

A FOREST FOR EVERY CLASSROOM

Learning to Make Choices for the Future



What is A Forest for Every Classroom?



A Forest for Every Classroom (FFEC) is a year-long professional development series for educators, aimed at providing the inspiration, knowledge and skills required to transform standards-based classroom teaching into effective and exciting place-based education.

Teachers who participate in FFEC will develop their own curriculum during the course. Through a multidisciplinary approach to exploring the natural landscape, place-based education and community engagement, FFEC fosters the creation of **very diverse curricula**, across grade levels, subject areas and duration of unit, all using local resources as tools for learning.

Selected topics from more than 60 curricula produced:

Elementary:

- Forest Soils
- Meadow-to-Forest Succession
- Who Lives Here? Mammal Tracking
- Story of a Forest Floor
- Change over Time in Local Landscape
- Creative Writing & Bookmaking
- Interdependence
- Forest Detective Agency!
- Village Quest

Middle and High School:

- Math: What Foresters Measure and Why?
- Forest Forays, Creative Writing and Speakchorus
- The Geology of School Forest
- Conservation History
- Global Forest Studies
- Natural Community Assessment and Management
- Transects from Forest to Bog
- River Dynamics

This workshop series offers you:

- A multi-disciplinary, field-based exploration of important private and public forests in our region, spanning all four seasons.
- Hands-on, content-rich workshops with sessions led by naturalists, loggers, forest managers, interpreters, wood industry experts, woodworkers, animal trackers, authors, and others passionate about the future of forest stewardship and youth engagement.
- Standards-based curriculum development and grade-level expectation support.
- Instruction in the Principles and Best Practices of Place-Based Education.
- Fun, age-appropriate learning opportunities that translate knowledge into effective, relevant experiences for your students
- Service learning fundamentals and case studies.
- Curricula and resource materials for teaching about forest ecology, management and stewardship.
- 5 graduate credits (awarded March 2010) for additional fee for participation and unit development.
- An ongoing network of educators & resource specialists.
- Extended support and follow-up through alumni training events and grant opportunities.

"This is the best class I have taken! I have been treated as an adult learner and have had the opportunity to vastly increase my knowledge base. Then I have been allowed to translate that into curricula that I can creatively craft myself!"

- PARTICIPANT 07-08



“This course has re-kindled my soul and passion for teaching. It has made it meaningful again. I am so grateful for the vision, the inspiration, the follow-through, and the commitment and knowledge that the partners have channeled through us.”

- PARTICIPANT

This collaborative program, with five founding organizations, is currently being replicated and adapted in four other areas of the country, and locally in A Watershed for Every Classroom. With a strong alumni program that offers ongoing support to participants, FFEC teachers can join a network of outstanding educators, professionals and organizations from which to draw ongoing resources and inspiration. Optional Alumni workshops are offered to past participants, along with additional grants and other resources. A Fellows Council of 12 alumni serves as an advisory group to the program partners, shaping future teacher support and receiving additional benefits. This Council is a rotating opportunity for interested alumni.

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What is Place-Based Education?

Place-based education is the process of using the local community and environment as a starting point to teach concepts in language arts, math, social studies, science and other subjects across the curriculum. Emphasizing hands-on real world learning experiences, this approach to education increases academic achievement, helps students develop stronger ties to their community, enhances students appreciation for the natural world, and creates a heightened commitment to serving as active contributing citizens. (David Sobel, *Standing Strong in my Rightful Place*, 2003)

For more information and a range of resources and evaluation findings in place-based education, visit: www.promiseofplace.org



“The teacher workshops model community knitting set in place, sharing of ideas, and collaborative work in a supportive environment. How could teachers fail to launch successfully into our teaching with this as our spring-board?”

- PARTICIPANT 07-08

Workshop Dates and Locations:

SPRING May 8 & 9, 2009 *Friday & Saturday*

SUMMER . . . July 8-10, 2009 *Wednesday - Friday*

July 13 & 14, 2009 *Monday & Tuesday*

FALL October 2 & 3, 2009 *Friday & Saturday*

WINTER February 2010 TBA *Friday & Saturday*

LOCATIONS:

Workshops will be held in five different locations in Chittenden County and the Upper Valley, including Shelburne Farms, Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historical Park, City of Burlington, Seyon Ranch in Groton State Park, and local forests and schools.

PLEASE NOTE: The FFEC program is open to teachers from all grades. New Hampshire teachers in grades 7-12 may also be interested in considering a session of FFEC that will be offered concurrently by a collaboration of New Hampshire partners. For full brochure see www.promiseofplace.org.



"My mind spins with the possibilities for place-based outdoor education next year, while still living through the excitement of this year!"

- PARTICIPANT 07-08

What will be expected of Workshop Participants?

Each participating team of educators will be responsible for developing a curriculum unit that meets Vermont's educational standards and grade level expectations. Curriculum units must be based on real-world learning experiences within their local communities. Each team of teachers will develop a service-learning project that brings the school and the community together in a reciprocal learning experience.

For general information about **A Forest for Every Classroom**, visit: www.nps.gov/mabi, click on "FFEC"

For more information on this year's course, email Pat Straughan at pstraughan@shelburnefarms.org

Founding Partners



The Northeast Natural Resource Center of The National Wildlife Federation represents NWF locally and conducts research, education and advocacy on a variety of conservation issues of regional significance.



Shelburne Farms is a nonprofit environmental education organization, 1,400-acre working farm, and National Historic Landmark whose mission is to cultivate a conservation ethic by teaching and demonstrating stewardship.

The Green Mountain National Forest is the largest contiguous green space in Vermont, offering 400,000 acres of forested landscape as an outdoor classroom and a staff committed to educating about forest ecology, watersheds and the role of forests in watersheds.



The Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historical Park is the only national park to focus on conservation history and the evolving nature of land stewardship in the United States. The park preserves and interprets a 550-acre forest in Woodstock.

CONSERVATION STUDY INSTITUTE

The National Park Service Conservation Study Institute provides leadership in collaborative conservation and develop new tools for community engagement such as place-based learning. The Institute provides technical assistance by conducting demonstration projects, distilling and sharing lessons learned, and building networks among peers for exchange.

This 2009-2010 Upper Valley series is funded by the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation, Upper Valley Region, the U.S. Forest Service, & NPS Centennial Challenge

For their past support of this series, we also thank

- A.D. Henderson Foundation
- Ittleton Foundation
- JL Foundation
- Upper Valley Community Foundation - Wellborn Ecology Fund
- National Park Service Parks as Classrooms
- National Park Service Challenge Cost Share
- U.S. Forest Service Green Mountain National Forest
- Sudbury Foundation

A Place-Based Professional Development Workshop Series:



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"This experience has introduced enough seed material for years of curriculum development and enrichment. I can't wait to get into the woods with kids this September!"

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Course fee: \$400. During the course, you will receive \$50 in personal resource money to support your teaching and an opportunity to apply for a \$200 mini-grant for your unit implementation.

Name _____

School _____

Position _____

Teammates applying _____

Administrator's name _____

School address _____

Town _____ State _____ Zip _____

School Tel _____ Home Tel _____

Email _____

Public/private forest land available to you

Graduate credits from Castleton State College (\$545): YES NO

About your teaching and professional development goals:

(Please answer the following questions on the reverse side.)

1. In what ways do you presently use your natural and human community for your teaching?

2. Please describe what resources (time, \$, agenda space, etc.) you hope to commit to place-based education over the upcoming years in your teaching position. How would you prioritize place-based education in comparison to other demands on your time and resources?

3. What is the philosophy of the school administration for using the outdoors as a part of the school curriculum? How does the school administration feel about educators who wish to take their students outside and/or into the community.

4. Do you have any experience with service learning?

Application Form

- Teams of two or more are encouraged to apply. Individuals also welcome.

Return completed application by **APRIL 1, 2009** to:

Pat Straughan
Shelburne Farms
1611 Harbor Road
Shelburne, VT 05482
Tel: (802) 985-0343
Fax: (802) 985-8123
pstraughan@shelburnefarms.org

Don't forget to include your administrator's letter of support.

Course Expectations:

- Participate in ALL workshops and summer sessions.
- Come with the strong support of your administrator - PLEASE PROVIDE A LETTER OF SUPPORT FROM YOUR ADMINISTRATOR AS PART OF THIS APPLICATION.
- Develop a place-based teaching unit which utilizes local landscape and meets the goals of your school action plan and the grade level expectations, exemplifying the best practices of Place-Based Education.
- Include service learning in your students' experience.
- Submit a reflection piece upon completion of this program, possibly including reflection on on implementation of unit as timing allows.