

# FIT ENVIRONMENT

Winneshiek County Conservation Board (WCCB) is pleased to provide you with the *Fit Environment* materials! Designed to complement existing environmental education programming, the *Fit Environment* program strives to increase knowledge of the outdoors while promoting physical fitness. Educators, both formal and informal, and in a variety of subjects or settings, will find *Fit Environment* a useful tool. If you desire to connect youth with nature and foster an active, healthy lifestyle within the realm of your classroom, this program is for you!

## **A focus on developing lifelong recreational skills...**

Through *Fit Environment*, students learn the skills of activities that are defined as lifetime activities. “Lifetime activities are activities that can be done both individually and with friends, but do not require other participants like football, basketball or field hockey do. These activities can be done by young and old alike and often require little equipment, so they’re easy to incorporate into your day” (www.nrgoutdoors.org). The activities of this program, such as archery, canoeing, and cross-country skiing, will entice youth to head outdoors for exploration, recreation, and adventure. Ultimately, they will continue to participate in these health-promoting activities for the rest of their lives.

## **...while developing conservation minded individuals.**

The wonders of the outdoors come alive through the activities of this program. Natural resources will begin to have value to today’s youth when they interpret resources as a venue for recreation, learning, and health benefits. As young generations increase their appreciation for nature, they will mature into the future land stewards needed to maintain and upkeep our valuable natural resources.

The *Fit Environment* courses and resources were developed by the Winneshiek County Conservation Board as a result of the requests by teachers and educators for hands-on instruction in outdoor recreation activities. The program is a collection of resources that encourage educators to explore the vast amounts of information that exist on environmental education. The *Fit Environment* materials provided on this CD or website include:

- **Outdoor Recreation Guides and Resources:** Including general and skill-specific instructional guides for outdoor recreation, information on receiving further training or materials, and lists of experts, facilities, and other resources for different areas across Iowa.
- **Student Field Booklets:** Outdoor activity guides that help encourage students explore and reflect on the outdoors and to learn while doing. Includes the full booklet, individual pages, and teacher resources.
- **Lesson Plans:** Developed by educators who participated in the Fit Environment workshop and covering a range of subjects, topics, and grade levels. Includes compilation of activities appropriate for use with the Backyard or Park Packs available for use through many county conservation boards. Also includes educational standards and resources for incorporating outdoor recreation or environmental ed. into classrooms.
- **Workshop Resources:** Readings, activity guides, and handouts from the Fit Environment workshops.

Many of the materials on the CD and website have been left in .doc format, so that you can edit them to best suit your needs. We encourage using all components in interdisciplinary study to gain the most educational benefit. The outdoors provides ample opportunities for study in physical education, math, science, social studies, and more. A snowshoe walk charted on a GPS unit gives immediate data for study, or a fish caught during a field experience can be dissected in class – you are limited only by your creativity!

The Winneshiek County Conservation Board or other resources local to you can help you incorporate the Fit Environment into you classroom by providing:

- **Staff** trained in outdoor recreation and environmental education
- **Equipment**
- **Training** opportunities and resources to make you more comfortable
- **Experience** and **knowledge** of the natural resources for education and recreation

We invite you to visit with your local resources about the opportunities they can provide for introducing outdoor recreation to your students!

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