



National Environmental Education Week

For Immediate Release

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National EE Week 2013 Highlights How Technology Can Get Kids Outdoors & Learning

WASHINGTON, April 15, 2013 – National Environmental Education Week starts today – the nation's largest celebration of environmental education – and will spotlight ways by which technology can enhance environmental learning.

This year's theme, Taking Technology Outdoors, is part of [EE Week](#)'s multi-year focus on Greening STEM (science, technology, engineering and math): The Environment as Inspiration for 21st Century Learning.

“The environment is not only a compelling topic for teaching STEM and engaging students through hands-on, real-world learning – it also provides knowledge, skills and experience students need to solve 21st century challenges like energy and resource conservation which affect all of us,” said Diane Wood, President of the National Environmental Education Foundation (NEEF).

U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan offered this perspective in a [public service announcement](#) for EE Week. “We know so many of the jobs of the future are in the STEM fields, and there are so many great ties between STEM education and environmental education,” he said. “If we really want to keep those good jobs in this country, if we want our students prepared – I think there's no better way to start to get at that, whether it's in 2nd grade or in 11th or 12th grade, than to get kids out in the outdoors with environmental education.”

Environmental education can incorporate all four pillars of STEM. Moreover, 75 percent of 1,900 educators asked in a survey by the National Wildlife Federation said students who spend regular time outdoors tend to be more creative and better problem-solvers. EE Week is providing case studies, webinars, a new Google+ Hangout on weather and the environment for students and educators, as well as other multimedia resources.

In today's era of gadgets and global connectivity, technology offers new ways for classrooms, students and learners of all ages to explore the environment. Tools such as mobile apps for spotting and identifying species in nature and sharing observations help make discoveries possible by citizens as well as scientists.

NEEF released the [Tech & Our Planet infographic](#) and [10 Apps for Taking Tech Outdoors](#) – illustrating the widespread use of technology among kids and adults and possibilities for environmental learning, career pathways and implications for the economy. For example, the growth in cloud computing and related technologies could help save more than a third of the energy used by data centers by the year 2020.

EE Week is hosting a live tweet chat today on Twitter to discuss and field questions on Greening STEM: Taking Tech Outdoors at 1pm ET with the hashtag #EEWeek. Participation in EE Week, which runs through April 20, is free, and educators can access all materials by registering free of charge at eeweek.org.

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NEEF is the nation's leading organization in lifelong environmental learning, connecting people to knowledge they use to improve the quality of their lives and the health of the planet. To accomplish this, NEEF provides knowledge to trusted professionals and other leaders who, with their credibility, amplify messages to national audiences to solve everyday environmental problems. Learn more at neefusa.org, follow NEEF on Facebook at <http://goo.gl/FidAX> & Twitter [@neefusa](https://twitter.com/neefusa).