, Alaska, were busy wading the Indian River, sampling the stream for insects and algae, and studying water chemistry this spring. Third and seventh grade science students and local college students working toward environmental science professions make up the Sitka Stream Team, a cooperative project between the Tongass National Forest, National Park Service's Sitka Historic Park, the Sitka School District, and the University of Alaska.

Data collected in Sitka is added to the Alaska Stream Team database, which is accessible to scientists and other students throughout the state. If the data exhibits unexpected anomalies, professional level monitors will be informed as this can be an early indicator of a problem in a stream. The Alaska Stream Team Data Collection website can be found at <http://astdatabase.uaa.alaska.edu/>.

For more information about the Sitka Stream Team, visit the Educator Resources section on the HOL website or contact Faith Duncan at [fduncan@fs.fed.us](mailto:fduncan@fs.fed.us).



7<sup>th</sup> grade students, Maddie, Chris, and Claire in Sitka, Alaska, use a net to sample the Indian River.

## IT'S NOT TOO LATE!

Nominate your site by  
July 31, 2007  
for the 2007 HOL Awards at  
[www.handsontheland.org](http://www.handsontheland.org).

## Web Corner

### Website Training Modules

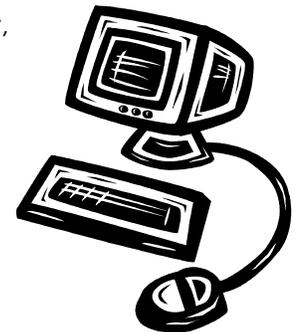
It is easy to forget how to best utilize the HOL website to accommodate your site's needs. In an effort to make these tasks easier, HOL webmaster, Dave Zelenka has created six interactive training modules. Using Flash-based web technology, the modules walk the site user through the necessary steps to better utilize the HOL website.

The modules cover:

- Becoming a Member
- Updating your Site Profile
- Posting an Educator Resource
- Posting Student Artwork and Writing
- Admin Hub Overview
- Using Hands-on Science

To access the Training Modules, follow these steps:

1. Go to the HOL homepage and click on the Program Provider link on the left-hand column.
2. Click on the Training Modules link.
3. Click on the Training Module of your choice.
4. Practice using the website with the guidance of these modules.



Please contact the interim HOL Program Director, Wendi Liles at [wiles@keystone.org](mailto:wiles@keystone.org) with any questions.