



**ENVIRONMENTAL  
LITTERACY  
FOR  
ILLINOIS 2000**

**A STRATEGIC PLAN FOR ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION IN ILLINOIS**

## INVITATION TO THE READER

We, the collaborators, invite you to read the *Environmental Literacy for Illinois 2000* Strategic Plan and offer your suggestions and comments for improving its premise and process, considering its simplicity and complexity, as well as its scope and sequence.

Consider the implications for the meaningful implementation of this systemic approach to environmental education in Illinois. Comment on the clarity and consistency presented in the plan, the feasibility of its implementation at your level in the scheme of environmental education in Illinois and the realistic possibilities for achievement of the individual goals.

For your greater understanding: The integration of the essential environmental education standards and benchmarks for Illinois' schools and classrooms is being addressed through the Illinois Academic Standards Project (IASP). This project is currently aligning standards in all learning areas from kindergarten through grade twelve to national standards projects and current research. The *Environmental Literacy for Illinois 2000* plan will encompass the needs identified for the meaningful implementation of many of the standards developed through the IASP.

We also invite you to assume a personal responsibility as a shareholder in this process. Prepare for active participation in reaching our goal of environmental literacy in Illinois for the year 2000. Examine the plan for opportunities to utilize your own talents and expertise. Our success will depend on statewide awareness, acceptance and action.

Please submit any comments by September 15, 1995 to:

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The *Environmental Literacy for Illinois 2000* Strategic Plan is a systemic five-year plan, designed to fully incorporate environmental education into the Illinois learning opportunities. This plan prioritizes those needs and outlines strategies to provide the necessary direction for the establishment of environmental literacy as an integral part of life-long learning. Annual action plans and budgets for such an effort may be generated from this document. The plan will play a central role in achieving the goals of each focus area by:

- providing a mechanism for implementing environmental education programs and utilizing the resources of Illinois' communities;
- assisting citizen access to local, state, and federal environmental information and data resources;
- designing implementation options for modeling and adapting effective programs;
- developing a mechanism for including business, industry, civic groups, etc. in partnership opportunities, including career awareness;
- providing avenues for environmental learning for providers from throughout the learning continuum, including preservice, inservice and informal education, as well as scientific expertise;
- correlating with emerging and existing national, state and local standards and recommendations; and
- continuing internal evaluation and external review.

Each of these specialists chaired a committee focusing on an area of environmental education need in Illinois.

Ms. Kathy Andrews - Illinois Department of Conservation, Springfield  
Dr. John Beaver - Environmental Education Association of Illinois, Macomb  
Ms. Nan Buckardt - Lake County Forest Preserves, Libertyville  
Mr. Jim Doyiakis - Amundsen High School, Chicago  
Ms. Carol Fialkowski - The Chicago Academy of Sciences, Chicago  
Dr. Marilyn Lisowski - Eastern Illinois University, Charleston  
Mr. Mike Schneider - Educational Service Center #16, Belleville  
Dr. Deborah Simmons - Northern Illinois University, DeKalb  
Dr. Trudy Volk and Mr. Versil Withrow - Southern Illinois University, Carbondale  
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## **INTRODUCTION**

The *Environmental Literacy for Illinois 2000* Strategic Plan is the culmination of the efforts of dedicated individuals from throughout Illinois who represent public schools, colleges, universities, resource agencies, businesses, government agencies and nonformal environmental education providers. These visionaries have long aspired to establish an Illinois plan for environmental education.

In 1957, legislation directed the first mandates for conservation education in Illinois. Over the years, individuals and organizations on the local, regional and state levels have focused energies on successful activities and projects to improve life-long learning and decision-making skills relating to our environment. Many of these programs have been used in Illinois, providing for inservice teacher education and classroom activities. In 1991 the Conservation Education Advisory Board began the development of its own strategic plan for conservation education having an impact on agency-directed efforts. Task forces charged by the Governor and Conservation Congress have made recommendations regarding the necessity of coordinated environmental education efforts.

The latest series of efforts began officially in 1993 with informal meetings organized through Lieutenant Governor Kustra, the Governor's Science Advisory Council, the Illinois State Board of Education, Center on Scientific Literacy and other member agencies of the Conservation Education Advisory Board. Model legislation, which has been enacted in several states, served as a template for the original design of *EL for IL 2000*.

The actual formulation of the *Environmental Literacy for Illinois 2000* Strategic Plan began in earnest in late 1994 and continued through the spring of 1995, funded through the Center on Scientific Literacy. During this time, committees have met to design a plan that can bring effective, meaningful environmental education to the schools in Illinois. Every aspect of the plan was deliberated extensively to ensure that the plan embraced the full definition and implications of environmental literacy. Moreover, the overarching multicultural tenets of environmental literacy were considered to encompass the provisions for a healthy and just environment for all, while understanding the past, acting in the present and protecting the future.

Endorsement and implementation strategies are being coordinated to make the plan a reality. Open and extensive review of the draft plan is considered essential to the success of the total plan and will be ongoing.

## **STATUS OF ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION IN ILLINOIS**

The attempt to develop the *Environmental Literacy for Illinois 2000* Strategic Plan began with a review of the existing environmental education components already in place in the State of Illinois. The National Environmental Education Advocacy Project suggests the components below as integral to the establishment of a successful state plan. The corresponding endnotes provide details on the status of each component in the State of Illinois.

- Instruction Requirement<sup>1</sup>
- Curriculum Requirement
- Environmental Education Frameworks/Outcomes
- Environmental Education Literacy Assessment<sup>2</sup>
- State Environmental Education Master Plan
- Environmental Education Grants Program
- State Environmental Education Curriculum Guide(s)
- Teacher Inservice Training
- Preservice Training Requirement
- State Environmental Education Board/Advisory Councils<sup>3</sup>
- Environmental Education Interagency Committee<sup>4</sup>
- State Environmental Education Coordinator (and staff)<sup>5</sup>
- State and/or Regional Centers<sup>6</sup>
- State Environmental Education Associations<sup>7</sup>
- Environmental Education Funding Mechanisms<sup>8</sup>

- 1) An instruction requirement does exist, as currently listed in the State of Illinois School Code, amended by P.A. 86-229, 2, eff. Jan. 1, 1990 . . . "In every public school there shall be instruction, study and discussion of current problems and need in the conservation of natural resources, including but not limited to air pollution, water pollution, waste reduction and recycling, the effects of excessive use of pesticides, preservation of wilderness areas, forest management, protection of wildlife and humane care of domestic animals."
- 2) A baseline survey of environmental education in Illinois was conducted in 1994 of Illinois K-12 teachers which is considered an informational source of data about teachers' professional and personal perceived needs relating to environmental education. Only 8% of the respondents indicated they had received

preservice teacher education in environmental education and 19% had received inservice teacher education to enable them to teach the principles of environmental education more effectively. (Figures are based on a 45.5% response rate.)

- 3/4) The Conservation Education Advisory Board to the Illinois State Board of Education was established through legislation in 1957. Members include the directors of the State of Illinois' Departments of Agriculture, Conservation, Energy and Natural Resources and the Environmental Protection Agency agencies and Governor-appointed representatives from colleges/universities, Soil and Water Conservation Districts, classroom teachers and business/industry. The legislation allows recommendations to the Governor on relevant matters.
- 5) Legislation mandates an Environmental Education Specialist at the Illinois State Board of Education, however, the position has not been established.
- 6) Environmental education centers exist at Southern Illinois University-Carbondale and Northern Illinois University. Publicly and privately funded environmental centers are found throughout the state. For the most part, the Illinois centers operate independently and little coordination exists between programs.
- 7) The Environmental Education Association of Illinois with over 600 members from throughout the state has existed for twenty-three years.  

The Illinois Environmental Education Advocacy Consortium (IEEAC) was established in March 1993. It has received U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and National Fish and Wildlife Foundation grant funding to promote the upgrading of preservice environmental education and to encourage the incorporation of environmental education into K-12 grades.
- 8) Funding for various environmental education efforts has been awarded through the Illinois State Board of Education Scientific Literacy and Eisenhower Title II funds, as well as through special programs operated by the Departments of Conservation and Energy and Natural Resources.

Although much progress toward the infusion of environmental education into formal and nonformal education establishments has been made in the State of Illinois, a comprehensive strategy is not currently in place. This plan addresses the need for the development of such a strategy and follows the suggested components noted above by the National Environmental Education Advocacy Project.

## **SHAREHOLDERS**

To ensure the effective implementation of the *Environmental Literacy for Illinois 2000* Strategic Plan it is necessary to identify the appropriate shareholders. These include those who will benefit from the plan, those who will carry out the actions outlined in the plan and other supporters with an interest in the plan. Distinctions between these shareholders are intentionally vague. A shareholder may benefit, implement and support.

<b>TYPE OF SHAREHOLDER</b>	
<b>Beneficiaries</b>	Illinois Citizens Pre-K-12 School Students, Teachers and Support Personnel College and University Students
<b>Environmental Education Providers</b>	Federal Agencies State Agencies Regional Agencies Soil and Water Conservation Districts Forest Preserve and Conservation Districts National Environmental Organizations Nonformal Environmental Education Institutions Park Districts Private Environmental Organizations Specialists (scientists, engineers, etc.) State Universities
<b>Supporters of Environmental Education</b>	Businesses Federal Agencies State Agencies International Environmental Organizations National Environmental Organizations State Environmental Organizations Regional Environmental Organizations Local Environmental Organizations Community-based Organizations Professional Educational Organizations

## **VISION STATEMENT**

Interactions within the environment sustain all life. Raising environmental literacy in Illinois will enable citizens to make informed decisions about the quality of life, without compromising that of future generations. Education can raise environmental literacy for all for lifelong learning. Additionally, environmental education contributes to an understanding and appreciation of society, technology and productivity and the conservation of Illinois' natural and cultural resources.

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

In order to serve the citizens of Illinois, the *Environmental Literacy for Illinois 2000* Strategic Plan will establish environmental literacy as an integral part of life-long learning. The primary purpose of this comprehensive five-year plan is to encourage, excite and empower individuals and groups to further strengthen environmental education programs in Illinois. Such programs will comply with the North American Association for Environmental Education National Standards Project definition of environmental literacy (see below).

## **DEFINITION OF ENVIRONMENTAL LITERACY**

(As defined by the North American Association for Environmental Education National Standards Project)

Environmental education is a process that aims to develop an environmentally literate citizenry that can compete in our global economy, that has the skills, knowledge and inclinations to make well-informed choices concerning the environment, and that exercises the rights and responsibilities of members of a community.

To be effective, environmental education programs should include learnings related to 1) environmental appreciation; 2) ecological knowledge (e.g., understanding of major ecological concepts including those focusing on individuals, special populations, communities, ecosystems, biogeochemical cycles); 3) sociopolitical knowledge (e.g., understanding how human cultural activities influence the environment; geographic understanding at the local, regional and global levels; understanding of economic, social, political and ecological interdependence); 4) knowledge of environmental issues; 5) skill development (e.g., ability to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate information about environmental issues using primary and secondary sources); 6) sense of personal responsibility (e.g., understand that what individuals and groups do can make a difference); and 7) knowledge of action strategies (e.g., economic, regulatory, political).



## **GOALS**

The *Environmental Literacy for Illinois 2000* Strategic Planning Committee has identified ten program focus areas for research and proposed implementation. They include Steering, Evaluation, Database, Collaborative Efforts, Preservice Teacher Education, Inservice Teacher Education, Core Course Requirements, Environmental Careers, Environmental Literacy Centers, and Grants and Mini-Grants.

- #1) The Steering Committee will develop a structure to insure statewide implementation of the *Environmental Literacy for Illinois 2000* Strategic Plan.
- #2) The Evaluation Committee will establish a mechanism for evaluating the effectiveness of the *Environmental Literacy for Illinois 2000* Strategic Plan.
- #3) The Database Committee will establish an environmental literacy database that contains environmental information and resources that can be easily utilized by all Illinois citizens.
- #4) The Collaborative Efforts Committee will establish a mechanism to enhance communication, coordination and shared responsibility among all environmental education shareholders.
- #5) The Preservice Teacher Education Committee will establish a mechanism to provide teacher preparation faculty with opportunities for increasing their awareness and skills in offering environmental education instruction to preservice teachers.
- #6) The Inservice Teacher Education Committee will enable Pre-K-12 teachers, principals and support staff to become familiar with environmental education goals (both state and national), methods and materials in order to implement environmental education into Pre-K-12 classrooms and settings.
- #7) The Course Requirements Committee will provide a template and framework for inclusion of environmental education into courses of study for Pre-K-16.
- #8) The Environmental Careers Committee will promote environmental careers and career oriented partnerships among business, government, community and school interests.
- #9) The Environmental Literacy Centers Committee will identify and assist in establishing a network of coordinated services for environmental learning centers in Illinois.
- #10) The Grants and Mini-Grants Committee will establish a grants program to support the components of the mission and definition of environmental literacy.

# STEERING COMMITTEE

**GOAL #1:** The Steering Committee will develop a structure to insure statewide implementation of the Environmental Literacy for Illinois 2000 Strategic Plan.

**OBJECTIVE 1:** Develop a blueprint, or matrix, to insure integration of committee planning and timelines.

- Strategies:*
- 1) Cross reference and consolidate plans into the matrix.
  - 2) Solicit internal and external review of the matrix.
  - 3) Revise the matrix as needed.

**OBJECTIVE 2:** Develop governance plan to provide oversight.

- Strategies:*
- 1) Define an interim governance process including the number of people, terms, chairs and composition.
  - 2) Define the criteria necessary for an effective governance structure such as statewide representation, knowledge of environmental issues, knowledge of education delivery systems, existing resources, etc.
  - 3) Research and investigate existing governance structures.
  - 4) Design, adapt and implement a five year governance plan.

**OBJECTIVE 3:** Coordinate communication between Environmental Literacy for Illinois 2000 subcommittees.

- Strategies:*
- 1) Plan and conduct meetings.
  - 2) Generate and disseminate minutes.

**OBJECTIVE 4:** Build coalitions and networks for plan endorsement.

- Strategies:*
- 1) Assess the existing capacity for marketing/media potential.
  - 2) Design a marketing/media strategy for statewide promotion, buy-in and distribution.
  - 3) Coordinate with statewide and national efforts.
  - 4) Facilitate dialogue among policy lead task forces in Illinois.

Goal. Obj. Strgy.	Year				
	1	2	3	4	5
1.1.1	X				
1.1.2	X				
1.1.3	X				
1.2.1	X				
1.2.2	X				
1.2.3	X				
1.2.4	X				
1.3.1	X	X	X	X	X
1.3.2	X	X	X	X	X
1.4.1	X				
1.4.2		X			
1.4.3		X	X	X	X
1.4.4		X	X	X	X

# EVALUATION COMMITTEE

**GOAL #2:** The Evaluation Committee will establish a mechanism for evaluating the effectiveness of the Environmental Literacy for Illinois 2000 Strategic Plan.

**OBJECTIVE 1:**

**Assess the status of environmental literacy in the State of Illinois by establishing baseline data.**

*Strategies:*

- 1) Conduct a baseline assessment of the status of environmental literacy for Pre-K-16 students, Pre-K-16 teachers, citizens and policy makers.
- 2) Interpret the information gathered through baseline assessments.
- 3) Disseminate the results of the assessment to the appropriate audiences.

**OBJECTIVE 2:**

**Reassess the status of environmental literacy in Illinois on an ongoing basis.**

*Strategies:*

- 1) Develop a mechanism for ongoing reassessment for the Pre-K-16 students, Pre-K-16 teachers, citizens and policy makers.
- 2) Interpret information gathered through the reassessments.
- 3) Disseminate the results of the reassessments to the appropriate audiences.

**OBJECTIVE 3:**

**Ensure evaluation of Environmental Literacy for Illinois 2000 committee plans and timelines.**

*Strategies:*

- 1) Develop annual integrated benchmarks for tracking progress.
- 2) Convene committee chairs quarterly for coordination, reporting against strategies and timeline integration.
- 3) Conduct annual review and revise the annual integrated benchmarks.
- 4) Produce an annual report.

Goal. Obj. Strgy.	Year				
	1	2	3	4	5
2.1.1	X				
2.1.2		X			
2.1.3		X			
2.2.1		X	X	X	X
2.2.2			X	X	X
2.2.3			X	X	X
2.3.1	X	X	X	X	X
2.3.2	X	X	X	X	X
2.3.3	X	X	X	X	X
2.3.4	X	X	X	X	X

# DATABASE COMMITTEE

**GOAL #3:** The Database Committee will establish an environmental literacy database that contains environmental information and resources that can be easily utilized by all Illinois citizens.

**OBJECTIVE 1:** Conduct preliminary research and assessments necessary to establish a statewide Environmental Literacy Database.

*Strategies:*

- 1) Identify potential users
- 2) Conduct a state needs assessment for an environmental literacy database.
- 3) Explore computer networking options.
- 4) Research environmental literacy database models.
- 5) Identify needs of all the Environmental Literacy for Illinois 2000 Committees.

**OBJECTIVE 2:** Ensure use of the Environmental Literacy Database.

*Strategies:*

- 1) Determine parameters used to develop the database survey.
- 2) Design and create a user-friendly database.
- 3) Collect and input the data.
- 4) Develop public relations/marketing strategy for the database.
- 5) Provide training for database users.

**OBJECTIVE 3:** Maintain the Environmental Literacy Database Information.

*Strategies:*

- 1) Develop a mechanism to update the database information.
- 2) Evaluate the use of the database to determine effectiveness and make adjustments as necessary.
- 3) Continue to expand the database as additional resources are identified.

Goal. Obj. Strgy.	Year				
	1	2	3	4	5
3.1.1	x				
3.1.2	x				
3.1.3	x				
3.1.4	x				
3.1.5	x				
3.2.1		x			
3.2.2		x			
3.2.3		x	x		
3.2.4		x	x		
3.2.5			x	x	x
3.3.1				x	
3.3.2				x	x
3.3.3				x	x

## COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS COMMITTEE

**GOAL #4:** The Collaborative Efforts Committee will establish a mechanism to enhance communication, coordination and shared responsibility among all environmental education shareholders. (see page 6)

**OBJECTIVE 1:** Establish models for collaboration (e.g., curriculum development, evaluation, field experience, etc.)

- Strategies:*
- 1) Research existing models.
  - 2) Determine characteristics of effective models.
  - 3) Develop effective models as necessary.

**OBJECTIVE 2:** Ensure communication among environmental education shareholders.

- Strategies:*
- 1) Provide and maintain means for other shareholders to contribute ideas to developers of environmental education programs and materials.
  - 2) Emphasize modern technological means of communication (such as computer telecommunication).
  - 3) Establish and maintain a collaborative newsletter.

**OBJECTIVE 3:** Establish guidelines to form and sustain environmental education partnerships.

- Strategies:*
- 1) Establish and strengthen contacts between specialists (scientists, engineers, etc.) and environmental educators.
  - 2) Improve networking to increase collaborative efforts.

Goal. Obj. Strgy.	Year				
	1	2	3	4	5
4.1.1	X				
4.1.2	X				
4.1.3		X			
4.2.1	X	X	X	X	X
4.2.2	X	X	X	X	X
4.2.3	X	X	X	X	X
4.3.1	X	X	X	X	X
4.3.2	X	X	X	X	X

## PRESERVICE TEACHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE

**GOAL #5:** The Preservice Teacher Education Committee will establish a mechanism to provide teacher preparation faculty with opportunities for increasing their awareness and skills in offering environmental education instruction to preservice teachers.

**OBJECTIVE 1: Develop models of delivering environmental education instruction to preservice teachers.**

*Strategies:*

- 1) Survey colleges for existing practices and programs of environmental education instruction.
- 2) Develop a list of competencies leading to certification requirements that would be aligned with the National Research Council and the North American Association of Environmental Education standards.
- 3) Develop models for teaching environmental education both for the formalized course and for clinical applications prior to and during student teaching.

**OBJECTIVE 2: Disseminate models of delivering environmental education instruction to preservice teachers.**

*Strategies:*

- 1) Identify faculty for the piloting of models.
- 2) Implement and assess models of instruction.
- 3) Provide inservice for cooperating teachers at the clinical sites, as well as new university faculty.
- 4) Design and disseminate a guide book on preservice teacher education.

Goal. Obl. Strgy.	Year				
	1	2	3	4	5
5.1.1	x				
5.1.2		x			
5.1.3		x			
5.2.1		x			
5.2.2			x	x	
5.2.3			x	x	x
5.2.4				x	x

## INSERVICE TEACHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE

**GOAL #6:** The Inservice Teacher Education Committee will enable Pre-K-12 personnel (teachers, principals and support staff) to become familiar with environmental education goals (both state and national), methods and materials in order to implement environmental education into Pre-K-12 classrooms and settings.

**OBJECTIVE 1:** Ensure the existence of effective environmental education programs for inservice Pre-K-12 personnel that are consistent with the Illinois definition of environmental literacy (see page 6).

*Strategies:*

- 1) Identify existing models which have research evidence of effectiveness.
- 2) Develop supplemental models if needed.
- 3) Implement supplemental models.

**OBJECTIVE 2:** Increase the use of effective environmental education instructional materials for inservice Pre-K-12 personnel that are consistent with the Illinois definition of environmental literacy (see page 6).

*Strategies:*

- 1) Utilize the Environmental Literacy Database to identify existing environmental education materials with research evidence of effectiveness.
- 2) Disseminate information about materials identified through inservice teacher education programs, meetings of state teacher organizations (EEAI, ISTA, etc.) and other appropriate avenues.
- 3) Encourage Pre-K-12 personnel to adopt, and supplement identified materials as they design locally appropriate environmental education programs.

**OBJECTIVE 3:** Strengthen state mandates for environmental education through certification requirements, endorsement options, etc.

Goal. Obj. Strgy	Year				
	1	2	3	4	5
6.1.1	X	X			
6.1.2		X	X	X	
6.1.3			X	X	X
6.2.1			X	X	
6.2.2					X
6.2.3					X
6.3.0		X	X	X	X

## CORE COURSE REQUIREMENTS COMMITTEE

**GOAL #7:** The Course Requirements Committee will provide a template and framework for the inclusion of environmental education into courses of study for Pre-K-16.

**OBJECTIVE 1:** Provide a template for including environmental education in courses of study.

*Strategies:*

- 1) Construct a template.
- 2) Pilot and field test the template.
- 3) Assess and revise the template.

**OBJECTIVE 2:** Provide a framework for integrating environmental education into Pre-K-16 classrooms.

*Strategies:*

- 1) Identify persons to facilitate integration.
- 2) Establish inclusion partnerships with state professional educational organizations.
- 3) Encourage teachers to develop environmental education courses or units.
- 4) Implement curriculum suggestions in classrooms.

**OBJECTIVE 3:** Develop certification recommendations for environmental education teachers.

Goal. Obj. Strgy.	Year				
	1	2	3	4	5
7.1.1	X	X			
7.1.2		X	X		
7.1.3			X		
7.2.1	X				
7.2.2	X	X	X	X	X
7.2.3			X	X	X
7.2.4			X	X	X
7.3.0	X	X	X	X	X



## ENVIRONMENTAL CAREERS COMMITTEE

**GOAL #8:** The Environmental Careers Committee will promote environmental careers and career oriented partnerships among business, government, community and school interests.

**OBJECTIVE 1:**

Coordinate with the School-to-Work Program to develop and disseminate environmental career programs that link to the stages of career knowledge; awareness (grades K-6), exploration (grades 6-8), orientation (grades 9-10) and preparation (grades 11-12).

*Strategies:*

- 1) Develop a guide of informational sources on environmental careers, including a list of universities and environmental training sources.
- 2) Develop mentoring, career fair and job shadow models.
- 3) Foster the preparation, training and dissemination of environmental career literacy kits.
- 4) Promote the development of environmental community service programs.
- 5) Facilitate faculty/counselor internships.
- 6) Promote opportunities for student internships/externships.

**OBJECTIVE 2:**

*Strategies:*

- Foster networking and partnerships.**
- 1) Conduct statewide convocations to facilitate networking during Earth Week of the first, third and fifth years of the Environmental Literacy for Illinois 2000 Strategic Plan.
  - 2) Conduct sub-statewide convocations to assist in localized networking during Earth Week of the second and fourth years of the Environmental Literacy for Illinois 2000 Strategic Plan.

Goal. Obj. Strgy.	Year				
	1	2	3	4	5
8.1.1	X				
8.1.2		X			
8.1.3		X	X		
8.1.4		X	X	X	X
8.1.5		X	X	X	X
8.1.6		X	X	X	X
8.2.1	X		X		X
8.2.2		X		X	

## ENVIRONMENTAL LITERACY CENTERS COMMITTEE

**GOAL #9:** The Environmental Literacy Centers Committee will identify and assist in establishing a network of coordinated services for environmental learning centers (ELCs) in Illinois.

**OBJECTIVE 1:** Conduct an inventory of existing agencies and resources that may be considered an ELC.

*Strategies:*

- 1) Conduct a survey of other states and Canadian provinces to determine the types of ELCs present.
- 2) Identify providers of Illinois environmental education services, the types of services provided and their level of interest in participating in the ELC system.
- 3) Review data collected to determine need for additional ELCs.

**OBJECTIVE 2:**

Develop and make available to the general public, a statewide database that provides information on specific services provided by each ELC.

*Strategies:*

- 1) Establish commonalities with Database Committee, develop database, and input data from survey.
- 2) Explore working with the Department of Commerce and Community Affairs - Tourism

**OBJECTIVE 3:**

Develop classification system of ELCs.

*Strategies:*

- 1) Determine basic types, classifications and criteria for ELCs
- 2) Recommend criteria/standards for potential new ELCs.
- 3) Determine need to establish ELC system on a statewide or regional basis.

**OBJECTIVE 4:**

Utilize Inventory Information to explore funding sources to maintain, rehabilitate or create new ELCs.

*Strategies:*

- 1) Identify gaps in service.
- 2) Develop list of partners, and grants and funding mechanisms.

Goal. Obj. Strgy.	Year				
	1	2	3	4	5
9.1.1	X				
9.1.2	X	X			
9.1.3		X			
9.2.1		X	X		
9.2.2		X	X		
9.3.1		X			
9.3.2		X			
9.3.3			X		
9.4.1			X	X	
9.4.2			X	X	X
9.5.1			X	X	
9.5.2				X	X
9.5.3				X	X

**OBJECTIVE 5: Promote ELCs as hands-on extensions of environmental curriculum.**

*Strategies:*

- 1) Develop a marketing and awareness program that is multi-faceted and will promote statewide and local use.*
- 2) Evaluate the ELC network and identify its needs through information from member sites through the computer network. Alter the ELC system as needed.*
- 3) Test the concept of the ELC network by determining whether there is an increased use of national and statewide environmental education programs.*

## GRANTS AND MINI-GRANTS FUNDING COMMITTEE

**GOAL #10:** The Grants and Mini-Grants Committee will establish a grants program to support the components of the mission and definition of environmental literacy.

**OBJECTIVE 1: Conduct a comparative analysis of funding models.**

- Strategies:*
- 1) Collect and evaluate existing funding programs for alignment to Illinois' needs.
  - 2) Cooperate with other Illinois impact grant programs for possible collaboration.

**OBJECTIVE 2: Establish sustained funding.**

- Strategies:*
- 1) Identify, evaluate and secure sustained funding sources.

**OBJECTIVE 3: Establish guidelines for environmental literacy grant program.**

- Strategies:*
- 1) Establish policies and procedures for grant program including program review.
  - 2) Determine and review administrative policy structure.

**OBJECTIVE 4: Promote the environmental literacy grants program.**

- Strategies:*
- 1) Promote statewide awareness for environmental literacy grant program.
  - 2) Provide training for grant awareness and application.

Goal. Obj. Strgy.	Year				
	1	2	3	4	5
10.1.1	X				
10.1.2	X				
10.2.1	X	X	X	X	X
10.2.2	X	X	X	X	X
10.3.1	X	X	X	X	X
10.3.2	X	X	X	X	X
10.4.1			X	X	X
10.4.2			X	X	X

**TIMELINE**

Committee	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Steering	Objective 1				
	Objective 2				
	Objectives 3-4				
Evaluation	Objective 1				
	Objective 3	Objective 2			
Database	Objective 1	Objective 2			
				Objective 3	
Collaborative Efforts	Objective 1				
	Objective 2				
	Objective 3				
Preservice Teacher Ed.	Objective 1				
		Objective 2			
Inservice Teacher Ed.	Objective 1				
			Objective 2		
Core Course Requirements	Objective 1		Objective 2		
	Objective 2				
Environmental Careers	Objective 1				
	Objective 2				
Environmental Literacy Centers	Objective 1				
		Objective 2		Objective 4	
		Objective 3		Objective 5	
Grants and Mini-Grants	Objective 1				
		Objective 2			
		Objective 3			
			Objective 4		

## **IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

An interim steering committee will be formed to oversee the implementation of the *Environmental Literacy for Illinois 2000 Strategic Plan*. Its composition will include a working committee comprised of the *Environmental Literacy for Illinois 2000 Committee Chairpersons* as well as an expanded advisory committee which will include at least ten additional members from appropriate fields. The duties of this interim Steering Committee will include:

- publicizing the *Environmental Literacy for Illinois 2000 Strategic Plan* by making presentations to appropriate audiences such as the Illinois Science Teachers Association Convention, the Midwest Environmental Education Conference, the North American Association of Environmental Education Conference and others;
- gaining endorsement from government officials by making presentations to Conservation Education Advisory Board and, if appropriate, to the State Agency Directors and eventually the Governor of Illinois;
- defining the duties of a Coordinator, lobbying the state to establish and fill this position with a qualified person to begin implementation of the plan;
- meeting the goals of the Steering Committee as outlined;
- establishing appropriate funding for the plan;
- providing short term governance of efforts; and
- compiling comments, revising and finalizing the plan.

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Effective July 1, 1995, the Department of Conservation and the Department of Energy and Natural Resources were merged to become the Department of Natural Resources



