Nebraska Envirothon News

October 2023 **www.nrdnet.org**

What is the Nebraska Envirothon?

The Nebraska Envirothon is a competition designed for high school students to test their knowledge about the environment. Teams of five compete at the regional level in seven environmental study subjects -- soils, aquatics, forestry, policy, wildlife, range and a special topic. For the state competition, an oral presentation is added to the testing on the special topic. The topic is selected by the National Conservation Foundation (NCF) Envirothon Committee.

A growing number of career fields involve natural resources. This an opportunity for students to gain hands-on experience working on environmental issues, and get exposure to a variety of careers.

Envirothon allows students to take their classroom knowledge and apply it to real-world situations. Students are given the opportunity to interact with resource professionals in environmental careers. The competition is a great link between academics and the business world.

2024 Envirothon Competitions

Regional Testing

January, February & March 2024

Regional Envirothon testing will be in January, February or March (schedule on next page). Teams with five members will work together to take seven tests. Each test is timed at 15 minutes. Schools can bring multiple teams to compete. The winning team from each region along with eight wildcards (14 teams total) are invited to compete at the Nebraska State Envirothon.

Nebraska State Envirothon

April 24, 2024

Ponca State Park

Ponca, Nebraska

The State Envirothon Committee will host the Nebraska State Envirothon at Ponca State Park in northeast Nebraska. The last time State Envirothon was hosted at Ponca State Park was 2009.

Previous State Champions

2023: Dawson County
2022: Concordia
2021: Ord
2020: *Canceled*
2019: St. Paul
2018: Concordia
2017: Concordia
2016: Concordia
2015: Concordia
2014: Concordia
2013: Concordia
2012: West Holt
2011: Superior
2010: Superior
2009: Ord
2008: Wauneta-Palisade
2007: Wauneta-Palisade
2006: Wauneta-Palisade
2005: Norris
2004: Norris
2003: Superior
2002: Medicine Valley
2001: Cambridge
2000: Nelson
1999: Nelson
1998: Cambridge
1997: Cambridge
1996: North Platte
1995: Chappell
1994: Norris

2024 Competition Locations & Contacts

Western Region

Jan. 31, 2024 — Gordon City Hall, Gordon

Regional Contact: Kylen Armstrong, Upper Niobrara White NRD, 308.432.6187, armstrong@unwnrd.org

Mid-Plains Region

March 5, 2024 — NE College of Technical Agriculture, Curtis

Regional Contact: Colleen Stone, Middle Republican NRD, 308.362.4281, cstone@mrnrd.org

Metro Region

Feb. 22, 2024 | 9 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. — Papio NRD Office, Chalco Hills Rec Area

Regional Contact: Kaylyn Kelley, Papio-Missouri River NRD, 402.315.1713, kkelley@papionrd.org

Central Region

Feb. 26, 2024 — Central Community College, Columbus

Regional Contact: Brody Vorderstrasse, Central Platte NRD, 308.385.6282, brody@cpnrd.org

Southeast Region

March 5, 2024 — Southeast Community College, Beatrice

Regional Contact: Scott Theis, Lower Big Blue NRD, 402.228.3402, theis@lbbnrd.net

March 7, 2024 — Nebraska Assoc. Resources Districts Office, Lincoln

Regional Contact: Megan Grimes, NARD, 402.471.7672, mgrimes@nrdnet.org

Northeast Region

Feb. 26, 2024 — Northeast Community College, Norfolk

Regional Contact: Beth Walsh, Upper Elkhorn NRD, 402.336.3867, bwalsh@uenrd.org

Nebraska State Envirothon Competition

April 24, 2024 — Ponca State Park, Ponca, Neb.

Megan Grimes, NARD, 402.471.7672 or mgrimes@nrdnet.org

2024 Current Environmental Issue (Special Topic)
"Renewable Energy for a Sustainable Future"

In our modern world, energy touches almost every aspect of our lives. It lights our homes, transports our food, cleans our water, fuels our cars, powers life-saving medical equipment, and so much more. The production and use of energy are deeply entwined with the economy, social and political issues, and the environment. The environmental, economic, and social outcomes of the choices being made about energy now will shape the future of our planet. Governmental policies, industry, and public opinion are shifting to embrace a sustainable future that includes renewable energy.

Today, power generation from renewable energy sources accounts for approximately one third of the total global output.

Signatories to the United Nations Convention on Climate Change agreed to work toward the goal of nearly 80% of the global power demand to be met by renewable sources by 2050. Many states are working to build a vibrant renewable energy industry covering all facets of the process from manufacturing to installation, and including technologies for solar, wind, biomass, and hydroelectric energy.

Decisions about sustainable energy are not just made by politicians and corporations Individuals can choose what energy practices to support and can advocate for the transition to renewables. New energy innovations are constantly transforming this emerging field, with technological developments in energy sources, production methods, and flexible delivery.

Students will learn about :

- Different sources of renewable energy
- Challenges facing the transition from traditional fossil fuels to renewables
- Environmental, economic, and social impacts of energy consumption
- How individuals can affect change in their communities

Find study resources for the 2024 special topic at [www.envirothon.org.](http://www.envirothon.org)

2024 NCF-Envirothon: New York!

The 2024 NCF-Envirothon will be hosted at Hobart and William Smith Colleges in Geneva, New York, July 28 to Aug. 3, 2024. This is in upstate New York in the Finger Lakes region, which refers to long, narrow lakes in an overdeepened glacial valley.

New York has some of the most progressive energy and climate goals in the United States, including: the adoption of the Clean Energy Standard, the passage of a mandate for 70% of electricity in the state to be from renewable sources by 2030, the goal of achieving a 40% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030, and saving 185 trillion British Thermal units (Btus) in end-use energy by 2030 through greater efficiency.

A Look Back at the 2023 Nebraska Envirothon

Eighty-six teams competed in the regional contests during February and March, and 14 teams qualified to participate at the state competition.

Pelicans and turkeys welcomed students to Lake McConaughy for the 31st annual Nebraska State Envirothon April 26, 2023. Dawson County Envirothon Club took home the championship along with $1,500 and represented Nebraska at the National Conservation Foundation (NCF) Envirothon in New Brunswick, Canada, in July 2023.

The 2023 oral presentation theme was "Adapting to a Changing Climate."

The Nebraska Association of Resources Districts (NARD) Foundation awarded cash prizes to the top three teams at the state competition:

- **First Place ($1,500)**: Dawson County Envirothon Club
- **Second Place ($1,000)**: Milford High School
- **Third Place ($500):** St. Paul High School

Additional prizes were awarded to the top teams in each testing category:

- **Aquatics**: Concordia Lutheran
- **Forestry**: Concordia Lutheran
- **Policy**: Dawson County Envirothon Club
- **Range:** Ord
- **Soils**: Milford
- **Wildlife**: Milford
- **Oral Presentation**: Dawson County Envirothon Club

Dawson County Envirothon Club students work to identify a snake at the Wildlife station during the State Envirothon.

Middle Right: The Alliance team gives their oral presentation to a panel of judges at State Envirothon.

Right: Milford students work together at the Range station during State Envirothon.

Left: Omaha Zoo Academy students identify a tree at the Forestry station.

Dawson County Competes in New Brunswick, Canada

After taking the top spot at the State Envirothon, the Dawson County Envirothon Club went on to represent Nebraska at the NCF-Envirothon in July 2023, at Mount Allison University in New Brunswick, Canada.

The NCF-Envirothon included 49 teams from the U.S., Canada, China and Singapore.

Top places went to the following states/provinces:

- **First**: Massachusetts
- **Second**: Pennsylvania
- **Third**: Ontario, Canada

The 2024 NCF-Envirothon will be hosted in Geneva, New York.

Right: Dawson County Envirothon Club was named 2023 Nebraska Envirothon champions and went on to compete in New Brunswick, Canada, in July 2023.

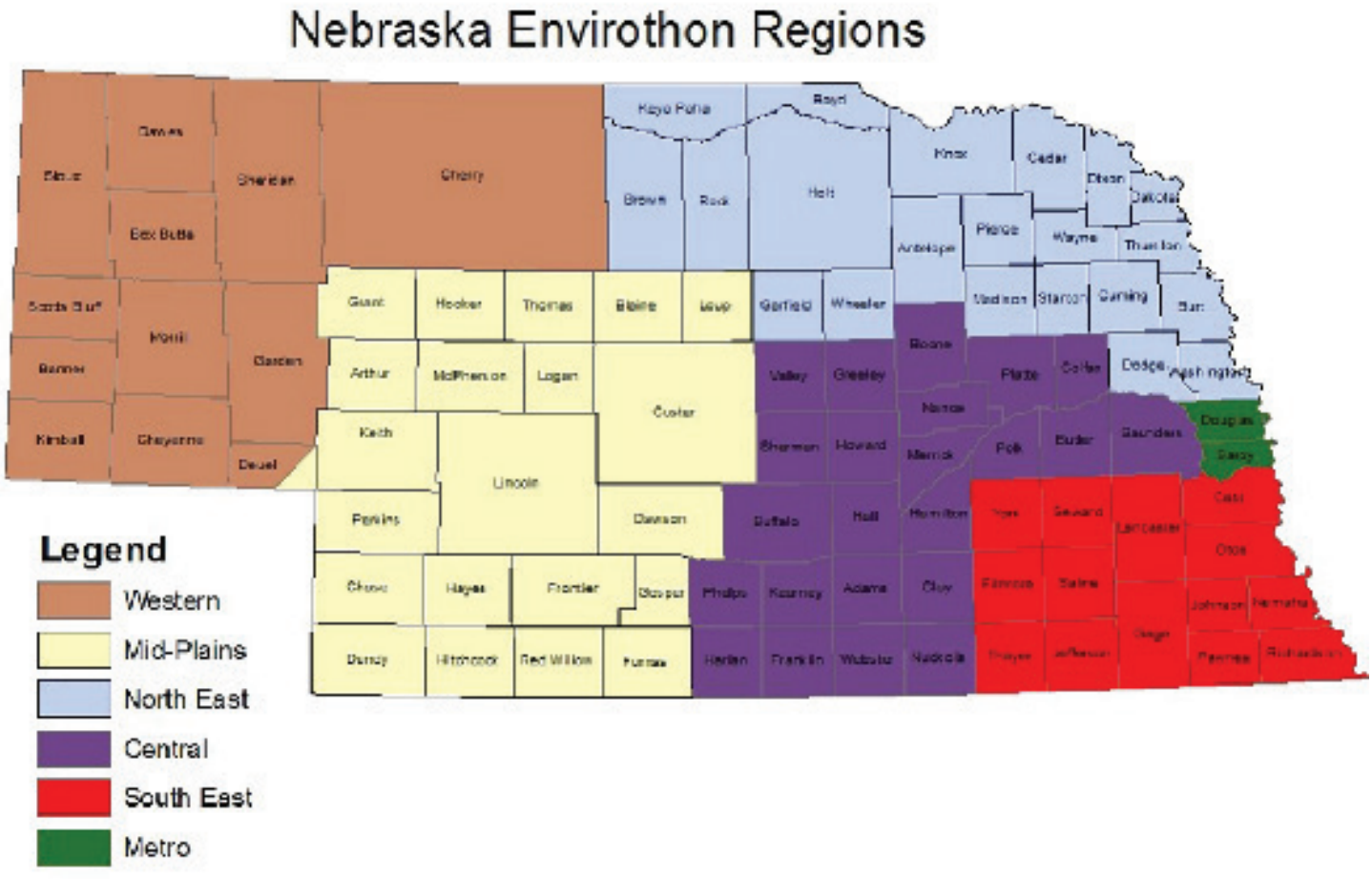
Competing in the Nebraska Envirothon

Teams may compete at ANY regional contest in Nebraska they choose, but are only allowed to compete at one regional contest per year. The score will be counted in the region that the school/club is geographically located in.

Envirothon teams are composed of FIVE students per team. A school may bring multiple teams to a regional competition.

Nebraska allows for six regional winners and eight wild card winners to compete in the State Envirothon. See page five of the Nebraska Envirothon Guide Book for more information.

All teams competing at the Nebraska State Envirothon competition will be required to create a slide deck and present to judges on the special topic. No audio is allowed in the presentation.

Awards are given to the winning team of each testing station. A championship award is given to the team with the highest overall score. The Nebraska Association of Resources Districts (NARD) sponsors the winning Nebraska team at the NCF-Envirothon competition in July.

The Nebraska Envirothon Guide Book and study materials are available on the Nebraska Envirothon website. For more information visit: www.nrdnet.org/nebraska-envirothon