

KANSAS ENVIROTHON HISTORY

The Envirothon Program is a hands-on environmental problem-solving competition for high school-aged students. Participating teams complete training and testing in five natural resource categories: i.e. soils and land use, aquatic ecology, forestry, wildlife and current environmental issues. The current issue changes each year.

The Envirothon Program was first started by the Pennsylvania Soil and Water Conservation Districts in 1979 and was known as the “Environmental Olympics” which was later shorten to “Enviro-Olympics”. This competition quickly gained popularity and the program grew rapidly and the 1987 Pennsylvania State Enviro-Olympics involved 40 conservation district teams which provided visibility and stimulated interest from neighboring states.

In 1988, the program became known as the Envirothon with 3 states – Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Massachusetts, competing in the first “National Envirothon”.

In the summer of 1991, Peggy Ricker read in the NACD publication ‘*The Tuesday Newsletter*’ about the National Envirothon competition that had just been held in Maine. Peggy contacted the Ohio Envirothon representative to obtain more information and then decided that this program was what she was looking for to entice high school students to learn more about conservation.

Peggy, with the approval of her board of supervisors, wrote a resolution that was presented at the 1991 KACD Convention. It was introduced at the KACD Youth and Education Committee meeting, and later approved at the general business session by all the supervisors.

Peggy was appointed coordinator of the Kansas Envirothon competition. The first competition was held at Fall River Reservoir in Greenwood County with three counties – Greenwood, Pottawatomie and Riley participating. At the 1992 National Envirothon held in the state of Maryland, Kansas along with Nebraska and Idaho were the first states west of the Mississippi River to join the competition. It was also the first time a Canadian team, Nova Scotia, participated.

As in any project that develops and grows, there are growing pains. On the National level came logistics with the expanding number of states and provinces, name change from “National Envirothon” to “Canon Envirothon”, Envirothon name registered, logo trademarked, incorporated, 501(c)3 status, and hiring an executive director and paid staff.

Kansas’ participation in the “Canon Envirothon” has not been without its successes. In 1996 the Kansas team won the Forestry Station Championship and in 1998 Kansas won the Oral Station Championship, posting the highest score ever received and still holds that record today. In 1998 the Kansas team also placed fourth overall, the highest the state has ever placed. The Canon Envirothon provides the opportunity to earn scholarships and canon products as prizes. The Canon Envirothon has become one of

North America's largest high school environmental education competitions. On the state level students receive t-shirts and medals for the top three places in each category.

In 1999 Janice Plummer joined Peggy Ricker as co-chair of the Kansas Envirothon and in 2009 the Kansas Envirothon website was developed. In 2010 the rules were changed from allowing one team per county to attend the Kansas competition to allowing one team per school.

The Envirothon works in partnership with local conservation districts and other government agencies and organizations. Through the years the Envirothon competition has gained several dedicated financial supporters. Donations and grants is the source of funding for the competition.

On the Kansas level we have had 43 counties participate with an Envirothon team at some time in the past 19 years. County participation varies when teachers retire or change schools, or you have a change in conservation district employees. The date and location of the competition and school finances all are determining factors on whether a team attends the competition or not.

Allen – 1 year

Atchison - 2 years

Brown – 12 years

Chautauqua 1 year

Clay – 17 years

Cloud – 11 years

Cowley – 2 years

Crawford – 5 years

Dickinson – 6 years

Doniphan – 14 years

Elk – 5 years

Ellsworth – 6 years

Graham – 6 years

Greenwood – 8 years

Jackson – 15 years

Jefferson – 10 years

Labette – 9 years

Lane – 1 year

Lincoln – 3 years

Lyon – 5 years

Marion – 16 years

Marshall – 16 years

Miami – 4 years

Mitchell – 2 years

Montgomery – 2 years

Morris – 1 year

Nemaha – 12 years

Neosho – 14 years

Norton – 1 years

Osborne – 9 years

Pawnee – 3 years

Phillips – 3 year

Pottawatomie – 18 years

Rawlins – 1 years

Riley – 17 years

Russell – 2 year

Saline – 10 year

Sherman – 1 year

Sedgwick – 1 years

Seward – 1 year

Washington – 7 years

Wichita – 1 year

Wilson – 15 years

Year	No of Teams	State Winner By County	State Location And KACD Area	North American Location
1992	3	Greenwood	Fall River Reservoir Area 5 – Greenwood Co.	St. Mary’s, Maryland
1993	4	Neosho	John Redmond Reservoir Area 5 – Coffey Co.	Lewiston, New York
1994	6	Clay	Woodson Co. State Lake Area 5 – Woodson Co.	Ashville, North Carolina
1995	10	Clay	Milford Lake Area 4 – Geary Co.	Rexburg, Idaho
1996	14	Clay	Christian Hills Camp Area 5 – Greenwood Co.	Ashland, Nebraska
1997	19	Wilson	Wilson Lake Area 1 – Russell Co.	Johnstown, Pennsylvania
1998	24	Clay	Tuttle Creek Reservoir Area 4 – Pottawatomie Co.	Lansing, Michigan
1999	20	Clay	Wolf Creek Nuclear Operating Corporation Area 5 – Coffey Co.	Arcata, California
2000	19	Clay	Chautauqua Park Area 3 – Mitchell Co.	Wolfville, Nova Scotia
2001	18	Osborne	Centralia Lake Area 4 – Nemaha Co.	Raymond, Mississippi
2002	16	Wilson	Clay County Park Area 4 – Clay Co.	Amherst, Massachusetts
2003	23	Wilson	Big Hill Lake Area 5 – Labette Co.	Emmitsburg, Maryland
2004	23	Riley	Riverside Recreation Area 1 – Cheyenne Co.	Springfield, Missouri
2005	20	Saline	Lake Scott State Park Area 2 – Scott Co.	Buckhannon, West Virginia
2006	20	Marion	Webster Conference Center Area 3 – Saline Co.	Winnipeg, Manitoba
2007	17	Clay	Banner Creek Reservoir Area 4 – Jackson Co.	Geneva, New York
2008	15	Clay	Wolf Creek Nuclear Operating Corporation Area 5 – Coffey Co.	Flagstaff, Arizona
2009	14	Clay	Southwestern College Area 5 – Cowley Co.	Ashville, North Carolina
2010	14	Jackson	Southwestern College Area 5 – Cowley Co.	Fresno, California