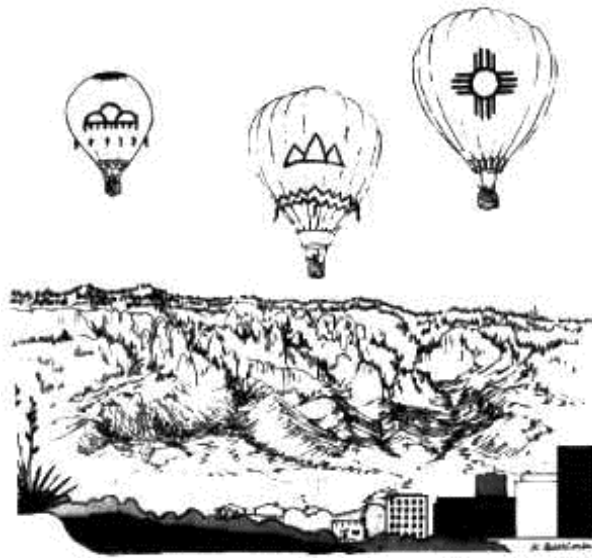


# Educating For A Sustainable Community

## *A Process Manual*

### How to Create Your Own Community's Environmental Story



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Produced by Friends of Albuquerque's Environmental Story

<http://www.cabq.gov/aes>

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## **Introduction**

This book was written to enable communities throughout the country and the world to use *Albuquerque's Environmental Story* as a basis for developing their own "Environmental Story" and, with its help, a sustainable future.

## **Background**

*Albuquerque's Environmental Story: Educating for A Sustainable Community*

What it is? Why it was written?

Educating for a sustainable community was a concept spawned in Albuquerque in 1975 when Hy and Joan Rosner, newcomers to New Mexico, invited local community volunteers to contribute their varied expertise towards producing a teacher's resource book in environmental education. *Albuquerque's Environmental Story* (AES), printed in 1978, was motivated by an increasing disquiet with the City's mushrooming growth and the effects such expansion could have on the quality and supply of water, open space, the waste disposal systems, the built environment and the area's general quality of life.

It was soon apparent that AES was more than a teachers' resource book, that it could serve as a basis for a unique environmental education program for use by the general adult community as well as the schools. Development of the book and the program involved an all community effort to identify basic elements that promote and support sustainability. Individuals, schools, government, the business sector, and public interest groups worked together to conceptualize, identify, create, and implement a shared vision designed to conserve natural resources, promote historic preservation, and celebrate diversity in both the natural and human worlds. What emerged was a holistic overview of the region's natural, human, cultural, built and economic environments. Essentially, AES had the effect of teaching inhabitants of all ages-its present and future voters and decision-makers – that our quality of living and our future sustainability depend on each of us. To continue to enjoy the community most people cherish, it will be necessary to have the

widespread, responsibility involved support of a citizenry which understands how the human and natural systems function, and recognizes that economic well-being is inextricably linked to the conservation of our natural resources.

The hands-on interpretive approach of the book is designed to heighten readers' awareness, enhance their capacity to enjoy the beauty surrounding them, and develop a sense of social and environmental stewardship. AES is interdisciplinary and stresses critical thinking. It is structured to add relevance to, and inherently augment the teaching of basic skills for young students.

The authors deal with the basic problem of adding environmental education to an already crowded curriculum by making it possible to infuse these materials easily into the existing required curriculum. Educators who have used the book have found this an approach that promotes awareness, knowledge, valuing, and responsibility, while making the prescribed curriculum more interesting.

AES establishes a bridge between Albuquerque today and tomorrow and profiles such environmental topics as air, water quality, solid, and hazardous waste, energy, historic preservation, the built environment, transportation, neighborhoods and downtown redevelopment. Most are applicable to many U.S. communities.

Climate, vegetation, wildlife, and terrain are studied and discussed along with an exploration of the area's ethnic, racial, socio-economic and neighborhood groupings. Readers develop a sense of place and become aware of shared commonalties in the problems and aspirations that underlie the differences they perceive in language and culture. This helps establish a base for mutual understanding and cooperation.

The focus is on Albuquerque's mix of natural habitats and human culture. Its subsequent replication, *The Dade County Environmental Story* and *The Florida Key's Environmental Story*, deal with South Florida's similar mix. Its premise is that indeed people of all ages, not only young people in school, learn to understand how they interrelate with their own home, school, neighborhood and city, and how they will be developing a larger awareness, an extension of valuing and concern which will help them recognize interdependencies, and see the tie-ins between personal and community survival.

Readers learn to understand how a responsible approach to their immediate surroundings can help provide a clean, attractive, habitable place to live. This establishes a meaningful knowledge base for developing an environmental ethic and extrapolating their conservationist concern beyond narrow political and personal boundaries. Young readers, future voters, decision makers and careerists

are being taught to make informed and objective cost/benefit evaluations on local issues and are also learning to sometimes accept short term economic discomfort, recognizing that ultimately, they, with the rest of their community, will probably be better off.

Readers of all ages are challenged to deal, at their own levels, with current local problems, whose immediacy make them seem less black and white than issues seem from a distance. The intent is for them to fact gather, learn to understand that the well-being of their home, its immediate surroundings and the people living there are inextricably related to the environmental health of their city, their state, their country, and in fact, the whole world.

Taught to recognize that they are part of an interdependent human and natural web, readers hopefully will emerge as a new generation educated to question prevalent attitudes and values, protect and respect diversity wherever it occurs in natural and human communities, and modify behavior in conformity with an ethic which sees people as a part of the natural world, not its masters. If the work has a bias, it lies in the belief that educating a new breed of environmentally literate, concerned and responsible citizens is essential to the survival of humankind and Planet Earth.

### **Replicating *Albuquerque's Environmental Story***

The initial reason for writing *Albuquerque's Environmental Story* as a teachers' resource which focuses on **one** city's environmental history and concerns rather than on the nation or world was the belief that environmental education is most effective when it relates specifically to a young person's own immediate surroundings. However, the book was also designed for a more universal applicability. It is potentially adaptable for use in other communities that can meet their needs by substituting for the background information in the Albuquerque book material specific to their own area. Many parts of the book (Eye Opener Worksheets and Activities, the section on the school and neighborhoods, and the basic environmental issues addressed in the final section,) can be used in any locale with minor changes.

Since publication of the original Albuquerque version in 1978, the book has been used as written or with appropriate local modifications, in several parts of the country in a variety of ways. The website has been accessed globally, having had over 175,000 hits! The Dade County Environmental Story, printed in 1986, was the first complete replication of the book. Following that, a Process Manual was developed to provide interested communities, school districts or teachers with a detailed "recipe" which they could use in the preparation of an Environmental Story custom made for their own situation. Monroe County, Florida, (the Florida Keys) field-tested this manual and *the Monroe County Environmental Story* was published in 1991.

A fundamental requisite for development of a book similar to the Albuquerque, Dade County or Monroe County Environmental Stories is the assumption of leadership and coordination by one or several individuals sufficiently committed to the project to be willing to devote approximately two years to its completion. The chances are probably, though not necessarily, that little or no financial reward would be available for this work unless undertaken by a salaried person assigned to the project.

Once the leaders/coordinators are identified, the tasks of planning, writing and publishing fall into place. The prospect of an environmental education book specifically designed for one's own community tends to generate enthusiasm and an eagerness to be an active participant in bringing the book to fruition. People willing to serve in a planning and advisory capacity are readily found, as are those who accept a request to write selected sections without remuneration.

Funding, or sources of in-kind assistance are necessary for word processing, editing, layout, printing, etc. See a detailed discussion further on in this Process manual for further information about funding, time schedules, production process and possible hurdles to overcome.

## **The Replication Process**

Please note that italicized sections refer to the methods used in the Dade County or Monroe County replications.

### **I. Getting Started**

#### **A. Initial Planning**

Set up an ad hoc advisory committee of key local people. This committee should be comprised of decision makers or their assistants, from the city planning department; the public school system; representatives of environmental and environmental education groups; members of the local college/university communities, forward looking public officials, historic preservationists; architects concerned about the community's built environment and representation of the private sector with a reputation for public interest support.

*The Monroe County committee found that it was very important to get community involvement at the earliest stage of planning. They used the local radio and newspapers to promote the project. They also sent out a letter over the School Superintendents signature to establish credibility.*

B. Early meetings of the Advisory Committee Meetings

1. Explanation of the background of the AES and Dade County Environmental Stories. (DCES)
2. Orientation to AES and DCES. Suggest that committee members visit the AES website <http://www.cabq.gov/aes> prior to the meeting to become familiar with the book.
3. Assessment of the ad hoc committee's reactions:
  - suitability of the concept of the books for the local area
  - extent of interest and potential personal commitment on part of those present
  - group's assessment of possible local support for some type of adaptation or replication of book.
4. If possible, arrange to meet with an author or editor of AES or DCES.

C. Later meetings

- 1 Discussion of possible content of a book suitable for the local area.
2. Identification of possible sources of funding and in-kind support
3. Identification of people who might assume leadership in preparation of book: coordinator(s); senior writer(s); editor(s); artist(s).

## II Further Planning

- A. Establish a project-planning group comprised of selected members of the ad hoc advisory committee as well as people identified as coordinators, senior writers, and editors.
- B. Develop a general outline for the book. Identify the natural areas to be included. Select the communities or areas for “Sense of Place” and the environmental concerns to be used in the Environmental Topics section.
- C. Based on the projected outline for the book, consider possible writers.
- D. Set up a timeline for the project.

## III. Funding

- A. Contact the City Planning Department and the local Public School for “in-kind” contributions. (e.g. writing, word processing, duplicating, editing, proofreading, photographs, maps, graphics, etc.).
- B. Seek financial assistance from local utility companies, private foundations, city general funds, state, or federal grants.
- C. Arrange with a non-profit group having tax exempt status to receive and administer grants. The usual fee for performing this task should be waived as an in-kind contribution.

*Preparation of the Dade County Environmental Story was well advanced before any funding was secured. A small private foundation, contacted during the initial planning stage expressed great interest in the book and indicated intention to commit \$5,000 when the project was closer to becoming a reality. No further attempts were made to secure funding until approximately one-fourth of the manuscript had been written.*

*At that time, a grant of \$7,000 was obtained from the Florida State Department of Education to prepare a camera-ready manuscript. This money was spent for editing, illustrations, and adaptation of the activities in AES.*

*An additional State Department of Education grant of \$10,000 was received the following year to meet the cost of printing 2,300 copies of the book. The \$5,000 was received at this time and was applied toward printing.*

#### IV. Development of the manuscript

##### A. Written text

1. Outline the contents of the book.
  - a. Decide on the number, topics, and order of sections to be included.
  - b. Select subsections or sections from AES or DCES to be used with minor adaptations.
2. Select writers of text and activities
  - a. Contact agency personnel, university faculty, environmentalists, and other concerned and involved citizens who have expertise in the various subjects to be covered.
  - b. Explain that all writing must be done as in-kind contributions.
  - c. Give writers copies of AES or DCES to use as models. Or refer to the Internet at <http://www.cabq.gov/aes>
  - d. Provide writers with written overviews of the length, scope and purpose of the articles they have been asked to prepare.
  - e. Select teachers with expertise in science and social studies to adapt AES activities for local use.



*Generic activities from AES were modified to be applicable to local conditions for the Dade County Environmental Story. Some activities were used without any changes. A team of activity writers consisting of an elementary teacher, a science teacher, an English teacher and a social studies teacher were hired (\$200, each) to produce new activities.*

3. Set Deadlines

- a. Allow two or three months for writers to complete tasks.
- b. Contact writers periodically by telephone to determine progress.
- c. Adjust deadlines as needed.

4. Provide for Peer Review

*Contributing authors were asked to recommend a peer review they felt would provide professional review services and content expertise, and whose advice they respected. After the author's rough draft was edited and returned to the author for approval, the material was forwarded to the respective peer review person(s).*

5. Edit and Rewrite

- a. Limit editing to changes in length and to correction of obvious errors. Standardization of style is unnecessary.
- b. Obtain written and dated approval of author.

*After final edit changes had been reviewed and approved by the author, authors signed, dated, and indicated approval to go to print ON THE COPY. Then all copies were filed.*

B. Word Process Manuscript

Arrange for entire manuscript to be standardized in font and point size. Authors could submit their work on a standard word-processing format and then editing would be simplified.

*In preparation of the DCES, word processing simplified the whole printing process. A spell checker saved enormous amounts of proof reading time. Desktop publishing software should be investigated*

#### C. Obtain Illustrations

1. Solicit recommendations for illustrations from authors, some of whom may wish to provide their pieces.
2. Arrange for talented college or high school students to do much of the artwork.
3. Obtain photographs from museums, historic preservation societies, planning departments, and other public agencies. Be sure to return any photographs the contributors wanted back.

#### D. Preparation of Camera Ready Manuscript

1. Use AES or DCES book design as model or arrange for an in-kind contribution of an alternative design.
2. Select cover design, color of cover, stock and pages and font to be used. It should be possible to arrange for a sizable discount on paper.
3. Solicit printing bids. Select a printer with a low bid and reputation for quality work. If possible, find a printer who will offer a substantial discount, as an in-kind contribution.
4. Provide for safe storage of camera ready copy after books are printed.

#### E. Creation of Multi-media Formats

1. Solicit funding or in-kind contributions for the creation of CDs and Internet publishing

*With AES, in-kind and contributions from local businesses, the recent possibility of publishing for a multi-media market has occurred. Local governmental or educational foundations can help with the multi-media formats.*

#### F. Distribution and Implementation

1. Decide in advance with grantors how books and CDs should be distributed.
2. Give a book or CD to each person on credit page.
3. Arrange for adequate storage facility for books and CDs until they are distributed.
4. Provide for workshops when distributing books or CDs to teachers.

*Most of the DCES books were distributed to teachers attending workshops, which familiarized them with the philosophy, content and potential of the book. All contributing authors received three copies. All Dade County Public School Libraries received a copy. Remaining books are still being given out at workshops.*

### **The Timeline involved in the Process in Developing the *Monroe County Environmental Story***

- March 1988            The Monroe County Environmental Education Task Force (EETF) was created. This group is comprised of various individuals involved in a wide range of environmental education programs. The Monroe County schools provided a liaison person.
- June 1988            After an introduction to the DCES, the decision was made to take on a similar project, the writing of the *Monroe County Environmental Story*. A small group for the EETF formed a project committee and chose a person to coordinate the writing of the MCES. Major decisions were made by this core group.
- July-  
August 1988        Contacts made with editors of AES DCES. Copies of these books were obtained and studied. Study of the draft process manual. A list of possible Ad Hoc Committee members, key people in the community, was compiled.
- Sept. 1988           Met with Superintendent of Schools to explain project. Gave presentation of MCES to the Monroe County School Board and received total approval and radio and newspaper publicity. Letter went out to potential Ad Hoc committee members.
- Oct. 1988            Wrote a hand out explaining MCES project. Compiled a list of potential contributors. Sent out form letter to potential contributors with a participation form to fill out.
- Nov. 1988            First Community Planning meeting held. The Superintendent gave the welcome address, then a general introductory session. Group meeting followed. Six areas were set up – one for each of the four sections of the book, one for community resources and one for specialties, production, etc. Participants joined the group of their interest/expertise. MCES project committee members chaired each of the six groups. Major decisions and commitments were made. This was a very high-energy meeting and the input was invaluable.

Dec. 1988	Plans were made for section meetings. Letters to potential contributors were sent announcing section meetings.
Jan. 1989	Sections meetings were held, the outline was refined and the writing topics were assigned.
Feb. – April	Articles received. Letters sent to writers who sent articles. Letters sent to writers who had not sent articles.
April 1989	Spring meeting/social was held for updating progress. Participation forms were available for newcomers.
May 1989	Peer review guidelines were written.
June 1989	Summer Teachers' workshops were held to modify worksheets and activities.
July 1989	Meetings held with writers, peer reviewers. Editing and word processing took place with periodical updating.
1990	Charted progress. Updated mailing lists. Kept up personal communication with telephone and letters. Met with photographers and artists. Made charts Located photographs.
April 1990	Prepared a MiniBook, sample of articles that will appear in MCES, to be used for obtaining funding Had an all out effort for state funding, phone, and letter writing campaigns
September 1990	Started a publicity campaign.  The EETF puts out a monthly newsletter giving progress of the MCES.

Monthly EETF meetings are published in local papers, always mentioning the MCES.  
All Countywide meetings are announced on local radio stations and the newspapers.  
Booths set up at educational conferences.