

ALLIANCE OF NATURAL RESOURCE OUTREACH & SERVICE PROGRAMS

PROGRESS REPORT

The Alliance focuses on enhancing existing natural resource education and service programs, and facilitating development of new programs.

Our Mission

To promote awareness and citizen stewardship of natural resources through science-based education and service programs.

Our Vision

Healthy ecosystems and communities through citizens who learn, teach, and practice natural resource stewardship.

Accomplishments 2003-2006

- ✓ Two national training workshops in 2004 - 89 people representing 30 states trained.
- ✓ Two national best training conferences (2005 & 2006). Proceedings of 2006 conference distributed on CD.
- ✓ Nationwide assessment of conservation education and volunteer programs. Results available at www.nralliance.org.
- ✓ List serve to provide forum for communication, information exchange, and news about programs and workshops.
- ✓ *Ad hoc* steering committee convened to develop mission and goals for national-level organization.
- ✓ Alliance of National Resource Outreach and Service Programs organized in June, 2006; formally launched at national conference in November, 2006.
- ✓ Launched organizational web site at www.nralliance.org.
- ✓ Developed ANROSP membership criteria and began accepting program members.
- ✓ Secured \$25,000 discretionary funds grant from USFWS to support 3/4-time coordinator through September 2007.
- ✓ Obtained temporary fiscal agent for 2007 (Missouri Conservation Heritage Foundation) and initiated process for obtaining independent 501(c)3 status.

Current and Future Activities

- ✓ Third Annual best practices conference to be held week of October 29, 2007, in Cloquet, Minnesota.
- ✓ New resources on the web site include an FAQ list about programs and the Alliance; a downloadable Power Point presentation describing the impacts, benefits, organization and operation of Master Naturalist-type program models; a bibliography; and links to potential funding sources.
- ✓ Future resources include mentor teams to consult with potential programs, document templates, curriculum outlines, best practices publications, case studies and more.
- ✓ Workshop for development of Junior Master Naturalist programs.
- ✓ Process to formalize partnerships with agencies and NGOs at the national level.

MASTER NATURALIST-TYPE PROGRAMS REALLY MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

The scope and activity of Master Naturalist programs is staggering

- ✓ Texas Master Naturalist volunteers have provided over 488,000 service hours valued at \$8.34 million while working with over 260 local partner organizations.
- ✓ In 2003-2004 alone, these volunteers reached 530,845 children, adults, and private landowners; engaged in projects on 75,000 acres of habitat; and developed and maintained 545 miles of interpretive trails.

"This is the first program I've been part of that has the potential to leave something of what I value behind when I am gone."

Master Naturalist programs grow quickly

Due to strong interests from both participants and partner organizations, program growth is generally rapid.

"It proves to me over and over that each of us can make a difference and change our world for the better--especially if we all work together."

- ✓ The Texas Master Naturalist program began with four chapters and 150 volunteers in 1998, and has now trained over 3400 volunteers in 35 chapters.
- ✓ The Florida Master Naturalist program has trained over 3000 participants since its first training course in 2001.
- ✓ The Virginia Master Naturalist program started in 2006 with 10 chapters conducting training.
- ✓ The Missouri Master Naturalist program has trained over 325 participants since its first training course in 2004.

Master Naturalists Extend Agency Resources

In a 2005 national needs survey, resource professionals reported overwhelming positive impacts in conservation education and outreach, and in wildlife and habitat conservation. Respondents also indicated a strong and growing need for more trained volunteers to act as environmental educators and stewards.

"The work of the Master Naturalists has allowed the Refuge to get an outreach and interpretive product to the public in a much more efficient manner. People are now well-informed about the Refuge and the flora and fauna that exist here."