ABOUT NCF

The mission of the National Conservation Foundation (NCF) is to identify and advance strategic programs and partnerships to deliver conservation solutions through locally-led conservation and to develop the next generation of conservation leaders. The vision of the National Conservation Foundation is to support delivery of locally-led conservation and to create future conservation leaders.

The foundation does this by providing conservation districts and other conservation organizations funding for research, educational programs and public outreach. In fulfilling its mission, NCF has two programs that work to develop the next generation of conservation leaders: the NCF-Envirothon, a high school environmental and natural resources program and competition, and the Next Generation Leadership Institute, a new program to cultivate the next generation of locally-led conservation leaders.

• IDENTIFY AND ADVANCE STRATEGIC PROGRAMS AND PARTNERSHIPS
• DELIVER CONSERVATION SOLUTIONS
• DEVELOP THE NEXT GENERATION OF CONSERVATION LEADERS
04. LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN
Steve Robinson | Marysville, Ohio

05. NOTE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Jeremy Peters | Washington, D.C.

07. WHO WE ARE

09. THE YEAR IN REVIEW

11. NEXT GENERATION LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE
NCF’s newest program trains conservation leaders to rise to the challenge of understanding and directing national, collaborative efforts in locally-led conservation.

21. NCF-ENVIROTTHON
The international NCF-Envirotthon competition unites more than 25,000 high school students in pursuit of natural resource education.

39. INVESTING IN TOMORROW
Dear Conservation Leaders,

The National Conservation Foundation had a busy year in 2019. Continuing our work to grow the foundation and its programs, the board of trustees embarked on several items to improve operations and management.

In 2019, the NCF drafted a new strategic plan, which will be implemented over a three-year period from 2020-22. The plan was adopted by the NCF Board of Trustees in February 2020 and will focus on continued growth in three primary areas: fundraising, programs and governance. The plan was developed in close coordination with NACD and will be implemented in tandem.

While maintaining strong focus on the NCF-Envirothon and building staff capacity in 2019, we coordinated closely with North Carolina for a successful international NCF-Envirothon competition in July.

NCF also successfully launched a new program in 2019, the Next Generation Leadership Institute, which held its inaugural training session in Las Vegas.

NCF also continued to improve financial management of the foundation, renewing its agreement with NACD to provide finance, accounting and professional services to support the foundation.

The NCF could not accomplish these outcomes without your support, so on behalf of the entire NCF Board of Trustees, I thank you.

Sincerely,

Steve Robinson
Chairman
NOTE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

BOLD STEPS FORWARD: NCF’S STRATEGIC PLAN

The National Conservation Foundation took a major step forward in 2019 with development of a new strategic plan.

The NCF’s strategic plan will focus on three primary areas: governance, programs and fundraising. Building on years of accomplishments, each of these areas are critically important to NCF’s future success.

Good governance is important for any organization, but it is especially important for foundations like NCF to help ensure to supporters and donors that resources are being utilized in ways that are responsible and fulfill the organization’s mission.

NCF has good governance in place through oversight by its officers, executive committee and board of trustees, and it will be even stronger once the board can review and update bylaws, policies, MOUs and other organizational documents that will contribute to its success.

Strong programs are also important for organizations like NCF.

Donors want to know they are making a difference with funds they are giving, and there are no causes more worthy than the NCF’s educational and leadership development programs like NCF-Envirothon and the Next Generation Leadership Institute.
DONORS WANT TO KNOW THEY ARE MAKING A DIFFERENCE WITH FUNDS THEY ARE GIVING, AND THERE ARE NO CAUSES MORE WORTHY THAN THE NCF’S EDUCATIONAL AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS LIKE NCF-ENVIROTHON AND THE NEXT GENERATION LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE.

Building on these strong programs to meet the opportunities and challenges ahead will be crucial.

Finally, no organization can exist without successful fundraising. NCF’s board of trustees are working to strengthen fundraising efforts and to develop comprehensive fundraising strategies, but the most important part of fundraising is willing and generous donors. That is where you come in.

In the weeks and months ahead, you will be hearing more about the NCF, its mission and programs as the strategic plan is implemented. But for today, please take time to read about the NCF’s accomplishments in 2019.

If you have been a past supporter, my sincerest thank you! If you have not yet supported NCF, please consider ways you can give.

Our future conservation leaders are counting on you!

Sincerely,

Jeremy Peters
Executive Director
LEADERSHIP

2019 NCF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Chair Steve Robinson .......................................................... Ohio
Vice Chair Tim Reich .......................................................... South Dakota
Treasurer John Redding ...................................................... Georgia
Secretary Mike Mosel .......................................................... Nebraska
NACD Immediate Past President Brent Van Dyke ..................... New Mexico
NACD Past President Gene Schmidt ...................................... Indiana
Immediate Past Chair Rudy Rice .......................................... Illinois
Executive Director Jeremy Peters ....................................... Washington, D.C.

2019 NCF BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Barbara Perlman-Whyman
Presidents Association Representative .................................. Nevada

Shana Joy
NASCA Representative ..................................................... Washington

Irene Moore
NCDEA Representative ...................................................... Ohio

Karen Smart
NACD Auxiliary Representative .......................................... Utah

Peggy Lemons
NCF-Envirothon Representative .......................................... Missouri

Earl Garber
NACD Past President .......................................................... Louisiana

Rick Jeans
Past NACD Executive Board Member .................................... Oklahoma

Bob Warner
NACD Board Member .......................................................... Colorado

Nedra Turney
At-Large Representative ......................................................... Arkansas

Patricia Lardie
At-Large Representative .......................................................... Wisconsin
TEAM

JEREMY PETERS  
WASHINGTON, D.C.
NCF Executive Director
202-547-6223
jeremy-peters@nacdnet.org

SUNNI HEIKES-KNAPTON  
MONTANA
NGLI Program Coordinator
406-570-4193
sunni-heikes-knapton@nacdnet.org

JENNIFER BROOKS  
NORTH CAROLINA
NCF-Envirothon Program Manager
1-800-825-5547
jbrooks@envirothon.org
jennifer-brooks@nacdnet.org

STEPHANIE TOLAR  
NORTH CAROLINA
NCF-Envirothon Education Specialist
1-800-825-5547
stolar@envirothon.org
stephanie-tolar@nacdnet.org

RAY LEDGERWOOD  
WASHINGTON
NGLI Facilitator
208-301-4728
rayledgerwood@msn.com

2019 NCF ANNUAL REPORT
MISSION
To identify and advance strategic programs and partnerships to deliver conservation solutions through locally-led conservation and to develop the next generation of conservation leaders.

VISION
The National Conservation Foundation inspires and develops current and future conservation leaders.

THE NEXT GENERATION LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

2020 inaugural cohort
1 year-long program
7 district officials
5 sessions

5 areas of study
- Forestry
- Soils and land use
- Wildlife
- Aquatic ecology
- Current year environmental issue

NCF-ENVIROTHON

50,000+ high school students
15,000+ hours of service annually
1,000,000+ adult volunteers

3 countries represented
- United States
- China
- Canada

Learn more at nacdnet.org/investing-in-tomorrow
### Fiscal Year 2019 Revenue

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dues</td>
<td>$20,550</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sponsorships</td>
<td>$64,500</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation Fees</td>
<td>$143,619</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government Grants</td>
<td>$114,094</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Other Sources</td>
<td>$81,481</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$424,244</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Fiscal Year 2019 Expenses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Program Services</td>
<td>$346,275</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management and General</td>
<td>$16,540</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fundraising</td>
<td>$313</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$363,128</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The nation’s top conservation district leaders have a new program to help them guide the future of locally-led conservation, thanks to big accomplishments and dedicated efforts by the NCF’s flagship Next Generation Leadership Institute (NGLI) program.

The goals of the program are to equip conservation district leaders with the tools to become national leaders through personal, civic and organizational leadership development. The program was created in response to a high demand for leadership instruction for conservation district leaders facing the challenges of a changing world.

Officially conceived in 2018 and launched in 2019, the program is a first-of-its-kind endeavor. The important early planning and development by the advisory committee (listed on page 13) laid the cornerstones for the program goals and approaches.

The NGLI program had a momentous launch of the first application period in August 2019 at the NACD Summer Meeting in Santa Fe, N.M. The response from our nation’s conservation district leaders was quite remarkable, with an impressive collection of high caliber and exceptional individuals submitting applications to be considered for the program.

The entries reflected a broad range of backgrounds and motivations. In December 2019, seven local leaders who shared genuine enthusiasm and wisdom in their applications were selected for the inaugural cohort.

During their four sessions in 2020 and a capstone session in 2021, the NGLI participants are faced with challenges of transitioning their work to meet the shifting needs of local conservation priorities.

The momentum for the program continues to grow, and NCF is eager to announce the impact made on the 2020 cohort, as well as the application period for the 2021 program.
Anticipated timeline for next application period:

• **Spring 2020:** Announcement of application period and public webinar
• **Early Summer 2020:** Application period open for six weeks
• **Late Summer 2020:** Selection process
• **Early Fall 2020:** Announcement of 2021 Cohort

NCF knows there is a bright future for this program and for the participants who complete the comprehensive training. To be involved as a supporter, or to inquire about applying, contact Sunni-Heikes-Knapton@nacdnet.org.
Anticipated timeline for next application period:

• Spring 2020: Announcement of application period and public webinar
• Early Summer 2020: Application period open for six weeks
• Late Summer 2020: Selection process
• Early Fall 2020: Announcement of 2021 Cohort

NCF knows there is a bright future for this program and for the participants who complete the comprehensive training. To be involved as a supporter, or to inquire about applying, contact Sunni-Heikes-Knapton@nacdnet.org.
MEET THE 2020 COHORT

In December 2019, NCF announced the names of the seven participants of the inaugural NGLI cohort, selected through a competitive national application process as members of a year-long program to build future conservation leaders through comprehensive trainings.

“It’s a privilege to announce these seven participants as members of our inaugural NGLI cohort,” NCF Chairman Steve Robinson said.

“This group of candidates demonstrated remarkable passion for locally-led conservation, and I look forward to seeing how their skills continue to develop over the next year.”

NGLI participants will meet for four training sessions throughout the year, with a capstone session at the National Association of Conservation Districts’ (NACD) annual meeting in New Orleans in 2021. NGLI curriculum will equip leaders with skills and resources related to personal, civic and organizational leadership development.

This comprehensive training will help participants rise to meet the future needs of natural resources management, helping them to increase their capacity to navigate and manage complex conservation challenges – both current and future – at the local and national level.

Learn more about the cohort online at www.nacdnet.org/2020-NGLI-cohort.

BARBARA BLEIWEIS
MECKLENBURG SWCD
CHARLOTTE, N.C.

I am a 62-year-old baby boomer who some describe as “energetic for my age,” still testing my limits, still growing up and plotting for the next challenge that will come my way. My life, which began in pre-statehood Hawaii, has been a pinball game of ricochets, with every move banking off an obstacle that redirects me.

I married my best friend in 1984, and we have two incredible, independent thinking kids who live productive and purpose-driven lives. In 2004, I lost my best friend to cancer, another of life’s ricochets, and ultimately moved to Charlotte, N.C., where I live in a house with three cats. Charlotte is home and the new beginning for my life of public service, filled with challenges to save our planet by conserving our natural resources and serving the public good.

“BAD THINGS HAPPEN IN LIFE, IT’S HOW YOU RESPOND THAT COUNTS.
-DABO SWINNEY
RYAN BRITT
RANDOLPH COUNTY SWCD
CLIFTON HILL, MO.

Ryan Britt is a fifth-generation farmer who with his father, brother-in-law and the support of their families, is striving to produce corn, soybeans, wheat, hay and cow-calf to finished beef through practices which incorporate the use of technology and innovative partnerships to maximize efficiency and sustainability.

While the work of crop and livestock production can be demanding, Ryan also sees the importance of serving the agricultural community through boards, associations and committees. He values improvement, and he desires to see all areas of agriculture succeed and flourish. Ryan and his wife Rebecca enjoy raising their three children, Lydea, Luke and Lynelle on the family farm near Thomas Hill Lake.

PHIL CAMPBELL
OKLAHOMA COUNTY CD
LUTHER, OKLA.

I’m Phil Campbell, owner of Campbell Farms in Luther, Okla. I’m a military veteran who began working with my local conservation district following my retirement. I have a passion for learning about conservation issues and spreading the word about conservation programs in our area and state. As a result, I’ve embraced my leadership role as a district director and commissioner.

Throughout my tenure, I’ve been an advocate for natural resource conservation by hosting field days on my farm, attending various annual meetings and participating in our 2018 Statewide Conservation Leadership Class. My desire is to provide assistance and mentorship to new and underserved land owners by providing them with information about resource management and the knowledge of programs available to them.

“Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I remember. Involve me and I learn.”
- Benjamin Franklin

“The best method of overcoming obstacles is the team method.”
- Colin Powell
Joe Caughlin
Kay County CD
Tonkawa, Okla.

Joe Caughlin, 49, is a fourth-generation agricultural producer from Tonkawa, Okla. Joe is married to Robyn and together they have three daughters and one son. Their family farming and ranching operation consists of 2,500 acres of cropland and 1,500 acres of native and improved grassland. With the help of his dad, Jack, his brother, Paul and son, Kevin,

Joe manages a commercial Angus cow-calf operation on a mix of family-owned and rented pasture. Joe also manages a no-till crop rotation on the farm consisting of hard red winter wheat, soybean, corn, alfalfa and various other forages. In 2000, Joe began a certified wheat seed business to help add value to the operation. A few years later, a row crop seed business was added to help service customers better.

Mark Masters
Lower Chattahoochee River SWCD
Dawson, Ga.

Mark Masters serves as director of the Georgia Water Planning and Policy Center at Albany State University and is a leading expert in agricultural water use and policy in the southeastern U.S.

Throughout his career, Mark has led numerous research and outreach projects related to water resources in Georgia and has positioned the center as a trusted technical resource for the state and its water planning efforts.

When he’s not busy professionally, Mark stays out of trouble raising grass-fed beef on his family farm in Terrell County and with his wife Amy, enjoys watching their three beautiful daughters make other kids look foolish on the soccer field.

---

YOU CALL ME ‘TEACHER’ AND ‘MASTER,’ AND RIGHTLY SO, FOR INDEED I AM. IF I, THEREFORE, THE MASTER AND TEACHER, HAVE WASHED YOUR FEET, YOU OUGHT TO WASH ONE ANOTHER’S FEET. I HAVE GIVEN YOU A MODEL TO FOLLOW, SO THAT AS I HAVE DONE FOR YOU, YOU SHOULD ALSO DO.

-JESUS CHRIST, JOHN 13:13-15

NEVER LET YOUR MEMORIES BE GREATER THAN YOUR DREAMS.

-DOUG IVESTER
CASSIUS SPEARS
SOUTHERN RHODE ISLAND CD
ASHAWAY, R.I.
Cassius Champlin Spears, Sr. has dedicated his life to the preservation of Narragansett culture throughout New England and the world.

He has served as cultural advisor for numerous educational projects, including the PBS documentary “We Shall Remain—After the Mayflower”. Spears has remained active in the practice of ethnobotany and traditional home building, where he has demonstrated eastern woodlands culture at museums, college campuses and film sets across North America.

In his most recent capacity as an agricultural technician, he has performed as a liaison for the Narragansett Indian Tribe and the USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

LEADERSHIP IS NOT ABOUT YOU; IT’S ABOUT INVESTING IN THE GROWTH OF OTHERS.
-KEN BLANCHARD

SAM STEINER
WARREN COUNTY SWCD
FRANKLIN, OHIO
I am a fourth-generation farmer from Lebanon, Ohio. I was raised on a dairy farm where I learned many life skills, including animal care and a love for our natural resources.

In 2010, I started farming full-time, raising laying hens, meat chickens, turkeys and beef cattle. Conservation plays a role in my farming practices because healthy soil and healthy water produce healthy livestock.

Educating consumers on where their food comes from and how it is raised is a large part of why I sell directly off the farm. An open line of communication between producer and consumer is a key element in building trust in the ag community.

THE MEASURE OF A LIFE, AFTER ALL, IS NOT ITS DURATION, BUT ITS DONATION.
-CORRIE TEN BOOM
“Working to understand others through compassionate, active, listening is one of the most important and most underrated skills for a public official.
- Barbara Bleiweis, 2020 NGLI Cohort Member

“Conservation practices are in great demand and constantly changing. Leadership must remain consistent in strategizing ways to bring resources to those challenges.
- Cassius Spears, 2020 NGLI Cohort Member

“I believe we must always be open to learning. Continued education is an important facet in all walks of life.
- Joe Caughlin
2020 NGLI Cohort Member
“Even in today’s political environment, policy and decision makers are still influenced greatly by the “grass-roots,” not just the “grass-tops.”

- Mark Masters, 2020 NGLI Cohort Member

“I have developed a belief that diverse teams are highly effective and tend to work well together developing solutions to complex plans.

- Phil Campbell, 2020 NGLI Cohort Member

“Conservation starts at my farm, but I believe that only by working together can we achieve the locally led, grassroots organizations that support conservation.

- Ryan Britt, 2020 NGLI Cohort Member

“By building a connection with our community, agricultural and urban, we get a wider understanding of what is going on in the area. Being willing to listen to their needs allows us to be able to find and/or guide them to solutions.

Samantha Steiner, 2020 NGLI Cohort Member
How do we balance quality of life and the quality of the environment?

Over 25,000 high school students across the United States, Canada and China embark on a journey each year to offer solutions to this critical question through the NCF-Envirotthon.
2019 NCF-ENVIROTHON OPERATING COMMITTEE

LORELLE STEACH
CHAIR, PENNSYLVANIA

WENDEE DODDS
VICE CHAIR, OHIO

MILLIE LANGLEY
PAST CHAIR, NORTH CAROLINA

PEGGY LEMON
NCF TRUSTEE, MISSOURI

BARRY BURCH
MARYLAND

KERIN HUME
DELAWARE

JEFF FOLGER
CONNECTICUT

SHONNY NORDLUND
MONTANA

SID LOWRANCE
ARKANSAS

JEANNE DRYBRUGH
NEBRASKA

ANDREA MCKEOWN
MISSOURI

BECKY GENEAU
NEW BRUNSWICK

JACQUELINE MONTEITH
MANITOBA

MISSION

To develop knowledgeable, skilled and dedicated citizens who have an understanding of natural resources and are willing and prepared to work towards achieving and maintaining a balance between the quality of life and the environment, accomplished by developing in young people an understanding of the principles and practices of natural resource management and ecology and through practice dealing with complex resource management decisions.

Connect with us @ncfenvirothon
Dear Friends,

Thank you for making 2019 yet another remarkable year for NCF-Envirothon!

North Carolina hosted yet another successful NCF-Envirothon with more than 250 high school students competing as part of 53 five-member teams from the U.S., Canada and China.

The teams embarked upon North Carolina State University in Raleigh to vie for awards and the title of NCF-Envirothon champion as they went through arduous testing and competitive oral presentations. North Carolina set a new standard: for the first time at an international-level competition, teams ventured beyond the traditional poster method and used PowerPoint to design their oral presentations. The title of 2019 NCF-Envirothon champion went to the Virginia team from Jamestown High School – Congratulations!

NCF-Envirothon is grateful for the continued support of its sponsors: Smithfield Foods, Inc. for generously sponsoring this year’s cash awards for the top three teams, in addition to the barbecue lunch for all of the teams; Idaho Envirothon, Soil Health Institute, and the National Association of State Conservation Agencies for supporting the fourth through eighth place cash awards; and the United States Forest Service for funding the Diversity Enhancement and Underserved Audience Grants.

I want to thank all of the state and provincial organizers and teachers who dedicate countless hours serving these young Envirothon enthusiasts. You help us meet our mission by sharing your knowledge of the environment and natural resource management with these future leaders, conservationists, and decision-makers. You provide them with the tools necessary to address the natural resource challenges facing today’s world, as well as the challenges of tomorrow.

As always, the National Conservation Foundation and the NCF-Envirothon Operating Committee are committed to strengthening the Envirothon program at all levels.

Finally, our dedicated staff has done an incredible job of expanding our outreach while strengthening our programs and services.

We encourage you to reach out to Jennifer Brooks, NCF-Envirothon Program Manager, and Stephanie Tolar, NCF-Envirothon Education Specialist, for local or state program building, outreach support, and any NCF-Envirothon related questions.

We look forward to an exciting 2020 Envirothon season.

Sincerely,

Lorelle Steach
NCF-Envirothon Operating Committee Chair
Created in 1979, the Envirothon is a hands-on, environmental problem-solving, team building and leadership experience for high school students in the U.S., Canada and China.

As the complex natural resource issues facing our ecosystems and planet today change, the mission and impact of the Envirothon has never been more important. The Envirothon is managed and directed by NCF and its NCF-Envirothon Operating Committee.

Participating high school teams are trained and tested in five natural resource categories: soils/land use, aquatic ecology, wildlife, forestry and a current environmental issue.

The Envirothon works in partnership with local, state, national and international conservation agencies to organize and conduct competitions across North America and beyond. Winning teams from each state and/or province advance to the international level event for an opportunity to compete for recognition, scholarships and prizes.
The National Conservation Foundation (NCF) assumed leadership of the Envirothon program in 2014.

The mission of the NCF is to identify and advance strategic programs and partnerships to deliver conservation solutions through locally-led conservation and to develop the next generation of conservation leaders.

The Foundation understands the powerful impact of the Envirothon program on so many students’ lives and its great potential to develop new leaders in conservation. The NCF-Envirothon Operating Committee (NCFEOC) is comprised of elected representatives from the five Envirothon regions in North America: the Southeast, the Northeast, the Far West, the Mid-West and the Far North; as well as one representative from the National Conservation Foundation board.

The NCFEOC provides recommendations to the NCF Executive Committee regarding the direction of the NCF-Envirothon. They work continually to update educational guidelines and curriculum frameworks to aid states and provinces in better serving their educators and students. In addition, they assist the host state/province in promoting, organizing and conducting the NCF-Envirothon annual competition and are responsible for the development of rules and policies for conducting the program.
Stephanie Tolar is a science educator who is passionate about the Envirothon program and helping people form a lifelong connection with nature. She has formal and informal teaching experience, both in the classroom and in the field. She has a Master's Degree in biology from Duke University, where she specialized in science education and ecology. She has a Bachelor of Science in environmental sciences and a Bachelor of Arts in Italian language as well as a minor in marine sciences from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

She previously served as the off-site and adult education program coordinator at the Piedmont Wildlife Center in Durham, N.C., and as a nature instructor for the City of Raleigh. She has a deep personal connection with the Envirothon program. Envirothon inspired her to pursue a career in environmental sciences, and she is excited to have the opportunity to facilitate meaningful experiences for a new generation of young conservationists. She is based in Durham, N.C.

" Sometimes you will never know the value of a moment, until it becomes a memory." – Dr. Seuss

After 25 years of dedicated service to the Envirothon program, Debbie Waycott, NCF-Envirothon Public Relations/Outreach Coordinator, retired on December 20, 2019. Debbie was an integral part of the Envirothon program, assisting with not only public relations and outreach, but also educational content, training and testing, event organization and more. Her wisdom, humor and historical knowledge about the program will be greatly missed.

"Going forward, I encourage you all to continue to the great work with the Envirothon program across North America and China and embrace what we have accomplished and continue on with the Envirothon program," Waycott said. "We all have our stories of Envirothon students/events and have witnessed some great results!"

Debbie will be enjoying retirement from her beautiful home on the shores of Nova Scotia, traveling with her husband Russ and spending time with her children and grandchildren. She also hopes to come back in a volunteer role for both the Nova Scotia Envirothon and the NCF-Envirothon.

Debbie Waycott Retires After 25 Years of Service

NCF-Envirothon Welcomes New Education Specialist

Stephanie Tolar is a science educator who is passionate about the Envirothon program and helping people form a lifelong connection with nature.

She has formal and informal teaching experience, both in the classroom and in the field. She has a Master’s Degree in biology from Duke University, where she specialized in science education and ecology. She has a Bachelor of Science in environmental sciences and a Bachelor of Arts in Italian language as well as a minor in marine sciences from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

She previously served as the off-site and adult education program coordinator at the Piedmont Wildlife Center in Durham, N.C., and as a nature instructor for the City of Raleigh. She has a deep personal connection with the Envirothon program. She competed in the Envirothon competition in both middle school and high school, at the area, state and international levels. Envirothon inspired her to pursue a career in environmental sciences, and she is excited to have the opportunity to facilitate meaningful experiences for a new generation of young conservationists. She is based in Durham, N.C.
LOCAL, STATE AND PROVINCIAL Envirothon Competitions Across the Globe

Each year, states and provinces across the United States, Canada and China host local Envirothon competitions among high school students, grades 9-12 (ages 14-19). These competitions incorporate five areas of study in natural resources: soils and land use, forestry, aquatic ecology, wildlife, and a current environmental issue that changes from year to year.

Teams consist of up to five students from the same school, non-traditional school, or youth organization. Guided by a volunteer advisor, teams typically meet from late autumn until spring, learning about environmental topics both in the classroom and out in the field.

The Envirothon curriculum emphasizes experiential learning and real-world application of concepts. Students can be found getting their hands dirty in a soil pit, measuring the basal area of a forest, collecting macroinvertebrates in a stream, or identifying animal tracks. The local competitions are often organized and sponsored by conservation districts, tribal organizations, and/or state or provincial agencies.

Teams work collaboratively to develop their knowledge of ecology and natural resource management and to practice their environmental problem-solving skills in preparation for Envirothon competitions.

The Envirothon program is structured to allow participating states and provinces maximum flexibility to individualize their programs. Each state or province has their own Envirothon committee that acts as a governing body, making decisions and establishing the policies and administrative structure for their local program. Some states and provinces have smaller “regional” or “area” competitions that serve as qualifying events for their state/provincial competition. The winning team from each state/provincial competition is eligible to attend the NCF-Envirothon Annual International Competition the following summer.

At all levels of competition, the Envirothon program encourages students to think critically and creatively about the natural world and their place in it.
Envirothon in the United States

Beginning in Pennsylvania in 1979 as the “Environmental Olympics,” the Envirothon has grown and expanded across the United States. In 2019, 46 states participated in the NCF-Envirothon program and attended the annual competition to compete for prizes and scholarships.

Envirothon in Canada

In 1992, Nova Scotia was the first Canadian province to join the Envirothon program. In 2019, eight Canadian provinces (Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, Ontario, Manitoba, Alberta and British Columbia) participated in the international competition.

Envirothon in China

In 2019, the Envirothon China program celebrated its fourth year of competition with a record high number of student participants, an estimated 580 students from across China. On April 4–6, 2019, the “national” competition was held at the Duke Kunshan University in Kunshan, China, to determine the two teams that would represent China at the 2019 NCF-Envirothon annual competition.
OUTREACH AND EDUCATION

Environmental education is gaining worldwide recognition for its many benefits and increasing importance in our society today. The advantages of environmental education for students are numerous and varied, including developing critical thinking and problem-solving skills, connecting classroom learning to real-world applications, fostering a sense of place and belonging, improving mental health, encouraging collaboration and teamwork, increasing community engagement, and empowering students to explore, discover, and become the great leaders of tomorrow.

The NCF-Envirothon Program covers all of these benefits and more. Environmental education has joined the ranks of traditional STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) to form E-STEM. Through the NCF-Envirothon program, students learn about local and global ecology through the application of chemistry, biology, innovative technologies, engineering practices and mathematics. The NCF-Envirothon challenges students to integrate all of these subjects to create inventive solutions for the complex environmental issues facing our world today.

The NCF-Envirothon performs outreach primarily through conferences and social media. In 2019, the NCF-Envirothon was present at the following events:

- **2019 NACD ANNUAL CONFERENCE SAN ANTONIO, TX**
  NCF-Envirothon staff and volunteers had an exhibit in the Expo Hall for conference attendees to learn more.
  **2019 PROJECT LEARNING TREE INTERNATIONAL COORDINATOR’S CONFERENCE LITTLE ROCK, AR**
  NCF-Envirothon staff presented at a breakout session.
  **2019 NACD SUMMER MEETING SANTA FE, NM**
  NCF-Envirothon staff and the NM Envirothon state champion team presented at a breakout session.
  **2019 NORTH AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION (NAAEE) 48TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE LEXINGTON, KY**
  NCF-Envirothon staff had an exhibit in the Expo Hall for conference attendees to learn more and presented at a breakout session.
  **NATIONAL FFA 92ND ANNUAL CONFERENCE, INDIANAPOLIS, IN**
  NCF-Envirothon staff and volunteers had an exhibit in the Expo Hall for conference attendees to learn more. With almost 70,000 attendees, this event is one of the world’s largest student conventions and an ideal time for the NCF-Envirothon to reach out to existing and potential Envirothon teams.

NCF-Envirothon’s presence on social media allows for promotion of the program, but also allows the NCF-Envirothon to gather immediate feedback and deliver educational content to our followers.

Our social media audience is comprised of current Envirothon competition participants, alumni, teachers, informal educators, conservation districts, local/state/provincial/federal agencies, environmental journalists, and other natural resource/conservation outlets.

The NCF-Envirothon’s three major social media outlets are Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, but the NCF-Envirothon has a growing presence on LinkedIn and YouTube.

In 2019, the top three team Oral Presentations from the 2019 NCF-Envirothon North Carolina event were livestreamed on YouTube and can be viewed on the NCF-Envirothon YouTube Channel.
ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT
ERIN HINES, N.C.

Erin Hines grew up in Envirothon, participating throughout middle school and high school in the North Carolina (NC) Envirothon competition - the state holds a middle school Envirothon in addition to the high school program. Her team’s commitment and drive led them to win the state championship three times, earning them the chance to compete in three NCF-Envirothon annual international competitions.

Today, Erin is an environmental educator for the Gaston County Soil and Water Conservation District in North Carolina, serves on the NC Envirothon committee, and was an integral part of the planning team for the 2019 NCF-Envirothon annual competition.

“As a program, Envirothon has what it takes to be extremely effective in influencing adult environmentalism, including extended duration, adult mentors and time in nature,” Erin said. “So here I am, throwing my weight behind this exceptional educational experience, and thanking all who make it possible.”

"THE SCHOLARSHIP MONEY WE EARNED FROM THE COMPETITIONS SUPPORTED US IN OUR EDUCATIONAL PURSUITS BEYOND HIGH SCHOOL. FIVE OF US RECEIVED FULL SCHOLARSHIPS TO NC STATE UNIVERSITY, AND ALL BUT ONE OF US CHOSE NATURAL RESOURCE CAREERS INCLUDING ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES, BIOLOGICAL AND AGRICULTURAL ENGINEERING, SOIL SCIENCE, GEOLOGY, AND PARKS AND RECREATION.

ALL OF US HAVE SAID ENVIROTHON WAS A MAJOR INFLUENCE IN OUR CHOICES."
2019 COMPETITION

From July 28 – August 2, 53 teams from across the U.S., Canada and China competed in the 2019 NCF-ENVIROTHON held on the campus of North Carolina State University in Raleigh, N.C. Hosted by the North Carolina Envirottton, an estimated 500 plus students, teachers, guests and volunteers attended.

The week is the cumulation of a year-long process of study and testing for these students. Participating state and provincial Envirottton programs held their own competitions to select these top 53 teams to represent them at the NCF-ENVIROTHON Annual International Competition, truly the best of the best.
At the annual competition, the teams are trained and tested in six categories: aquatic ecology, forestry, soils/land use, wildlife, current issue topic and an oral presentation. The 2019 theme was ‘Agriculture and the Environment: Knowledge and Technology to Feed the World’.

Following an exciting day of team arrivals, registration, the Opening Ceremony and then an active ice cream social/trading session, the students buckled down for two intense days of training and testing on Monday and Tuesday. Teams spent Monday in the field learning natural resource management techniques and skills directly from resource professionals. Tuesday, they put those skills to the test for scores in aquatic ecology, forestry, soils/land use, wildlife and the current issue topic.

On Wednesday, thanks to sponsor Smithfield Foods, Inc., the teams, guests and volunteers were treated to an Education Day on the NC Coast. Thursday, the teams were tasked with preparing a 20-minute oral presentation scenario involving the current issue topic. Unique to this year’s contest, teams had the option of presenting their OP using either PowerPoint or the traditional poster method.

Dozens of judges, recruited and trained by NC, viewed and scored the 53 presentations Friday morning. Those preliminary OP scores combined with the test scores from Tuesday determined the top three ranking teams, who then presented their OP again in front of a new panel of judges and all the attendees for a new, final score, determining the overall winners. A recording of the livestreaming of the top three oral presentations can be found at www.envirothon.org.

At the conclusion of the week, an Awards Banquet was held and NCF Executive Board member Gene Schmidt from Indiana attended and served as the Master of Ceremonies. Several awards were given out, including Station Awards and Hall of Fame Awards, in addition to the overall championship.

In the end, the Jamestown High School team from Williamsburg, Va., was named the champion of the 2019 NCF-Envirothon competition. They received a $15,000 scholarship award from Smithfield Foods, Inc., as well as prizes from the National Conservation Foundation and Cabot Foods.
TOP EIGHT TEAMS AND PRIZES

1. VIRGINIA - $15,000
2. NORTH CAROLINA - $10,000
3. PENNSYLVANIA - $5,000
4. NEW YORK - $2,500
5. MISSISSIPPI - $1,250
6. SOUTH CAROLINA - $1,000
7. CHINA TEAM 1 - $750
8. KENTUCKY - $500

In addition to the scholarships from Smithfield Foods, Inc., the top three teams received medals and a plaque from National Conservation Foundation and a gift basket from Cabot Foods.

STATION AWARDS

SOILS/LAND USE - NEW YORK
WILDLIFE - NORTH CAROLINA
CURRENT ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUE - MISSISSIPPI

The top scoring team for each station received a plaque to commemorate their accomplishment.

DON & MARY JANE SPICKLER / ORAL PRESENTATION AWARD

KENTUCKY

The winning team received a plaque, and the Kentucky Envirothon program received a $1,000 award.
In addition to student awards, NCF-Envirothon recognizes the dedication and commitment of our volunteers and educators to the Envirothon’s mission with an annual Hall of Fame award and the new Wave of the Future award.

The Hall of Fame award recognizes the achievements of state and provincial Envirothon representatives and how these individuals have directly influenced, impacted, and promoted NCF-Envirothon.

+ MILLIE LANGLEY

2019 NCF-Envirothon Hall of Fame Award

+ PAUL DOLAN, RHODE ISLAND

2019 NCF-Envirothon Hall of Fame Award
The North Carolina host committee sponsored a social media photo contest, encouraging teams to take a pic of themselves around the NCSU campus and use the hashtag ‘#2019ncfenvirothon’. The winning post was from the Kentucky Envirothon team. They received a $100 gift card to Forestry Suppliers.

The wave of the future award is a new award that recognizes the achievements of teachers, advisors and alumni who have been involved with Envirothon for at least five years and how these individuals have directly influenced, impacted and promoted NCF-Envirothon.

+Kentucky

2019 NCF-Envirothon Social Media Contest Winners

+Sueann Wright, Missouri

2019 NCF-Envirothon Wave to the Future Award
Nervous, excited and jittery are a few words that described me and my team on our way to the NCF-Envirothon competition.

We had studied the written material and had made bee-themed costumes to wear for the Envirothon photo contest! After arriving in Raleigh, we began our photo shoot on NC State’s beautiful campus.

When out and about, several people stopped us and asked what we were doing. We explained that we were there for an academic competition about the environment, and we were also trying to win the photo contest. You could see the confusion on their faces because they didn’t associate “fun” and “bee costumes” with an academic competition. That week, the NCF-Envirothon truly broke through any thought that it would be a boring and strictly academic event.

That week, my team and I were able to meet new people from across the world and learn about their cultures.

The night we traded items from our states/countries/provinces was especially enjoyable! My team ate cookies from New York, obtained bookmarks from China, and received cacti-shaped pens from Arizona. The sense of celebrating our differences and specialties continued throughout the whole week.

One of the things that amazed me was how supportive everyone was of each other. The staff was knowledgeable and helpful, and there was a healthy sense of competition between teams.

In fact, after we had finished testing for the day, teams spoke with each other, shared what they struggled with, and helped provide a different perspective about the material we had studied.

Finally, I gained hope for the future of our environment.

Seeing so many volunteers, students and staff passionately working to educate themselves and others about protecting the world was truly inspiring.

My team and I are thankful for the opportunity to participate in this premier academic event, and we are grateful to the NCF-Envirothon for opening our eyes to the complexity and beauty of creation.
The National Conservation Foundation (NCF), in conjunction with the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), offers the Diversity Enhancement and Underserved Audience Grant program to help state and provincial Envirothon programs expand the diversity of student participation. Mini-grants are awarded for projects that work to reach out to minority and underserved urban and/or rural students that lack access to natural resource-based outdoor educational opportunities. In 2019, the USFS awarded the NCF $19,000 to be utilized by participating U.S. Envirothon programs. For Canadian Diversity Grant projects, the NCF provided $1,500 in funding for one Canadian Provincial project.

**ARIZONA ENVIROTHON - $2,000**  
*Arizona’s Title 1 Schools:* Outreach to Title 1 schools in the greater Phoenix Area in order to encourage participation in the Arizona Envirothon Annual Competition.

**MISSOURI ENVIROTHON - $4,000**  
*Making Additional Resources Available to All Missouri Schools:* Creation of additional ‘Envirothon Training Trunks’ and making them accessible to rural and urban schools across Missouri.

**TEXAS ENVIROTHON - $2,000**  
*Maintaining Diversity in the Texas Envirothon:* Funding to support students of diverse social and economic backgrounds to participate in the 2019 Texas Envirothon.

**VIRGINIA ENVIROTHON - $2,000**  
*Henrico County Public Schools Envirothon Program:* Sponsorship of Envirothon training workshops to provide in-depth training about the five Envirothon subject areas Aquatic Ecology, Forestry, Soils and Land Use, Wildlife and the Current Issue in a diversified community.

**NEW BRUNSWICK ENVIROTHON - $1,500***  
*Women in STEM Outreach:* Sponsorship of event to encourage girls and women to enter in the fields of Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM), with a focus on increasing the number of female students participating in the Envirothon New Brunswick program.

**NCF-ENVIROTHON - $9,000**  
*Outreach and Education Special Project:* With funding provided by the USFS, the NCF-Envirothon translated several pieces of outreach material into Spanish, French and Mandarin Chinese. The translated brochures and outreach booklets are available for download on the NCF-Envirothon website.

*Funding for Canadian provinces is provided by the National Conservation Foundation*
The NCF-Envirothon program has been recognized by leading corporations and organizations nationwide. These caring corporate citizens, nonprofit organizations and government agencies have partnered with us to find innovative ways to provide natural resource/environmental education to the world’s youth. A special thank you to our loyal sponsors and donors for their support.

In 2019, the following sponsors contributed a donation in support of the NCF-Envirothon’s mission and/or with sponsorship of scholarship awards to the winning teams.
In October 2019, NCF launched a campaign titled “Investing in Tomorrow,” aimed at helping grow the next generation of conservation leaders through the NCF-Envirothon and Next Generation Leadership Institute (NGLI). Throughout the campaign, Chairman Steve Robinson provided updates on NCF’s cornerstone programs to showcase their importance.

On December 18, NCF’s Giving Day, every dollar donated was doubled through a generous match by Warner Ranch.

“Our next generation of locally-led conservation leaders are our future,” said Bob Warner of Warner Ranch. “They are instrumental in preserving our soil and managing our water and keeping it clean. We must encourage them to stay on the land and give them opportunities to become landowners and managers.”

Through the NCF-Envirothon, high school students across the U.S., Canada and China showcase their understanding of soil, land use, aquatic ecology, forestry, wildlife and other environmental issues. The competition fosters the growth of our next generation of conservation leaders.

The NGLI is a program to equip conservation district officials for the challenges of tomorrow. The NGLI is focused on developing these local conservation leaders through a carefully crafted curriculum that will help them learn the tools necessary to meet natural resource management needs.

“The most remarkable leaders learn their philosophy and employ their skill set over many years,” Robinson said. “They have the humility to know they can always benefit from greater knowledge.”

This year’s “Investing in Tomorrow” campaign helped raise funds to maintain these two crucial programs that will develop our future conservation leaders. Through the gracious support of many across the nation, the NCF will continue to invest in our future, providing avenues for conservation learning and growth across all age groups.
THANK YOU TO THE DONORS WHO HELPED SUPPORT OUR CONSERVATION LEADERS OF TOMORROW

LAURA DEMMEL
JEREMY PETERS
JOHN H. REDDING
CANDICE ABINANTI
SUNNI HEIKES-KNAPTON
PEERANUT VISETSUTH
IRENE MOORE
KIMBERLY ULDRICKS
ARIEL RIVERS
UPPER PECOS SWCD
PATRICIA LARDIE
MARc L. CRIBB
BRENT VAN DYKE
DEBBIE WAYCOTT
IAN CUNNINGHAM
JENNIFER BROOKS
RICHARD L. DUESTERHAUS
CHIP JONES
THE WHYMAN FAMILY TRUST
THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

The National Conservation Foundation is raising conservation leaders of tomorrow. Thank you for your support of NCF over the years. Considering providing a monetary gift to NCF to support its programs? Please visit www.nacdnet.org/national-conservation-foundation/