



Hands on the Land

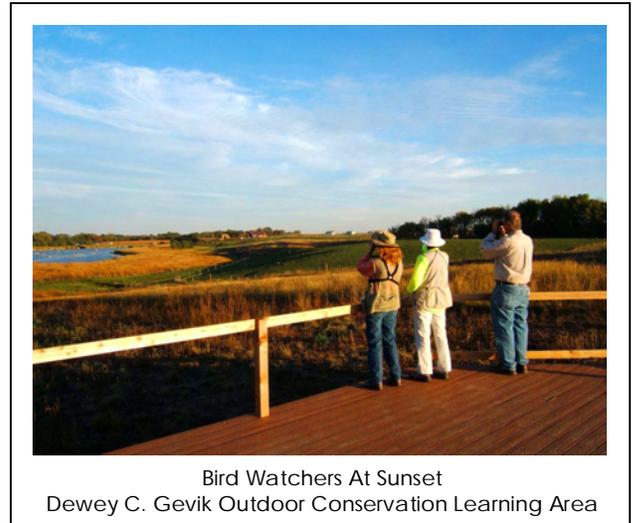
A National Network of Field Classrooms Linking Students, Teachers, and Parents to their Public Lands and Waterways

Featured Site

Dewey C. Gevik Outdoor Conservation Learning Area-Sioux Falls, South Dakota

Hands on the Land welcomes its newest site: Dewey C. Gevik Outdoor Conservation Learning Area! Not only is this site new to the network, it is also a state funded site.

Located near Sioux Falls, South Dakota the Conservation Learning Area (CLA) is comprised of 100 acres and focuses on combining education and conservation. Managed by the Minnehaha Conservation District, it contains native prairie grasslands, wetlands and forests. An extensive trail system allows visitors to access these diverse environments. The CLA also boasts a diversity of wildlife and, most notably, a large population and variety of birds. Bald Eagles, Purple Martins and Red-tailed Hawks can be seen from many of the birding blinds and observation areas.



Bird Watchers At Sunset
Dewey C. Gevik Outdoor Conservation Learning Area

Funding is provided to the Dewey C. Gevik Outdoor CLA through the sale of hunting and fishing licenses. These dollars allow for ongoing wildlife management and continued land conservation. However, the CLA does not allow any hunting or trapping onsite allowing visitors and students the opportunity to experience nature on relatively 'untouched' lands.

With a mission to provide an interpretive educational experience to the public with an emphasis on conservation, the Dewey C. Gevik Outdoor Conservation Learning Area will help visitors reach a greater understanding and appreciation for wildlife and the environment.

For more information, please visit the Dewey C. Gevik Outdoor Conservation Learning Area website www.leifericson.org/sfbc/id12html or contact Harley Shafer at 605-336-1527.

Updates

A Hands on the Land Thank You!



National Public Lands Day
A National Environmental Education Foundation Program



National Public Lands Day began in 1994 with three federal agencies and 700 volunteers. Last year 120,000 volunteers worked in over 1,700 locations and in every state. Now, 8 federal agencies and many state and local land management agencies participate in this annual day of caring for shared lands.

National Public Lands Day aims to educate Americans about natural resource issues and the need for shared stewardship of these valued, irreplaceable lands and to build partnerships between the public sector and the local community. National Public Lands Day also aims to improve public lands for outdoor recreation, with volunteers assisting land managers in hands-on work.

This year Hands on the Land would like to thank the three National Public Lands Day sites for their dedication and participation in National Public Lands Day 2008: **BLM Campbell Tract/ Campbell Creek Science Center** in Alaska, **Grand Canyon National Park** in Arizona and **Petrified Forest National Park** in Arizona.

Congratulations to the 2008 Hands on the Land Awardees!

There were many excellent programs nominated for the 2008 Hands on the Land Awards (see page 3 for a full list of nominees). This year, awards were given to **King Range National Conservation Area** for Community Collaboration and **Elden Pueblo Project** for Fostering Partnerships. We encourage sites to review the criteria for each category for nominations in 2009!

King Range National Conservation Area, CA (BLM) Community Collaboration

The Bureau of Land Management's King Range National Conservation Area formed partnerships with Mattole Restoration Council and Whitethorn Elementary School. These organizations have come together and created various restoration projects within the Mattole Watershed area. The Lost Coast Lifelab, an after-school program for 5th to 7th graders, began in 2007. This program connects teachers and students with the environment by allowing them to collect phytoplankton, analyze the samples and enter their findings into a national database. It has given the local community a renewed sense of responsibility to the environment.



Elden Pueblo Project, AZ (Forest Service) Fostering Partnerships

The Forest Service's Elden Pueblo Project is a cultural heritage site located on the Coconino National Forest, which invites the public to be a part of active stewardship through research and educational efforts. Designated for public education and research in 1978, the Project encourages collaborative interaction with organizations in the community, state and country.



The Project invites many partnerships and programs that enhance community awareness and education. These programs and partners include: grants for local educators, outdoor education for Flagstaff Unified School District, Arizona Archaeology Society, Coconino County Teen Works Programs, Grand Canyon Youth Volunteer Corp, Anthropological training for Northern Arizona University and Coconino Community College, Flagstaff Festival of Science and Arizona Archaeology Month.



2008 HOL Award Nominees



Congratulations to 2008 Nominees!

Thanks to all of the HOL sites that submitted a nomination for this year's Awards.

This year's nominees include the two winners and the following list:

1. Diamond Fork Youth Forest – Forest Service, UT

The Diamond Fork Youth Forest has developed partnerships with students, parents, families, teachers, and community partners. The Diamond Fork Youth Forest aims to "Create an enjoyable and challenging learning environment where youth can discover, gain an awareness and understanding of our natural resources, and have the opportunity to participate in managing those resources."

2. West Eugene Wetlands Education Center – Bureau of Land Management, OR

West Eugene Wetlands Education Center is in its third year of partnership with the University of Oregon's Environmental Leadership Program. The ELP is a service-learning program that moves students into the community and addresses environmental issues.

3. Chippewa National Forest – Forest Service, MN

The Chippewa National Forest was nominated for their programs that aim to "get more kids in the woods." In the 2007-2008 year 22 field trips, 11 after school programs and 8 family outdoors weekends were hosted.

4. Prairie Wetlands Learning Center – US Fish and Wildlife Service, MN

Prairie Wetlands' ambitious fundraising efforts created massive expansions for the center and allowed partnerships with the local school district. These expansions bring 200 students to the Center every day.

5. Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument – Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management, CA

Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monuments were nominated because of their programs that have helped educators in the desert cities region. These programs provide supplies to promote hands on education, develop hands on programs, and support public school teachers in gaining expertise in field studies.

6. Great Smoky Mountains National Park – National Park Service, NC

Great Smoky Mountains National Park facilitated workshops with educators on a variety of topics. Teachers have opportunities to combine field data collection in Great Smoky Mountains National Park with activities that can be used in the classroom.

7. Desert Discovery Center– Bureau of Land Management, CA

This year the Desert Discovery Center helped put together a proposal to develop a nature trail with several stations that provide visiting schools an outdoor learning experience. The DDC is expanding their Junior Naturalist education programs to encompass a nature trail with up to 7 educational stations.

8. Rickenbaugh House – Forest Service, IN

This year the Rickenbaugh House presented educational programs to Perry Central Community School on local history, natural resources and the Rickenbaugh House as well as organized volunteer opportunities.

Upcoming Events

Association of Nature Center Administrators Midwest Regional Summit, Jan. 27 2009 Wilmot, Ohio

ANCA Regional Summits are for management level staff from nature centers. This one-day gathering gives you and your management staff an opportunity to network with other centers in the region and time to discuss topics of interest to you. For more information please visit http://www.natctr.org/assets/docs/public/09_mwregional_summit.pdf.

Professional Leadership Institute, Jan. 13-18 2009, Hockessin Delaware

Gain insight and expertise in key components of operation a non-profit institution. Network and share with colleagues your successes and lessons learned from experience. Acquire techniques in recognizing and preparing for challenges. Refresh and focus your vision. For more information please visit http://www.natctr.org/assets/docs/public/prof_leader_institute_09.pdf.