

# SEEA Newsletter

## *January 2021*

### SEEA Conference 2021 - Save the Date!

September 10-11, 2021

*Hosted by Environmental Educators of North Carolina*

**Lutheridge**

Arden, NC

This site has a wonderful camp-like feel, even though it's less than 10 minutes from the Asheville Airport!

In addition to two full two days of conference sessions, EENC will also be hosting a full day of optional workshops and pre-conference field trips on Thursday, September 9. More information to come!



## ***SEEA Project Updates***

### **Landscape Analysis**

The SEEA regional landscape analysis leadership team is finalizing survey questions and each state has been fleshing out their contact lists. Preparing to launch this survey in the next few months. A smaller subgroup is working directly with the Ecorise technical consultant on survey refinement to establish base standardized questions that can be used to compare data across regions. The anticipated role-out will be February 2021. In the meantime, states have been working on building their contact lists, which for some, has been a great exercise in filling gaps and just discovering providers in their states.

The Southeastern Environmental Education Alliance (SEEA) is a network of state affiliates of the North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE) located in the southeastern United States. Member states include AL, FL, GA, KY, MS, NC, SC, and TN. SEEA offers a regional conference and provides networking and professional development opportunities for the southeastern states.

## Don't Get Wasted

States have been working on correlating and customizing the curriculum to their individual states. An advisory team will be brought together to help build the online training portal for educators (formal and nonformal). The first Train the Trainer (T3) training will be held virtually in May or June, with another T3 held at the SEEA Conference in September (hopefully in person).

## Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Online Course

The development of this course in partnership with EcoInclusive, Youth Outside, and the Center for Diversity in the Environment is wrapping up. Next steps will be pilot testing this 100% online and asynchronous training. More information on how this can be rolled out to states and across the region will be coming in the months ahead.

## NAAEE Updates

### ***ACTION NEEDED BY FRIDAY, JANUARY 22, 2021***

NAAEE has drafted a letter that will be sent to the new Presidential Climate Envoy, the Hon. John Kerry, to ask him to give high priority to climate literacy, education, and training in our nation's work to rejoin the Paris Climate Accord.

More specifically, we are asking that this be done under the aegis of the [\*\*Action for Climate Empowerment \(ACE\) framework\*\*](#) and to make the U.S. a model for education and training as a critical part of major climate solution commitments under the Paris Agreement. The educational, skill development, and overall human resource development aspects of achieving our nation's goals is strongly facilitated and should not be overlooked by the U.S. or other nations.

If you would like to become a supporter/signatory of this letter, you can [\*\*sign up via this form\*\*](#). We will be collecting sign-ons through the **deadline on Friday, January 22<sup>nd</sup>**.

This climate education advocacy effort is a collaboration among many organizations committed to advancing climate literacy and related job and career development including: NAAEE, National Wildlife Federation, Earthday.org, the Campaign for Environmental Literacy, the Blue-Green Alliance, Climate Generation, the Aspen Institute, the Climate Literacy and Energy Awareness (CLEAN) Network, of course, Action for Climate Empowerment (ACE), and more! Join our growing coalition [here](#).

I look forward to hearing from you and hope you can sign on, and please share this with your networks!  
Sarah Bodor (sarah@naaee.org)  
NAAEE

## Affiliate Network Community Calls

*These calls are open to any affiliate members to network and share ideas. There is no set agenda or monthly topic. Calls are typically held the third Wednesday of the month at 2pm EST.*

**January 27, 2021** (rescheduled)

1pm EST

Zoom Link: <https://zoom.us/j/97703885114?pwd=ZHRaZW56YVNxckYxWjNTM0NmakNrUT09>

Meeting ID: 977 0388 5114

Passcode: 012508

**February 17, 2021**

2pm EST

Zoom Link: <https://zoom.us/j/99323689678?pwd=bEkrVUh4V0gzSzFHVW1wenp3UkJCQT09>

Meeting ID: 993 2368 9678

Passcode: Affiliates

## Other Events

### Green Teacher Webinar

*The Plastic Problem and What We Can Do About It*

Wednesday, February 3, 2021

7:30 - 8:30pm EST / 6:30 - 7:30pm CST

Presenter: Rachel Salt

Cost: Free (donation suggested)

Registration and more information: <https://greenteacher.com/webinars/>

Join author Rachel Salt, as she discusses her two recently-published books, *The Plastic Problem* and *Your Plastic Footprint*. Though plastic has numerous benefits, our reliance on this sturdy, light, and flexible material, paired with its longevity and our changing consumer habits means we've created a real plastic problem. However, there are reasons to be hopeful! This webinar will investigate the many meaningful and creative ways people around the world are working to manage, reduce and eliminate plastic waste, while providing ideas for classroom activities that can be taught virtually.

### 2021 International Conference on Outdoor Leadership

The Wilderness Education Association (WEA) and 2nd Nature TREC ([2ndnaturetrec.com](http://2ndnaturetrec.com)) are cosponsoring the **2021 International Conference on Outdoor Leadership** on February 12, 2021. This is a virtual event and we want to invite you to consider registering with your classes/students. **Students can attend for \$15 which also includes a 1-year membership to the Wilderness Education Association.** Here are a few key highlights and links to the schedule and speakers.

**When:** Friday, February 12th (10:00 am - 6:00 pm eastern time)

**Theme:** Wilderness Education in a Changing World

**More Information:** [www.weainfo.org/2021-international-conference](http://www.weainfo.org/2021-international-conference)

**Format:** One-day virtual conference using Whova and consisting of 20 educational sessions, workshops, and a keynote speaker.

Strands:

- Wilderness Education Association (judgment, leadership and decision-making)
- Environmental Integration
- DEI/Justice
- Research/Theory
- Virtual Learning and Technology

**Student Rates:** \$15/person which includes a WEA 1-year Associate Membership.\*\*\* If you register your class, you can select a batch of up to 10 participants at a time on the Whova registration platform.

**To Register:** [whova.com/portal/registration/weaic\\_202102](http://whova.com/portal/registration/weaic_202102)



## Alabama

Environmental Education Association of Alabama (EEAA)

<https://www.eeaa.us/>

Usually, EEAA would invite folks together in February for a conference at one of Alabama's many environmental gems. Unfortunately, we are not able to hold a meeting like that this year. With the Zoom fatigue many are feeling, an all-virtual offering was not really what we were looking for, and being an environmental organization, we wanted to get out and explore! We will be offering both in-person (small group) and virtual field trips across the state at environmental centers and outdoor locations that will showcase the natural beauty of Alabama. Like our conference, each field trip will focus on environmental education tools you can use in the classroom and resources available to you year-round. Keep February 25-27, 2021 on your calendars and an eye out for more details to come!

Auburn University at Montgomery Experimental Education and Engagement Center partners with Oak Mountain State Park for "Warhawk Workdays". Shelly Taliaferro brought a group of her students from AUM to Oak Mountain State Park to assist with both the Alabama Wildlife Center and Oak Mountain Interpretive Center's Native Plant Butterfly Garden. This program is for all majors and provides real world experience to students from various majors and backgrounds. Oak Mountain State Park is proud to partner with this program and the

opportunity to expose these students to environmental education and potential careers. Lauren Muncher, Oak Mountain State Park Naturalist is the coordinator for this project.



## Florida

League of Environmental Educators in Florida (LEEF)

<https://leef-florida.org/>

Our crowd fundraising campaign finished at the end of December. Although we didn't meet our goal of \$7,000, we earned about half that—the most we have ever raised in a campaign! We have been working to develop a video to thank donors in a special way this year. Having to do everything via Zoom is hard!!

We have also made a final decision to cancel our face-to-face conference scheduled for April, 2021; it will be replaced with a virtual conference. Since none of us has any experience with planning a conference of this sort, we are collecting knowledge about ones that we have attended to decide what we want and do not want. The conference has always been one of our major annual funding streams so we are working to establish other avenues for raising funds.

We just filled two empty slots on the board with a couple of eager, younger members who were ready for this leadership commitment. Now we just need to find a President-Elect so that our current president doesn't have another year to add to his duties! Gathering contact information for the Landscape Analysis turned into a group effort by the board, and now we are pleased with the amount of data we have collected. The finished analysis as well as the contact database is going to be very useful for coordination of EE in Florida.

As the pandemic continues to spread, we want to wish all of our SEEA friends a healthy and safe start to this near year!

## Georgia

Environmental Education Alliance of Georgia (EEA)

<https://www.eealliance.org/>

EEA's 2021 conference will be held virtually March 12 & 13. Sessions will focus on practices developed during the pandemic that are likely to last; inspiring stories of schools, nature centers, or environmental education organizations that found innovative ways to adapt in the past year; lessons learned about making environmental education more culturally-responsive; and schoolyard STEM projects that engage kids and communities in solving real-world problems. EEA will also be honoring all the amazing EE work across the state during the conference, and [nominations are now being accepted in all four award categories](#). Volunteers are also being sought to help run and plan the conference!

The application process is open for the [Petey Giroux Dragonfly Grant for EE and the Arts](#). These \$1000 grants from EEA honor Petey's life of service and her legacy of EE through the performing and visual arts. Applications are open to Georgia educators, and are due March 1.

Monarchs Across Georgia, one of our signature programs, is seeking nominations for its annual Service and Pollinator Habitat Awards! The MAG Service Award recognizes significant contributions to monarch education, conservation, and/or habitat restoration in the state of Georgia. Two Service Awards are available: one for an individual engaged in formal or informal education, and another to recognize a facility.

The Pollinator Habitat Award will recognize a MAG certified pollinator habitat that goes above and beyond the minimal certification criteria and has been established for at least three years.

Links to the award applications and scoring rubrics will be on the awards page at <https://www.eealliance.org/mag-awards.html> The submission deadline is February 1, 2021. Only one nomination per person or facility, please!

Also related to monarchs, a collaboration between Journey North, Monarchs Across Georgia, the University of Georgia and the Georgia Department of Natural Resources are encouraging people to report monarch sightings from December through March in the coastal states of Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, Florida, South Carolina, and North Carolina. Read the GA DNR Press Release and find out how you can contribute <https://georgiawildlife.com/researchers-invite-community-help-monarch-conservation-efforts>.

## Kentucky

Kentucky Association for Environmental Education (KAEE)

<https://www.kaee.org/>

This month, KAEE opens the 2021 Winter/Spring session of our [eeCredential Professional Learning Leader courses](#). In this pilot stage, the education team continues to glean valuable student feedback on courses and has made applicable updates to course requirements and



timelines. KAEF will also begin facilitating bi-monthly virtual WET and PLT workshops for educators across the state. A monthly webinar series featuring some of our state EE specialists and conference presenters is in the planning stages.

KAEF has been chosen to participate in the Target Circle charitable giving campaign program through March 31st. Help KAEF and learn more about Target Circle here: [www.target.com/circle](http://www.target.com/circle) Every vote counts!

## Mississippi

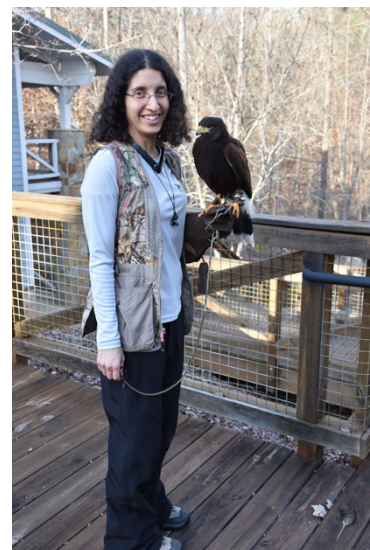
Mississippi Environmental Education Alliance (MEEA)

Website coming! Facebook @meeainms

Mississippi informal environmental educators have been working hard to take programs into the classroom or meet youth/teacher/adults outside. Unfortunately, most of our in-person classroom programs have been cancelled. A few bright spots though are our PLT program has been doing Teacher workshops virtually and has started doing a few in-person. Also, an outdoor field day with the Boy Scouts at their local camp will be an engaging, hands on, badge filled day. The Museum of Natural Science has been doing programs for small groups, which mainly consist of homeschoolers. Classrooms are not allowed field trips currently. They are also doing a few virtual programs and classes/workshops on the weekends with no more than 10 participants. This month they will also be doing a larger event, Family Fun Science with several exhibits that participants can look and learn from. Advance registration for these events has been necessary. Adopt-A-Stream has also been doing a few virtual programs. We are also planning to try filming some demonstrations and power points for our Envirothon teams training. If it works well we hope to use them in other teaching programs. Some of the local cities are also getting creative to try and promote outside the box ideas. One is doing "mini museums" in their display cases in city hall and this month will highlight various educational programs from Adopt-A-Stream.

The Master of Science in Conservation Education degree program at Mississippi State University is underway! This is the inaugural semester for our newly approved, 100% online Master of Science in Conservation Education degree program at Mississippi State University. We accepted five students into the degree program our first semester. Additionally, our new 100% online conservation education courses are providing professional development opportunities; several working professionals across many conservation-related fields have enrolled.

Here's why one of our students applied to our new Conservation Education degree program. "I wanted to continue my education at Mississippi State because of their reputation of having an amazing wildlife program. Mississippi State allows for real world experiences to help guide your education so you can pursue a career you will enjoy." ~Amber Barrow, Wildlife Interpretive Specialist at Charlie Elliot Wildlife Center in GA



## North Carolina

Environmental Educators of North Carolina (EENC)

<https://eenc.org/>

### [Making a Plan for EE to Survive and Thrive Beyond this Pandemic](#)

In partnership with the NC Office of Environmental Education and Public Affairs, EENC convened 30 thought leaders from across the state representing a wide range of backgrounds to discuss the effects of COVID on the educational landscape across the state. From there, the Advisory Council identified the needs we think are here to stay:

- Stronger partnerships between formal educators, nonformal environmental education programs, and community programs.
- Shared communications and storytelling around why EE is important
- Continued virtual programming/engagement
- Rethinking the role of an Environmental Educator.
- General EE Capacity Building.

Considering these needs, we developed a comprehensive list of action strategies. These action items are being distributed to partners across the state, so that we can all work to the best of our capacity to help elevate the field.

January has been a big month with the launch of our [New Member Levels and Benefits](#) based on over a year of discussion and work from the Membership Bootcamp. Our [2021 mini-grant application period has also opened](#). EENC mini-grants award up to \$250 and can be used for anything that would promote excellence for environmental education across the state, including but not limited to: professional development course fees, substitute teacher fees to allow professional development attendance, student field trip/virtual program fees, educational books or materials for facility/classroom/workshop, and garden resources for example. Want to know the difference \$250 can make? Take a look at [some of our 2020 mini-grant award recipients](#)!

Following the December SEEA Connection to Nature Workshop, the NC participants have decided to pursue a similar introductory training and visioning process with a selected group of program providers across the state that have been identified (or self-identified) as striving to connect people to nature through their programming. The visioning session will help determine if there is an interest in a statewide effort to use the [Practitioner Guide to Assessing Connection to Nature guide](#) to help gather baseline data across the state.

We also had a successful end of year crowdfunding campaign, exceeding our goal by raising \$20,577! As a thank you, EENC Board Members have pledged to picking up litter from 1 mile of roadways for every \$500 donated; so over 40 miles of roadsides across the state will be cleaned up when completed. The board decided this was a great pandemic-friendly activity that could be completed in individual communities and that worked towards a common goal without actually being together.



## South Carolina

Environmental Education Association of South Carolina (EEASC)

<https://eeasc.org/>

- EEASC is planning an environmental education workshop on pollinator conservation on March 18, 2021, in partnership with the SC Department of Health and Environmental Control's Champions of the Environment program.
- The 2020-2022 cohort of Palmetto Environmental Education Certification Program participants has had their virtual program orientation and will participate in their first required workshop January 15-17.
- Monthly Meetups continue to be popular among EEASC members. These virtual networking round-robins allow each educator 2 minutes to share program updates, event announcements, and support requests. The start time for these events alternates monthly between 8am and 3:30pm, and we consistently have 14-20 participants.
- EEASC leadership is making plans for a virtual 2021 board retreat/strategic planning session in February.
- Virtual fundraiser to begin in February and run through April.
- Planning for the 2021 EEASC Annual Conference is underway. The event (June) will likely be a hybrid conference, with some virtual sessions and one day of field trips.
- An EEASC subcommittee is revising our Mini-Grant program to provide more support for our members' professional development, service, and student-centered projects. We hope to roll out the new mini-grant guidelines in spring 2021.
- The SC Landscape Analysis Coordinator continues to work with the regional SEEA team to compile a database of EE contacts within our state.

## Tennessee

Tennessee Environmental Education Association (TEEA)

<http://eeintennessee.org/>

TEEA will be joining together virtually for their annual board retreat in early 2021. Upcoming projects include recording a set of EE Career panels for release in April. These recordings will feature current EE practitioners in various fields talking about their career and the past experiences that helped them break into the job market. The main audience for these recordings will be high school students. TEEA will also be hosting a Community Engagement Guidelines workshop in March.

# SEEA at Your Service



- Access the SEEA website <http://www.southeastee.com/>
- [2021 SEEA Leadership Team Roster](#)
- SEEA Strategic Plan, 2018-2021
  - Will be revised sometime in 2021
  - <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1PrsEUVFA-2yosIEF75XRxVu6RZT3Uw82-ncr54ZpPRU/edit>
- ZOOM Video Conferencing Available to all SEEA States if needed. Please email Ashley (director@kaee.org) to request date/time.

## Resources from NAAEE and the Affiliate Network

- eePRO Affiliate Group: <https://naaee.org/eeepro/groups/affiliates>
  - NAAEE membership is not required for most eePRO resources
- EE Research Bulletins (EERBs): <https://naaee.org/eeepro/research/eeerb>
- eePRO Research & Evaluation group: <https://naaee.org/eeepro/groups/research-and-evaluation>
- NAAEE's Research Programs: <https://naaee.org/eeepro/research>
- Children and Nature Network's Research: <https://www.childrenandnature.org/learn/research/>
- *Applying Systems Thinking for Our Affiliates* Webinar: <https://youtu.be/2A6vll3Fthc>
- EENC's [Environmental Education is Essential Document](#)

*As always, let us know if you have any concerns or questions as well as suggestions about how we can structure these updates to serve you better. Please send items for next month (news, updates, pictures) to Renee.*

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# SEEA at a Glance: Questions and Answers

## 1. What is SEEA?

The Southeastern Environmental Education Alliance (SEEA) is a network of state affiliates of the North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE) located in the southeast region of the U.S. - EPA Region 4. The region is composed of the eight states below.

### NAAEE Affiliate Organizations

- AL - Environmental Education Association of Alabama
- FL - League of Environmental Educators in Florida
- GA - Environmental Education Alliance of Georgia
- KY - Kentucky Association for Environmental Education
- MS - Mississippi Environmental Education Alliance
- NC - Environmental Educators of North Carolina
- SC - Environmental Education Association of South Carolina
- TN - Tennessee Environmental Education Association

## 2. What is SEEA's Mission?

The mission of the Southeast Environmental Education Alliance (SEEA) is to provide southeastern state environmental education associations and their members with valuable networking and communication opportunities that lead to greater success for all.

## 3. How is SEEA structured?

The SEEA Leadership Team includes two representatives from each state, including a Chair-elect, Chair, and Past Chair which are elected from the 16 representatives. SEEA has a part-time Executive Director and part-time Education Director. Funding for these positions come, in part from contributions from member states. The return on investment for the money paid by each state to support a SEEA Executive Director has been 2-4 times the contribution.

## 4. How does SEEA help the individual states?

SEEA helps the state NAAEE Affiliates in a variety of ways. SEEA seeks to procure funding through grants and other means to help the state affiliates. SEEA also compiles and provides shared resources so individual states don't have to invent everything from scratch. These resources include:

- o Strategic Plans
- o Policy Manuals
- o Job Descriptions and Personnel Policies
- o Forms
- o Marketing plans
- o Fundraising or Outreach Videos
- o Other documents

States can choose to participate in various opportunities such as grants but they are not obligated to do so. Participation on each initiative is voted on by the state affiliate board/council.

5. Does SEEA hold a conference or regular meetings?

The SEEA Leadership Team holds monthly conference calls and participates in a yearly leadership retreat. SEEA partners with one of the eight SE states each year to co-sponsor a conference, which doubles as the conference for both the state affiliate and SEEA.

6. What is SEEA working on currently?

In addition to the projects listed at the beginning of this newsletter:

- Creating and implementing a new SEEA work plan for the next three years.
- Pursuing new funding opportunities.
- Providing networking opportunities such as a regional conference and a SEEA meeting at the NAAEE Annual Conference.
- Facilitating communication among affiliate groups through various means, including monthly conference calls, periodic email updates, and postings on the SEEA website around various topics of mutual interest.
- Sharing resources such as newsletters, COVID adaptations, conference attendance opportunities, and general organizational information.