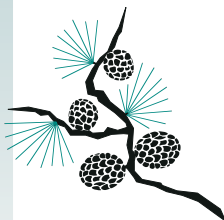




Colorado Alliance for Environmental Education



2004 Environmental Education Awards

The Colorado Alliance for Environmental Education (CAEE) wishes to thank Suncor Energy U.S.A., CH2M HILL, Coors Brewing Company, Lookout Mountain Publishing and New Belgium Brewing Company for their generous support of the Seventh Annual Fundraiser and Awards Celebration.



Teresa Ford



CAEE is grateful for the wonderful bluegrass music provided by The Woody Johnson Trio.

CAEE would also like to thank the volunteer members of the 2004 Awards Committee:

Paula Cady, Chair, Denver Zoo

Cheryl Armstrong, James P. Beckwourth Mountain Club

Roxanne Brickell-Reardon, Colorado State Parks — Eldorado Canyon

Susan Buhr, Cooperative Institute for Research in Environmental Sciences,
University of Colorado

Kirsten Copeland, Colorado State Parks — Ridgway

Shawna Crocker, Colorado State Forest Service — Project Learning Tree

Stacie Gilmore, Environmental Learning for Kids

Shirley Greve, Colorado Range Rider Youth Corps

Wendy Hanophy, Colorado Division of Wildlife

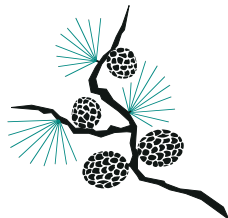
Karin Hostetter, Interpret This

Dan Parker

Diane Simmons, Colorado Academy

Janna Six, Consultant

Dean Winstanley, Colorado State Parks, Statewide Programs



Enos Mills Lifetime Achievement Award

Mike Way

Mike Way has committed his life and work to strengthening environmental education (EE) in Colorado and across the country. As far back as his undergraduate and graduate school efforts at Colorado State University (CSU) and throughout his 27-year career with CSU and the Colorado State Forest Service, he has been a leader and a tenacious ambassador for the field of EE.

Mike was instrumental in founding the Colorado Alliance for Environmental Education (CAEE). He was the first elected president of CAEE's board of directors in 1989, and began serving as the acting executive director of the organization from 1994 until his recent retirement this fall. On special assignment to CAEE from his Colorado State Forest Service staff position as head of Conservation Education Division and state coordinator for Project Learning Tree, the dream of drawing disparate organizations and individuals into a unified professional development association has become a reality. The strategies and partnerships that CAEE accomplished during his tenure have elevated CAEE to a model organization of more than 600 members.

He directed CAEE's initiative to manage the 1995 Colorado EE Master Plan. Later, his vision was the catalyst for the development of an online "EE yellow pages" system to develop, deliver, coordinate and promote EE programs for Colorado. It revolutionized CAEE's approach to state EE capacity building, and is being adopted by at least six other states.

Mike's ability to hold a vision high and keep moving forward in spite of obstacles has also been tested more recently as CAEE's professional development and training activities have focused upon the development of a statewide, EE quality assurance system — only a dream just ten years ago. When others have compromised, given up or gone away, Mike persisted in inspiring other leaders to push past setbacks. His leadership of CAEE has been characterized by strength of will, intense dedication, creative problem-solving and keen strategic thinking.

At the national level, his contributions include chairing the National EE Advisory Council and serving for four years on the board of directors for the North American Association for Environmental Education. He helped establish the State Affiliates Network and served as the first chair, and later chaired the National EE Quality Assurance Initiative.

As Enos Mills exemplified hard work, persistence and unrelenting passion for nature and its virtues, so does Mike for the environment and the need to teach intelligently about its role and value in our lives. As an educator, mentor and leader whose vision and dedication inspire and motivate others, Mike has set the stage for the continuation of the goals and aspirations of CAEE into the future.

Enos Mills Award

This award for significant achievement is named after Enos Mills, "founder" of Rocky Mountain National Park, and is presented by CAEE each year to an individual for 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 guiding, writing and photographs. Like Enos Mills, the award recipient has demonstrated leadership and commitment to the field of EE through a significant body of work.



Teaching EE in Thailand



A relentless pursuit of knowledge about schools and group(er) dynamics



Mike Way



Mike Way

Colorado Alliance for Environmental Education
15260 S. Golden Road
Golden, CO 80401
303-273-9527
mikeway@caee.org

President's Award

Jim Hubbard and Colorado State Forest Service



Jim Hubbard is the state forester for Colorado and has been the director of the Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS) for the past 20 years. Due to Jim's guiding hand of leadership and commitment, the people of Colorado enjoy a better climate for environmental education (EE) to thrive.

As the director of a major state agency, he has demonstrated unflinching commitment to and steadfast, long-term support of EE from a significant position of leadership. He elevated the conservation education responsibility to a senior staff level, and made the conservation education a separate division in an agency reorganization. One of his earliest decisions as state forester was to designate CSFS as the host agency for state coordination of the Project Learning Tree (PLT) program in 1985.



Using a strategy that has allowed CSFS to accomplish a great deal even though it is a relatively small organization by most standards of statewide agencies, Jim has placed special emphasis on building strong partnerships with other agencies and non-profit organizations, including the National Arbor Day Foundation's Tree City USA program; several U.S. Forest Service programs; the National Forest Foundation's Tree Farm program; the firefighting rapid-response program; the Colorado Association of Conservation Districts; and the Colorado Forestry Association.



Jim supported CSFS staff spending significant time in the early days of CAEE to help develop the organization by serving on the initial task force and then later with several terms on the board of directors. Later, he assigned Mike Way, then the CSFS senior staff for the Conservation Education Division, to act as CSFS liaison to the Colorado Department of Natural Resources at a time when Ken Salazar, then DNR director, had declared that EE would be one of his top five priority areas. When Salazar left his position in DNR a year later, Jim recognized a different opportunity and reassigned Mike to stay on special assignment as project manager to steward the Colorado EE Master Plan through to its completion in 1995. For the past 10 years, Jim has made it possible for CSFS to provide an "executive on loan" to CAEE — an arrangement that has greatly benefited CAEE and the statewide EE effort, but simultaneously is helping accomplish the CSFS statutory mission in conservation education.



Jim solidified an innovative and effective public/private partnership for the betterment of EE in Colorado, and committed CSFS resources to develop a Colorado Center for EE and Training, which now hosts both CAEE and PLT programs.

Thus, because of Jim's commitment to EE, CAEE has been able to become the premier state EE association of its kind in the nation. Simply stated, while many people have made various significant contributions to CAEE's success, none of it would have been possible without Jim's acting behind-the-scenes and creating the climate of opportunity.



Jim Hubbard, Director/State Forester

Colorado State Forest Service

Colorado State University

Fort Collins, CO 80523-5060

970-491-6303

jhubbard@lamar.colostate.edu



Early Childhood Education Award

Starsmore Discovery Center - Andy's Animal Senses

City of Colorado Springs and Friends of Cheyenne Cañon

Given their taste for fistfuls of dirt, it is easy to assume that young children have a natural affinity for the outdoors. For many young children, however, the natural world is a “scary place full of icky things that like to eat us.” Age-appropriate, positive outdoor experiences can help young children overcome their fears and build a life-long appreciation for nature.

Andy's Animal Senses is an environmental educational program that introduces 3- to 5-year-olds to the natural world in a fun, safe and positive atmosphere. Andy is an original handmade “animal” puppet who has no senses. Through songs and hands-on activities, children learn about senses and how animals use them to survive. The children help Andy gain his senses by attaching eyes, ears, a nose, mouth and paws to his body, then they use their own senses in small group activities along the trail.

Brenda Holmes-Stanciu, staff naturalist and early childhood specialist, saw the need for early childhood education and created Andy's Animal Senses in 1998. More than 2,500 children have participated in the program. Activities encourage exploration and the natural curiosity of children, develop observation skills, and teach children about Colorado wildlife. The program is frequently lauded as “being thoroughly age appropriate.” Many teachers who bring their students to the program later enroll in early Childhood Project Wild or Project Learning Tree workshops offered at Starsmore Discovery Center. These workshops give teachers confidence to incorporate environmental education into their classroom curriculum.

Andy's Animal Senses is hosted at Starsmore Discovery Center located in the spectacular North Cheyenne Cañon City Park. The center and park are owned and operated by the Colorado Springs Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department. The program is made possible through a partnership with the Friends of Cheyenne Cañon (FCC), a non-profit organization whose members volunteer with the program. FCC funds staff salaries and program materials and provides scholarships to children in need.

Comments from children

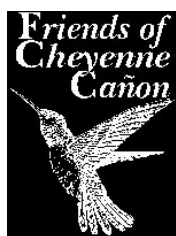
“I liked putting eyes on Andy.”

“I like sticking my hand in the box of raccoon food.” (pretend)

Comments from teachers and parents

“Kept at children's learning level and kept them interested.”

“Age appropriate, fun and educational.”



Andy the Animal and friends



Volunteer Joanne Roussy assists with the program as staff observes.



Andrea Arthurs teaches children to walk like a bear.



Brenda Holmes-Stanciu helps students learn about sight.

Brenda Holmes--Stanciu, Staff Naturalist and Early Childhood Specialist
Andrea Arthurs, Staff Naturalist and Coordinator

Starsmore Discovery Center
2120 S. Cheyenne Cañon Road • Colorado Springs, CO 80906
Starsmorecenter@springsgov.com • www.tfocc.org
www.springsgov.com/parks (Cultural Services/Starsmore Discovery Center)

K-12 Education Award

Bluff Lake Nature Center

"This was the most educational trip I have taken with students in 25 years of teaching!"

Bluff Lake Nature Center (BLNC) is a beautiful outdoor classroom that includes several distinct habitats and an abundance of animals and native plants. This unique oasis in the city brings curricula to life as children who seldom experience nature see, hear, smell and touch their lessons. From initial exploration in early childhood through focused instruction in grade five, programs provide meaningful and creative science instruction. Of special significance is the Spanish translation of activities for the many Spanish-speaking children who attend programs.

In 2004, Bluff Lake is observing its 10th anniversary of community service! Since its inception, BLNC has focused on helping underserved children learn to love natural science. Bluff Lake has supported 130 local elementary schools by providing excellent programs to more than 42,000 students, and it places special emphasis on working with underserved schools. About 80 percent of children who attend classes also attend schools with a 70 percent or greater participation in the reduced/free lunch program. In 2003-2004, a scholarship fund provided free tuition and free transportation to 70 percent of all participating schools.

In fall 2004, the Bluff Lake Education Program has introduced a brand new curriculum, "Wild Life Cycles." It teaches students about the beauty, diversity and complexity of local plant and animal life cycles. Like all of the curricula at Bluff Lake, "Wild Life Cycles" includes classroom and field programs and is based on Colorado Teaching Standards.

For a decade the Bluff Lake Education Program has connected Denver metro area schoolchildren to science education through nature. For most who visit Bluff Lake, it is close enough for them to return and share the joy of nature with their families. For most students, this is their backyard.

"I think your program is wonderful and I want to be a part of it every year."

Sue Schafer, Education Director
303-468-3245
sschafer@stapletoncorp.com

Steve Norris, Executive Director
303-468-3241
snorris@stapletoncorp.com



Bluff Lake Nature Center
7350 E. 29th Ave., Suite 300
Denver, CO 80238
www.blufflakenaturecenter.org



BLUFF LAKE
NATURE CENTER
Wildlife in the city

Citizen/Community Award

Durango Nature Studies' Children Discovering Nature Program

Founded in 1994, Durango Nature Studies (DNS) is a non-profit organization dedicated to increasing awareness of, knowledge of and respect for the natural world through hands-on learning experiences. As the only nature center in southwestern Colorado, DNS serves a distinct educational need in the Four Corners community. Each year, DNS serves approximately 10,000 children and families from a wide geographic area from Silverton to Farmington and Cortez to Pagosa Springs.

One of the many ways that DNS promotes science and environmental literacy in our community is through our flagship program Children Discovering Nature (CDN). CDN is a two-part program in which students experience and learn about local flora, fauna and habitats. The first part of the program consists of a classroom visit from a DNS lead naturalist. During this visit, students may dress up as flowers to learn about stamens, pistils and anthers as part of the first grade Plants Are Producers class, or pretend to be a water droplet moving through the stages of the water cycle in third grade's Watery World.

The week following the classroom visit, students participate in a half-day visit to the 140-acre Durango Nature Center. Here, small groups of children hike the center's trails with a volunteer naturalist and have the opportunity to explore and learn about its grassy fields, piñon-juniper forests and riparian areas. During the hike, the naturalists use games, experiments and real-world examples to reinforce the knowledge gained in the classroom.

CDN's reliance on volunteer efforts provides a meaningful opportunity for civic participation. Each season some 20 new volunteers participate in a 17-hour training that provides them with information about child development and behavior, in addition to extensive knowledge about the flora and fauna of the Four Corners area. This training not only offers individuals the opportunity to give back to their community, but also provides valuable life skills and resume-building experience for college students, educators and interested community members.

Since its inception the CDN program has experienced grown 575 percent — from 400 students served in 1994 to 2,300 in 2003. The program's excellence is evidenced by its high return rate, with nearly 93 percent of participating teachers using CDN year after year. In its 10-year history, DNS has trained approximately 270 volunteer naturalists.

What educators are saying about CDN

"These walks continue to be a great extension of our science unit."

"The activities were hands-on, student centered and handled with ease by the presenters. The material extended our knowledge beautifully."

What volunteer naturalists are saying about CDN

"Nothing feels better than introducing new concepts or ideas into these bright youngsters. Hopefully we have sparked an interest or maybe just a little respect and awe for the outdoors, both big and little, beautiful or ugly, awesome or simply awestruck."



Lisa K. Branner, Executive Director
Durango Nature Studies
P.O. Box 3808 • 1309 E. 3rd Ave., #34
Durango, CO 81302 • 970-382-9244
lisa@durangonaturestudies.org
www.durangonaturestudies.org

Best New Program Award

Watershed Approach to Stream Health Project: 'Get to Know Your H2O' Education Program



The Watershed Approach to Stream Health (WASH) Project is a partnership of communities in the Boulder and Saint Vrain watersheds working together to protect our water quality. WASH communities include Boulder County, the cities of Boulder, Longmont and Louisville, and the towns of Superior and Erie. The WASH "Get to Know Your H2O" Education Program provides stormwater education to the public and school-aged children in WASH communities.



The Education Program includes two principal components: a school-based WatershED Program and a community outreach program. WatershED includes a water resource guide, annual teacher training, annual water festival, and classroom and field programs. The community-based program includes a water quality campaign, brochures, tributary signs, festival booths, speaker's program and storm drain marking program.



The WASH "Get to Know Your H2O" Education Program goals are twofold:

- Provide a variety of educational activities, materials and special projects to increase public awareness and foster community wide support for pollution prevention and water conservation activities.
- Give students and the public a way to be actively involved in caring for their water resources.

The Education Program is unique in that it is a cost-saving, collaborative effort among many communities in the Boulder and Saint Vrain Watersheds. This regional approach to education and outreach helps maximize the program effectiveness, as it reaches beyond community borders.



In the 2003-04 school year, WASH staff provided programs for more than 4,300 Boulder Valley School District (BVSD) and Saint Vrain Valley School District (SVVSD) students. In 2003, community volunteers marked more than 660 storm drains in WASH communities. Program participants and volunteers complete program evaluations and indicate they learn about local water resources and come away with ideas on ways they can help protect and conserve local resources.

WASH Education Program Partners include the BVSD, SVVSD, U.S. Geological Survey, Boulder Creek Watershed Initiative (BCWI), WASH communities, the Boulder Area Sustainability Information Network (BASIN) web site and local youth organizations including Youth As Resources (YAR) in Longmont.

Evidence of program success

"This is one of the best programs I have seen in my 12 years of teaching."

— Kim Yguyen, 4th grade teacher, Fireside Elementary

"The program helped reinforce the importance of taking care of our water through the use of animal puppets that children can relate to."

— Laurie Sullivan, Children's World, Louisville

Curry Rosato, Watershed Outreach Coordinator

City of Boulder

4049 N. 75th St. • Boulder, CO 80301

303-413-7365

Rosatoc@ci.boulder.co.us • www.basin.org/wash



Higher Education Award

Colorado State University Cooperative Extension in Jefferson County: Colorado Native Plant Master Program

Imagine you and a friend are walking along a trail on a summer's day, surrounded by yellow wildflowers gently blowing in the breeze. You're amazed at the abundance of beauty, but the friend tells you that the yellow flower is a noxious weed that has crowded out native plants. This alien weed is inedible to both wildlife and livestock, so the scenic landscape you've been admiring is actually like a desert for the animals that live there.

Your friend is a Colorado Native Plant Master and you ask, what is that? A Native Plant Master is an agency staff member or volunteer who receives special training and certification and then uses that training to educate the public about the biological and human values of Colorado plants. A primary goal of the Native Plant Master Program is to change the behavior of the public by increasing actions that help to preserve and protect native plant resources in Colorado.

The Native Plant Master Program has demonstrated significant impacts. Since its inception in 1997, nearly 200 Native Plant Master course graduates have educated 53,078 members of the public using information they gained from the program.

A 2003 survey of course graduates showed that, as a result of their participation in the program, 79 percent controlled noxious weeds on their properties for a total of 14,279 public and private acres impacted. In addition, 73 percent included native plants in a landscape, impacting 16,553 acres.

The Native Plant Master Program is sponsored by Colorado State University as a joint program of Cooperative Extension in Jefferson and Gilpin Counties. Cooperative Extension is the outreach arm of Colorado State University with branch offices in most Colorado counties. The mission of Cooperative Extension is to provide practical, research-based information and relevant educational programs to enhance the quality of life for Colorado citizens.

The primary partners of the Native Plant Master Program include Colorado State Parks, the Colorado Mountain Club, the Lookout Mountain Nature Center (a part of Jefferson County Open Space) and the Plains Conservation Center.

Native Plant Master participant comments

"I was totally unfamiliar with native vegetation. Now I use plants in nearly all my interpretive talks and displays."

"I used the program as a model for an educational program with the potential to reach 10,000 members."

"I am a professional botanist/ecologist and I use the info all the time in my college classes."



Putting Knowledge to Work



Barbara Fahey, County Director

Colorado State University Cooperative Extension

in Jefferson County

15200 W. 6th Ave., Unit C

Golden, CO 80401 • 303-271-6620

bfahey@co.jefferson.co.us • www.coopext.colostate.edu



“For those of us who live, work and play in the mountains of Colorado, environmental stewardship is a responsibility that everyone must share. Vail Resort’s successful partnership with Gore Range Natural Science School and the U.S. Forest Service provides an important as well as fun educational experience for our guests, our community and our staff that enhances environmental awareness.”

— Bill Jensen
Senior Vice President/COO
Vail Resorts

Business Award

Nature Discovery Center Partnership Gore Range Natural Science School, Vail Resorts and the Holy Cross Ranger District of the U.S. Forest Service

Located in an all-seasons yurt atop Vail Mountain, the Nature Discovery Center (NDC) is a community-based partnership between Vail Resorts, the U.S. Forest Service and Gore Range Natural Science School (GRNSS). Since its inception in winter 2000-01, the Nature Discovery Center has provided the visiting public with meaningful access to the wonders of the natural world through guided and exploratory environmental education and interpretive learning. The Nature Discovery Center partnership supports one of Colorado’s leading professional development opportunities for the nation’s up-and-coming environmental educators and naturalists. Vail Resorts and the U.S. Forest Service both provide in-kind and direct financial assistance that enable GRNSS to hire a staff of six summer and four winter interns who provide all environmental education and interpretive programs at the NDC and other sites throughout Eagle County.

During the winter season, environmental education programs inside the NDC augment Vail’s ski school Skecology program, which educates youth about mountain safety, mountain ecology, and the basics of how to ski and ride. GRNSS naturalists also provide daily snowshoe tours while assisting walk-in visitors with natural science lessons relevant to the local ecology of central Colorado. During the summer, GRNSS naturalists provide daily nature hikes that explore Vail’s high alpine habitat, work with local nonprofit groups to provide environmental education programs to underserved youth populations in Eagle County, and assist walk-in visitors with natural science learning. Through these combined programs, GRNSS, Vail Resorts and the U.S. Forest Service annually contact more than 15,000 visitors.

Partners

Vail Resorts owns and operates four of Colorado’s premier ski resorts, including Vail where the NDC is located. Vail provides the NDC yurt, signs, displays, summer housing for staff of seven, ski passes for winter staff, and in-kind and direct financial support.



GRNSS raises environmental awareness and inspires stewardship through natural science learning experiences in Colorado’s Rocky Mountain ecosystem. Based in Red Cliff, GRNSS serves the residents and visitors of Eagle County with a variety of school, summer youth, adult and interpretive programs. GRNSS staffs the NDC and develops all programming at the site.

Holy Cross Ranger District of the White River National Forest opened the NDC as a point of outreach for environmental education and visitor contact in 1999. Vail operates under a special use permit on the White River National Forest. The Holy Cross Ranger District annually provides GRNSS with winter housing for the NDC staff and financial support to maintain and improve NDC displays.

Markian Feduschak, Executive Director

Gore Range Natural Science School

P.O. Box 250

Red Cliff, CO 81649

www.gorerange.org



Agriculture Award

Rock Bottom Ranch

The 113-acre Rock Bottom Ranch (RBR) is tucked between the Roaring Fork River and the base of Mount Sopris near Basalt, Colorado. RBR was preserved in 1999 through the cooperative efforts of the Aspen Center for Environmental Studies, a local landowner, as well as many community members and Colorado-based organizations. Since that time RBR has grown into a working ranch, environmental education center and has preserved 73 acres of wetland habitat in a conservation easement with the Aspen Valley Land Trust (AVLT).

RBR's education staff teaches experiential-based classes both on-site and in elementary school classrooms throughout the valley, with more than 2,500 student contacts annually. Students visiting the ranch participate in hands-on activities such as milking goats, spinning wool, organic gardening and cheese making, and they assist with the chores of daily ranch life. Classes also incorporate the study of local plants and animals, wetland ecology, Colorado ranch history, and games and activities that promote trust and cooperation among students.

RBR is home to many wild and domestic animals. Bears, bobcats, mountain lions, mink, beaver, trout and herons all share the ranch with more than 20 varieties of rare-breed chickens, turkeys, ducks and goats. Cattle are raised at the ranch using an Holistic Range Management system. This helps enhance pasture health and provides improved winter feeding grounds for more than 200 elk that migrate to the ranch after the first heavy snows fall. The ranch currently produces grass-fed beef, free-range eggs, goat cheese, organic produce and pasture-raised chicken and turkey.

The integration of a ranch, environmental education center and wildlife preserve provides a unique natural classroom in which students study the interconnections of human agriculture and natural systems. Rock Bottom Ranch is open to public visitation six days a week and also hosts natural history and sustainable agriculture programs for adults.



Andrea & Matthew Earley Coen
Rock Bottom Ranch
2001 Hooks Spur Road • Basalt, CO 81621
970-927-6760
rockbottom@sopris.net • www.aspennature.org



Parent/child naturalist team Heather and Tosca show the touch-table to a visitor.

Government Award

South Platte Park

Kids and teens begging to do work? This unexpected phenomenon happens all the time at South Platte Park. The park's origin lies in innovation and its staff strives daily to continue that trend — most recently with youth volunteer opportunities.

The 700-acre park was established in 1983 as a creative solution to flood control along the South Platte River, and today includes more than six miles of trails, a nature center and a strong environmental education program. Owned by the city of Littleton and managed by South Suburban Parks and Recreation, the park hosts thousands of school children in field trips each year, and offers unique programs for hundreds of families throughout the recreation district.



Teen helpers search a restored wetland area for signs of aquatic life.

The youth volunteer program was formalized 10 years ago with teens who have been through the program returning to help younger children. They provide personal attention to kids, help capture critters and provide aid to staff. Each teen receives an orientation course and all volunteer benefits. Teens have been lining up for the limited opportunities as a high-status role model for kids. The staff's hope of establishing a habit of volunteerism and environmental commitment is realized by older helpers being hired as staff the last four years, several going on to other agencies or universities, and one even earning an interpretive guide certification. The park also has a parent/child naturalist team program for pre-teens where

teams host the public visiting the nature center, care for display animals and have fun as they learn and work.

Other recent successful innovations include the "Become a Naturalist" course where the public can get refunded if they volunteer; a popular new Homeschooler's Science Day to accommodate learners without access to guided programs; and taking a lead role in the recent All Species Count, the first metrowide, multi-agency biological inventory. Recently the park was awarded nearly \$150,000 in grant funds to update and expand the nature center, so staff is eagerly working on more innovations for the future!



A group of summer campers searches for critters in the South Platte River.



Former teen-helper-turned-staff Kate Neafus shares a box turtle discovery with summer camp kids.

Skot Latona
 South Platte Park
 3000 West Carson Drive
 Littleton, CO 80120-2968
 303-730-1022
 skotl@ssprd.org • www.ssprd.org



South Suburban
 PARKS AND RECREATION

K-12 Education Award

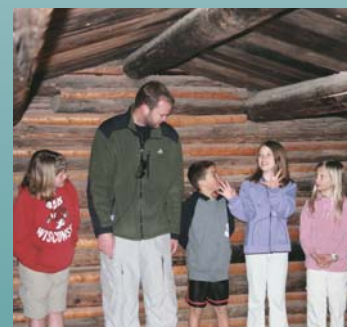
The Greenway Foundation: South Platte River Environmental Education

The South Platte River Environmental Education (SPREE) program provides an opportunity for students to get out of the classroom, explore the natural world with all of their senses, and develop a relationship with the South Platte River. Students walk in the footsteps of Denver's past and explore six different parks along the South Platte River as it runs through Denver.

They hear stories being told in ancient Arapaho and Cheyenne camps, they pan for gold in Colorado's first chartered town, and they struggle through devastating floods at the birthplace of Denver. Then they tiptoe around the homes of fox, beaver, raccoons and great blue heron, they peek under rocks looking for crayfish, leeches and snails, and they sing alliterative songs to remember how to identify Colorado trees.

Approximately 3,500 students from across the metro Denver area come to the South Platte River for SPREE field trips every year. Five elementary schools have also earned the designation "SPREE School" for their commitment to infuse the river and environmental education into their schoolwide curriculum. Students at these SPREE schools come down to the river at least once every year for a series of hands-on experiences that build on each other from year to year. For the students at these SPREE schools, environmental education and the South Platte River become more than just field trips; they become a way of life and a rite of passage.

The SPREE Program is made possible by the commitment of the Greenway Foundation to education and preservation along metro Denver's urban waterways. The Greenway Foundation is a non-profit organization created 30 years ago to restore and protect the polluted and abused South Platte River.



Jolon Clark, Director
The Greenway Foundation
8707 E. Florida Ave., #815
Denver, CO 80247 • 303-743-9720
spree@greenwayfoundation.org
www.greenwayfoundation.org



Students learn techniques used to band birds — from hummingbirds to hawks — to collect important data about bird life cycles and survival patterns.



Executive Director Jessica Feld teaches students about the importance of wetlands at Sombbrero Marsh.



Thorne Natural Science School's experienced instructors lead children through streams, grasslands and forests to explore and discover the wonders of nature.



Non-Profit Award Thorne Ecological Institute

Thorne Ecological Institute is celebrating its 50th anniversary! It was founded in 1954 by Dr. Oakleigh Thorne, II when he was a graduate student at the University of Colorado. Its mission is to offer hands-on environmental education (natural science) to children, teens and adults. This mission comes to life through natural science classes for children, in-school environmental education programs, symposia, field workshops, teacher training seminars, and partnerships on innovative environmental education concepts.

Partnerships — In 1999 Thorne Ecological Institute created a key partnership with the city of Boulder Open Space and Mountain Parks Department (OSMP) and the Boulder Valley School District (BVSD) in which OSMP purchased Sombbrero Marsh from BVSD as permanent open space, and BVSD constructed the Sombbrero Marsh Environmental Education Center building in which Thorne provides teacher training workshops and environmental education classes for BVSD students. Over the years, Thorne has built partnerships with other organizations, businesses and government to further environmental education. It has helped establish groups such as the Colorado Chapter of The Nature Conservancy (in 1954 Dr. Thorne was appointed as the first representative for The Nature Conservancy in Colorado), the Colorado Open Space Council, Denver Audubon Society, Aspen Center for Environmental Studies (ACES), Keystone Science School, Balarat and Cal-Wood Outdoor Education Centers, and the Chatfield Environmental Education Resource System (CHEERS). Thorne's Seminars on Environmental Arts and Sciences (SEAS), held in Aspen from 1967-1984, influenced many national business, professional and government leaders, demonstrating to them how the scientific Principles of Ecology apply to economics and sustainability.

Thorne Natural Science School — Thorne Ecological Institute has always been a recognized leader in children's environmental education in Colorado. The Thorne Natural Science School was established 48 years ago, and it reaches more than 500 students each summer through field-based classes for children ages 6-14. Each day the children visit a different local ecosystem for hands-on learning experiences. Thorne conducts this program in three locations: Boulder, Denver and Littleton, the latter located at the historic Kassler Center through a partnership with Denver Water.

Project BEAR (Building Environmental Awareness and Respect) is Thorne Ecological Institute's In-School program. It reaches more than 5,000 students annually, including many inner-city minority children in northeast Denver and in Lafayette, often connecting them to nature for the first time in their lives.

Thorne
Ecological Institute



Thorne Ecological Institute

P.O. Box 19107 (1466 N. 63rd St.)

Boulder, CO 80308-2107

303-499-3647

info@thorne-eco.org • www.thorne-eco.org

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) non-profit 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 capacity-building for EE resources. More than 400 organizations, engaging thousands of staff and volunteers, currently provide EE programs and services. To fulfill CAEE's niche in this wide-ranging EE community, CAEE manages several programs and project activities, including:

- Electronic Information Clearinghouse — the state's online "yellow pages" of EE resources
- The statewide, annual conference on EE — "Teaching Outside the Box"
- Managing a review process for EE materials and programs
- A statewide, annual EE awards and recognition program
- Stewardship of Colorado's Environmental Education Master Plan project
- A monthly newsletter — EE InfoLink
- Managing centralized correlations between EE programs and the state academic standards
- Establishing a state training center for EE
- Hosting the state's EE Advisory Council
- Maintaining close working relationships with community-based EE networks

CAEE Membership

You are invited to join the largest professional organization of 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 Database (if you are an organizational member)

Membership Rates

Student or Teacher: \$15/year

Individual: \$35/year

Organization/Agency or Institution: \$65/year

(Allows up to four contacts, field offices or program managers to be listed)

A membership form is available at www.cae.org or by contacting the CAEE office.

Colorado Alliance for Environmental Education

15260 S. Golden Road • Golden, CO 80401

303-273-9527

info@cae.org • www.cae.org

CAEE Staff

Ali Goulstone Sweeney, Executive Director
Amanda Peterson, Program Coordinator

2004 CAEE Board of Directors

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2004 Environmental Education Awards