

**Cabarrus Soil & Water Conservation District
Education and Contest Handbook 2023-24**

The Living Soil

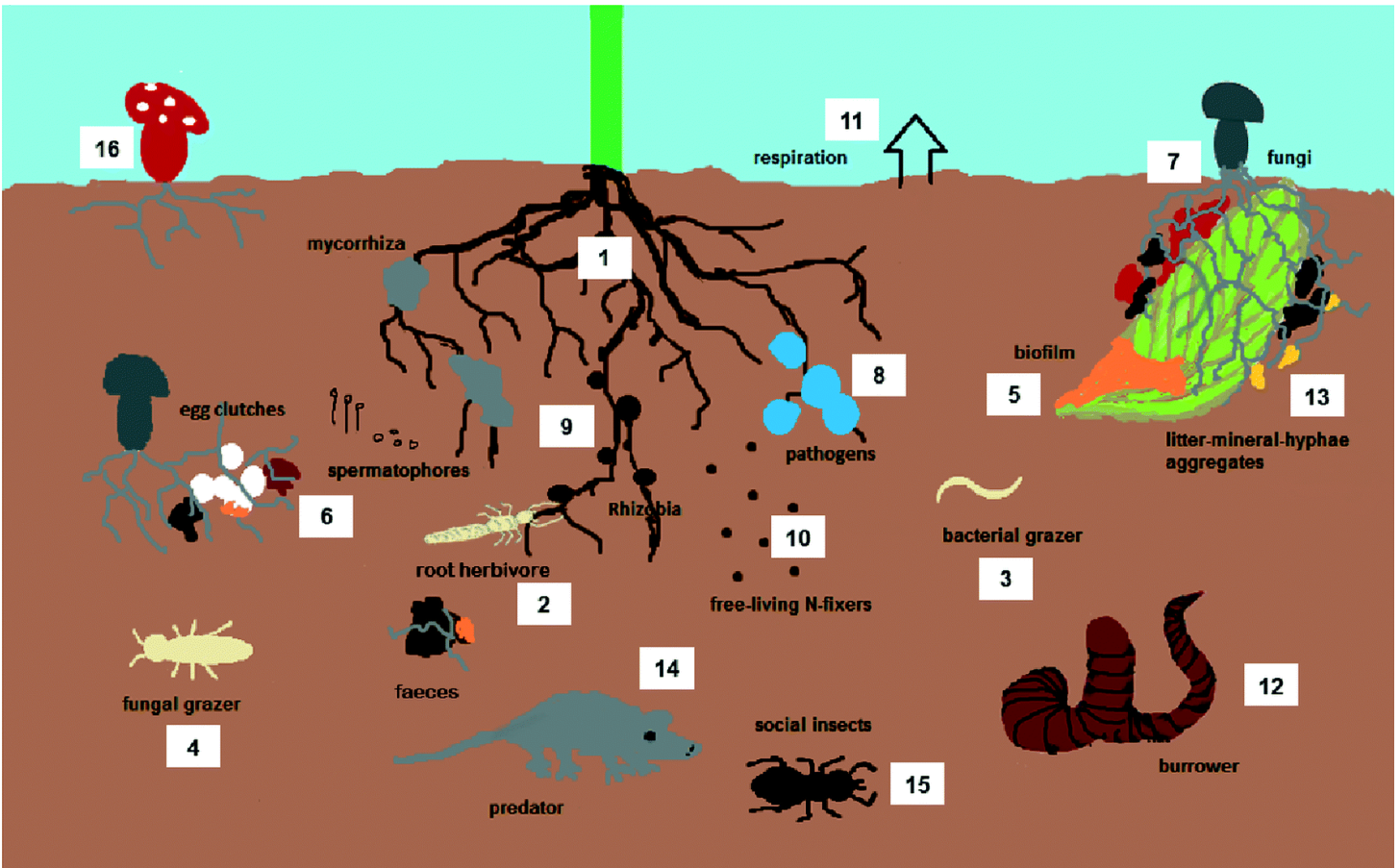


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CONTEST THEME FROM THE DIVISION OF SOIL
& WATER CONSERVATION

2023-2024

The Living Soil

"Conservation" -- the wise use and management of natural resources (soil, water, air, plants, and animals) to fulfill human needs now and in the future.

"Soil Conservation" -- to protect soil from erosion, to keep it productive and out of waterways; to use and manage soil wisely now to ensure a rich soil resource for future generations.

"Water Conservation" -- to protect water quality by keeping water clean from sediment, chemicals, oil and animal wastes; to protect water quantity by using smaller amounts of harmful elements; to use and manage water wisely now to ensure good water quality for future generations.

"Best Management Practices" (BMPs)– agricultural practices that are suitable for reducing or minimizing the amount of water pollution generated by non-point sources; an engineered structure or management activity, or combination of these, that eliminates or reduces adverse environmental effects of pollutants.

Theme packet with links and DPI correlations for the contests:



Cabarrus County students can participate in the following:

1. Bookmark Contest (Grades K-2)
2. Poster Contest (Grades 3-5)
3. Essay Contest (Grades 6, 7, 8 and 9-12)
4. Computer Designed Slide Show (Grades 6, 7, 8 and 9-12)
5. Public Speaking Contest (Grades 6, 7, 8 and 9-12)

Awards: Winners receive a cash prize and a certificate—three winners will be selected at each grade 3rd-8th and three in 9-12 grade levels in each contest category.

First place winners of the 'Bookmark Contest' will receive copies of their bookmark to give out to friends, cash and a certificate. Second and Third Place will receive a certificate.

Deadline: Friday January 26, 2024 at 3:30 p.m.

Submit Entries online and bring bookmarks and posters to:

Tammi Remsburg
Cabarrus Soil and Water Conservation District
715 Cabarrus Avenue West
Concord, NC 28027

Email digital entries to tremsburg@cabarruscounty.us

Annual Awards Banquet: Contest Winners will be recognized at the annual stewardship celebration on April 30, 2024 and at a Cabarrus County Commissioner's meeting (date tbd).



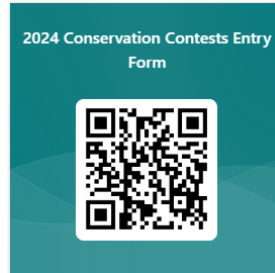
2023-2024 ENTRY FORM ONLINE

CABARRUS SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT CONTESTS

2023-2024 Theme: "The Living Soil"

Entries for contests to be

entered at this MS Form:



<https://forms.office.com/g/VKW7au9AWe>

You will need the following information to fill out the registration link: **Student name, Contest name, School name, Grade, Parent/Guardian(s) name, phone, and email, sponsoring teacher's name and email**
How many students participated in that contest at your school?

NOTE: For each contest, **three students per grade** from each school is eligible to enter.

Entries Due: Friday, January 26, 2024 at 3:30 p.m.

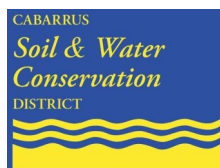
Essay, and Computer Designed Slide Show entries must be submitted electronically to the email highlighted below (in PDF, Power Point or JPG formats) --with the entry form filled out in MS Forms. If sending in PDF or JPG, please submit one with information slide or name and one without identifying information. Please put the contest, student's initials, and school in the file name. (For example: 6_essay_tr_ccgriffin.jpg) For the Public Speaking Contest, only the MS Forms entry form is required. Third-Fifth grade Posters and K-2 Bookmarks must be submitted in person at the address listed below. The MS Forms entry form will also need to be filled out for these contests.

Public Speaking Contest date February 13, 2024

Identifying information should not be included on the front of posters or bookmarks. Name and school information can go on the back of the poster, appropriate place on the bookmark entry template, and/or in the file name when sent electronically.

Cabarrus Soil & Water Conservation District, 715 Cabarrus Avenue West, Concord, NC 28027

704-920-3331; tremsburg@cabarruscounty.us



Grades Kindergarten, 1st & 2nd
“The Living Soil” Bookmark Contest

Contest Deadline: Friday, January 26, 2024 at 3:30 p.m.

Contest Eligibility: Grades K-2

Contest Specifications:

- ♦ Bookmarks must be the original work of the individual student.
- ♦ Students should be made aware of the copyright protection.
- ♦ No computer drawings. Hand drawn only.
- ♦ Bookmarks should clearly convey contest theme.
- ♦ Entries must be clear and reproducible. Bold colors and distinct lines work best.
- ♦ Use the bookmark template for your entry.

Contest Judging Criteria:

- ♦ Conservation Message - 50%
- ♦ Visual Effectiveness - 25%
- ♦ Universal Appeal - 10%
- ♦ Originality - 10%
- ♦ Hand-drawn Elements - 5%

Contest Awards: Each grade level will receive the following:

1st, 2nd and 3rd place certificates and First place winners get \$10 and professionally printed bookmarks to give to friends and family.



Draw inside the box below.
Don't go outside lines.



Student's Name:

Grade:

School:

Use the template in actual size—do not
enlarge.

Be sure to outline artwork in dark colors
—student may use adult's help with that
part only.

Teacher's name

“The Living Soil”

**Deadline Friday, January
26, 2024 at 3:30 p.m.**

K to 2nd Grade Bookmark Contest Judging Criteria

Conservation Message

Bookmark shows the contest theme in easy to understand ways.

Visual Effectiveness

Bold colors, outlined, easy to see design. Will print well as bookmark.

Universal Appeal

Easily understood by the general public.

Originality

Bookmark entry shows student thought and skills--without help from an adult (except outlining)

Hand-drawn elements

Age appropriate neatness.

Grades 3, 4, 5

“The Living Soil” Poster Contest

Deadline: Friday, January 26, 2024 at 3:30 p.m.

Contest Specifications:

- ♦ Posters should be the original work of the individual student. Students should be made aware of the copyright protection. Hand-drawn pictures are preferred over computer-generated drawings.
- ♦ Posters should clearly convey contest theme.
- ♦ Posters should be no larger than 24 x 36 inches.
- ♦ Pictures or other materials may be mounted on the posters, if mounted securely. Mounted materials cannot stick out more than 1/8 of an inch from the paper.
- ♦ Posters should be submitted flat and not rolled.
- ♦ Posters must be properly identified on the back using the CSWCD entry Form (tape or staple).

Contest Judging Criteria:

- ♦ Conservation Message - 50%
- ♦ Visual Effectiveness - 25%
- ♦ Universal Appeal - 10%
- ♦ Originality - 10%
- ♦ Hand-drawn Elements - 5%



3rd-5th Grade Poster Contest Judging Criteria

Conservation Message

Poster shows thorough detailed illustration of the conservation message in the contest theme.

Visual Effectiveness

Exceptionally attractive, showing great effectiveness.

Universal Appeal

Words or illustrations are easy to understand.

Originality

Student used creativity and thought for the presentation.

Hand-drawn Elements

Poster uses clearly understood hand-drawn elements.

Grade 6, 7, 8 and 9-12
“The Living Soil” Essay Contest

Deadline: Friday, January 26, 2024 at 3:30 p.m.

Contest Specifications: Essay must:

- ♦ Be the original work of the individual student.
- ♦ Bear the current title of the essay contest.
- ♦ Be limited to 300-500 words. All words will be counted to reach the limit.
- ♦ Submit as a word document or PDF or JPG. Email essay with entry form to tremsburg@cabarruscounty.us before deadline.

Contest Judging Criteria:

- ♦ Conservation Message & Originality - 50%
- ♦ Writing Style - 20%
- ♦ Organization - 20%
- ♦ Neatness - 10%



ESSAY CONTEST POINTERS

For clarification, the difference between an essay and a report, as applied to this contest, is as follows:

Essay - A short composition dealing with a single subject from a personal point of view; facts may be interwoven into the essay, which stimulates thinking.

Report - A formal presentation of facts in a report style.

Judging Criteria The Association has adopted a standard score sheet to be used for all contest levels. Essays will be judged on content and writing skills as described on the score sheet.



6th, 7th, 8th Grade Essay Contest Judging Criteria and 9-12th

Conservation Message and

Originality

Shows clear understanding of why this natural resource is important AND explains in a fresh, inventive way how people can and should conserve this natural resource.

Writing Style

Innovative style, interesting, correct use of grammar, spelling, punctuation. Easy to read.

Organization

Proper paragraph transitions, opening and closing tie-ins, sticks to the theme.

Neatness

Neat, consistent handwriting or typing.

GRADE 6,7, 8 and 9-12
COMPUTER SLIDE SHOW

Specifications:

Slide shows should be designed along the following specifications. See **Slide Show Pointers** for tips.

- The slide show shall contain no more than 15 slides of content. Fewer slides are allowed.
- The slide immediately following the slide show (slide number 16 if 15 slides are used) should be blank. The slide immediately following the blank slide (slide number 17 if 15 slides are used) should contain identifying information (see next page)
- Slide shows must be created so that they are viewable as a slide show on a PC computer in the soil & water conservation district office. If created in MS PowerPoint, files must be compatible with PowerPoint 2003.
- The use of audio (sound) is allowed.
- The use of slide animation is allowed.
- The use of video is prohibited. Slide shows using video will be disqualified.
- Slide shows shall not exceed a maximum of 5 minutes in length.
- The slide shows shall be submitted electronically.
- All slide shows will be judged electronically.
- Slide shows must be the **original work** of the individual student. Original work is created by the student and shows a fresh, new idea. Students should be made aware of **copyright protection**.



Computer Slide Shows must be identified by containing the following information on the final slide of the slide show (put a blank slide in between show and information slide:

Student's Name:

Grade:

Slide Show Title:

Slide Show File Name:

Student's Address:

Parents' Email:

Phone:

Teacher's Name:

School:

County: Cabarrus

District: Cabarrus



Computer Slide Show Pointers

What makes a good slide show?

- ◇ • Follow a logical order: start with a title/introductory slide; have the slides progress so that they build on previous slides; end the slide show with a conclusion slide.
- ◇ • A catchy message; use one theme
- ◇ • A slogan telling viewers to do something and making them want to do it
- ◇ • Good use of colors and backgrounds to get and hold attention
- ◇ • Letters large enough to be easily read and words separated enough to make them quickly grasped
- ◇ • Good use of pictures and illustrations

Avoid these slide show faults:

- More than one theme
- Too busy -- too many and/or too scattered pictures or words
- Text too small to read easily
- Text is difficult to read due to not enough color contrast with background
- Material not relevant to topic
- Message becomes lost

Other tips to remember:

- ◇ Balance the placement of text and photos/illustrations on the slide
- ◇ Illustrations add emphasis and attract attention
- ◇ Small lettering is hard to read at a distance. Consider the following font sizes for readability from 20 feet:
- ◇ Easiest to read: 36 to 44 point font size (Good for titles)
- ◇ Easy to read: 28 to 34 point font size
- ◇ Fairly easy to read: 24 to 26 point font size



Computer Slide Show Judging Criteria:

The NCASWCD has adopted a standard slide show score sheet to be used at all contest levels. Slide shows will be judged on the following points (Refer to **Slide Show Pointers** and the score sheet for tips):

- Conservation Message 50%
- Visual Effectiveness 30%
- Universal Appeal 10%
- Originality 10%

Infractions:

Points will be deducted for the following infractions:

- Copyright violation - 5 points
- Exceeding the maximum number of slides (15) - 5 points
- Exceeding the maximum time limit (5 minutes) - 5 points
- Use of video - Disqualification

Copyright:

Copyright is a protection by U.S. laws for the authors and creators of original work. A copyright protects the particular manner of expression of ideas, but not the ideas themselves. Original work includes illustrations, computer-generated drawings, photographs, or other art work created solely by the individual submitting the work. **Example:** You can make a poster using cartoon characters that talk about soil and water conservation in comic-strip fashion if the ideas are yours (this main idea cannot be copyrighted). But if classmates recognize your cartoon characters as popular characters, then your work is copied from the original artists. Remember to use your imagination because your own ideas are the BEST!



Computer Slide Show Judging Criteria

Conservation Message

Shows clear understanding of why this natural resource is important AND explains how people can and should conserve this natural resource.

Visual Effectiveness

Exceptionally attractive, showing great effectiveness.

Universal Appeal

Words or illustrations are easy to understand.

Originality

Expresses the contest theme in a fresh inventive or novel way. Uses independent thought and creativity to use the unexpected to full advantage.

Grades 6,7,8 and 9-12

“The Living Soil”

Public Speaking Contest

- ♦ The contest will take place (February 13, 2024) at 6 p.m. at our office. First place winners go on to area and state competitions.
- ♦ The speech is limited from 4 to 6 minutes. Visual aids may not be used.
- ♦ Use of note cards is acceptable for back up.
- ♦ Contestants shall identify themselves by their assigned number only or not at all. Personal information such as name, school and hometown can't be given.
- ♦ Teachers are asked to let me know that your school will be participating by November-tremsburg@cabarruscounty.us

You will fill out an online entry form for each student.

Contest Judging Criteria:

- ♦ Conservation Message - 20%
- ♦ Organization - 15%
- ♦ Originality - 5%
- ♦ Skillful Use of Facts, Examples, Descriptions and Analogies - 10%
- ♦ Voice and Diction - 15%
- ♦ Style- 20%
- ♦ Body Language - 15%



PUBLIC SPEAKING CONTEST POINTERS

- ♦ Don't go under 4 minutes or over 6 minutes in time.
- ♦ Don't reveal your name, school or any such identification.
- ♦ Become familiar with the judging criteria on the Public Speaking Contest Score Sheet.
- ♦ Memorize your speech. Use of note cards is acceptable for back up. No visual aids may be used.
- ♦ Dress appropriately-no costumes, logos or anything that would identify your school, hometown, or county.
- ♦ Arrive early so that you can relax and be comfortable in the contest surroundings.
- ♦ Make eye contact with your audience during your speech.
- ♦ Be sure to stay in range of the microphone on the podium.
- ♦ Speeches will be videotaped and may be put on the county, area or state's online media. Your parent will be asked to sign a permission form for this purpose.



PUBLIC SPEAKING CONTEST

N.C. ASSOCIATION OF SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICTS



JUDGE: _____ TITLE: _____

DATE: _____ GRADE: _____

* Students and judges should be informed of the judging criteria before the contest begins.

* A timekeeper will inform the judges of the contestants' official time

* Perfect Score = 100 points (Total of CONTENT + SPEAKING SKILLS)

* **Infractions:**

Outside the 4-6 minute time limit: minus 5 points

Use of visual aids: minus 5 points

Gives personal identification: minus 5 points

CONTENT CRITERIA		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
A. COMPREHENSIVE KNOWLEDGE OF SUBJECT: Good choice of material, makes sense, factual, accurate, quotes are correct and appropriate, shows understanding of material, relevant to Soil and Water Conservation Contest theme	20 points								
B. ORGANIZATION: Presented in meaningful order, shows continuity of ideas, uses orderly flow of thoughts, uses good transitions between thoughts	15 points								
C. ORIGINALITY: Creative approach and effective use of material	5 points								
D. SKILLFUL USE OF FACTS, EXAMPLES, DESCRIPTIONS AND ANALOGIES Elements of the speech flow together well and contribute to the quality of the presentation. Facts, examples, descriptions and analogies add to the quality of the presented message	10 points								
CONTENT SUB-TOTAL									

(Adopted January 2014)

JUDGE: _____ TITLE: _____

DATE: _____ GRADE: _____

* Students and judges should be informed of the judging criteria before the contest begins.

* A timekeeper will inform the judges of the contestants' official time

* Perfect Score = 100 points (Total of CONTENT + SPEAKING SKILLS)

* **Infractions:**

Outside the 4-6 minute time limit: minus 5 points

Use of visual aids: minus 5 points

Gives personal identification: minus 5 points

SPEAKING SKILLS CRITERIA		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
A. VOICE AND DICTION: Quality and variety (not monotone), inflection, enunciation, pronunciation, proper emphasis, projection and control, appropriate volume	15 points								
B. STYLE: Rapport with the audience, word selection, no distracting vocal mannerisms, appealing presentation	20 points								
C. BODY LANGUAGE: Eye contact, posture and poise, hand gestures used with restraint and good taste	15 points								
SPEAKING SKILLS SUB-TOTAL									
STUDENT'S OFFICIAL TIME (must be within 4-6 minutes)									

FINAL SCORING SECTION									
CONTENT SUB-TOTAL									
+ SPEAKING SKILLS SUB-TOTAL									
= TOTAL									
- INFRACTIONS (if any, subtract points)									
= FINAL TOTAL									

RESOURCE CONSERVATION WORKSHOP (RCW)

(Scholarship for High School Rising Juniors and Seniors)

The Resource Conservation Workshop is sponsored by the N.C. Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts in conjunction with the Division of Soil & Water Conservation and the Soil Science Department of NC State University. For detailed information visit the website <http://www.ncagr.gov/SWC/educational/RCW.html>.

Workshop Description:

The Resource Conservation Workshop is a weeklong and involves study and hands on participation in a wide range of conservation topics. Students are housed at NC State University campus dormitories under the guidance of live-in counselors. In order to achieve success, students should come prepared to meet the primary objective of the workshop -- learning about natural resources and their management in today's global environment. Awards and scholarships can be won and are presented to students under several awards programs.

Workshop Dates:

The Resource Conservation Workshop is usually held during one of the last two weeks in June. The Resource Conservation Workshop Planning Committee will issue the upcoming workshop dates and registration materials no later than October 1st of the year.

Student registration opens November 1st.

Participants:

The Resource Conservation Workshop is designed to accommodate up to 104 students. The student slots will be filled on a first come first served basis as registrations with specific student's names are received.

Participant Eligibility:

Students who have demonstrated an interest in natural resource conservation and are nominated by their local soil and water conservation districts are eligible. **HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES ARE NOT ELIGIBLE TO ATTEND.** The District will give priority to rising juniors and seniors. Students may participate only one time in this workshop.

If a student wishes to participate in this wonderful opportunity, have them send their application as soon as possible to Tammi Remsburg at tremsburg@cabarruscounty.us



CLASSROOM GRANT

The Auxiliary – Classroom Grant is sponsored by the North Carolina Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts Auxiliary. The purpose of the grant is to provide funding to classroom teachers for projects to enhance learning using conservation and environmental practices. Grants of up to \$500 are awarded.

RULES FOR PROCEDURES

- Eligible educators include teachers and principals in North Carolina schools serving grades K-12.
- Applications will be accepted for specific projects to enhance learning, using conservation and environmental practices.
- Application limit: One proposal per educator. An applicant for an individual grant may not apply as the leader for the project, and vice versa. However, an applicant for an individual grant may be part of a team project for which another educator is applying.
- Grants will not be awarded for educator salaries, time or expenses.
- Proposals may be approved for partial funding when the applicant's budget summary includes a figure for the minimum grant required to conduct the project on a smaller scale.

SELECTION CRITERIA

PROJECT MUST:

- Directly involve students.
- Use innovative and creative teaching methods.
- Seek to achieve clearly defined goals and learning objectives.
- Provide ongoing benefits to students.
- Be completed during the current school year.
- Feature measurable results that can be evaluated upon completion.
- Use the grant as a supplement to state and local funding.
- Be unavailable to students without funding from private sources.
- Be in keeping with schools overall objectives.

HOW TO APPLY

Visit the NCASWCD website, Auxiliary page, to obtain an application form and instructions; the direct link to the Auxiliary page is: http://ncaswcd.org/?page_id=516

Deadline

The application is due by December 1st to the Auxiliary President. It may be mailed either by local Soil and Water Conservation District offices or by the schools.



ENVIROTHON PROGRAM

See the website www.spenvirothon.org

The Envirothon program is sponsored by the North Carolina Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts. There is both a State middle school and a State high school competition.

Participant Eligibility:

Open to teams of students in grades 9 – 12 for high school and in grades 5-8 for middle schools. Teams consist of five members. Each team must have an adult advisor and the team may have alternates. It is important for high school teams to have at least two alternates if you feel that your team may have a chance to win first place at the state competition. **See website www.ncenvirothon.org for official rules.**

Public schools, private schools, home school groups, school clubs, FFA groups, etc. are all eligible to participate in the Envirothon Program.

Team Sponsorship:

Teams must be sponsored by a Soil and Water Conservation District. teams if Districts can't or do not wish to be sponsors.

Contest Cycle:

The Envirothon begins at the start of the new school year. There are eight Area Envirothons in the spring. A team must qualify at an Area Envirothon to advance to the State Envirothon. By August 31, the State Envirothon Committee will set the date for the State Competition.

Contest Procedure:

Currently the State Envirothon is held on a Friday and Saturday. Friday is a training day with teams registering and picking up their registration packets. Friday is also the day of the high school oral presentation. The oral presentation is conducted during the station rotation on Friday afternoon.

On Friday afternoon, there are seven high school resource stations set up. One for each of the five subject areas and one for each of the oral preparation and presentations components. The teams rotate from station to station and attend training sessions held by resource professionals at each station. Resource professionals may include some of the material presented Friday at their station on the state exam the next day.



ENVIROTHON PROGRAM (cont.)

The contest consists of five subject area resource stations:

- Wildlife** - challenges teams on habitat knowledge, identification, foods, rules &

regulations, birdcalls, diseases, management, animal signs.

- Aquatic ecology** - ecology of water, non-point sources of pollution, wetlands, stream buffers, water chemistry, plants & animals living in or around water, pollution, conservation, macro invertebrate id, erosion problems.

- Forestry** - tree identification, improvement of timber stands, forest ecology, insects, diseases, forest management, forest measurements, functions of trees.

- Soils/land use** - classification, erosion, soil surveys, site suitability, current issues,

profiles, soil characteristics, Best Management Practices, erosion.

- Current Environmental Issues** - any current or newsworthy environmental issue.

Teams will visit each resource station and be given a written test. Questions are answered as a team. After finishing one station, and at a set time, teams will rotate to the next station.

Test answers are graded and scores tallied to select the winner. The high school team with the highest score will be declared the state winner and will be eligible to compete in the North American Envirothon competition. materials.

The teams must prepare a write up of their project and give a fifteen-minute oral presentation to a public body. They must film this presentation and send it with the written report to the State Envirothon Coordinator by March 1. See the website www.ncenvirothon.org for more information.



ENVIROTHON PROGRAM (cont.)

Competition Preparation:

Once a team has pre-registered for the Area Envirothon, information will be sent by the sponsoring District to each advisor listing the source of materials that will be needed for study. The resource study materials can be found on the Envirothon web site (www.ncenvirothon.org). Questions will be developed from resource materials or from information supplied during the events' station trainings.

Area Competitions:

Each of the eight Areas of the NC Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts holds an Area Envirothon competition. This is to give the teachers an opportunity to evaluate the progress of their team's study efforts and to get a feel as to how the state Envirothon operates. These Area Envirothons are also qualifying events. The top seven scoring teams from the Area Envirothons, in both the middle school division and the high school division, are eligible to attend the State Envirothon Competition. The highest scoring Area FFA high school team is also eligible to go to the state Envirothon Competition, even if they are not part of the top seven teams. The FFA uses the NC Envirothon as the state qualifying event for the national FFA Environmental Awareness event. All competing FFA teams must have FFA in their team name.

Community Service Learning Projects

The State Envirothon Committee sponsors a voluntary Community Service Learning Project competition for the teams. This project can be a data sharing project, a physical project or a service project. The project is a team project, is voluntary and a great opportunity for the Envirothon team to show what they have learned about our natural resources from studying the Envirothon resource .

District Support

For teachers interested in starting a team, there is a week-long training in June that will be paid for by the district. There are supplies to check out and experts can be arranged to visit the teams or field trips arranged for preparation. Contact Tammi Remsburg at tremsburg@cabarruscounty.us to arrange.



Classroom Education Classes

Cabarrus Soil and Water Conservation District provides free classes to all grade levels, Pre-K to 12th.

Topics are on a nature/conservation theme, and incorporate NC Science and NC Social Studies Essential Standards in all classes, and including 21st Century Learner and ELA and Math standards in some classes. We can meet virtually, come to your school or meet you at an area park to do the program.



Additional Support for teachers

We also provide curriculum training in Project Learning Tree, Project WET, Project Food, Land & People, Project WILD and the Leopold Education Project

upon request for a group of educators. Also PD for outdoor learning can be given.

Opportunities for participation in Community Science, grants and awards are available through CSWCD.

See link below for more.

Contact Tammi Remsburg at 704-920-3331 or tremsburg@cabarruscounty.us to explore the ways that we can collaborate.

