

Examples of Stewardship & Service Learning Projects

- Become a DCNR Volunteer by contacting your local state park or state park forest office. (www.dcnr.state.pa.us)
- Check out iConserve PA, a DCNR initiative at www.iConservePA.org. Get great ideas about conservation and how you can get involved in local projects.
- Check out the Earth Force: Student action initiatives at www.earthforce.org.
- Visit www.pennCORD.org for ideas on how to become involved in your community.

Habitat Protection

- Adopt a stream. Learn how to collect chemical and biological data on a local stream. Determine what you can do to improve the quality of the stream. Participate in volunteer stream monitoring as sponsored by PA Department of Environmental Protection or participate in the Bureau of State Parks Watershed Education program.
- Become a “weed warrior”—help with removal of invasive species and replant with native species.
- Build a butterfly garden at a local park or at your home remembering to plant shrubs and flowers not only for the adult but also those foods preferred by the caterpillars.
- Certify your backyard as a National Wildlife Federation Backyard Habitat. (www.nwf.org/backyard)
- Campaign for protection of a local wetland or ecologically sensitive area. Form a club to save a habitat. “Save the Swamp” is a participant organization from Central Dauphin High School that is involved in protecting a wetland on their school grounds.
- Make and sell bird boxes with proceeds going to an environmental organization.
- Organize and participate in a clean up project: The Great PA Clean Up; Adopt a Highway or sign your school up to be a Litter Free Zone (www.greatpacleanup.org/litterfreeschoolzones.asp).
- Paint a mural depicting local flora and fauna.
- Participate in Participant (PARC) Partners in Amphibian and Reptile Conservation (www.parcplace.org/sparc.html).
- Research and submit to the PA Online Herpetological Atlas at the Indiana University of Pennsylvania (www.webspace.ship.edu/tjmare/herp.htm).
- Participate in the 2nd PA Breeding Bird Atlas (www.carnegiennh.org/atlas/home.htm).

Endangered/Threatened Species

- Participate in Endangered Species Day May 18th activities. The goal of Endangered Species day is to protect our rare, threatened, and endangered animal and plant species (www.stopextinction.org/endangeredspeciesday).
- The Endangered Species Act is a federal law and is the safety net for wildlife, plants and fish that are on the brink of extinction. Upon signing the Endangered Species act on December 28, 1973, President Richard Nixon stated “Nothing is more priceless and more worthy of preservation than the rich array of animal life with which our country has been blessed.” The act is based on three key elements. Listing species as threatened or endangered; designating habitat essential for their survival and recovery; restoring healthy populations of the species.
- Set up a display of locally known endangered/threatened species at the mall or other public arena to bring attention to the importance of protecting habitat.
- Organize a party to celebrate the bald eagle’s removal from the endangered species list. This shows how the endangered species act has benefited one of our country’s most recognized and well known species.
- Adopt an endangered species native to your area. Find out how you can help conserve it, and inform the citizens in your community about your adopted plant or animal with newspaper articles, brochures, buttons, signs, and videos.
- Write letters to your local senators or local newspaper.
- Write and present a play about threatened habitats.

Deer Management/Wildlife Management

- Erect a deer fence and monitor the difference in vegetation inside and outside.
- Participate in a browse study to determine if there is an overabundance of deer in that area affecting native vegetation. Contact a PA Game Commission Biologist for more information.
- Remove invasive trees and shrubs that deter native foraging plants needed by deer.
- Research, construct and install turtle platforms in a local pond.
- Research, construct trail tunnels for amphibians and small mammals.
- Research and establish water sources for wildlife in winter.
- Learn more from the PA Game Commission regarding habitat projects and nesting boxes for such wildlife as turkey, wood duck, barn owl, bats, etc (www.pgc.state.pa.us).

Ecosystem Services

- Adopt and maintain a local hiking trail.
- Stencil storm drains to bring attention to runoff.
- Erect a small windmill or solar panel to demonstrate alternative energy.
- Build and erect a rain barrel and/or rain garden to combat storm water runoff.
- Plant and maintain a community garden.
- Help publicize local farm produce. Buy from local farmers markets (www.buylocalpa.org).
- Organize and lead a green energy tour of local sites that demonstrate green practices.
- Plant a riparian buffer along a streamside.
- Plant trees to hold soil and reduce runoff.
- Sign your school up to be a litter free zone (www.greatpacleanup.org/litterfreeschoolzones.asp).
- Establish a composting site in your community.
- Sponsor programs that provide composting barrels to interested homeowners.
- Establish rain barrels at a local nature center. Teach others about water conservation and the application of rain barrels.

Trees/Forestry

- Organize and plant trees in your neighborhood.
- Participate in Arbor Day activities—always the last Friday in April!
- Plant trees in celebration of something or in memory of someone (www.arborday.org/join/tictim/index.cfm).
- Develop an inventory of the species and trees in your community. Include descriptions.
- Establish a Shade Tree Commission.
- Research and remove invasive plants, and plant native species.
- Research Tree Vitalize and learn how to establish it in your community.

Tools for Protecting Land Resources

- Participate in a community clean up (www.pacleanways.org).
- Organize a community household hazardous waste clean up.
- Recycle in your community.
- Attend township meetings and write letters to township officials about land use issues affecting your community.
- Help institute a community Christmas Tree Recycling program in your township.

Community Improvement Projects

- Develop a Quest: a treasure hunt that leads participants through the community using a set of clues with rewards. Resource: *Questing, A Guide to Creating Community Treasure Hunts* by Delia Clark and Steven Glazer. A guide to creating treasure hunts that teach and share the special places in your community.
- Develop Green Maps of your community. Design maps for specific purposes such as a map to all the gardens in your community, a walking map, a map of historic sites.
- Plant flowers at an intersection or beautify a vacant lot.
- Research, plan and produce a trail brochure for a favorite nature trail.
- Organize a way to beautify buildings. Paint a mural on a building as they did in the city of Reading, Pennsylvania depicting the migration of birds from South America and the faces of children that have migrated to Pennsylvania, sharing common ground.
- Survey trees in your neighborhood and develop a database which includes measurement of size, health, condition, etc.
- Plant trees in a parking lot. Develop a plan for maintenance.
- Stencil street drains with the destination of storm water (www.cbf.org).
- Organize a “Walk to School” Program.
- Promote healthy recreational activities (www.keystonehealthyzone.org).
- Adopt a highway, pick up litter and plant wildflowers.
- Collect and fix donated bicycles to give to younger children.