

Nebraska Envirothon News

October 2024

www.nrdnet.org



What is the Nebraska Envirothon?

The Nebraska Envirothon is a competition designed for high school students to test their knowledge about the environment. Teams of five compete at the regional level in seven environmental study subjects -- soils, aquatics, forestry, policy, wildlife, range and a special topic. For the state competition, an oral presentation is added to the testing on the special topic. The topic is selected by the National Conservation Foundation (NCF) Envirothon Committee.

A growing number of career

fields involve natural resources. This an opportunity for students to gain hands-on experience working on environmental issues, and get exposure to a variety of careers.

Envirothon allows students to take their classroom knowledge and apply it to real-world situations. Students are given the opportunity to interact with resource professionals in environmental careers. The competition is a great link between academics and the business world.

Previous State Champions

- 2024: Concordia
- 2023: Dawson County
- 2022: Concordia
- 2021: Ord
- 2020: *Canceled*
- 2019: St. Paul
- 2018: Concordia
- 2017: Concordia
- 2016: Concordia
- 2015: Concordia
- 2014: Concordia
- 2013: Concordia
- 2012: West Holt
- 2011: Superior
- 2010: Superior
- 2009: Ord
- 2008: Wauneta-Palisade
- 2007: Wauneta-Palisade
- 2006: Wauneta-Palisade
- 2005: Norris
- 2004: Norris
- 2003: Superior
- 2002: Medicine Valley
- 2001: Cambridge
- 2000: Nelson
- 1999: Nelson
- 1998: Cambridge
- 1997: Cambridge
- 1996: North Platte
- 1995: Chappell
- 1994: Norris

2025 Envirothon Competitions

Regional Testing

January, February & March 2025

Regional Envirothon testing will be in January, February or March (schedule on next page). Teams with five members will work together to take seven tests. Each test is timed at 15 minutes. Schools can bring multiple teams to compete. The winning team from each region along with eight wildcards (14 teams total) are invited to compete at the Nebraska State Envirothon.

Nebraska State Envirothon

April 30, 2025

Chalco Hills Recreation Area

Omaha, Nebraska

The State Envirothon Committee will host the Nebraska State Envirothon at Chalco Hills Recreation Area in the Metro Region. We will be welcomed by the Papio-Missouri River NRD.

2025 Competition Locations & Contacts

Western Region

Feb. 5, 2025

Gordon City Hall, Gordon

Regional Contact: Kylene Armstrong, Upper Niobrara White NRD, 308.432.6187, armstrong@unwnrd.org

Mid-Plains Region

March 11, 2025

NE College of Technical Agriculture, Curtis

Regional Contact: Colleen Stone, Middle Republican NRD, 308.362.4281, cstone@mnrnd.org

Metro Region

Feb. 27, 2025 | 9 a.m. and 12:30 p.m.

Papio NRD Office, Chalco Hills Rec Area

Regional Contact: Kaylyn Kelley, Papio-Missouri River NRD, 402.315.1713, kkelley@papiornrd.org

Central Region

Jan. 30, 2025

Central Community College, Columbus

Regional Contact: Brody Vorderstrasse, Central Platte NRD, 308.385.6282, brody@cpnrnd.org

Southeast Region

Feb. 25, 2025

Southeast Community College, Beatrice

Regional Contact: Scott Theis, Lower Big Blue NRD, 402.228.3402, theis@lbbnrnd.net

March 11, 2025

Nebraska Assoc. Resources Districts Office, Lincoln

Regional Contact: Megan Grimes, NARD, 402.471.7672, mgrimes@nrndnet.org

Northeast Region

Feb. 25, 2025

Northeast Community College, Norfolk

Regional Contact: Beth Walsh, Upper Elkhorn NRD, 402.336.3867, bwalsh@uenrd.org

Nebraska State Envirothon Competition

April 30, 2025

Chalco Hills Recreation Area, Omaha, Neb.

Megan Grimes, NARD, 402.471.7672 or mgrimes@nrndnet.org

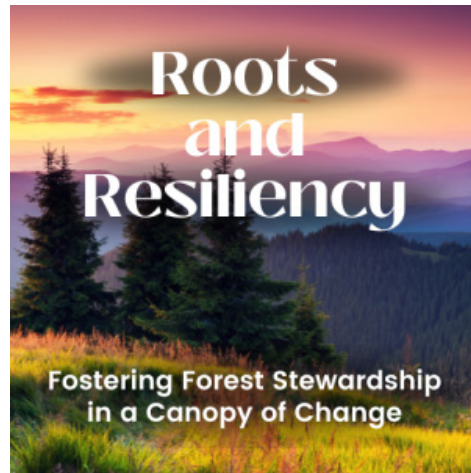
2025 Current Environmental Issue (Special Topic)

“Roots & Resiliency: Fostering Forest Stewardship in a Canopy of change.”

Forests cover 31% of all land area in the world, making their mark on the landscape and the lives of people around the globe. Since time immemorial, Indigenous peoples have made environmental stewardship a keystone to their ways of being and doing. Beyond their sheer beauty, forests continue to serve as a cornerstone for economic vitality, societal well-being, and ecological richness. Fostering resilient forests is not just about trees: it's about safeguarding a legacy that intertwines with our society, economy, and commitment to environmental stewardship.

As the world studies climate change, the significance of the forests becomes even more pronounced. Worldwide, forests are experiencing impacts from extreme weather events due to a changing climate, which will result in changes to individual species and the ecosystem as a whole.

Fostering Forest Stewardship in a Canopy



of Change is a call to action that calls on us to examine current forest practices, identify where vulnerabilities may lie, and identify necessary adaptations. To create viable

solutions for future resilient forests, one will have to examine traditional ways and knowledge of stewardship, as well as scientific innovations and techniques.

Students will learn how climate models can help predict the impacts of a changing climate on forests; how this data can be used to facilitate conservation; how a changing climate will influence ecosystem shifts;

how these projected altered ecosystem are expected to impact forest health; and how these shifts will present challenges to existing forest management and harvest systems. Teams will work together to create innovative solutions to complex problems facing the forest and the environment.

Find study resources for the 2025 special topic at www.envirothon.org.

2025 NCF-Envirothon: Alberta, Canada

The 2025 NCF-Envirothon will be hosted at Mount Royal University in Calgary, Alberta, Canada, July 20-26, 2025. Calgary is located in western Canada and sits on the transitional area between the Rocky Mountain Foothills and the Canadian Prairies.

In Alberta, approximately 60% of the Canadian province is covered by forests, and these wooded landscapes are an integral part of the identity and culture of those who live there.

The area is also home to Banff National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, which is famous for Rocky Mountain peaks and glacial lakes.

If you have a competitive team, consider applying for passports now so you'll be ready if you win state in April.



A Look Back at the 2024 Nebraska Envirothon

Sixty-eight teams competed in the regional contests during February and March, and 14 teams qualified to participate at the state competition.

Teams met at Ponca State Park for the 32nd annual Nebraska State Envirothon April 24, 2024. Concordia Lutheran High School from Omaha took home the championship along with \$1,500 and represented Nebraska at the National Conservation Foundation (NCF) Envirothon in Geneva, New York.

The 2024 oral presentation theme was "Renewable Energy for a Sustainable Future."

The Nebraska Association of Resources Districts (NARD) Foundation awarded cash

prizes to the top three teams at the state competition:

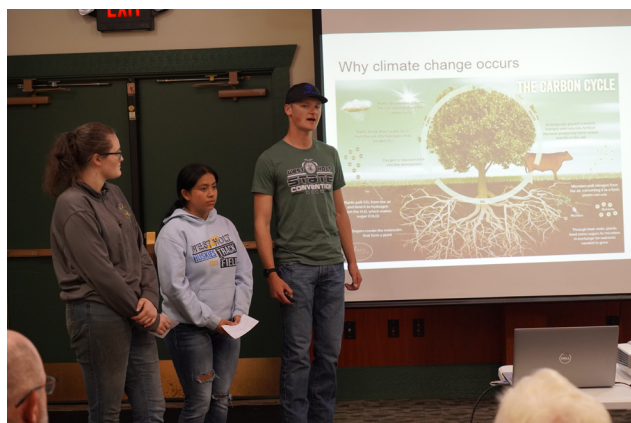
- **First Place (\$1,500):** Concordia Lutheran
- **Second Place (\$1,000):** St. Paul High School
- **Third Place (\$500):** Overton High School

Additional prizes were awarded to the top teams in each testing category:

- **Aquatics:** Concordia Lutheran
- **Forestry:** Concordia Lutheran
- **Policy (tie):** Concordia Lutheran & Overton
- **Range:** Burwell High School
- **Soils:** Concordia Lutheran
- **Wildlife:** Concordia Lutheran
- **Oral Presentation:** St. Paul High School



Tri-County students work to identify a snake at the Wildlife station during the State Envirothon at Ponca State Park.



Middle Right: The West Holt team gives their oral presentation to a panel of judges at State Envirothon.

Right: Beatrice students work together at the Aquatics station at State Envirothon.

Left: Omaha Zoo Academy students identify a tree at the Forestry station.



Concordia Lutheran Competes in Geneva, New York

After taking the top spot at the State Envirothon, Concordia Lutheran went on to represent Nebraska at the NCF-Envirothon July 28 to Aug. 3, 2024, at Hobart and William Smith Colleges in Geneva, New York.

The NCF-Envirothon included 49 teams from the U.S., Canada, China and Singapore. Top places went to Tennessee (first), New York (second), and Maryland (third). The 2025 NCF-Envirothon will be hosted in Calgary, Alberta, Canada, July 20-26, 2025.



Left: Concordia Lutheran represents Nebraska at the NCF-Envirothon in Geneva, New York. The students had a great oral presentation placing 18th out of 49.

Right: The "Fun Day" during the NCF-Envirothon in New York included a day at Niagara Falls where students took the Maid of the Mist boat tour.



2024 Fall Field Days to Prepare for Envirothon

Nebraska's Natural Resources Districts in conjunction with partners are hosting Envirothon Field Days in two (maybe three) locations this fall. The field days are a good opportunity to train students for Envirothon with resource professionals or introduce students to Envirothon who may not have competed before.

- Sept. 4, 2024: Envirothon Field Day (Wahoo, Nebraska)
- Oct. 30, 2024: Envirothon Field Day (Ord, Nebraska)
- TBD: Western Nebraska Location

While students are participating in the Field Day, teachers will have the opportunity to participate in a Project WET professional development training and receive curriculum to take home. Foundations of Water Education is Project WET's newest resource published in 2024 provides NGSS standards aligned lessons that help build student understanding of water conservation. This new curriculum guide includes newly updated and revised Project WET activities that set a good foundation of awareness and action concerning water, systems thinking, and human interactions with the shared environment.

There is still time to register for the Oct. 30th Envirothon Field Day in Ord. [REGISTER HERE!](#)



A Milford student learns how to measure tree diameter with Nebraska Forest Service Forester Justin Evertson.

Time	Session
9-9:15 a.m.	Welcome
9:20-10:05 a.m.	Session 1
10:10-10:55 a.m.	Session 2
11-11:45 a.m.	Session 3
11:50 a.m. to 12:35 p.m.	Session 4
12:40 p.m. to 12:45	Closing Announcements & Thank You
12:45 p.m.	Depart or Students can eat sack lunch on property

Envirothon Field Days are generally from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. The above timeline outlines the Envirothon Field Day expectations.



Above: Students learn how to identify wildlife pelts with Nebraska Game & Parks during the Envirothon Field Day in Wahoo on Sept. 4, 2024.



Above: NRCS Soil Scientists show students how to texture soil.

Right: Students listen to Tara Anderson from the Nebraska Department of Environment & Energy during the Aquatics station at the Envirothon Field Day Sept. 4, 2024, in Wahoo.



Competing in the Nebraska Envirothon

Teams may compete at ANY regional contest in Nebraska they choose, but are only allowed to compete at one regional contest per year. The score will be counted in the region that the school/club is geographically located in.

Envirothon teams are composed of FIVE students per team. A school may bring multiple teams to a regional competition.

Nebraska allows for six regional winners and eight wild card winners to compete in the State Envirothon. See page five of the Nebraska Envirothon Guide Book for more information.

All teams competing at the Nebraska State Envirothon competition will be required to create a slide deck and present to judges on the special topic. No audio is allowed in the presentation.

Awards are given to the winning team of each testing station. A championship award is given to the team with the highest overall score. The Nebraska Association of Resources Districts (NARD) sponsors the winning Nebraska team at the NCF-Envirothon competition in July.

The Nebraska Envirothon Guide Book and study materials are available on the Nebraska Envirothon website. For more information visit: www.nrdnet.org/nebraska-envirothon

Nebraska Envirothon Regions

