



NATURE AND ECOLOGY



WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

Wyoming is home to some of the most wild and scenic landscapes in North America. Our great outdoor spaces like Yellowstone National Park contain some of America's most iconic wildlife. Take a journey through fields, forests, wetlands and rangelands to discover the wonders and mysteries of Wyoming's natural environment. Through the 4-H nature and ecology project, you will learn about the interconnections of people and nature. You'll also develop respect for the natural environment while creating a sense of stewardship toward our natural resources.

HERE'S WHAT YOU CAN LEARN...

STARTING OUT

- ✿ Learn about ecosystem services.
- ✿ Explore watershed and water purification
- ✿ Collect and analyze soil samples
- ✿ Learn about different sources of energy
- ✿ Explore ecotourism
- ✿ Learn more about aesthetics and the environment

LEARNING MORE

- ✿ Learn about environmental stewardship
- ✿ Find out what natural capital is and why it is important
- ✿ Explore local and national land use
- ✿ Learn about population capacity and reasons for extinction
- ✿ Use butterflies to test the local health of your ecosystem
- ✿ Explore native and invasive species
- ✿ Explore the earth's atmosphere
- ✿ See how solid waste affects our environment

GOING FURTHER

- ✿ Learn about climate change and its effect on the environment
- ✿ Discover the sources of various types of pollution, and learn how pollution can be prevented
- ✿ Learn how to live an environmentally responsible lifestyle
- ✿ Identify ways to conserve energy
- ✿ Learn about resource sustainability
- ✿ Investigate your carbon footprint

RESOURCES

- ✿ Exploring Your Environment • *Ecosystem Services (08410)*
- ✿ Exploring Your Environment • *Earth's Capacity (08411)*
- ✿ Exploring Your Environment • *Facilitators Guide (08412)*

TAKE IT FURTHER!

- ✿ Take a field trip. Identify different ecosystem services found in Wyoming
- ✿ Visit your local landfill or dump to find out about solid waste and recycling programs
- ✿ Conduct an experiment to see how trash breaks down in a landfill
- ✿ Set up an environment quiz bowl or skillathon for your club or county
- ✿ Attend your local 4-H camp
- ✿ Interview someone from the Bureau of Land Management
- ✿ Explore the types of foods in your area that wildlife might eat
- ✿ Visit your local NRCS to find out more about the soil in your area
- ✿ Plan an Earth Day celebration
- ✿ Find out more about the effects of erosion
- ✿ Tour parts of Wyoming that are affected by erosion and weathering

ENHANCE YOUR COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Research an environmental issue and prepare a presentation to government officials for resolution

Write articles or newsletters about environmental events and issues as well as natural resource topics

Create a blog about how kids can be environmentally friendly

GET INVOLVED IN CITIZENSHIP AND SERVICE

Start a recycling program in your neighborhood or community

Adopt a highway, river, lake or other outside area for cleanup

LEARN ABOUT LEADERSHIP

Lead your clubs families in performing a home energy audit

Plan and conduct an "energy fair" teaching younger kids about wind, solar, biomass and coal energy

Lead a group game at your club meeting related to learning about the environment

EXHIBIT IDEAS

- ✿ Can you identify local trees? Make a poster to help others learn
- ✿ What attracts butterflies to your garden? Find out and share your findings in a video
- ✿ How has Wyoming's wildlife changed through the years? Create a timeline with visuals of significant events
- ✿ Create a survey on what other youth think and feel about today's environmental issues
- ✿ Create a video on pros and cons of sun, wind, nuclear and/or coal power
- ✿ Create an original piece of artwork using natural objects
- ✿ Develop a display or notebook on forest diseases
- ✿ Create a field notes adventure pack
- ✿ Display your field notes and findings from your 4-H year
- ✿ Make a leaf and twig collections
- ✿ Make a bird feeding station
- ✿ Create a report on soils in your area
- ✿ Make a poster showing a wildlife habitat
- ✿ Create a soda bottle ecosystem
- ✿ Make a display of the ecosystem your favorite animal lives in
- ✿ Make a comparison chart of characteristics of Wyoming ecosystems and an ecosystem another part of the world
- ✿ Build a model of a landfill

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