Youth Wetlands Education and Outreach

Overnight Camps

During the summer months, over 4,000 youth participate in four summer camps supported by the Youth Wetlands Education and Outreach Program: 4-H Camp Grant Walker, LOST Camp, Marsh Maneuvers, and Wild Woods Wanderings. At each camp, participants take part in hands-on, wetland-related educational activities in an outdoor setting. Through these activities, students are motivated to become ambassadors for wetland preservation, conservation and restoration and to become responsible environmental stewards, sharing their views and knowledge with others in their community upon their return.

Camp Grant Walker

- 4-H Camp Grant Walker is a five-day camp for 4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> grade students held for nine separate sessions during the summer. Campers choose from a variety of education activity “tracks” to focus on during the week. The Youth Wetlands Education and Outreach Program sponsors the Wetlands Track, which provides campers with field-based learning activities, video presentations, and lectures that focus on Louisiana’s wetland issues and what can be done to alleviate wetland degradation.

LOST Camp

- LOST Camp, based on the 4-H Science, Engineering, and Technology (SET) Program, is a five-day camp for 7th and 8th grade students where campers are exposed to job responsibilities in a variety of science-based professions. Campers select three activity tracks in which to participate and the Youth Wetlands Education and Outreach Program sponsors the Wetlands Track, where campers partake in wetland-related educational activities that explore careers in a wetland-based profession. Examples of these activities include, plant identification, soil classification, wetland restoration, wildlife management techniques, and water sampling.

Marsh Maneuvers

- Marsh Maneuvers is a five-day camp held every week in July at the Rockefeller Wildlife Refuge in Grand Chenier, Louisiana. High school students are immersed in wetland ecology lessons, including fishing, crabbing, cast netting, water chemistry testing, wildlife observation, seafood processing, boating, policy debates, and more. 132 campers representing 32 Louisiana parishes participated in four sessions of Marsh Maneuvers during the summers of 2007 and 2008. During the summer of 2008, a pre and post test was given to participating students during the four sessions of Marsh Maneuvers. Combined pre and post test results showed an overall improvement in test scores at the conclusion of camp, with the average score increasing 22.4% across grades 7-12. Specifically, results of session averages indicated that Session 1 scores increased 19.7%, Session 2 increased 22.0%, Session 3 increased 27.0%, and Session 4 increased 21.0%.

Wild Woods Wanderings

- Wild Woods Wanderings is a five-day camp providing high school participants with first-hand experiences in a forested wetland ecosystem. Camp activities consist of outdoor survival skill training and classes on map and compass skills, water quality, public policy, pollution, and aquatic education. 76 youth participants, representing 14 parishes in Louisiana attended the camp during the summer sessions held in 2007 and 2008. During the summer of 2008, a pre and post test was completed by the youth participants at each session of Wild Woods Wanderings. The test is used to assess knowledge gained on wetland ecosystems and sustainability components. The combined pre and post test averages indicated a 17% increase in scores. Specifically, scores showed that Session 1 increased 13% and Session 2 increased 21%.

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