

Building Capacity in Wisconsin

From Small Seeds Grow Big Dreams

The Challenge

How does the Northeastern Area best deliver quality conservation education materials and programming given limited staff and funding?

The Solution

The Northeastern Area conservation education uses existing delivery systems to extend our resources. In 1994 the Area awarded \$10,000 to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources for state-wide conservation education activities. Working with a multitude of partners, including the Wisconsin Environmental Education Board and the Governor's Council on Forestry, the Department expanded an allocation of \$10,000 into a \$400,000-a-year program.

Developing this type of support did not happen overnight. First, the Department of Natural Resources developed a strategic plan for a state-wide environmental education program. Over the next 8 years, they partnered with various organizations and received a line item of \$400,000 from the State Legislature for forestry education grants.

In 2002 the program has the potential to increase due to a legislatively approved tree seedling surcharge. The surcharge could result in an additional \$500,000 to \$1,000,000 in funding to train teachers, develop classroom materials, and improve school forests.

Resulting Benefits

- Diverse environmental and conservation interest groups worked together to develop this natural resource-based education program.

Partnering with State forestry agencies is one way the Northeastern Area effectively delivers conservation education programs and materials.



Partnerships make it possible to grow big dreams from small seeds.

- Wisconsin residents will be better informed and educated about natural resource and forestry issues.
- Classroom teachers will have access to additional resources and training, and the environmental education program will be incorporated into Wisconsin State Educational Standards.
- School forests will be better used and will serve as outdoor classrooms.

Sharing Success

- The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources presented their story at the Forest Service's 2002 National Conservation Education Meeting in New Mexico.
- The Northeastern Area's 2000 review of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Conservation Education Program has been distributed throughout the Northeast and Midwest.
- The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources strategic plan for a state-wide conservation education program, "Education and Wisconsin's Forest Resource," has been distributed throughout the Northeast and Midwest.



USDA Forest Service
Northeastern Area
State and Private Forestry

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