

Information and Education Session

Aquatic Education Curriculum

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Abstract: Representatives of 17 conservation agencies and organizations have joined together to form the Aquatic Resources Education Council with the goal of increasing public awareness of and respect for our aquatic resources. One of the first projects of the council was to design an aquatic education curriculum for schools, civic groups, and other organizations.

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The Aquatic Resources Education Council (AREC) was formed to respond to aquatic resource issues. The Council was established through the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (IAFWA). Jack Berryman, executive vice president of the IAFWA, was elected chairman of the AREC. The Council consists of individuals and organizations interested in conserving living aquatic resources and increasing public knowledge and awareness of them. Council organizational members are the American Fisheries Society, The American Fishing Tackle Manufacturers Association, Boat/U.S. Foundation, Bass Anglers Sportsman Society, IAFWA, Izaak Walton League, Missouri Department of Conservation, National Marine Fisheries Service, National Marine Manufacturers Association, National Wildlife Federation, Pennsylvania Fish Commission, Sport Fishing Institute, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Outdoor Empire Publishing Company, Youth Publishing Company, Natural Resources Police-Maryland and Delaware, and the Future Fisherman Foundation.

Purpose

The overall mission of the Council is "to provide a forum for the discussion of aquatic resource education; to develop recommendations for consideration by its members; to encourage and assist states and organizations in increasing public awareness and understanding of the nation's living aquatic resources and associated life forms and their proper utilization; and to produce safe, responsible, knowledgeable, and involved citizens." The initial major project selected by the Council

was the development of an aquatic education curriculum and instructor's manual which would qualify for Wallop-Breaux funding and be utilized by the individual states. In addition to being available for aquatic education programs in the states, the curriculum is designed for use by schools, civic organizations, clubs, associations, and individuals who have a desire to teach about fishing and aquatic resources.

Instructor's Manual

The instructor's manual, authored by C. Boyd Pfeiffer and Mark Sosin, consists of 4 major units of study and 28 individual lessons. The units are: Unit I—A Fishing Primer; Unit II—Becoming A Better Angler; Unit III—Understanding Fish and Their Environment; and Unit IV—Water Resources for Our Future. The lessons include topics such as endangered species, pollution, aquatic communities, fish behavior, population dynamics, ethical behavior, fishing equipment, safety, and where, when, and how to fish for different species and in different types of waters. The individual's responsibility and role in protecting aquatic resources is stressed throughout.

The instructor's manual is designed to be a self-contained instructional package. It contains the background content necessary for the instructor as well as a suggested teaching procedure with activities for students. In addition, appendices in the manual contain a glossary, graphics which can be photocopied for students or used for overhead transparencies, supplemental materials and references, equipment and instructional materials sources, and a section on careers in aquatic resource areas.

The 3-ring, loose-leaf format of the instructor's manual expedites its use. This format allows the instructor to easily incorporate specific local, regional or state information; to choose the order of the lessons to be presented; to include materials produced by fishing, outdoor, recreational and other organizations; and to quickly update the contents without revising the entire manual.

The Aquatic Resources Education Curriculum is designed for people who are looking for instructional material which satisfies the following requirements: 1) information on teaching fishing techniques, water safety and aquatic life; 2) flexible, adaptable materials suitable for a wide range of students, 3) a format that concentrates on aquatic resource management and conservation; 4) an approach which develops respect for the rights of others and emphasizes the importance of individual contributions; and 5) a concise explanation of fish biology and food chain functioning. This self-contained, 28-lesson curriculum covers these subjects and many others in a convenient, easy-to-use form. Developed with the support of the American Fishing Tackle Manufacturers Association, the instructor's manual is a complete, comprehensive guide to all aspects of aquatic resource education.

Additional information can be received from the American Fishing Tackle Manufacturers Association, 1250 Grove Ave., Barrington, IL 60010, or by calling (312) 381-9490.