



Minnesota Project Learning Tree Educator Update

January 2008

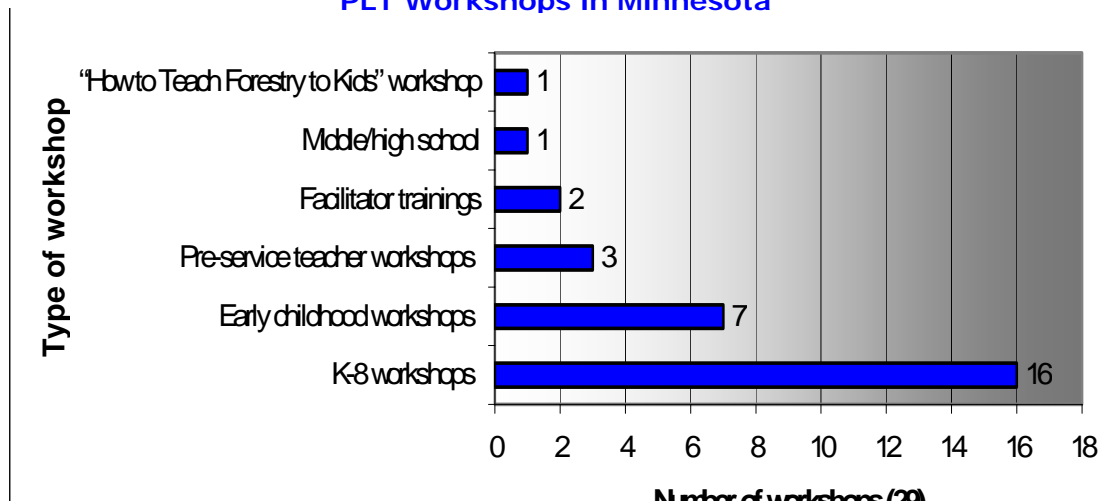
Happy New Year!

E-newsletter for educators who have attended a Project Learning Tree workshop

NEWS

Just the Facts, Ma'am... Minnesota PLT 2007 Annual Report

PLT Workshops in Minnesota



The numbers for 2007...

- More than **450** teachers, naturalists, foresters, and other educators attended PLT workshops—in International Falls to Morris, and several point in between.
- **27** volunteer facilitators helped conduct these workshops. Facilitators came from diverse professions including formal and nonformal education, forestry, and wildlife biology.
- PLT presented sessions at **eight** conferences around the state, reaching an additional 355 people.
- All workshops provided continuing education units (CEUs). Also, **five** workshops included graduate credit for attending.

Other accomplishments in 2007

- Offered a "Places We Live" workshop for middle/high school teachers.
- Conducted 2 "How to Teach in Your School Forest" workshops to staff working in schools that have DNR School Forests.
- Conducted 2 facilitator trainings, which added 32 new facilitators in WILD, WET, and PLT.
- Set up 3 "How to Teach Forestry to Kids" workshops for natural resources professionals.
- Nominated one teacher for "National PLT Outstanding Teacher of the Year" award.
- Recruited and prepared 20 teachers to attend the Temperate Forest Foundation forestry teacher tour in Escanaba, Michigan.
- Offered PLT sessions at 8 national, state, and regional education conferences.

Sub Stipends Available for Attending PLT Workshop

The good news is that up to 15 substitute stipends are available for middle and high school teachers to attend the Feb. 8 workshop on "Invasive Species!" The bad news is that **this only happens once in a blue moon**. Stipends are available first come, first served. If you're interested in getting some great PLT curricula for secondary education, CEUs, a first-hand report on the state of Minnesota's invasives from a knowledgeable DNR expert, plus a STIPEND, register for the class! www.mndnr.gov/plt



What Do You Think of Minnesota's K-12 Science Standards?

The Minnesota Department of Education wants to hear about it! The MDE is preparing to revise the 2003 science standards. This is your chance to share your opinion on the standards' current emphasis (or lack thereof) on environmental education. Take a short **survey** on http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/Academic_Excellence/Academic_Standards/Science/index.html

GRANTS

National Fishing and Boating Education Grants Initiative

Deadline: January 21, 2008

Source: Future Fisherman Foundation

Web Site <http://futurefisherman.org/programs/pegrants.php>

The Future Fisherman Foundation invites physical education teachers to apply for funds to incorporate fishing and boating activities into their classrooms and integrate fishing and boating activities into the broader school curriculum. Grants of \$2,500 are available to certified physical education teachers in public, private, or charter schools.



GreenWorks! Grants

Available ONLY to PLT teachers! The next grant deadline is April 30. \$250 - \$5,000 grants are available for tree plantings, building trails, and enhancing outdoor learning areas. In 2007, four Minnesota schools in International Falls, Chaska, Leech Lake Indian Reservation, and East Grand Forks received grants. www.mndnr.gov/plt

Grant Wrangler

Grant Wrangler™ is a free grants listing service for teachers, librarians, and parents to find funding, including grants and awards for arts, history, mathematics, science, technology, and more. <http://www.nimble-net.com/>

Jeffers Foundation Grants

The Jeffers Foundation is offering grants to Minnesota schools who want to improve their environmental education teaching capacity—that is, through funding teacher workshops (like PLT, WET, or WILD), outdoor learning sites, school-based food waste reduction programs, and school/community festivals designed to increase environmental awareness. A easy application is on www.jeffersfoundation.org. (Notice- there is a typo on the grant application, be assured that all schools *and* 501(c)3 nonprofit organizations are eligible. I checked for you!)

FREE STUFF

FREE MinnAqua Lessons

OK, so there are only two lessons online you can use. But watch for upcoming MinnAqua workshops in Minnesota, which are modeled around PLT, WET, and WILD workshops. The newly released *MinnAqua Teachers' Guide* is the DNR's Fishing Education curriculum. It's a beautiful publication, full of activities and very relevant to addressing academic standards. Get the free lessons from <http://www.mndnr.gov/minnaqua>

RESOURCES FOR PLT ACTIVITIES

Minnesota Conservation Volunteer Magazine

The current issue introduces *biofuels*, a word which will increase in importance and quantity in years to come—especially in Minnesota. There is a great "Young Naturalists" story for kids about wildlife populations. The accompanying Web site includes a teachers' guide on wildlife populations, which includes some excellent activities that address Minnesota academic standards in language arts, math, life science, and geography. Bemidji State University prepared the teachers' guide. Young Naturalists articles and teachers' guides are for late elementary/middle school readers. Go to www.mndnr.gov/volunteer for this and all back issues.

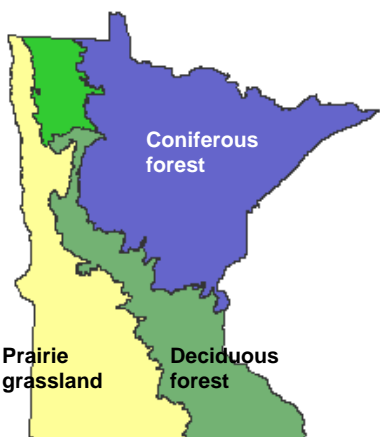


There are **33 back issues online** with teachers' guides, such as:

- Ready, Set, Grow! (seed sprouting and plant growth)
- Look Down in the Woods (woodland plants)
- Tremendously Marvelous Trees (tree biology)

JUST FOR FUN

Tallgrass
aspen
parkland



Minnesota DNR Recognizes Tallgrass Aspen Parkland Biome in Minnesota

A biome is a regional ecosystem characterized by the plant, animal, and microbial communities that have developed under specific soil and climate conditions. Minnesota is home to four biomes: coniferous forest, deciduous forest, prairie grassland, and tallgrass aspen parkland. The DNR has created a helpful Web site that outlines each of the biomes on www.mndnr.gov/ecs. (The Web site refers to biomes with their more technical term, "provinces.")

See pages 4 - 6: **UPCOMING WORKSHOPS**

Minnesota PLT Web Site: www.mndnr.gov/plt
National PLT Web Site: www.plt.org
Minnesota PLT coordinator: laura.duffey@dnr.state.mn.us

UPCOMING ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION WORKSHOPS

from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

Also check the workshop calendar www.mndnr.gov/education/teachers/calendar



How to Teach Forestry to Kids – Project Learning Tree

Jan. 23, 2008, 9:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m., Bemidji State Park Visitor Center, Bemidji

Feb. 27, 2008, 9:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m., Heintz Center, Rochester

Mar. 27, 2008, 8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m., USFS building, U of Minnesota, St. Paul

This workshop is designed for **Foresters & Natural Resources Professionals** who do field days and occasional learning with kids. This workshop features fun, hands-on activities designed to teach how to appeal to different learning styles, improve field day activities, how to work with teachers, use age-appropriate activities, and more.

FREE to DNR staff; \$25 for others.

Participants get:

- *PLT PreK-8 Activity Guide*
- Lunch
- Optional: Five Society of American Foresters CFE contact hours
- Optional: One Woodland Advisor WAE13 elective credit (U of Minn.)

Registration forms are on www.mndnr.gov/education/teachers/calendar



Tree ID techniques!

Project Learning Tree and MinnAqua for Grade K-8 Educators

Jan. 22, 2008 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Valley Branch Environmental Learning Center, Afton

Designed to help St. Paul School District educators integrate MinnAqua and PLT into their curricula. This fun, hands-on workshop will introduce Project Learning Tree and MinnAqua at the beautiful Valley Branch environmental learning center!

Cost: \$20 (St. Paul School District teachers only); or \$50 all others

Participants get:

- Lunch
- MinnAqua's *Fishing: Get Into the Habitat!* Activity Guide (39 lessons)
- *Project Learning Tree* (forestry and environmental education) *PreK-8 Activity Guide* (96 lessons)
- Other environmental education teaching materials from the Minnesota Dept. of Natural Resources
- A certificate for 7 continuing education units (CEUs)

Registration forms are on www.mndnr.gov/education/teachers/calendar

Project Learning Tree for Early Childhood Educators

Feb. 2, 2008 9:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Proctor Community Center (near Duluth)

Get great materials designed by experts in early childhood and environmental education! Learn fun, hands-on activities to do with young children to get them engaged in their environment at their level, and at their pace. Environmental education and young children is a natural fit!

Cost: \$35 Participants get:

- *Project Learning Tree* (forestry and environmental education) *PreK-8 Activity Guide*
- *Minnesota Project Learning Tree Early Childhood Supplement*
- *Natural Wonders: A Guide to Early Childhood for Environmental Educators*
- Other environmental education teaching materials
- A certificate for 6 CEUs



Taking outdoor pictures, preschool-style

Registration forms are on www.dnr.state.mn.us/education/teachers/calendar

Invasive Species Workshop (Project Learning Tree) for Middle/High School Educators

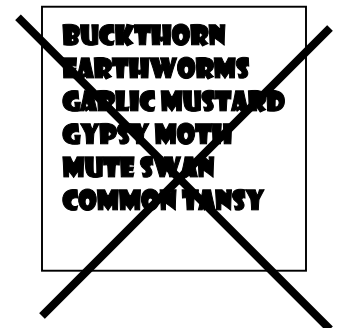
Feb. 8, 2008 8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Minnesota Pollution Control Agency Building/Dept. of Natural Resources Building, St. Paul

Want a fun, effective way to teach about invasive species to middle and high school students that engages computer technology, mapping, math and population analysis, and journaling? Val Cervenka, DNR forest health expert, will explain the important invasive species that every citizen should know about. Then, learn how to use WISE (<http://wise.berkeley.edu>) as a tool for teaching a variety of science subjects to your students. Optional: Participants may purchase the PLT preK-8 Activity Guide for an additional \$20).

Cost: \$15 Participants get:

- Project Learning Tree high school module
- Access to the WISE computer platform (developed by U.C. Berkeley)
- Lunch
- Other environmental education teaching materials
- A certificate for 6 CEUs
- **Substitute stipends** are available for the first 15 people who ask for them! (Up to \$125)



Registration forms are on www.mndnr.gov/education/teachers/calendar

Project Learning Tree, Project WET, and Project WILD for Grade K-8 Educators

Feb. 29 and Mar. 1, 2008, 4:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. and 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Wargo Nature Center, Lino Lakes

Incorporate environmental education into your existing curricula. Get all three "Projects" at the same time, while engaging in fun, hands-on indoor and outdoor learning activities designed by and for educators.

Cost: \$70 Participants get:

- *Project WET* (water education) *K-12 Activity Guide*
- *Project WILD* (wildlife education) *K-12 Activity Guide*
- *Project Learning Tree* (forestry & EE) *PreK-8 Activity Guide*
- *Project WILD Aquatic* (aquatic wildlife education) Activity Guide
- A certificate for 12 CEUs
- Optional **graduate credit** from Hamline University (\$110)



Registration forms are on www.mndnr.gov/education/teachers/calendar

Project Learning Tree for Grade K-8 Educators

March 8, 2008 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Forest History Center, Grand Rapids

Get great forestry and environmental education lessons that engage students in math, science, social studies and language arts. All activities are correlated to Minnesota Academic standards. Participants will learn through fun field activities and hands-on lessons at the beautiful Forest History Center!

Cost: \$25

Participants get:

- Lunch
- *Project Learning Tree* (forestry and environmental education) *PreK-8 Activity Guide*
- Other great environmental education teaching materials
- A certificate for 7 CEUs

Registration forms are on www.mndnr.gov/education/teachers/calendar



The blacksmith shop at the Forest History Center

SUMMER INSTITUTE! Projects WILD/PLT/WET for Middle and High School Educators

July 15-18, 2008; check in is 12:00 noon on 7/15

Vermilion Community College, Ely, Minnesota

This workshop will examine methods to incorporate environmental education (EE) into your daily middle and high school classroom routine and provide hands-on examples of proven activities. Expert speakers from wildlife, forestry, and the water sciences will lead field trips each day. Past workshops have included field trips to the Soudan Underground Mine and the International Wolf Center. Using background information and field experiments, you will gain knowledge and experience to increase your comfort in EE.

Cost: \$225. All participants get:

- Four days room and board (dinner on 7/17 on own)
- *Project WET* (water education) *K-12 Activity Guide*
- *Project WILD* (wildlife education) *K-12 Activity Guide*
- *Project Learning Tree* (forestry & EE) *High School Modules*
- *Project WILD Aquatic* (aquatic wildlife education) *Activity Guide*
- A certificate for 12 CEUs
- Optional Saturday canoe trip into the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness (July 19)
- **Two optional graduate credits** from Hamline University (\$224)

Registration forms are on www.mndnr.gov/education/teachers/calendar



Outdoor activities such as journaling, field study, canoeing, picnics, and more, are part of this fun summer institute!

OTHER UPCOMING EVENTS

Minnesota Environmental Education Week is April 13-19, 2008

Governor Pawlenty has announced Minnesota will for the first time recognize National Environmental Education Week. The purpose is for educators to raise awareness about the benefits of environmental education. Tips are on http://www.eeweek.org/EE_benefits.html