

# TOOLS FOR INTEGRATING CULTURE INTO ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

Prepared by Earth Ethics, Inc. and FDEP Office of Environmental Education

This project is part of the Capacity and Continuity: Advancing Environmental Education in the Southeast led by the Office of Environmental Education at the Department of Environmental Protection. This initiative is supported by a Regional Environmental Education Award from the Environmental Protection Agency (Region 4)

*Environmental  
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Underserved  
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## ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) received funding from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for Environmental Education. With that funding FDEP selected six (6) mini-grants recipients to rebuild key environmental education structures and programs lost over the last decade. Five (5) of the mini-grants are designed to build existing strengths and addresses challenges currently affecting the effectiveness of environmental education in Florida. This product is a result of one of those five (5) whose purpose was to focus on diversification and reaching groups underserved and underrepresented in environmental education.

This document was created in partnership with Earth Ethics, Inc. and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's Office of Environmental Education and Sustainable Initiatives.

The Office of Environmental Education was established to promote and support environmental citizenship by building awareness, understanding and appreciation of Florida's environment. Together with other government agencies, non-profits, the academic and the private sector, the Office contributes structure and funding for environmental education in Florida. <http://www.dep.state.fl.us/secretary/ed/>

Earth Ethics, Inc. is a federally recognized 501(c) (3) non-profit organization that is dedicated to addressing environmental and social issues along the Gulf Coast (Gulf of Mexico). The MISSION of Earth Ethics, Inc. is to educate the public and increase awareness about environmental and social issues at local, regional, and global levels in an effort to engage, empower, and encourage public involvement towards positive resolutions. [www.earthethics.us](http://www.earthethics.us)

## HOW WE GOT HERE

Initially, a search was conducted researching, reviewing, and assembling existing documentation within the State of Florida that addressed the best management practices for reaching and engaging the traditionally underserved/underrepresented group in environmental education. This search was eventually expanded to a national level. A collection of nine (9) field tested practices/tools for reaching underserved/underrepresented are included in this document.

Based on the collected documents, a survey was crafted for submittal to Southeast Environmental Educators in an effort to determine their familiarity with the practices/tools and the extent to which they might put them in place or would likely put them in place. Upon the collection and analysis of the survey, a webinar was created for those who participated in the survey and other interested parties to review and discuss the information obtained from the survey. Specifically, participants were able to review the results of the survey, comment on the analysis of the survey and provide input into the format of this guide on the best management practices that would be most useful to formal and non-formal educators.

This resource guide was created to provide Environmental Educators as a source for materials to be used when beginning the process of working with traditionally underserved/underrepresented groups. It is the intent for this guide to also serve as recommendations on the best management practices for the design, delivery and evaluation of environmental education programs for underserved/underrepresented groups.

## WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

This resource guide is a working document. Changes and modifications can be expected that will improve the materials, uses, and recommendations that best serve Environmental Educators. The guide will also be posted to local, state, and national environmental education resources websites.

## THE RESOURCES

- 1) *Cultural Competency Self-Assessment Tool* – A voluntary self-assessment for teachers and non-formal educators to help them examine, measure, track, and strengthen the extent to which they address culture in design, implementation and evaluation of their courses/programs.

This document can be accessed at

[http://www.dep.state.fl.us/secretary/ed/pdf/life\\_resources/cultural\\_competantcy\\_070313.pdf](http://www.dep.state.fl.us/secretary/ed/pdf/life_resources/cultural_competantcy_070313.pdf)

For more information about this resource, please contact the Office of Environmental Education and Sustainable Initiatives - Florida Department of Environmental Protection - 3900 Commonwealth Blvd., MS-30, Tallahassee, FL 32399-3000 - Office: (850) 245-2906.

- 2) *Florida's Learning in Environment or LIFE program: LIFE School Profile Index* – LIFE School Profile Index is a planning tool to help identify the relative priority of one potential LIFE site over another (when a choice between schools is presented). The tool generates an index score from multiple criteria to help compare different school needs. Generally, schools with the greatest needs are given priority for participation

This document can be accessed at

[http://www.dep.state.fl.us/secretary/ed/pdf/life\\_resources/school\\_profile\\_index\\_070313.pdf](http://www.dep.state.fl.us/secretary/ed/pdf/life_resources/school_profile_index_070313.pdf)

For more information about this resource, please contact the Office of Environmental Education and Sustainable Initiatives - Florida Department of Environmental Protection - 3900 Commonwealth Blvd., MS-30, Tallahassee, FL 32399-3000 - Office: (850) 245-2906.

- 3) *Privilege Walk (CAEE)* - The “Privilege Walk” is an activity that Colorado Alliance for Environmental Education (CAEE) has used at various inclusiveness trainings for people involved with their affiliate. This document provides a good opening activity and opportunity for people to be more open and mindful of some of their own privileges and assumptions.

This document can be accessed at The Colorado Alliance for Environmental Education (CAEE) – [www.caee.org](http://www.caee.org)

For more information about this resource, please contact Malinda Mochizuki at [malindamochizuki@caee.org](mailto:malindamochizuki@caee.org) or (303)-273-9527 or 15260 S. Golden Road - Golden, CO 80401.

- 4) *Family Interview/Survey* - The family interview assignment is an important assessment tool of the LIFE (Learning in Florida's Environment) program. The purpose of the family interview assignment is to help teachers find ways to make classroom and field experiences more relevant to students and to identify common cultural characteristics. By capturing and recording what is important to your family and community, the LIFE program will be better able to create meaningful watershed experiences that relate directly to the community and students involved.

This document can be accessed at <http://www.dep.state.fl.us/secretary/ed/liferesources.htm>

For more information about this resource, please contact the Office of Environmental Education and Sustainable Initiatives - Florida Department of Environmental Protection - 3900 Commonwealth Blvd., MS-30, Tallahassee, FL 32399-3000 - Office: (850) 245-2906.

- 5) *Community Culture and the Environment: A Guide to Understanding a Sense of Place W-4 Worksheet- Defining Community* (page 44-45) (EPA)- The document explores the concepts of community and culture and provides tools for identifying, assessing, and working cooperatively within the social dynamics and local values connected to environmental protection. These tools will help you define your community, identify stakeholders, enhance education and outreach, build partnerships and consensus, identify resources, plan and set goals, and integrate local realities with ecological issues.

This document can be accessed at <http://water.epa.gov/type/watersheds/publications.cfm>

For more information about this resource, please contact the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency - Office of Water (4100T) - 1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W. -Washington, D.C. 20460 or Region 4 / Atlanta at (404)-562-9900.

- 6) *EE Toolbox Urban Environmental Education document*: Activity 1 – page; Activity 2 – page 31; Activity 3 – page 32; Activity 5 – page 36. - This document is for environmental educators wanting to explore the urban environment with their students. It discusses environmental education, student population, and where to address urban environmental education.

This document can be accessed at <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED384531.pdf>

For more information about this resource, please contact the School of Natural Resources and Environment, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor at (313)-998-6726.

- 7) *Use of Public Lands and Open Space for Recreation: Connecting with Diverse Communities – A Dozen Strategies* (Nina S. Roberts SF State University)- This document addresses broadening the base of support for land conservation – across ages, ethnic groups and income – is the key to the future of open space in the US. Humans are a key element of preserving such spaces. As more children stay inside, communities of color grow, and income levels stratify, the traditional U.S. land conservation community needs to find and build from its shared interests across a more diverse range of partners.

This document can be accessed at

[http://online.sfsu.edu/nroberts/documents/Roberts\\_UseOfPublicLands\\_DiverseCommunities08.pdf](http://online.sfsu.edu/nroberts/documents/Roberts_UseOfPublicLands_DiverseCommunities08.pdf)

For more information about this resource, please contact Nina S. Roberts, San Francisco State University, at

E-mail: [nroberts@sfsu.edu](mailto:nroberts@sfsu.edu) - Phone: (415) 338-7576 - Fax: (415) 338-0543. Address: San Francisco State University - Dept. Rec., Parks, & Tourism - 1600 Holloway Ave., HSS 307- San Francisco, CA 94132-4161

- 8) *Reaching out with Respect: Environmental Education with Underserved Communities – 15 Suggestions* – This document ties together environmental education and underserved communities in an opportunity to challenge our assumptions about nature, culture and science, and, our assumptions about the life experiences of people of different backgrounds and cultures.

This document can be accessed at <http://www.clearingmagazine.org/Underserved.pdf>

For more information about this resource, please contact the City of Vancouver - 4600 SE Columbia Way - [www.cityofvancouver.us/watercenter](http://www.cityofvancouver.us/watercenter)- (360)-487-7111

- 9) *Urban EE Guidelines 1998 - Guidelines for Urban Environmental Education* – Cities are complex environments that offer rich opportunities and challenges for environmental education. The interplay of people, cultures, natural cycles, social and economic systems, built environments, transportation systems, environmental education and other elements make urban areas exciting arenas for environmental education. This paper sets forth ten environmental education guidelines for high-quality urban programs and offers concrete ideas for putting the guidelines into action.

This document can be accessed at <http://www.naaee.org>

For more information about this resource, please contact NAAEE's Publications and Membership Office - P.O. Box 400, Troy, Ohio 45373 - Phone/fax: (937) 676-2514 - E-mail : [jthoreen@erinet.com](mailto:jthoreen@erinet.com).

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The document is designed for formal and non-formal environmental educators involved in community-based initiatives, including those affiliated with community and watershed-based organizations, universities, and federal, state, tribal, and local agencies.

It is recommended that in order to build success and expand uses with any of these programs, users are encouraged to:

- Increase the awareness of the value of diversity and build inclusiveness skills among environmental educators.
- Increase the diversity of environmental educators.
- Increase the diversity of the audiences being served by environmental education.
- Involve the people who live and work in the community.
- Address air, water, land, pollution, and living resource concerns in a multimedia strategy for community-based approaches. Initial approaches might address one of these concerns, but later expanded to include others.

This guide offers a process and set of tools for defining and understanding the human dimension of an environmental issue.

The belief that holistic, place-based environmental protection efforts will lead to more effective long-term protection is the basis of community-based environmental protection and watershed protection approaches.

Approaches should integrate ecological issues with local economic and social concerns to resolve or prevent local environmental problems. Localized issues/concerns might not address these initially, but can be included when a project is viewed on a watershed approach.

Tailoring environmental protection efforts to local realities and partnering with community members leads to greater public support and involvement and, ultimately, to better environmental protection.

There is much information with regards to diversity and how to teach to a multicultural society. General information about this can be incorporated and expanded upon to include the environmental education component with diverse groups.

All environmental education organizations should review these tools and adopt ones appropriate for their program and audience.

## RELATED DIVERISIFICATION RESOURCES

Florida's Learning in Environment or LIFE program - <http://www.dep.state.fl.us/secretary/ed/liferesources.htm>

Colorado's Alliance for Environmental Education (CAEE) Diversity & Inclusiveness Committee - <https://www.cae.org/diversity-inclusiveness-committee#overlay-context=diversity-inclusiveness-initiative>

- Cultural Competency Resources - <https://www.cae.org/cultural-competency-resources#overlay-context=diversity-inclusiveness-initiative>
- Making The Case For Diversity & Inclusiveness in EE - <https://www.cae.org/making-case-diversity-and-inclusiveness-ee#overlay-context=diversity-inclusiveness-initiative>
- Inclusiveness In Practice - <https://www.cae.org/inclusiveness-practice#overlay-context=diversity-inclusiveness-initiative>
- Professional Development On Inclusiveness - <https://www.cae.org/professional-development-inclusiveness#overlay-context=diversity-inclusiveness-initiative>
- Resources: <https://www.cae.org/how-do-i-know-what-my-students-know-and-are-able-do>
- Assessment: <http://www.naaee.net/framework>

Tailoring Outreach Programs to Minority and Disadvantaged Communities and Children - [http://cfpub.epa.gov/npdes/stormwater/menuofbmps/index.cfm?action=factsheet\\_results&view=specific&bmp=7](http://cfpub.epa.gov/npdes/stormwater/menuofbmps/index.cfm?action=factsheet_results&view=specific&bmp=7)

Nonformal Environmental Education Programs: Guidelines for Excellence - <http://eelinked.naaee.net/n/guidelines/posts/Nonformal-Environmental-Education-Programs-Guidelines-for-Excellence>

The Environmental Education (EE) Toolbox is an organized collection of publications for educators who conduct environmental education teacher in-service programs. The EE Toolbox is intended to advance EE in-service programs toward the goal of empowering teachers to help students carefully consider the environment and develop the skills that will enable them to take responsible actions. <http://www.naaee.net/publications/eetoolbox>

Association for Environmental & Outdoor Education / Diversity in Outdoor and Experiential Education: This site offers a wealth of information regarding articles, organizations, events and opportunities, training/professional development, multicultural EE providers, books/magazines, museums, exhibits, lesson plans and teaching materials all highlighting diversity. - <http://aeoe.org/resources/diversity/index.html>

Center for Diversity and the Environment: "...Provides strategic direction on diversifying the environmental movement...provides information about efforts, organizations, people, research and strategies that are diversifying the environmental movement." <http://www.environmentaldiversity.org/>

Consultation on the Outdoors for All: Diversity Action Plan: This Plan “encourages making opportunities for disabled people, people from black and minority ethnic communities, young people and people from inner cities to enjoy the countryside and green spaces. The Diversity Action Plan asks questions about how we can help to give more people the opportunity to enjoy the countryside and green spaces. At the moment many people don't have the chance to enjoy the outdoors or don't think it's a place they can enjoy spending time in.”

<http://www.diversity-outdoors.co.uk>

Minority Environmental Leadership Development Initiative: MELDI is a “project at the University of Michigan's School of Natural Resources and Environment. The project aims to enhance the leadership and career development opportunities available to minority students and minority environmental professionals. The project seeks to provide information that will help more minority students embark on careers in the environmental field. It is also designed to help minority students and professionals in the environmental field take advantage of networking and mentoring opportunities.” <http://www.umich.edu/~meldi>

National Hispanic Environmental Council: NHEC “seeks to educate, empower, and engage our community on environmental and sustainable development issues; encourage Latinos to actively work to preserve and protect our environment; provide a national voice for Latinos before federal, state, and nonprofit environmental decision-makers; and actively assist Latinos to pursue the many career, educational, and policy opportunities in the environment and natural resources field: <http://www.nheec.org>

New America Media - Expanding the news lens through ethnic media: <http://news.newamericamedia.org/news>

NAM Directory 2008: “A bridge to America's ethnic media and communities.” -

[http://news.ncmonline.com/news/view\\_custom.html?custom\\_page\\_id=263](http://news.ncmonline.com/news/view_custom.html?custom_page_id=263)

Outdoor Industry Association, Outdoor Foundation, Research: The Hispanic Community and Active Outdoor Recreation: <http://www.outdoorfoundation.org/research.hispanic.html>

Rising to the Challenge: Strategies for enhancing diversity within environmental organizations. 2004. Environmental Diversity Working Group. Fort Washington, MD: The Kenian Group (Consultants) Strengthening Organizations through Diversity. <http://www.keniangroup.com>

Stewardship Council - Established in 2004 as part of a Pacific Gas and Electric Company Land Settlement:

<http://www.stewardshipcouncil.org>

Youth Investment Program: [http://www.stewardshipcouncil.org/youth\\_investment](http://www.stewardshipcouncil.org/youth_investment)

Student Conservation Association (Celebrated 50 years in 2007): National Urban and Diversity Program

<http://www.thesca.org>

Cultural Resources Diversity Internship Program in partnership with the National Park Service:

<http://www.nps.gov/history/crdi/internships/intrnCRDIP.htm>

Clearing – Pacific Northwest Journal of Community based environmental literacy education:

<http://clearingmagazine.org/resources/exemplary-program-map>

Social Justice Training Institute: <http://www.sjti.org/>



John Hopkins School of Education: <http://education.jhu.edu/PD/newhorizons/strategies/topics/multicultural-education/diversity-within-unity>

The Native Science Academy: <http://www.silverbuffalo.org/NativeScienceAcademy.html>

South Central Comprehensive Center at the University of Oklahoma:  
[http://www.sc3ta.org/knowledgebases/American\\_Indian/4\\_1\\_5\\_0/prepare-educators-to-teach-american-indian-students.html](http://www.sc3ta.org/knowledgebases/American_Indian/4_1_5_0/prepare-educators-to-teach-american-indian-students.html)

Poverty, Pollution and Environmental Racism: <http://www.ejrc.cau.edu/programs.htm>

## ADDITIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION TOOLS

Tools of Engagement – Audubon - <http://web4.audubon.org/educate/toolkit/toolkit.php>

National Institute for Urban Wildlife - 10921 Trotting Ridge Way- Columbia, MD 21044 - <http://windstar.org/training-info/>

Project Pigeon Watch - <http://ehrweb.aaas.org/ehr/parents/Pigeons!.html>

Backyard Wildlife Habitat Program - <http://www.nwf.org/How-to-Help/Garden-for-Wildlife/Schoolyard-Habitats.aspx>

Ten-Minute field trips using school grounds for environmental studies - <http://www.acornnaturalists.com/store/TEN-MINUTE-FIELD-TRIPS-A-Teachers-Guide-to-Using-the-Schoolgrounds-for-Environmental-Studies-P287C1113.aspx>

Wildlife Habitat Conservation Teacher's Pack Series - <http://www.fws.gov/idaho/education.htm>

City Kid's Field Guide - [http://www.biokids.umich.edu/resources/links\\_for\\_teachers/classroom\\_resources/](http://www.biokids.umich.edu/resources/links_for_teachers/classroom_resources/)

Walking; a realistic approach to environmental education - [http://wwf.panda.org/what\\_we\\_do/how\\_we\\_work/people\\_and\\_conservation/our\\_work/education\\_for\\_sustainable\\_development/](http://wwf.panda.org/what_we_do/how_we_work/people_and_conservation/our_work/education_for_sustainable_development/)

Florida Schoolyard Wildlife Project – Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission - <http://myfwc.com/education/educators/schoolyard-wildlife>

Teaching about wildlife and conservation. Tools for teachers; <http://www.nwf.org/What-We-Do/Kids-and-Nature/Educators/Teacher-Tools.aspx>

Activities and materials dealing with conservation of plants, animals, and habitats - <http://eelink.net/eactivities-wildlifeconservation.html>

Wildlife Humane Education - <http://www.mspca.org/programs/wildlife-resources/wildlife-humane-education.html>

Ten-Minute field trips using school grounds for environmental studies - <http://www.acornnaturalists.com/store/TEN-MINUTE-FIELD-TRIPS-A-Teachers-Guide-to-Using-the-Schoolgrounds-for-Environmental-Studies-P287C1113.aspx>

## ADDITIONAL EVALUATION TOOLS

My Environmental Education Evaluation Resource Assistant - <http://meera.snre.umich.edu/>

Evaluating a Constructivist and Culturally Responsive Approach to Environmental Education for Diverse Audiences - [http://meera.snre.umich.edu/sites/all/files/Stern\\_Profile\\_0.pdf](http://meera.snre.umich.edu/sites/all/files/Stern_Profile_0.pdf)

Measuring the Success of Environmental Education Programs - <http://macaw.pbworks.com> - [http://macaw.pbworks.com/f/measuring\\_ee\\_outcomes.pdf](http://macaw.pbworks.com/f/measuring_ee_outcomes.pdf)