



UPDATES

Pennsylvania Envirothon

Summer / Fall 2008

2008 Canon Envirothon

A five-member team of Pennsylvania high school students from Penncrest High School took third place honors at the 2008 Canon Envirothon. This was announced on Saturday, August 2nd, during the closing ceremony of the weeklong North American environmental education competition held at Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff, AZ, and sponsored by Canon U.S.A., Inc.

More than 265 teenagers from 45 U.S. states and nine Canadian provinces studied environmental issues and resource conservation, while competing for a share of more than \$125,000 in scholarships and Canon products.

The first place Delaware team received a total of \$25,000 in Canon scholarships along with Canon equipment for their advisor and sponsoring



PA CANON ENVIROTHON TEAM

Penncrest High School Team members (l to r): Chrissa Kuntz (Coach), Katie Ferguson, Alex Senko, Jennifer Walker, Elizabeth Freeburg, Katie Davis, and Mark Samilenko (Coach).

agency to use in science education. Missouri (\$20,000) and Pennsylvania (\$15,000) placed second and third respectively. The fourth place team from New York received \$10,000. The fifth place team from Ohio received \$7,500.

The National Association of Conservation Districts, the United States Department of Agriculture (U.S.D.A.) Forest

Service, and the U.S.D.A. Natural Resources Conservation Service, are Canon Envirothon partners.

Since 1997, Canon U.S.A. has been a sponsor of this annual competition. The Canon Envirothon is the culmination of a series of competitions that began during the past school year and involved more than 500,000 teenagers throughout North

America. In written tests and oral presentations, starting on the local level, the winning five-member teams from schools and organizations competed for the distinction of representing their state, province, or territory at the Canon Envirothon.

Each team's knowledge is tested under the supervision of foresters, soil scientists, wildlife specialists, and other natural resource professionals. Teamwork, problem solving, and presentation skills are evaluated as each team offers a panel of judges an oral presentation containing recommendations for solving the specific challenge that is presented during the competition.

For more 2008 competition information, visit the Canon Envirothon press room at www.envirothon.org.

UPJ to Host 2009 Pennsylvania State Envirothon

Preparations have begun for the 2009 Pennsylvania State Envirothon. The 2009 event will be held on the beautiful University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown campus.

This 26th event will be held on

Monday and Tuesday, May 18 and 19, 2009.

Students, advisors, and volunteers will be housed in the UPJ dormitories.

Team registration and the oral presentation competition are

scheduled for Monday, May 18.

The traditional station testing will take place on campus, Tuesday, May 19.

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Originator of Envirothon Receives Recognition



Carolyn Hollenshead is recognized with Distinguished Honors by PA Envirothon Chair, Andy Patterson.

At its 25th annual state competition, the Pennsylvania Envirothon recognized Carolyn Hollenshead with the distinguished honor of being a key individual who created the Envir-Olympics, now known as the Pennsylvania Envirothon.

The program has grown from involving only a few conservation districts into North America's largest natural resource and environmental science competition for high school students.

Chairman Andy Patterson honored Mrs. Hollenshead on May 20th for her dedication and enthusiasm for originating the program. The Envirothon

is a grassroots success story. Created as a local competition in 1979, the Envirothon was designed to "cultivate a desire to learn more about our natural environment through competitive events."

Competing in the Envirothon starts many students down the road to becoming involved, action-oriented adults. They develop a greater appreciation for man's dependence on the environment.

Starting in one Pennsylvania county conservation district with a few students, expanding to three more county conservation districts and a few dozen students, it has

evolved into one of the state's most successful conservation education programs. And beyond imagination, the Envirothon now reaches a half-million students across the United States and Canada.

Carolyn Hollenshead, a teacher at the Fulton County Community Christian School, continues to be involved with the Envirothon by serving as a team advisor.

Congratulations, Carolyn, and **Thank You** for sharing your "Envir-Olympics" idea, which over a span of 25 years has become the present day Envirothon.

Partners – Thank you!



The Pennsylvania Envirothon Board of Directors would like to thank all of the partnering agencies, conservation districts, financial contributors, sponsors, participants, advisors, and volunteers for making the 2008 Envirothon year another great success. Without the hard work and dedication of so many, the Envirothon could not happen!

Thank you ...

- PA's Conservation Districts
- Department of Agriculture

- State Conservation Commission
- PA Association of Conservation Districts
- Dept. of Conservation & Natural Resources Bureaus of Forestry and State Parks
- Department of Education
- Department of Environmental Protection
- Game Commission
- Fish & Boat Commission
- U.S.D.A. Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Air Products
- Nestle Waters North America
- PPL Corporation

- Recreation Equipment Inc., REI
- The AES Corporation
- Bayer HealthCare Consumer Care
- First Quality Enterprises
- Canon Envirothon
- Conestoga Wood Specialties
- The Hershey Company
- Haines & Kibblehouse Inc.
- International Erosion Control Assoc./MAC
- PA Outdoor Writers Assoc.
- Dwight Lewis Lumber
- Lewis Lumber Products
- Cargill

Pennsylvania Envirothon Is Seeking a Title Sponsor(s)

The mission statement for the Pennsylvania Envirothon is to educate high school students in natural resources and environmental sciences. The program emphasizes the importance of environmental

sensitivity while stressing a need to achieve a social, ecological, and economic balance.

The Pennsylvania Envirothon provides future generations

with the ability to be better equipped to address the complex natural resource concerns facing today's world as well as the challenges of tomorrow.

Would you like to invest in the future of Pennsylvania's Envirothon program?

If so, please contact our office at (814) 623-7900 ext. 111 to discuss this sponsorship opportunity.

Biodiversity in a Changing World—2009 Current Issue

The rich tapestry of life on our planet is the outcome of over 3.5 billion years of progressing history. It has been shaped by forces such as: changes in the planet's crust, ice ages, fire, and interaction among species. Now, it is increasingly being altered by humans through our habitat changes to benefit us.

The impacts of human activities reach into every corner of the natural world. For instance, between one third and one half of the Earth's land surface has been substantially transformed by agriculture, urbanization, and commercial activities of various kinds; about one quarter of all bird species have been driven to extinction; and more than one half of all accessible surface water, as well as an enormous quantity of groundwater, is diverted for human uses. It is estimated that 25% of all species could go extinct in the next ten years.

Such uses have brought unquestionable benefits to human welfare. But the result of this growing human domination of the planet is that no ecosystem on Earth is free from pervasive human influence.

The term "biodiversity" is indeed commonly used to describe the number, variety, and variability of living organisms. It has become a widespread practice to define

biodiversity in terms of genes, species, and ecosystems, corresponding to the three fundamental levels of biological organization previously mentioned.

It is evident that a certain level of biological diversity is necessary to provide the material basis of human life: at one level to maintain the biosphere as a functioning system and, at another, to provide the basic materials for agriculture and other needs.

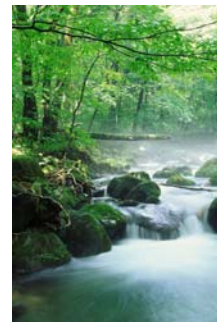
Over geological time, all species have a finite span of existence. Species extinction is therefore a natural process, which occurs without the intervention of man. However, it is beyond question that extinctions caused directly or indirectly by man are occurring at a rate which far exceeds any reasonable estimates of background extinction rates. Management of our ecosystems intended to maintain one facet of biodiversity will not necessarily maintain another facet which may be just as important.

Perhaps because the living world is most widely considered in terms of species, biodiversity is very commonly used as a synonym of species diversity, in particular of "species richness," which is the number of species in a site or habitat. Marine habitats frequently have more and different phyla but fewer

species than terrestrial habitats. Species diversity in natural habitats is high in warm areas and decreases with increasing latitude and altitude. On land, diversity is also usually higher in areas of high rainfall and lower in drier areas. The richest areas are undoubtedly tropical moist forests. In aquatic areas most life is found near the shoreline.

Issues to ponder...

- Biodiversity changes as man manipulates his environment - is this good or bad?
- Biodiversity changes are a natural process - how does acceleration of our environmental changes affect biodiversity?
- Biodiversity has changed or changes as a result of our activities.
 - ◆Habitat loss
 - ◆Natural disasters
 - ◆Alterations to ecosystems
 - ◆Invasive/non-native species
 - ◆Over-exploitation
 - ◆Pollution/Pesticides
 - ◆Global Climate Change



Rivers, lakes, and wetlands provide rich resources for biodiversity.

The term "biodiversity" is indeed commonly used to describe the number, variety, and variability of living organisms.



To protect biodiversity, we must protect natural habitats.

Pennsylvania Envirothon
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We're on the web.

www.envirothonpa.org

2009 at a Glance



Reduce, Reuse, Recycle
Do your part to conserve
our natural resources.

October

Teacher Resource Packets and new materials will be available to County Envirothon Coordinators.

November

Teacher Resource Packets and new materials available for Envirothon Advisors and Teams. Advisors, call your county coordinator regarding resources and information.

April / May

County Envirothon events are held in all 67 counties.

May 18 & 19

Twenty-sixth annual Pennsylvania State Envirothon to be held at the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown.

August 2–8

Twenty-second annual Canon Envirothon to be held at the University of North Carolina, Asheville, NC.

2010

Twenty-third annual Canon Envirothon to be held at the University of California, Merced, CA, July 31–August 7.