

**Joint Meeting of the New Jersey Commission on Environmental Education  
And Interagency Work Group - AGENDA  
Wednesday, September 25, 2003**

NJDEP Headquarters, Trenton

9:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon, 7<sup>th</sup> Floor Large Conference Room

<b>8:30 a.m.</b>	<b>COFFEE AND TEA</b>	
<b>9:00</b>	<b>Opening Remarks</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Welcome and opening remarks from Chair</li><li>• Review of agenda and request for new business items</li><li>• Review/acceptance of May meeting notes</li><li>• Appointments process and openings - update</li><li>• October recognition ceremony – discuss</li><li>• Status of annual report (2001-02)</li><li>• Meeting schedule</li></ul>	<b>Joni Elliott/ Tanya Oznowich</b>
<b>9:30</b>	<b>Environmental Education Summer Updates</b> Updates on EE summer activities among members	<b>Group - Round Robin</b>
<b>9:45</b>	<b>Priority Tasks and Budget for 2003-04</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Review priority tasks discussed in spring, 03, and autumn, 02</li><li>• Discuss upcoming activities and available funding</li></ul>	<b>Joni/Tanya</b>
<b>10:00</b>	<b>The NJCEE and IWG Website</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Discussion regarding content and design</li><li>• Permission to make available to public through SEEDS (after any new edits or changes are incorporated)</li></ul>	<b>Marc Rogoff</b>
<b>10:15</b>	<b>Earth Day Committee – Update – 2004 Plans</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Update and needs: Environmental Primer</li><li>• Update on Earth Day – New Jersey Website</li><li>• Discussion: Earth Day Legislative Forum and/or the Establishment of theme programs around the state</li><li>• Next steps</li></ul>	<b>Tanya/Marc/ Leslie Parness</b>
<b>10:30</b>	<b>BREAK</b>	
<b>10:45</b>	<b>Plan of Action Committee – Update</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Summary of Committee meeting activities</li><li>• Discussion regarding NSF feedback and new ideas</li><li>• Next steps</li></ul>	<b>Dale Rosselet</b>
<b>11:00</b>	<b>EE Network Committee</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Status of EE Network activity/next steps</li></ul>	<b>Tanya</b>
<b>11:10</b>	<b>Overview: A Needs Assessment Survey for New Jersey Teachers</b> Guest Speaker: Dr. Nick Smith-Sebasto, Montclair State University <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Group discussion about the purpose, contents and use of this tool</li><li>• Next steps</li></ul>	<b>Tanya</b>
<b>11:35</b>	<b>New business</b>	<b>Joni/Tanya</b>
<b>11:50 a.m.</b>	<b>Wrap up, closing remarks and departure</b>	

**Joint Meeting of the New Jersey Commission on Environmental Education  
And Interagency Work Group – Meeting Notes  
Wednesday, September 25, 2003**

**NJCEE Members:** Rich Belcher, Marie Downes, Fred Ellerbusch, Joni Elliott, Tanya Oznowich, Barbara Rich, Dale Rosselet

**IWG Members:** John Dougherty, Joan Olawski-Steiner, Marc Rogoff

**Guests/Speakers:** Pat Skelly, Nick Smith-Sebasto

**Discussion #1: Budget and Tasks for 2003-04**

Tanya distributed an update on available funds for 2003-04, along with a list of priority tasks (and estimated costs) and committed expenditures for this timeframe. Joni reviewed this with the group.

Tanya also distributed a list of tasks (some cost related, some not) that have been discussed or decided upon by the group beginning in autumn, 2002. This was reviewed and discussed by Joni with the group, as well.

Both lists will be sent to absent members for advanced review. Everyone should bring his or her copies to the October meeting. At the October meeting, the expenditures and work of the commission and work group for 2003-04 will be finalized so that committee plans can be formulated.

The proposed teacher survey has costs. If this project is pursued during this school year, related costs must be factored into this decision making process and this also must be decided on at the October meeting.

**Discussion Details**

- A stable source of funds is still our #1 need but supplemental legislation is not wise to pursue aggressively in 2003-04 due to the limited state budget. Commission members should informally interact with legislators and staff this year to rekindle sponsorship of future legislative activity, as well as to raise awareness of commission activities and an understanding of environmental education. This will be done by mailing them annual reports and other information, possible meetings later in the year, as well as through a spring program in Trenton (Joni, David Nash).
- The group agreed that all activities must attempt to maintain and further a higher profile for commission and work group activities and reputation.
- The group also agreed that school construction and “green school” activities should be folded into all future environmental education efforts of the commission.
- Barbara suggested inviting a legislative aide to a future commission meeting to explain the legislative process to us. The group agreed it was a good idea. Joni and Barb will pursue.
- Fred suggested we look into the check-off for college tuition (taxes). The group thought it was an interesting idea to explore but no decisions were made.
- The group wants to continue improving ties with ANJEE leadership and members. Joni stressed that commission attendance at the conference and at ANJEE meetings is just as valuable as ANJEE members attending commission meetings, as Pat, Mike and Janice have been doing faithfully.
- Fred suggested putting our finalized activities into a table format so that logistical information can be viewed easily. Group agreed.
- Joni and Tanya have made commitments to try to increase attendance at commission/work group meetings as well as to enhance the makeup of both groups in 2003-04.

**Discussion #2: Committee Activity for 2003-04**

Dale provided an update on the **Plan of Action Revisions Committee**. The group met in the summer and finalized an outline for the revisions process. This was submitted to a New Jersey contact now employed with the National Science Foundation (Julie Johnson). The commission expressed interest in a planning grant submission of \$50,000 but was told that NSF cannot provide funds for organizational and planning activities. However, they would provide funds to conduct research that would then support planning needs.

The **Program Committee** and the **Environmental Education Network Committee** did not meet over the summer but will establish work and calendar needs at the October meeting.

Tanya provided a brief update for the former **Publications Committee**, which includes the need for her to complete and distribute the commission's 2001-02 combined annual report and to discuss the continued distribution of the environmental education posters and costs related to outdated information on the poster. This will be discussed again at the October meeting. There was also some discussion about costs for the "Environmental Primer" publication, which Tanya will look into before the October meeting.

Tanya provided a brief overview of the summer annual joint meeting with ANJEE members. She will compile a list of current committees and committee membership. This list will be shared at the October meeting and Joni will encourage members to sign up for these committees.

### **Discussion #3: The Proposed New Jersey Teacher Survey on Environmental Education**

Tanya and Joni provided an overview of results from the summer joint meeting and how the concept of a teacher survey for environmental education was discussed at this meeting. (It provides a foundation of data and findings that would support the school-based recommendations in the revised Plan of Action strategies for schools. Dr. Nicholas Smith-Sebasto, Associate Director of the New Jersey School of Conservation, introduced the concept. Nick has the experience and training to develop such tools.)

Reaction to the survey at the joint meeting was mixed but there was enough positive support to have the idea posed to the commission for possible sponsorship. Nick was invited to attend the September and October meetings of the commission/work group. The draft survey tool was circulated for comment to joint meeting attendees and feedback was received from ten attendees. Their feedback is being shared with commission members. There was varied reactions to, and questions about, the survey, which should be decided on at the October meeting if it is to be completed during this current school year.

Tanya provided an introduction for Nick, who provided a survey overview and responded to questions. Attendees received copies of the survey and related information, to be reviewed before the October meeting. This same information will be sent to absent members. The commission must decide about doing or not doing this, at the October meeting. If it is to be done an implementation plan must be determined.

### **Discussion Details and Questions Raised**

- **Purpose of the survey...** Why do it? At many planning meetings it is easy to establish many directions and raise a lot of questions that cannot be answered. The purpose or results of such a survey is to provide direction and give answers to questions that needed to be asked.
- **Sampling of teachers...** Won't the sampling be skewed? How can a rep group of 500 be accurate? A snapshot of under #1,000 teachers, even with the quantity of teachers and diversity of school and learning situations in New Jersey, will still be accurate. The NJEA may be a source for labels... NJDOE may not be able to assist with this.
- **Results of survey...** How will it be ensured that findings are utilized and that no questions are asked in vain? What methods will be used to analyze the data? Findings will help provide support for future plans and should help to secure funding needs. The survey tool shared is only an example and the final tool should only reflect questions that commission and ANJEE members want to ask. The data will be studied through direct studies, inferences and relationships between responses.
- **Costs and expenses...** There are costs for this effort, such as the development of the instrument and the data analysis (which you cannot rely on grad students for only) as well as mailing, supplies, incentives, postage, etc. No details have been hashed out yet but the estimated costs range between \$4,000 - \$5,000. These costs were compared to other states that conducted similar surveys (were higher) as well as if Starch/Roper were to be hired (also higher). Nick wants to do this for NJ as a former and current resident.
- **Length, distribution and incentives...** Questions were raised about attention spans, e-mail versus hard copy mail, and incentives. Nick's suggestions were based on other research or past experiences.
- **Sponsorships and Partners...** Much discussion on NJEA as a sponsor and partner, as well as a potential "enemy" in terms of NJEA not liking some of the language. This requires further discussion.

#### **Discussion #4: Environmental Education Project Updates**

**Dale Rosselet:** The revised *Bridges to the Natural World* will be sold at 4 Borders bookstores during Teacher Appreciation Week in early October. The new *Wild Journeys* curriculum supplement, which focuses on animal migration, will be available soon. Audubon has nine centers now that it administers, many of them offered successful summer camp programs.

**Rich Belcher:** New Jersey's Envirothon team that won here placed 7<sup>th</sup> out of 47 teams in the national competition, which was 5-days long. The theme for the 2004 competition is "urban conservation" and it will be held at the New Jersey School of Conservation.

**Fred Ellerbusch:** Involved with many urban-based environmental justice projects, such as Camden – remediation, waterfront, public outreach; Trenton – brownfields; Elizabeth – brownfields; and, Newark – brownfields and local enforcement model. He is also pursuing grant opportunities that link environmental justice with health issues and concerns.

**Marie Downes:** The New Jersey Environmental Information Center is still active but is being maintained and funded by Downe Township Public Library. State funds have all been spent and the township cannot financially help to support it. This is a good chance that this service will be discontinued. Joni suggested the commission or chair sending letters to the county freeholders and legislators for the area (October meeting agenda item) and Tanya requested a summary of the library's activities from Marie.

**Barbara Rich:** Announced upcoming annual Environmental Congress with theme of "Designing for the Environment." It will be held on Saturday, October 25 at Rutgers University in Piscataway. Commission and work group members were encouraged to attend. Barbara also asked that the commission help the Delaware River Basin Commission to get public reaction to the regional management plan that is being developed for the river basin in four states. Tanya will contact DRBC about this.

**Marc Rogoff:** Marc is a co-chair for the New Jersey Coalition for Schoolyard Habitats. This summer he developed a new Website for the coalition, which is part of DEP's **SEEDS**.

**Tanya Oznovich:** It is likely that DEP will receive \$50,000 from the NJ Department of Education to further EIC delivery and promotions in New Jersey. The funding source is Eisenhower funds, which support standards-based initiatives and professional development. Tanya circulated a cc of the revised draft social studies classroom standards for group review, noting the added environmental content.

**John Dougherty:** DOE received input over the summer from Carl Henn and Jeff Brown (the New Jersey Sustainable Schools Network) for the writing teams. As a result, more environmental content was added. John encouraged input for SS standard 6.1 for civics, local government, volunteerism and community action. But, the standards will be reviewed for approval by the state board of education at any time soon.

**Joan Olawski-Steiner:** Is involved with enforcement restoration projects and works closely with DEP staff, especially along the Passaic River and resulting restoration work to take place there.

**Joni Elliott:** The state's Agricultural Society held summer camp programs for four groups of at risk students in middle and high school this past summer. The programs focused on careers, farm products and processes, and food sources. The society also provides funds to eight New Jersey schools for curriculum-based gardening projects.

**Pat Skelly:** Circulated logistics on the upcoming annual environmental education conference sponsored by ANJEE. The theme this year is "*Building the Future One Green Brick At A Time*" and it will be held on Thursday – Saturday, January 8 – 10, 2004, at Ryder University. Details about the conference are posted at the ANJEE Website at [www.anjee.net](http://www.anjee.net).