

Spring 2002



*Welcome to
EarthTracks, an
environmental
education newsletter
for Idaho teachers.
Here you'll find
news from the
"Projects"
(Learning Tree,
WET and WILD),
the Bureau of Land
Management, and
others interested
and active in
environmental
education. We
encourage your
suggestions and
thoughts.*

Dreaming of summer vacation? If so, think SNOW!

What SNOTELs us

All through the winter, weather forecasters talked about snow measurements. SNOTEL monitoring stations throughout the state, managed by the Natural Resources Conservation Service, measure both snow depth and water content. These measurements, along with precipitation forecasts, probability of El Niño effect, and historic stream flows are all pieces that help scientists put together the yearly water supply puzzle. Since snow is the one measurable factor in a complex predictive model, it takes on critical importance. If all other factors are within normal range, the snowpack defines how much water we can expect during runoff. Though the forecasts aren't perfect, they are the best available tool for making water supply plans.

From water projection reports, farmers can better gauge timing and quantity of available irrigation water. This can influence the type of crops they plant. Livestock producers and dairy farmers can make realistic estimates of forage availability and feed costs. Forest and rangeland managers use the water forecast to make predictions about the upcoming fire season. Planners in your community can calculate expected recharge to local aquifers and predict, in high runoff years, the likelihood of localized flooding. Even recreationists use SNOTEL's information for vacation planning for water dependent sports such as rafting, kayaking and fishing.

So SNOTEL tells us a lot about what our lives will be like for the coming year. To keep closer track of water supply predictions, visit <http://idsnow.id.nrcs.usda.gov/>.





Workshop Calendar

April 19-20

Ketchum/Stamley, WET
Boise, PLT

May 3-4

Coeur d'Alene, WET

May 10-11

Post Falls, PLT
Twin Falls, Geothermal Energy
(contact WET)

May 24-25

Boise, Geothermal Energy (contact WET)

June 18-21

Twin Falls, Water Camp (contact WET)
Idaho Falls, Water Camp (contact WET)

June 25-28

Lewiston, Water Camp (contact WET)

June 26-28

Post Falls, PLT Natural Resources
(*new credit!*)

June 30-July 3

McCall, HS Range Camp, (contact IRRC)
McCall, Curriculum Devel. (contact IRRC)

July 7-13

McCall, WILD II

July 14-20

Island Park, WILD IV

July 15-19

McCall, Rangelands in the Classroom
(contact IRRC)

July 18-19

Boise, PLT Natural Resources (*new credit!*)

July 22-24

Challis, HS Range Camp (contact IRRC)

July 24-28

McCall, Fire Ecology (contact PLT)

July 25-26

Lewiston, PLT Natural Resources
(*new credit!*)

July 28-Aug. 3

Clark Fork, WILD III

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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Standards Correlations Update

Our project to correlate all activities of PLT, WILD and WET to the Idaho Achievement Standards is moving right along. In March, teachers from throughout the state gathered to review our draft correlations. Now we're working on finishing the correlations, and formatting them to be user-friendly for educators. If you have ideas for how you'd like the correlations to work, contact us. The finished correlations will be available this fall.



Project WILD has a few spots remaining



Project WILD II, McCall, July 7 – 14, 2002

Project WILD III, Clark Fork, July 28 – August 3

Email or call Lori Adams for information.

Use the Internet to supplement Project WILD this spring

www.nwf.org April 22–28, 2002 is National Wildlife Week. You can find neat classroom activities and interactive games on this site.

www.idahoptv.org/dialogue4kids This outstanding site has many creative topics and activities to use in the classroom. Project WILD has helped Idaho Public Television create some of these sites. Our favorites include Mountain Goat and Desert Habitats. Past programs include Salmon, Bats, Bears, Wetlands and Birds of Prey. Check it out. You'll be glad you did!

<http://imnh.isu.edu/digitalatlas/> Use this site to research Idaho topics ranging from wildlife to geology and much much more.

Earth Day Bags Project

(and Arbor Day, too!)

Have your students decorate paper grocery bags with Earth Day messages. Stores can use the bags on Earth Day (April 22). Visit www.earthdaybags.org to learn more. Expand the project and decorate bags for use on Arbor Day (April 26), too!



High School Range Camp—two locations

June 30-July 3, McCall, Idaho
July 22-24, Challis, Idaho

IRRC and the Society for Range Management are teaming up to provide an outdoor school like no other. Hands-on activities will provide a better understanding of the largest ecosystem in Idaho. School groups are encouraged to sign up early. Space is limited. Early bird registration fee \$50. Regular registration fee \$75. Includes all materials, field trips, meals, and three nights lodging. Contact IRRC for deadlines and registration materials.

ATTN: 4th Grade Teachers

This is the workshop for you! Spend three days, two nights (July 1-3) along the banks of Payette Lake putting your knowledge of Idaho's vast heritage on Idaho's rangelands to work. Curriculum materials and usable activities will be the outcome of this exciting workshop. Your input is critical to its success. Stipends for travel costs available. Credits offered through Univ. of Idaho. Meals and lodging at UI McCall field campus, materials, and field trips are provided at no cost to you. You won't find a better deal. Space is limited--sign up with IRRC today!

New 1-credit PLT workshops this summer:

June 26-28, Post Falls; July 18-19, Boise; July 31-August 1, Lewiston.

PLT: Natural Resources & Solid Waste explores where stuff comes from and where it ends up. For educators of all grades and subjects—PreK-12. Learn more about renewable and nonrenewable resources, reducing, reusing and recycling. A separate credit from regular PLT workshops, so experienced PLT teachers can take it as well as first-timers. Contact the PLT office to register.

Arbor Day Poster Contest Winners

Hundreds of Idaho 5th graders participated in the Arbor Day Poster Contest offered by the Idaho Dept. of Lands. This year's winners are:

1st: Priscilla Fisch of Latah County HomeSchoolers.
Teacher: Lisa Fisch.

2nd: Erik Merrill of Big Valley Elem. in Rupert.
Teacher: Mrs. Vogt.

3rd: Ashley Newcomb of Seltice Elem. in Post Falls.
Teacher: Kay Hall.

Priscilla's poster is entered in the National Arbor Day Poster Contest. All three Idaho winners receive a savings bond and a tree to plant at their school. To view their posters, go to www2.state.id.us/lands, and click on News to Use. *Congratulations to the winners and to all who participated.*

ATTENTION SITE teachers

(and others who do environmental monitoring with students).

This training applies to what you do!

Riparian Proper Functioning Condition Assessment Training

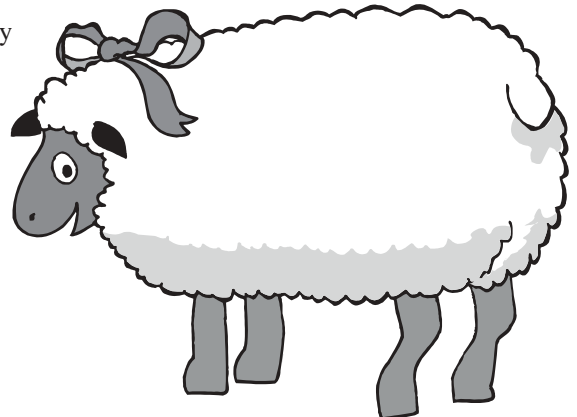
This assessment method is a key tool for a collaborative, landscape effort for restoration of riparian and wetland areas.

Twin Falls, July 17-18; Mountain Home, Sept. 11-12

Each course is free, with attendance limited to 40 people. For information contact Ervin Cowley, BLM, 1387 Vinnell Way, Boise, ID 83709, (208) 373-3810, ervin_cowley@blm.gov

Dances with.... sheep?

Join the IRRC and Defenders of Wildlife on a field trip to a sheep camp in the mountains near McCall to learn about livestock/wolf interactions. Learn from rangeland ecologists about the dynamic resources in Idaho. May 31 early-bird deadline: \$50, after will be \$75. Includes all materials, field trips, meals, and four nights lodging at the U of I McCall Field Campus on beautiful Payette Lake (July 15-19). Contact IRRC for more information.





For more information on Earthtracks, contact:

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Idaho Forest Products Commission
Project Learning Tree
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EarthTracks can be accessed at <http://www.idahoforests.org/teach1.htm>

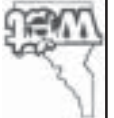
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Idaho Rangeland Resource Commission