



HILARY S. FRANZ
COMMISSIONER OF PUBLIC LANDS

\$1.65M GF-S

DNR's Youth Education and Outreach Program (YEOP) adds to the growing momentum around environmental education in Washington and facilitate natural resource career preparation.

This proposal funds:

- **7 ongoing FTE** for robust, statewide programming (\$1.17M).
- **Regional passthrough funding** to support collaborative and community-centered opportunities (\$180k).
- **Gear libraries** to support equity in natural resource education (\$75k).
- **Field experiences** for K-12 youth on state lands (\$80k).
- **Educator workshops** on the realities of modern natural resource management. (\$12k)
- Planning for a **Youth Natural Resource Camp** and **Educator Natural Resource Conference**, set to launch in the summers of 2026 and 2027 respectively (\$10k).

CONTACT

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Youth Education & Outreach Program

DNR's Youth Education and Outreach Program (YEOP) will facilitate place-based, career-connected, outdoor learning experiences on state lands for the next generation of natural resource professionals.



DNR manages 5.6 million acres of land and employs more than 1,400 people across the state—people who are experts in forestry, aquaculture, ecology, geology, horticulture, habitat restoration, wildfire, engineering, trail design, geospatial information, policy, and archaeology. DNR is positioned to enhance ongoing environmental education efforts across Washington and to engage youth in critical career exploration and preparation in the natural resources sector.

It's clear that Washington's youth care deeply about issues that are central to DNR's mission and DNR's YEOP will empower youth in decision-making processes, cultivate stewardship behaviors, build environmental literacy, and support the physical and mental wellbeing of young people through outdoor experience.

To advance this work, DNR's newly launched YEOP strategic plan seeks to:

- Expand career-connected outdoor learning opportunities on state lands
- Inspire the next generation of natural resource professionals
- Recruit a natural resource workforce that reflects the demographics of Washington state

Funding for Youth Education will enable DNR to provide clear pathways for youth into natural resource careers.

- Formal and non-formal educators have the knowledge, skills, and confidence to teach about the complexities of natural resource management; and
- Washington youth have place-based, experiential learning opportunities on public land to explore careers in natural resources and develop the skills used by natural resource professionals.





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Funding DNR's YEOP will allow the agency to accomplish:

Goal 1: Formal and non-formal educators have the knowledge, skills, and confidence to teach about the complexities of natural resource management.

- **Educator workshops (\$12,000):** professional learning opportunities to explore the complexities of natural resource management and introduce available curriculum resources.
- The **Educator Natural Resource Conference (\$5000):** a weeklong professional workshop that provides experiential learning on the practices and professions in natural resources.
- **DNR Youth Education Webpage Redesign (\$15,000):** the website will host curriculum and other resources to support natural resource workforce development.

Goal 2: Washington youth have place-based, experiential learning opportunities on public land to explore careers in natural resources and develop the skills used by natural resource professionals.

- **Field trips on DNR-managed lands (\$80,000):** Field experiences are the most powerful tool for promoting environmental stewardship and inspiring interest in natural resource careers. YEOP will **reimburse schools for transportation, substitute teachers, and other necessary resources** to ensure program equity and access for all students, including those with specialized needs and physical disabilities.
- **Gear Libraries (\$75,000):** YEOP will establish gear libraries in each of DNR's 6 regions to **provide area teachers and organizations with materials to support equitable outdoor learning.** Libraries will include the basics like boots and ponchos, in addition to resources to improve access for students with disabilities, and tools to support forestry, geology and aquatics education.
- The **Youth Natural Resource Camp (\$5000):** The YNRC will bring together a workgroup of partners to design and deliver a **weeklong experience for high school aged youth interested in careers in natural resources.** The YNRC will provide participants with worksite learning opportunities and mentorship from natural resource professionals.



Regional Funding (\$180,000): YEOP regional coordinators will each distribute funding to regional partners to **support collaborative work with tribes, community-based organizations, and education non-profits** in the design and delivery of educator professional development and career-connected field experiences for youth.

7.0 Ongoing FTE (\$1.17 million): 5 regional coordinators to meet student needs across Washington, a curriculum specialist, and support for public facing materials.