



Osprey Wilds

Environmental Learning Center

Osprey Wilds EE Update

January 15, 2025

Hi EE Coordinators,

Well done making it halfway through the school year, developing environmental literacy plans, and shepherding EE programs at your school! There's still time to adjust your environmental literacy plan to ensure you can both implement activities and collect the necessary data. Remember, you need prior approval to make changes to your plans, so reach out if you'd like to talk through any questions or ideas you have. We always love to hear new things you are trying and success stories. Send us your EE highlights and we'll feature them in these updates as one way to "cross pollinate" inspiring ideas and effective practices in EE.

School Spotlights

- [Twin Cities Roadcrew visited Noble Academy to host an engaging and informative presentation titled "Wise with Waste"](#)
- [Prairie Seeds Academy Planet Protectors Call to Action](#)

Upcoming Professional Development Events

[Teach Climate Network Workshop: Building Energy Detectives: Using your Building as an Energy Education Tool](#)

January 15, 2025 | 5:00-6:00 PM CST

Participants will explore student lessons, activities and programs that answer the anchor phenomenon: What energy actions can I take at school, at home, and in my community to create a more sustainable future? Learn how students can investigate energy and energy conservation through energy auditing that can result in a measurable reduction in your building's carbon footprint. Find out how your school can participate in a national school building energy conservation program. Participants will have access to free Google lessons that align with NGSS standards, follow a 5E format and include career and climate connections. **All registrants will receive a recording and additional resources to their e-mail within 1 week of the event.**

[Outdoor Learning Online Courses](#)

The Outdoor Learning School & Store is a charitable social enterprise offering excellent outdoor learning training, tools, resources & equipment with 100% of proceeds going back to supporting outdoor learning non-profit initiatives!

Early Bird Registration closes this Friday, January 17 for:

1. [The Medicine of Stories](#) - starts Jan 30 with Dr. Robin Wall Kimmerer
2. [School Gardening for Educators](#) - starts Feb 19 with Megan Zeni
3. [Ktunaxa Introductory Language Course](#) - starts Jan 20 with Elder Alfred Joseph

Early Bird Registration is now open for:

1. [Teaching in the Outdoor Classroom](#) - starts April 2 with Lauren MacLean
2. [Nêhiyawêwin \(Cree\) Language Course](#) - starts March 12 with Rollin Baldhead
3. [Anishinaabemowin \(Ojibwe\) Language Course](#) - starts April 3 with Sarah Wood

[MPCA Smart Salting Training](#)

If your school is looking for ways to improve sustainable operations, consider whether a smart salting training or certification would be relevant for any of the facilities staff in your building. Smart Salting training helps improve operator effectiveness and reduce chloride pollution while keeping roads, parking lots, and sidewalks safe. Participating organizations have been able to reduce their salt use by 30-70 percent. In addition, the training has been shown to prevent chloride contamination in lakes, rivers, and streams.

Resources

[National Wind Energy Art Challenge](#)

February, 28 2025

KidWind, supported by the U.S. Department of Energy's Wind Energy Technologies Office, invites students from kindergarten through 8th grade across the United States to create artwork on the theme "Beautiful Wind Energy."

[National Environmental Education Foundation Resolve to Save Calendar](#)

Each month in the calendar has a different theme, such as the conservation of water, energy, or gas, with a background fact and two resolutions provided.

[5th National Climate Assessment Art Gallery](#)

Art × Climate is the first art gallery to be featured in the National Climate Assessment. The US Global Change Research Program issued a call for art with the understanding that, together, art and science move people to greater understanding and action. The call received more than 800 submissions, and the final collection features the work of 92 artists. Their work, which represents all 10 NCA regions, offers a powerful depiction of climate change in the United States—its causes and impacts, as well as the strength of our

collective response. This gallery could serve as an interesting interdisciplinary prompt for exploring themes of art, narrative, climate, and advocacy embedded in STEAM.

[Global Oneness Project](#)

Explore this engaging collection of lesson plans focused on the impact of climate change through visual and narrative storytelling. Students of all ages can find stories from around the world on the connection between people and the natural world.

[Nature-Based Learning Case Studies](#)

This document has case studies of multiple early learning programs that deliver nature-based learning to young children in Minnesota, provided in their own words. Examples demonstrate that nature can be explored in any outdoor environment, in any program type—rural, urban, suburban, and for infants and toddlers. The document is found on the MDE Outdoor and Nature-Based Learning [webpage](#).

Some Things We're Reading

- [Community Energy Ambassador Story: Environmental Leadership with Carolina Ortiz](#)
- [How Unjust Policies Influence Who Experiences the Harms of Climate Change First](#)

Grants

[Solar for Schools Readiness Assessment](#)

February 2025. deadline TBD

Eligible schools are encouraged to apply for grants up to 40-70% of the cost to purchase and install a solar energy system.

[Hennepin County School Recycling Grants](#)

February 27, 2025

Grants are available for schools to start or improve programs to reduce waste and keep recycling and organic materials, including food and non-recyclable paper, out of the trash. Eligible organizations include preschools, K-12 schools, colleges and universities in Hennepin County. Grant funding can be used to fund staff time for project implementation as well as to purchase equipment and supplies including recycling and organics recycling containers, sorting stations, reusable food service ware, and bulk condiment dispensers.

- See the [grant flyer \(PDF, 500KB\)](#) for an overview of the program.
- Review the [grant guidelines \(PDF, 540KB\)](#) for more information about the program, eligible project activities and allowable expenses.

Application timeline

The first round of funding will be available to two-year colleges, Head Start, and preschools and K-12 schools with at least 50% of students qualifying for free and reduced lunch. Applications are due by 4 p.m. on Thursday, February 27. Schools may apply for up to \$20,000 in the first round.

Applications of up to \$15,000 from any K-12 school, preschool, college, or university in the county will be accepted in the second round from March 18 through October 15, or until available funds are depleted.

A virtual information session will be held via Zoom

- Wednesday January 29 from 9 to 10 a.m. [Register](#).