

Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District  
Environmental Education Programs  
2019

# Cultivate Awe.\*

\*And create conservationists.

Environmental Programs  
for all ages  
Field Trips  
Competitions

THE PAPIO-MISSOURI NRD:

## 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 that border the Missouri River, from Sarpy north to Dakota County. Our popular recreation areas and reservoirs at Chalco Hills, Danish Alps, Prairie View, and Flanagan Lake—results of our important flood control projects—are enjoyed by many year-round. Equally significant are our many wild-life 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 at the NRD's main office site allow valuable hands-on, close-up interaction with nature in progress.

### Teachers love us.

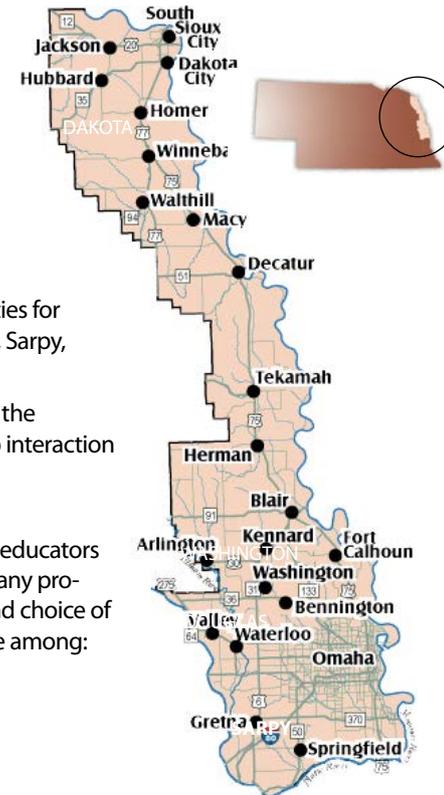
Programs are developed by professional environmental educators and are individually tailored to students K through 12. Many programs are designed to accommodate class schedules and choice of presentation site (Chalco or a regular classroom). Choose among:

- Environmental Programs and Presentations*
- Envirothon Competition*
- WaterWorks Field Days*
- Seeds and Trees*

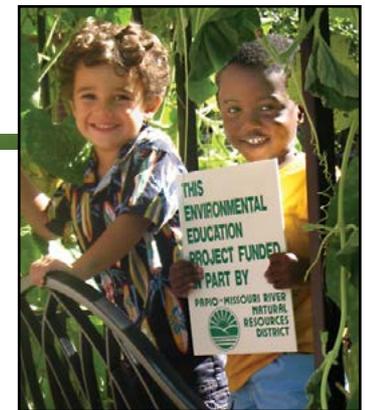
To help make things happen, we offer several scholarships and grants, as well as a free lending library of resources, all of which are detailed here.

The NRD is an active member of the 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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[www.papionrd.org](http://www.papionrd.org)



# Environmental Programs & Presentations 2019

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 three months in advance. Contact us now to schedule programs for 2019.*

**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:** Kaylyn Kelley at [kkelley@papionrd.org](mailto:kkelley@papionrd.org) or 402-315-1713.

## Scaled Tails

Scaled animals come in all shapes and sizes. Did you know, before snakes were feared...they were worshipped? And what makes a lizard...a lizard? Learn about these interesting ectotherms, with help from our animal educators and some special Nebraska residents.

## 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

### Surface Water

Through the use of hands-on models, students learn about watersheds, erosion, and pollution to help understand current water quality problems facing the Metro.

### Groundwater

It can be tough to grasp what you cannot see, which explains why groundwater is an often-misunderstood resource. Using a cross-section ground model, students get a better insight into the hydrology and issues affecting 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.

## I Dig Soil

One single tablespoon of soil has more organisms in it than there are people on earth! Soil plays an essential, not so glamorous role in our everyday lives. In this presentation, we explore the fascinating life beneath our feet and just how important healthy soil is.

## Pollinating Nebraska

Did you know approximately 1/3 of every bite of food we eat requires pollination by an animal or insect? Discover some of our local pollinators and experience firsthand the process of pollination through an interactive demonstration!

## 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 find out how to determine water quality.

## 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.

## All About Owls

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 available with advance notice. Please contact us with your request.*

## 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 Kaylyn starting in January to place your order.

**Cost:** Free

**Contact:** Kaylyn Kelley at [kkelley@papionrd.org](mailto:kkelley@papionrd.org)



Six-lined racerunner

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

Loren Eiseley

## 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.

Study guides are available for many topics, listed at the link below.

**Ages:** High School  
**When:** Tuesday, February 26, 2019  
10:30 am or 4:00 pm competition time  
**Where:** Chalco Hills Recreation Area  
**Cost:** Free  
**To register:** Contact Austen Hill with team names.  
**Contact:** [ahill@papionrd.org](mailto:ahill@papionrd.org) or 402-315-1777  
**More info:** [nrdnet.org/nebraska-envirothon](http://nrdnet.org/nebraska-envirothon)



## Water Works Field Days

Fifth-graders in Sarpy and Douglas County can attend one of our Water Works Field Days on May 7 or 8, 2019. 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](http://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 7 or 8, 2019; all day  
**Where:** Schramm Park  
**Cost:** \$2 per student, day of event  
**To apply:** Register from January 14–February 22 at [www.papionrd.org/education/water-works](http://www.papionrd.org/education/water-works)  
*Attendance is limited.* Each class wishing to attend must register individually.  
**Contact:** Austen Hill at [ahill@papionrd.org](mailto:ahill@papionrd.org), or call 402-315-1777.  
**More info:** [papionrd.org/education/water-works](http://papionrd.org/education/water-works)



A turtle and a mallard hen share a perch on the water.

## 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.

**Cost:** Free  
**Location:** Chalco Hills Recreation Area

### Scholarships

Scholarships are available and awarded throughout the year to teachers attending a class or training on a natural resources topic.

**Amount available:** \$250 per fiscal year (July 1–June 30)

### Outdoor Classroom Grants

Outdoor Classroom Grants can apply to a range of projects, such as butterfly gardens, prairie grass plantings, ponds, vegetable gardens, arboretums, 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

### 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, per teacher

### Contact:

Austen Hill at [ahill@papionrd.org](mailto:ahill@papionrd.org) or 402-315-1777.

**For more info and to apply:** [papionrd.org/education](http://papionrd.org/education)

Third- through fifth-graders learn about water quality and erosion.



Getting up close with a crawdad at Wehrspann Lake.



Box turtle Gramps is a favorite guest at our wildlife presentations.



# Mark your Calendar.

January+  
Jan-Feb

Place **Seeds & Trees** order

Book **Environmental Programs** for spring and fall

February 22

Deadline to register for **Water Works Field Day**

February 26

Metro Regional **Envirothon**

April 12

Education Tree Pick-up

April 13

**Earth Day Omaha** (Elmwood Park, 11 am-6 pm)

April 26

**Arbor Day**

April 28

**Sarpy County Earth Day** (12-4 pm)

May 7-8

**Water Works Field Days**

September 7

**World O! Water Festival**

Year-round

Apply for **Educational Scholarships and Grants**

[www.papionrd.org](http://www.papionrd.org)



@PapioNRD



Papio-Missouri River  
Natural Resources District



papionrd



Hikers out exploring the nature trails at Chalco Hills.



The northern brown snake (*Storeria dekayi*) is a common resident at Chalco Hills.

A lesson in wilderness firestarting.



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