



Benchmarks for Conservation Literacy

CONCEPTS OF LEARNING THAT ALL STUDENTS SHOULD KNOW AND BE ABLE TO DO.	CONSERVATION BENCHMARKS		
	5 th GRADE	8 th GRADE	12 th GRADE
Ecological systems are dependent upon the interactions between living and nonliving systems. <i>Conservation Literacy and Systems</i>	Identifies the basic needs of plants and animals. Describes how the basic needs of plants and animals are met. Describes a local ecosystem and identifies its living and nonliving components.	Examines the environmental factors that influence the number and diversity of species in an ecosystem. Examines energy flow through the food web in each ecosystem.	Predicts how a change in an environmental factor can affect diversity of species in an ecosystem. Investigates the health of a local ecosystem by researching, gathering and analyzing the biological, geological, chemical, and physical data of that system.
The health and well-being of humans is dependent on fish, wildlife and the natural environment. <i>Conservation Literacy and Systems</i>	Identifies natural resources that help humans meet their basic needs.	Assesses the importance of the role of fish, wildlife and the natural environment in sustaining human populations.	Compares and contrasts how the health and well-being of humans is currently and has historically been dependent on fish, wildlife and/or the natural environment.
Science process skills are utilized to conduct fish and wildlife field investigations <i>Conservation Literacy and Systems</i>	Conducts a descriptive field study of an outdoor natural area using multiple observation skills.	Conducts a comparative field study involving fish and wildlife and their habitat using multiple observation skills.	Conducts a field study that involves collecting and reporting fish and wildlife related data to biologist, community professional, and/or other stakeholders.
Demonstrate decision making skills related to fish and wildlife conservation efforts. <i>Civic Participation and Stewardship</i>	Writes 5 rules people should follow when participating in nature-related outdoor activities.	Describes how cultural influences and values affect outdoor ethics, stewardship behavior and wildlife rules and regulations.	Writes a personal ethics or stewardship statement related to fish, wildlife, and/or natural resources in their community.
Volunteer and participate in natural resource-related decision-making opportunities. <i>Civic Participation and Stewardship</i>	Participates in a natural resource conservation opportunity at school or in local community.	Works with others to plan and conduct a natural resource conservation action at school.	Selects and participates in a natural resources conservation action with a local community partner.
Human actions impact fish, wildlife and natural resources, and fish, wildlife and natural resources impact humans. <i>Civic Participation and Stewardship</i>	Identifies examples of the relationship between human activity and fish, wildlife and natural resources.	Explains and gives examples of the interrelationships and interdependencies of humans and natural resources.	Examines and analyzes a current event or issue considering potential environmental, economical, social and cultural impacts.



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<p>Citizens have a right and responsibility to be aware of and engaged in fish, wildlife and habitat issues.</p> <p><i>Civic Participation and Stewardship</i></p>	Identifies how people have specific rights and responsibilities related to fish, wildlife, and habitat in their local community.	Researches and evaluates the consequences of taking or not taking stewardship actions on fish, wildlife and habitat issues.	Analyzes our rights, privileges, responsibilities and opportunities to influence public policy, laws and regulations pertaining to fish, wildlife and natural resources.
<p>Outdoor recreational pursuits have many benefits and impacts (such as health, economic, ecological, etc.)</p> <p><i>Outdoor Participation</i></p>	Identifies nature-related outdoor recreation opportunities for health, fun, challenge, self expression, and/or social interaction.	Describes the role of nature-related outdoor recreation for health, fun, challenge, self expression, and/or social interaction.	Creates an individual plan for lifelong nature-related outdoor recreation for health, fun, challenge, self expression, and/or social interaction.
	Identifies nature related outdoor activities and their impact on the natural environment.	Describes impacts that nature-related outdoor recreation activities can have on the local natural environment and community.	Calculates the benefits, costs, and obligations associated with regular participation in nature-related outdoor recreation beyond the local level.
<p>Demonstrate competency in motor skills needed to participate in a variety of nature-related outdoor recreational activities.</p> <p><i>Outdoor Participation</i></p>	Demonstrates mature forms of locomotor and non-locomotor skill combinations used in nature-related outdoor-activities.	Demonstrates competency in modified versions in at least one nature-related activity from three of the following categories: aquatics (water-based activities), shooting/ archery, traversing (hiking, tracking, walking, etc.).	Demonstrates competency in basic and advanced skills in at least one nature-related activity from three of the following categories: canoeing, archery, fishing, shooting, tracking, camping, and hiking.
<p>Participate regularly in nature-related outdoor recreation.</p> <p><i>Outdoor Participation</i></p>	Sets a short-term goal to participate in a nature-related activity and make a plan for achieving it.	Sets personal nature-related outdoor recreational activity goals independently to meet needs and interests.	Cultivates interest and strengthens desire to independently maintain an active lifestyle in nature-related outdoor activities.
<p>Exhibit responsible personal and social behavior that respects self and others in nature-related outdoor recreation.</p> <p><i>Outdoor Participation</i></p>	Understands and follows activity-specific safe practices, rules, procedures and etiquette during nature-related outdoor activities.	Participates cooperatively in nature-related outdoor activities with persons with diverse abilities and backgrounds.	Initiates responsible behavior, functions independently and responsibly, and positively influences the behavior of others while participating in nature-related outdoor activities.



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The Benchmarks for Conservation Literacy identify what students should know and be able to do at the 5th, 8th and 12th grade levels on their way to becoming involved, responsible, conservation-minded citizens. The Benchmarks were developed with input from professional educators in the formal and non-formal sectors. They can be used in program development and as an assessment tool.