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**OK Environmental Literacy Organization Receives Federal Funding**

The Oklahoma Consortium for Environmental Literacy (OKCEL) has received two years of additional funding through the national Environmental Education and Training Partnership (EETAP). The grant will help the organization develop an Environmental Literacy Master Plan. OKCEL received \$60,000 to support their work through September, 2005.

The grant will help OKCEL design a state-level Master Plan to guide environmental education efforts in Oklahoma over the next five years. “We are working to build a partnership of diverse stakeholders to create and implement Oklahoma’s first comprehensive statewide Environmental Literacy Master Plan,” said Kathy Draper, OK’s EETAP Project Manager.

“We are bringing in representatives of traditionally under-served and un-served communities to participate in the designing of the Master Plan,” said Draper. “By having many different audiences involved from the beginning, we can ensure the Master Plan will be far reaching and sustainable.”

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Oklahoma and seven other states received financial support to advance environmental education statewide. These eight states receive U.S. EPA funds through the Environmental Education and Training Partnership (EETAP) based at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point.

“We have 42 partners from throughout Oklahoma working on four sections of the Master Plan: Advocacy, Implementation, Outreach and Resources,” Draper said. “Each section group has its own goals and action steps to further our mission which is to promote environmental literacy through the cooperative actions of the entire environmental education community.” Draper says OKCEL plans to meet bi-monthly until the plan is completed.

“Our intent is to make this a living document,” Draper continued. “We are implementing action steps while the Master Plan is being developed. As a result, we have strong buy-in from our participants, who are anxious to see progress.”

The National Environmental Education Advancement Project (NEEAP), one of eight national EETAP partners, manages the EETAP States Program. “OKCEL’s efforts to include many diverse audiences in the development of this plan are impressive,” said Jeremy Higgins, NEEAP Outreach Coordinator. “We are excited to support OKCEL’s efforts to promote high-quality, sustainable environmental education.”

For more information about NEEAP or capacity building related activities, visit the website <http://www.uwsp.edu/cnr/neeap/>.

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