



## Connecting More Americans to Nature

When young people connect regularly with nature, the outcomes are profound. Children are happier, healthier from the exercise, effects of attention-deficit disorder are reduced and they score higher on standardized tests when natural environments are integrated into school curricula. State fish and wildlife agencies nationwide provide educational opportunities that can help bridge the gap between formal school settings and the great outdoors and all offer outdoor skills training in non-formal settings.

Endorsed by the 50 state agencies, the award-winning *North American Conservation Education Strategy* (CE Strategy) delivers unified, research-based Core Concepts and messages about fish and wildlife conservation, translated into K-12 academic standards to shape students' environmental literacy, stewardship and outdoor skills.



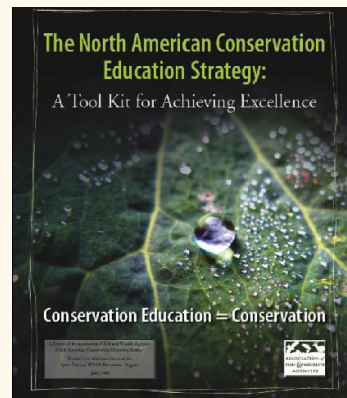
Launched in 2004, the CE Strategy is our blueprint for identifying what every citizen should know, feel and do related to fish and wildlife conservation, including the sustainable enjoyment and use of those resources.

### NORTH AMERICAN CONSERVATION EDUCATION STRATEGY RESOURCES

With funding provided through a Multistate Conservation Grant of the Sport Fish & Wildlife Restoration Program, state conservation education experts have developed a variety of researched-based resources to help support agencies' and even non-governmental organizations' fish and wildlife programs.

These resources are available for download from the Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies' website at [www.fishwildlife.org](http://www.fishwildlife.org) in the Focus Area section, Conservation Education.

### The North American Conservation Education Strategy: A Toolkit for Achieving Excellence



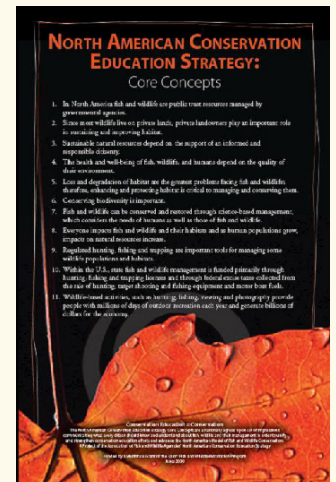
This kit compiles all of the products produced by the CE Strategy working group. It also outlines the mission, vision, goals and underlying principles of the North American Conservation Education Strategy. A hard copy of the kit is available upon request or upon completion of a CE Strategy training.

### Conservation Education Core Concepts

To be collectively effective in their efforts to connect with Americans, agencies agreed to a set of Core Concepts that clearly state what they want every American to understand about the conservation of fish and wildlife and related resources.

### Top CE Core Concepts Poster

This poster highlights key messages for the top 11 fundamental, overarching concepts. It is recommended that communicators and educators read the full set of concepts before using these top 11.



### Conservation Benchmarks

Conservation Benchmarks in the areas of stewardship, conservation literacy and outdoor participation identify experiences and skills at the 5th, 8th, and 12th grade levels that will guide students on their way to becoming involved, responsible, conservation-minded citizens. The Benchmarks were developed with input from professional educators in the formal and non-formal sectors and can be



## Conservation Education = Conservation

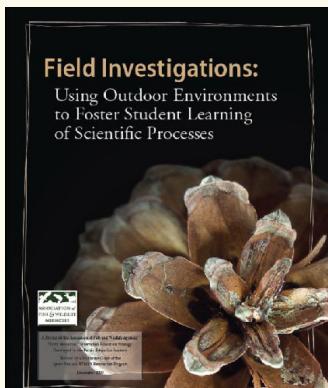
used in program development and as an assessment tool.

**Conservation Knowledge and Literacy:** What students should know and be able to do in order to sustain the health of fish and wildlife through our natural and social systems.

**Civic Participation and Stewardship:** Steps to prepare students for a lifetime of informed, responsible decision-making on personal behavior, community issues and stewardship opportunities.

**Outdoor Participation and Skills:** Steps to develop outdoor skills and encourage life-long, safe and responsible participation in the outdoors.

### Field Investigations Guide: Using Outdoor Environments to Foster Student Learning of Scientific Processes



Field investigations help students become systems thinkers, learn the skills of scientific inquiry and understand that science doesn't only happen in a laboratory or classroom. Outdoor experiences in natural settings increase students' problem-solving abilities and motivation to learn in social studies, science, language arts and math.

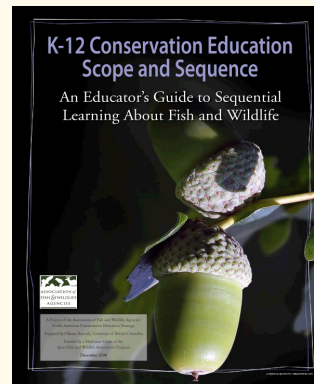
The Field Investigations Guide helps K-12 teachers introduce their students to the methodologies used for scientific field research and guide them through the process of conducting field studies. It demonstrates how to use descriptive and comparative methodologies for field studies.

A social science companion guide on Landscape Investigations and Systems will be published in 2011 as well as a guides entitled *Fostering Outdoor Observation Skills*; *Sustainable Tomorrow: A Teachers' Guidebook for Applying Systems Thinking to Environmental Education Curricula*; and *Schoolyard Biodiversity Investigation Educator Guide*.



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### K-12 Conservation Education Scope & Sequence: An Educator's Guide to Sequential Learning about Fish and Wildlife

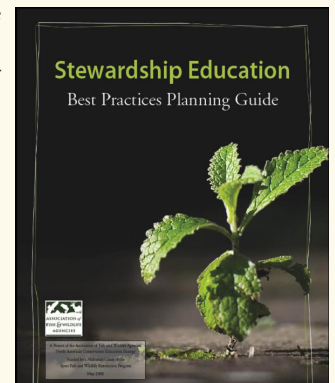


The K-12 CE Scope & Sequence is a set of expectations that describe what students should know and be able to do in three grade bands—K-5, 6-8 and 9-12—in the areas of science, social science and health and fitness.

The Scope & Sequence translates the Core Concepts into content standards and performance expectations and is organized as a collection of charts and maps depicting how students' understanding of concepts and skills should be developed. The purpose of the Scope & Sequence is to help agencies align their CE programs with school curriculum, instruction and assessment at local and state levels.

### Stewardship Education Best Practices Planning Guide

Stewardship—informed, responsible action or behavior on behalf of the environment—is an important part of fish and wildlife agency conservation education programs. Based on research and evaluation, this guide provides recommendations for strengthening and developing natural resources stewardship aspects of your programs.



### CE White Papers

**Indicators and Data Sources for Assessing the State of Outdoor Recreation Participation, Environmental Literacy and Civic Participation and Stewardship in America:** This white paper provides baseline data on conservation education and outdoor recreation participation in the United States.

**Benefits of Outdoor Skills to Health, Learning and Lifestyle: A Literature Review:** This comprehensive literature review documents the extent to which positive impacts of outdoor skills education has been researched and substantiated. The white paper includes abstracts for 99 documents. Findings are grouped into themes including healthy lifestyles; fear of the woods; outdoor skills education as a tool to increase outdoor recreation participation; constraints to hunting and fishing participation; and more.

Visit [www.fishwildlife.org](http://www.fishwildlife.org) in the Focus Area section, Conservation Education, to learn more about the CE Strategy.