

Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District
Environmental Education Programs
2015-2016

Cultivate Awe.*

*And create conservationists.

Environmental Programs for all ages
Field Trips
Competitions
Summer Camps



In the end, we will conserve only
what we love, we will love only what we
understand, we will
understand only what we are taught.

—Baba Dioum, Senegalese Conservationist

Your Partner in Environmental Education.

We teach environmental conservation to youth so they will practice it in the future.

The Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District is one of 23 Natural Resource Districts in the state, and serves residents of Nebraska in counties with borders along the Missouri River. Our most visible and important projects have involved flood control, resulting in the popular recreation areas and reservoirs at Chalco Hills, Prairie Queen, and Walnut Creek. Less visible but equally significant are the many wildlife habitat restoration projects along the Missouri River.

All of these projects provide rich educational opportunities for schools, families, teachers and youth groups in Douglas, Sarpy, Thurston, Burt, Dakota, and Washington Counties.

Chalco Hills Recreation Area and its Wehrspann Lake, the NRD's main office site, allow valuable hands-on, close-up interaction with nature in progress.

Teachers love us.

Programs are developed by professional environmental educators and are individually tailored to students K through 12. Many programs are designed to accommodate your schedule and your choice of site (yours or ours). Choose among:

Environmental Programs and Presentations
Environmental Summer Camps
Envirothon Competition
WaterWorks Field Days
Seeds and Trees

And to help make things happen, we offer several scholarships and grants, as well as a free lending library of resources, all of which are detailed here.

The NRD is an active member of the National Association for Interpretation (NAI), the North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE), and the Nebraska Alliance of Conservation and Environmental Education (NACEE).

Since 1972, your NRD has been providing educational opportunities for District residents. Each year we engage more than 10,000 youth with nature.

Many return again and again.

Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District
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*So come forth
into the light
of things,*

LET NATURE BE YOUR TEACHER.

William Wordsworth



Environmental Programs & Presentations 2015-2016

Arrange a special presentation for your class, either at your site or as a field trip to ours. Some programs are available year-round, others are season-specific or offered on a limited basis. *All programs are free of charge.*

Decide upon your date, and select from the wide range of topics below. *Our programs are very popular, and often book up to 3 months in advance. Contact us now to schedule programs for Spring and Fall 2016.*

Ages: K-12, per specific program
When: During normal school hours or as scheduled.
Where: Your school, Chalco Hills Recreation Area, or a location specified by presenter
Lead time: 8 weeks
Reservations: Call or email with your requested topic and date.
Contact: Christine Jacobsen at cjacobsen@papionrd.org or 402-315-1713.

Lizard Lowdown Discover just what makes a lizard... a lizard! With the help of educational animals, children get a hands-on opportunity to learn about these interesting reptiles.

Slithering Serpents Did you know, before snakes were feared... they were worshipped? Learn why these important creatures are nothing to be afraid of with the help of a few Nebraska snakes.

Environmental History Since the first people crossed into what is now Nebraska, humans have relied on our state's natural resources to survive. Learn how various peoples shaped our environment and, in turn, were shaped by it.

Wildlife Wonders **Animal Tracks, Pelts, and Skulls** Explore the life history of common Nebraska mammals. Through the hands-on use of pelts, skulls, and tracks, kids will acquire a better understanding of how these animals live.

The Nature of Water **Erosion, Surface Water, and Groundwater** With the use of interactive models, students get a better grasp on hydrology and water issues facing this essential resource.

Wetlands and Macro Invertebrates Let's get our hands a little dirty as we investigate a wetland up close. Using sampling equipment, students will dip for macroinvertebrates to get a better understanding of the health of area ponds and lakes.

Animal Adaptations Through various educational animals, students will learn about some unique adaptations that allow these animals to survive.

Tree Planting Discover what a tree needs to survive, as well as how trees help us to do the same. Get your own tree to take home and plant and continue the Nebraska tradition of Arbor Day—see *Seeds and Trees* below.

Recycle Relay Conservation, natural resources, and recycling are all topics of the day! Learn what makes something a natural resource, decide what common household waste is recyclable, and end with a make-your-own sustainable snack.

Analyze Your River Let us bring the water to your classroom! Students will collect, sort, classify, identify, analyze, and evaluate a sample of ordinary materials representing aquatic macroinvertebrates.

Incredible Insects Insects are mysterious and often misunderstood. With the aid of live insects, we will explore the wonderful world of six-legged animals.

Owls: Taloned Teachers With the aid of feathered teachers, students will learn about predator/prey relationships, adaptations and owl pellets, providing students and teachers with an up close view of raptors that many never get the opportunity to see.

Geocaching This high-tech program combines technology with the natural world. Using GPS devices to find "hidden treasure" at an area park (or your school grounds), students will gain experience with GPS technology.

Custom programs are available with advance notice. Please contact us with your request.



Six-lined racerunner

ONE DOES NOT MEET
HIMSELF
UNTIL ONE CATCHES THE REFLECTION
FROM AN EYE
OTHER THAN HUMAN . . ."

Loren Eiseley

Seeds and Trees

Trees and seeds are available at no cost for your classroom or youth group upon request. Every year the Papio-Missouri River NRD gives away thousands of trees and wildflower seed packets. The trees are small seedlings and the flowers are a wildflower mix. The seedlings will be distributed in mid-April, in time for Arbor Day and Earth Day festivities.

Consider combining your order with our Tree Planting Program above!

To order: Email Austen in January to place your order.
Cost: Free
Contact: Austen Hill at ahill@papionrd.org

High-schoolers learn about wetland habitats at Chalco's Wehrspann Lake.



Summer Camps

Looking for some summer fun? Take advantage of the season—the NRD’s Nature Camps have something for all! Camps are all led by natural resources professionals and licensed teachers, and are held during June and July. Camps include meals where appropriate.

Backyard Explorers:	Pre-K, ages 4–5. Camp will focus on discovering the wonders of nature with activities based in play.
When:	June 6–10, 2016 9am–Noon
Cost:	\$85/camper for the week-long session.
Discovering Nature:	Ages 6–8. Camp gets deep into exploring nature and the great outdoors while focusing on the senses, gardening, wildlife, and camping.
When:	June 20–24, 2016 9am–2pm
Cost:	\$100/camper for the week.
Boys’ Challenge:	Ages: 9–14 Campers will sharpen outdoor skills while totally immersed in nature in this outdoor camp. Team building skills, dutch oven cooking, water exploration, and camping are all topics the boys will explore.
When:	July 11–13, 2016 9am–3pm
Cost:	\$95/camper for the 3-day session.
Girls’ Adventure:	Ages 9–14. Camp focuses on land, campfire cooking, water, native flora and fauna, and skill exploration. Girls will spend time out on the lake, geocaching, and setting up camp.
When:	July 27–29, 2016 9am–3pm
Cost:	\$95/camper for the 3-day session.

Schedule: June through July, 2016; check specific dates above.
Location: Chalco Hills Recreation Area
Register: From February 2-29
Contact: Christine Jacobsen at cjacobsen@papionrd.org or 402-315-1713.
More Info: www.papionrd.org/educational-resources/summer-camps



Right, two happy explorers learn about nature hands-on. Far right, characteristic tracks of Nebraska’s Virginia opossum.



Envirothon Competition (Metro Regional Envirothon)

Envirothon is a competition for teams of five high school students. The teams compete on seven different environmentally-themed tests, including aquatics, forestry, policy, range, soils, wildlife, and current environmental topics.

All teams that compete receive a \$200 grant to be used towards environmental projects at their school. Schools can send multiple teams.

Teams compete at the Metro Regional, and the winning team moves on to the Nebraska State Envirothon. The winning team from the State Envirothon moves on to the National competition.

A Study/Reference Guide is available through the link below, under Resources.

Ages: High School
When: Tuesday, February 23, 2016
 10:30am or 4:00pm competition time
Where: Chalco Hills Recreation Area
Cost: Free
To register: Contact Christine Jacobsen with team names
Contact: cjacobsen@papionrd.org or 402-315-1713
More info: www.nrdnet.org/envirothon.php



Water Works Field Days

Fifth-graders in Sarpy and Douglas County can attend one of our Water Works Field Days, May 3 or 4, 2016. Classes attending will participate in six water-related sessions throughout the day, learning about everything from pollution, to drinking water, to water recreation and the great outdoors. The sessions are taught by experts in the field from a variety of agencies.

Teachers must apply on-line at www.papionrd.org on the water works page, and each 5th grade class from the school must register. Classes are selected by school, but rotate separately at the event.

Ages: 5th Grade
When: May 3 or 4, 2016, all day
Where: Schramm Park
Cost: \$1 per student, day of event
To apply: Register at www.papionrd.org/educational-resources/water-works-online-registration from January 1–February 14. *Attendance is limited.* Each class wishing to attend must register individually.

Contact: Christine Jacobsen at cjacobsen@papionrd.org, or call 402-315-1713.

More info: www.papionrd.org/educational-resources/water-works

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Resources, Scholarships & Grants

Media Resources: The Papio-Missouri River NRD has materials available for online and onsite check-out by teachers and students. We have a wealth of books and videos on natural resource topics, including starting an outdoor classroom, composting, trees, and wildlife.
 Checkout online: <http://www.papionrd.org/educational-resources/kids-activities>
 Cost: Free
 Location: Chalco Hills Recreation Area

Scholarships: Available to teachers attending a class or training on a natural resources topic. Awarded throughout the year.
 Amount available: \$250 per fiscal year (July 1–June 30)
 Application: www.papionrd.org/wp-content/uploads/EnvironmentalEducationTeacher-Scholarship.pdf

Outdoor Classroom Grants: Outdoor classrooms grants can apply to a range of projects, such as butterfly gardens, prairie grass plantings, ponds, vegetable gardens, arboretum trails and many other ideas. Our Outdoor Classroom Guide packets are available free of charge to get you started. Examples of completed projects can be found throughout the District and are used to teach math, science, language arts and many other curriculum standards.
 Amount available: \$1000 per fiscal year
 Application: www.papionrd.org/wp-content/uploads/Application.pdf

Mini Grants: Apply for a mini-grant to work on some fun environmental science projects in your classroom. Have all your grade level teachers apply and receive \$50 per classroom to go towards your project.
 Amount available: \$50 per fiscal year
 Application: www.papionrd.org/wp-content/uploads/Mini-Classroom.pdf

Contact: Christine Jacobsen at cjacobsen@papionrd.org or 402-315-1713.
More info: www.papionrd.org/educational-resources/outdoor-classroom/#grants

These kids are clearly committed to cleaning up!

Left: Great white egret parent oversees this season’s nestlings.



Mark your Calendar.

January	Place Seeds & Trees order
Jan–Feb	Book Environmental Programs for spring and fall
February 2–29	Register for Summer Camps
February 14	Deadline to register for Water Works Field Day
February 23	Envirothon
April 16	Earth Day Omaha
April 29	Arbor Day
May 3–4	Water Works Field Days
June 6–10	Backyard Explorers Summer Camp
June 20–24	Discovering Nature Summer Camp
July 11–13	Boys’ Challenge Summer Camp
July 27–29	Girls’ Adventure Summer Camp
September 10	World of Water Festival
Year-round	Apply for Educational Scholarships and Grants

The Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District is an equal-opportunity employer and educator.

www.papionrd.org



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