



NEW HAMPSHIRE CHARITABLE FOUNDATION

WELLBORN ECOLOGY FUND 2023 INSTRUCTIONS FOR SCHOOL-BASED PROJECT GRANT APPLICATIONS

The Power of Place: Place-based ecology education immerses students in local heritage, cultures, landscapes, opportunities and experiences, using these as a foundation to meaningfully connect learners to the world around us and promote a deeper understanding of environmental issues.

Wellborn School-based Project Grants will help your Upper Valley K-12 school or early childhood education center launch (or continue) place-based ecology education programs/projects.

1. Grants are open to Upper Valley K-12 schools, early childhood education centers and local environmental organizations providing school-based programming. See the [NHCF website](#) for further eligibility criteria.
2. Grants are available for the following categories:
 - a) **Starting or Enhancing place-based ecology-education programs and/or nature-based early learning programs. Activities include, but not limited to:**
 - ✓ Supporting teachers to participate in professional-development opportunities that will enhance their skills in place-based ecology education and/or nature-based early learning;
 - ✓ Enhancing hands-on, nature-based, outdoor learning approaches that are tied to Common Core and Next Generation Science standards;
 - ✓ Purchasing relevant supplies and/or equipment.
 - b) **Creating opportunities for all youth to have nature-immersion experiences. Activities include, but not limited to:**
 - ✓ Improving, enhancing or creating access to natural areas (including gardens and outdoor classrooms) within walking distance of schools and early childhood centers, and helping to integrate learning opportunities in those natural areas with school curriculum.
 - ✓ Supporting inclusionary practices or accessibility modifications help youth with disabilities successfully participate in outdoor classrooms, gardens and/or other natural areas.
 - ✓ Purchasing relevant outdoor learning supplies and/or outdoor gear for students.

Context and Background:

The Wellborn Ecology Fund (WEF) is dedicated to using the “power of place” to increase environmental and ecological knowledge in the Upper Valley. WEF was established through a bequest by the late [Marguerite Wellborn](#), a former Hanover resident and avid naturalist with an enduring passion for studying and protecting the natural world.

Place-based learning addresses the integrated goals of:

- **Student Engagement:** boosts students' engagement, academic achievement, and sense of personal efficacy as stewards of their local environment and community.
- **Community, Social and Economic Vitality:** fosters connections between local social and environmental organizations and their constituencies in the schools and community, which helps to improve quality of life and economic vitality.
- **Ecological Integrity:** helps students make tangible contributions to resolving local environmental issues and conserving local environmental quality.

And don't forget about the well-being of our littlest ones!

Research demonstrates that nature-based early learning and child-directed nature play in preschool settings not only has a profound influence on children's values toward nature and pro-environmental behaviors, but also increases protective factors, including enhanced physical, mental and emotional health.

Wellborn Vision – *We imagine a region in which:*

- People of all ages, backgrounds and abilities can learn about the natural systems of the Upper Valley and the impact of human activity on those systems.
- All residents have ready access to nature—to learn about and enjoy our incredible landscape and natural systems.
- There is a growing network of individuals, organizations and communities working to promote and implement access to nature and ecology education.
- Upper Valley residents gain the ecological knowledge and skills they need to enable them to protect, restore and steward our natural systems.
- Ecological sustainability and environmental stewardship are core values.

Wellborn Region-wide Goals

- Reach underserved communities and constituencies in the Upper Valley.
- Promote partnerships and collaborations between and among schools, colleges, environmental learning centers, nonprofit organizations, municipalities, community groups, and other institutions.
- Support existing environmental-education organizations in the region.
- Enhance leadership and expertise among individuals to better serve their organizations, communities and the region.
- Leverage resources to encourage more community and/or financial support for environmental and ecology education programs.