



How to Use www.handsontheland.org

A Manual for Members in the Use of Your Public Land's On-line Network

Updated: May 17, 2006

The Hands on the Land web site welcomes those who seek quality public land information. To keep this web site active and up-to-date, we have designed it so members with passwords may easily update and post new information through the content management system found in the *Admin Hub*. Updates occur instantaneous so that on-line users may access the latest Hands on the Land's classroom resources. Member sites are selected for their unique ability to contribute quality educational resources for teachers, parents, and students.

This document is designed to guide participation in the Hands on the Land web site. We strive to create the most intuitive, compelling and accessible web site possible so visitors can gather up-to-date information in an efficient and thorough way.

Table of Contents

I. SEARCHING AND NAVIGATION.....	3
Database Searches	3
Google™ Site Searches	3
Primary Navigation.....	3
Section Navigation.....	4
Help Alerts	4
II. DYNAMIC DATABASES.....	5
On-line Editable Web Pages.....	5
Admin Hub	6
Time Limits	6
III. PASSWORDS	7
Access Levels	7
Passwords.....	7
IV. SITE PROFILES AND SITE TOURS	8
Site Profiles	8
Site Tour.....	8
Primary Images.....	8
V. TASK TABLE	9
Task Management	9
Parties.....	9

Task Notes and Percent Complete	9
VI. QUIZZES AND QUESTIONNAIRES	10
Description.....	10
Quizzes.....	10
Questionnaires	10
VII. TEACHERS AND CLASSROOMS	11
Student Authorship	11
Artwork, Photography, Poetry and Essays.....	11
Glossary.....	11
Bulletin.....	12
Quality Assurance	12
VIII. CONTACT DIRECTORY	13
Networking	13
Group E-mail	13
IX. ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING DATABASES	14
Focal Classroom Projects.....	14
If you wish to participate in these projects, please request information by clicking the Request Info link in the Hands-on Science section..	14
Site-specific Classroom Projects	14
X. HANDS ON THE LAND TOOLBOX.....	15
Pop-up Data Windows	15
Code Writer	15
XI. FEEDBACK.....	16
We Need Your Feedback	16



I. Searching and Navigation



Database Searches

Each dynamic database hosted by Hands on the Land contains customized search tools. One example of a database search is found on the *Educator Resources* page. This search tool draws from entries contained in the education programs and teaching materials database. Drop-down menus allow visitors to search by site, state, grade, and keywords.

Each database search tool contains a customized set of drop-down menus and keyword fields which allows visitors to perform distinct and custom searches.

Google™ Site Searches

On the home page of Hands on the Land, a Google™ search field allows visitors to search Hands on the Land database files as well as web page text contained within the Hands on the Land web site. Use this search feature when general search information is desired. Google™ searches will not access password-protected information.

Primary Navigation

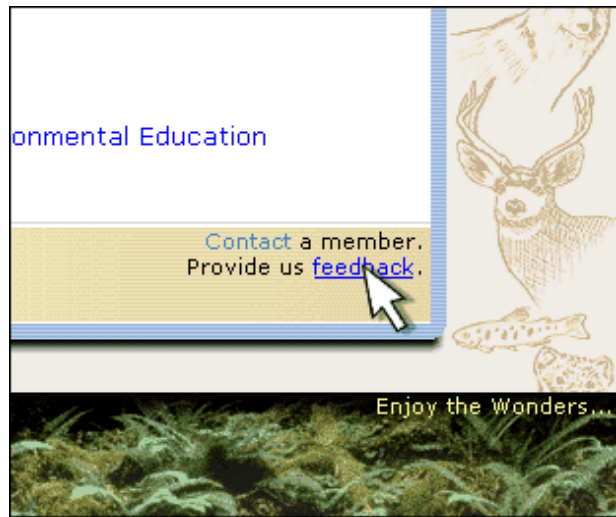
Primary navigational links are always available on the left-hand side of the screen. The primary areas of interest are:

1. Site Profiles – This section contains a national map with a site list and a database search for site profile information for each member site. Also available in this section are general site information and links to educator resources, site tours, and links to member web sites.
2. Hands-on Science – Hands on the Land offers five environmental monitoring databases: Ozone Bio-monitoring, Slime Mold Inventory, Water Quality Monitoring, Terrestrial Invertebrates, and Salamander Monitoring. Members may have a custom database entry set up for their site. Data is posted, updated, and analyzed from this section.
3. Educator Resources – Hands on the Land’s primary database which provide teachers information about programs and materials offered by member sites is available in this section.
4. Hot Topics – National-level resources which are of high priority to member agencies are listed in the Hot Topics section. Find teaching resources on invasive species, fire ecology, watersheds, and forest health.

Additional resources are available for program providers and students in the secondary navigation found below the four main topics. Training resources, grant writing information, evaluation and assessment, the bulletin board, student activities, student glossary, and the Admin Hub may be accessed from this lower navigation area.

Section Navigation

At the bottom-right on many pages, small links assist navigation within sections. These links are most widely available in those areas where dynamic database features exist, such as post and update.



Help Alerts



Web Site Clarification – In locations where clarification or additional instructions may be necessary, green question marks called ‘Help Alerts’ are available. Click on these small, circular green icons and text-based help will open in pop-up alert boxes.

Alert Hands on the Land – If you feel that a Help Alert is needed in a location where one does not already exist, please explain the exact location and send us your thoughts through the Feedback section.

II. Dynamic Databases



On-line Editable Web Pages

The Hands on the Land content management system is based on dynamic web pages produced through the web authoring language of ColdFusion. Dynamic web pages allow members with passwords to post, update, and delete information from a database that resides on the server. The access level of a user defines the level at which modifications may be made. For instance, teacher may post student artwork but they do not have permission to update a member's site profile.

When posting or updating any database information it is only necessary to fill in the fields that apply to your information. If a field that is not required is not filled in, it will not show when visitors access your database record.

In some database entry forms it may be necessary to select more than one item from a menu list. Press CTRL + <click> to choose multiple items.

Current databases tables:


1. Site Profiles – Contains the primary information about each site (address, phone, link information, big picture, education partners, etc.).
2. Educator Resources – Lists information about on-site and classroom programs provided by member sites and lists educational materials which member sites make available to teachers, parents, and students (curriculum guides, resources, web sites, booklets, etc.).
3. Glossary – The *Living Glossary* provides a dictionary of natural and cultural resource terms. Terms may have links to external web sites and may be contributed and updated by members with manager-level or higher passwords.
4. Environmental Monitoring Projects – Hands on the Land offers five focal environmental monitoring databases. These projects were developed by scientists and researchers associated with Great Smoky Mountains National Park. This page also contains a list of classroom-based environmental monitoring projects available at member sites.
5. Contact Directory – Contains a list of each individual member of the Hands on the Land Network. Members may post new contacts at or below their permission level. For example, site managers may post new site managers and teachers. Teachers may post new teacher contacts, but they may not post new site managers.
6. Artwork and Photography – Student, teachers, and program providers may contribute artwork and photography to this database. Only members with teacher-level passwords or higher may approve student-posted images.
7. Poetry and Essays – Student, teachers, and program providers may contribute poetry and essays to this database. Only members with teacher-level passwords or higher may approve student-posted writing.
8. Bulletin – Hands on the Land members may post articles, news items, or events in this section.
9. Highlights – Appearing on the home page of Hands on the Land, these bulleted items highlight noteworthy and current features of the Hands on the Land Network. Only members with administrator-level access to the Hands on the Land web site may update this dynamic feature.

Admin Hub

The Administrator's Hub allows members access, update, and post new information through the site's content management system.. Members may post, update, and delete information from this section.

Time Limits

Please prepare text in advance before you post or update information into any dynamic database while logged in to the web site. If forty-five minutes elapse while your connection to the server is idle, you will be automatically logged out and you may lose your work. An easy way to enter dynamic information is to prepare the text beforehand in a word processing program. Then log in to the Admin Hub and cut and paste the information into the form fields. If pasting from word processors, be aware that your original formatting will not be retained.



III. Passwords



Access Levels

Seven hierarchical levels of access exist for the Hands on the Land web site.

1. Administrators – Administrators may modify all content on the web site including Highlights and password restrictions.
2. Agency Members – Agency representatives may access membership applications and may update any site profile.
3. Environmental Monitoring Members – Users with this level access may manage the five focal environmental monitoring project databases.
4. Site Managers – Program Providers may update site profiles and educational resources, as well as any of the information listed below.
5. Teachers – Teacher-level passwords allow teachers to approve student contributions and post environmental monitoring data.
6. Students – Students who have password access will only have database access to their classroom’s environmental monitoring data.
7. General Visitors – Anyone may browse the Hands on the Land Network for information without the need of a password.

Passwords

Members who are listed in the Contact Directory may retrieve their password through the *Retrieve Password* function on the log in page. Once the password is retrieved, the password may be changed through the Contact Directory.

In the case of a breach of security, please alert the web site administrator as soon as possible. Passwords will be promptly reset and redistributed.

IV. Site Profiles and Site Tours



Site Profiles

General site information is posted in the *Site Profiles* updating section. Members may update the following information through the Admin Hub: site name, agency, address, contact information, site link, site tour link, photograph alt-text, photograph credit, educational partners, big picture, climate, geography, geology, ecosystem types, focal plants, focal animals, prehistory, Euro-American history, current communities, facilities, longitude, latitude, and site size. It is not necessary to fill out all each field, yet visitors will be served best if the information is complete and consistent across each profile.

This general information is central to the Hands on the Land's web site design. Visitors may access this content from the *Site Profiles* section.

Site Tour

Site Tours provide a photographic journey into each member site's resources. The Hands on the Land web site hosts the vast majority of site tours, but a member site may set the link to a tour that is located elsewhere. Tour links are dynamic and may be set by members from their Site Profile updating page.

To create a custom site tour, click "Create or edit a site tour" on the Site Profile updating page. If you need help formatting images, please contact the web site administrator for assistance.

Enter up to 20 slides into the slide listing. File size for each image should be no greater than 110 kb. Final output size of the images is 534 pixels in width by 335 pixels in height. Other dimensions are okay. Progressive JPEG files will not work with the Flash tour. Save files only as baseline ("Standard") '.jpg' files. Please name your files using a standard file naming convention for the Internet (do not use special characters or spaces).

Alternatively, you may provide a short Quicktime or AVI video on CD to the web site administrator. This video will be uploaded as a Flash video tour and replace the photographic site tour option.

Primary Images

Each site must provide Hands on the Land a primary image before a site profile may be posted on the web site. This image can be changed or updated at any time. Final output dimensions are: 250 pixels in width, 200 pixels in height. Please compress JPEG files to medium. Progressive JPEG files will not work on this web site. Primary images may be uploaded from the site profile updating page.

V. Task Table



Task Management

If you are an active participant in Hands on the Land and are helping to develop the network, please check in at the *Task Table* and see what ways you may be able to provide assistance. With a manager-level password you may provide updates. With administrator-level passwords, you may add tasks and provide updates.

Parties

When each new task is entered into task table database a responsible party is defined. If multiple parties are posted for one task, always separate each party by a space, so that the task table search tool can distinguish between the parties that are available. A list of party abbreviations is available on the post and update page.

Example: KSS MAN PRE

Task Notes and Percent Complete

As task progress is made, please update task notes and percent complete in the task table. Task notes should succinctly brief reviewers of a task's progress and of the date in which progress was made. Each time a task is updated, please re-estimate the percent complete.

Example: 12/15/03 – Began writing of the How-to manual.
Percent Complete: 10%

VI. Quizzes and Questionnaires



Description

Teacher-level members or higher may post quizzes and questionnaires into the quiz and questionnaire database. They are managed from the Admin Hub and they are not posted publicly on the web site. To have users complete a quiz or questionnaire, a link must be distributed. Provide the full link—which is available Quiz and Questionnaire Administration page—by email to the desired audience.

Quizzes

Quizzes are intended for student audiences. They consist of multiple choice questions with up to five choices. Users are provided with correct and incorrect feedback. And a score card compares their answers with other users. Pre- and post-trip quizzes may be used to evaluate the effectiveness of a program or teaching material.

Questionnaires

Questionnaires are intended for teacher or student audiences. They consist of multiple choice questions with up to five choices. Feedback field entries are also available. Questionnaire results are password-protected and are managed from the Quiz and Questionnaire Administration page. Use questionnaires to help you evaluate and assess the effectiveness of a program or teaching material.

VII. Teachers and Classrooms



Student Authorship

One way for students to have real connections with their public lands is for them to become authors of authentic publications. The Hands on the Land network provides means and ends for students who produce artwork and writing about public lands. Three dynamic databases are available for student contributions: *Artwork and Photography*, *Poetry and Essays* and the *Bulletin*. Any student may post work directly into these contribution databases, but all student-posted materials will be held in pending status until a person with a teacher-level password or higher makes a student's work public. Make a student contribution public by reviewing the contribution database in the Admin Hub. All work that has yet to be made public rises to the top of these database lists. Click on the "Make Public" check box and then click "Update" to allow a student's work to be accessed publicly. While reviewing student contributions, please delete any clearly inappropriate entries.

Teachers may also publish student-created web sites that are produced about public lands. Student web sites must be approved before work begins in order for the design format to meet the needs of Hands on the Land's student web site development guidelines. Final web site content must be approved by the associated Hands on the Land member site before public links are installed.

Artwork, Photography, Poetry and Essays

Students, teachers, and program providers may contribute artwork, photography, poetry and essays to the *Artwork and Photography* and *Poetry and Essays* databases. Access to these databases is from the *Student's* section.

Be sure to have your students format their images correctly before posting. Please resize images to a width of no greater than 534 pixels (450 pixel width is ideal). Compress JPEG files to around 50% or medium. File names must end in ".jpg" and must contain no spaces or special characters. One way to easily scan artwork is to take digital photographs of them. When photographing artwork, set images outside in a sunny place. It may be necessary to turn the camera's macro function (usually a flower symbol) to on.

We highly recommend having parents of students whose photographs are contained in posted work fill out our model release form. The Hands on the Land Model Release form is a MS Word document located in the *Program Provider's* documents section.

Glossary

New terms for the *Living Glossary* may be posted by any visitor of the web site. But like the student contribution listed above, glossary records will not be made public until a Hands on the Land member with a manager-level or higher password access approves the word and definition for public access. Please enter additional words that are particular to your site into the glossary. Definitions are automatically hyperlinked, so when you write a definition, be sure to include other terms found within the glossary.

Bulletin

The *Bulletin* is accessed from Hands on the Land's home page. Members may submit articles that direct visitors to news briefs about current events at member sites and classrooms. Articles submitted by students are pending until a member with teacher-level or higher password access approves their work.

Quality Assurance

Work posted by students will only be viewable by the public after a person with teacher-level access or higher approves their work. Access student work from the Admin Hub. Click the "Make Public" check box to publish student work.

VIII. Contact Directory



Networking

Members are encouraged to enter contact information for other users such as teachers and program providers. The *Contact Directory* allows members to make contact with teachers and program providers. Please remember to update the contact directory on Hands on the land when your information changes. Persons who are entered into the contact directory will have access to a password through the Retrieve Password function on the log in page.

Group E-mail

Members listed in the Contact Directory with access of teacher-level or higher may send group e-mails. Choose from various member types to add precision to targeted group messages. Group e-mails may also be directed to member types from specific states.

IX. Environmental Monitoring Databases



Focal Classroom Projects

Hands on the Land currently hosts five environmental monitoring databases, all of which were initially created by scientists, researchers, and educators associated with Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

1. Ozone Bio-monitoring - Classrooms and member sites are monitoring ground-level ozone through leaf injury analysis of plants in their ozone gardens.
2. Slime Mold Inventory - Very little is known about the slime molds of planet earth. Students, teachers, land managers and scientists are combining efforts to inventory slime molds nationally.
3. Water Quality Monitoring - Classrooms and land managers are working together to monitor the health of the waters that are so precious to all life.
4. Terrestrial Invertebrates - Classrooms are learning about the ecological importance of creepy-crawlies, while helping scientists study insects and other arthropods.
5. Salamander Monitoring - Students are helping scientists to monitor these important water-loving bio-indicators at Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

If you wish to participate in these projects, please request information by clicking the *Request Info* link in the Hands-on Science section.

Site-specific Classroom Projects

The member project database helps members market site-specific environmental monitoring information to teachers. Links may be made from the Admin Hub to environmental monitoring projects that already exist on member's web sites.

X. Hands on the Land Toolbox



Pop-up Data Windows

Access Hands on the Land's databases while keeping visitors at your site. Member sites may create local access windows to dynamic data specific to their site. Tools are available for these databases: Feedback, Education Programs, Teaching Materials, Artwork and Photography, Poetry and Essays, the Bulletin, and the Glossary

One example of a pop-up data window is posted on North Cascades National Park's web site. Through simple pop-up windows, classroom-based visitors may post and access their poems and artwork from North Cascades web site without going to the Hands on the Land web site.

Code Writer

The *Hands on the Land Toolbox* automatically produces HTML/Javascript pop-up window code for member's local web site. Simply answer the appropriate questions and code will be made available for a member site's webmaster. Copy and paste the code and any web site will have access to Hands on the Land's most significant databases. The Toolbox and code writer is located in the Admin Hub.

XI. Feedback



We Need Your Feedback

We cannot overly stress the importance of our need for your feedback. Please use the *Feedback* form located on the home page to address navigation, flow, logic, and content. We continually make modifications to our design when feedback is received in order to help partners and visitors in their use of the Hands on the Land web site. This web site is yours. Help us design it so it best fits your needs.