



# Iowa Leopold Education Project

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## What is the Iowa Leopold Education Project?

Iowa LEP is an innovative educational program based on the classic writings of the renowned conservationist and Iowa native Aldo Leopold. It uses hands-on critical thinking activities to not only teach students about nature and conservation, but to instill what Leopold called a “land ethic” – an appreciation of, and respect for, the land. Its curriculum takes conservation education one step further by depicting land as a community to which humans belong and not just a commodity for our consumption. It draws the connections between wildlife, its habitat, and our influence on both.

## Isn't LEP a National Program?

Yes. But it operates the same way individual chapters do: Though it is a national program (just like chapters are part of the national organization), its implementation – from fundraising to teaching the curriculum – is at the local level. It is no different from chapters raising local money to do local habitat projects while being part of a national organization. LEP in Iowa operates the same way. Thus, all money raised for Iowa LEP *stays in Iowa* to provide the curriculum to more educators and students.

## With so many other local, state and national educational programs out there, why LEP?

Much of the LEP curriculum overlaps with and integrates aspects of other programs to provide a wider array of activities. This allows LEP curriculum to fit into virtually any classroom, for any subject. It also works great for youth events held by chapters and agencies, or any other group. It is dynamic and flexible enough to be used indoors or out, and for virtually any age group. What sets LEP apart is that it doesn't just provide knowledge of wildlife, their habitats and conservation principles – it provides *understanding* of why those things are important and how we affect them with our actions. And with that understanding comes appreciation and enjoyment – two necessary attributes for the conservation leaders of tomorrow.

## How does LEP operate?

There are two levels of training associated with LEP. The first level is *Educator* and applies to anyone interested in delivering the LEP curriculum to students. LEP Educators can be (and are) teachers, naturalists, resource professionals, chapter leaders...pretty much anyone. These are the people that use the curriculum, lead the activities and teach the students. The second level is *Facilitator* and applies to those who not only want to deliver the curriculum, but who want to train more Educators. Facilitators participate in additional training to learn how to host the Educator Workshops that train the Educators on how to use the LEP curriculum.

Iowa LEP is 100% volunteer run. The only paid staff associated with LEP are those that oversee the entire program at PF's national office. So 100% of the money raised for Iowa LEP is used to fund Facilitator and Educator workshops throughout the state, and to promote and grow the program. Without any staff, Iowa LEP relies on local chapters for funding, to identify potential workshop participants and to raise interest in the program in their communities.

## Who do I contact for more information?

For more information on Iowa LEP, contact Chris Lee, LEP State Coordinator, at (319) 572-1564 or by email at [chrislee0515@yahoo.com](mailto:chrislee0515@yahoo.com).