



**WV ENVIROTHON**

**POLICY & PROCEDURES MANUAL**

**(REVISED 03/2025)**

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## **Mission Statement**

The mission of the WV Envirothon is to educate and promote the development of skills, knowledge, and an appreciation of the environment and conservation of natural resources for West Virginia students.

## **Objectives**

**Objective:** Cultivate the desire to learn about the natural environment and develop skills and knowledge applicable to responsible natural resource management.

- a. *Basic knowledge* – Students will be able to demonstrate a basic knowledge of the concepts of ecology and resource management, especially in the areas of soil, water, forestry, wildlife, and current environmental issues.
- b. *Resource management skills* – Students will be able to demonstrate and apply current scientific methods for resource management.

**Objective:** Promote stewardship of natural resources and the development of critical thinking, cooperative problem solving, and decision-making skills.

- a. *Awareness of environmental issues* – Students will gain an awareness of environmental issues and the various ecological, social, and economic factors involved.
- b. *Ability to work as a team* – Students will develop and demonstrate the ability to work together as a team to gather information and generate solutions to complex environmental issues.

**Objective:** Provide young people with the opportunity to experience environmentally oriented activities and become proactive citizens.

- a. *Knowledge and strategies* – Students will demonstrate strategies used to properly manage natural resources and remedy environmental concerns.

b. *Introduction to resource management agencies and organizations –*  
Students will become familiar with agencies and organizations involved in natural resource management.

## **I. WV Envirothon Competition**

- A. Selection of the Site:** The selection of the site shall be determined by the WV Envirothon Committee (WVEC).
- B. Dates of Competition:** The dates to hold the WV Envirothon competition shall be selected by the WVEC.
- C. Competition Stations:**
  - 1. There shall be 4 competition stations which include natural resource topics of Forestry, Soils, Aquatics, Wildlife, and a fifth station of a current environmental topic which shall be closely aligned with the North American Envirothon current environmental topic.
  - 2. The tests for each station shall be developed by the Education sub-committee.
  - 3. Station tests will be conducted by cooperating agencies and/or independent environmental professionals.
- D. Reference/Resource Materials:**
  - 1. The WVEC will provide resource information to each team's advisor(s).
  - 2. Registration packets shall be made available no later than March 1<sup>st</sup> of each year.
  - 3. The WVEC will identify and/or provide reference material to help students prepare for the WV Envirothon. Reference may include websites or their sources of information about natural resources or environmental issues.
  - 4. The WVEC will provide study materials to be utilized during the state competition on the website [www.wvca.us/envirothon](http://www.wvca.us/envirothon).
  - 5. No copies of tests shall be distributed to any individual or team.
  - 6. A listing of addresses of natural resources agencies shall be made available to registered teams upon request.

**E. Judging:**

1. Professionals from various organizations and agencies will judge the oral presentations.
2. Judges shall be selected by the WVEC. The judges shall be objective and knowledgeable in the natural resource field.
3. Judges decisions for all events will be final, pending a final decision by the WV Envirothon Executive Committee if necessary.

**F. Scoring:** Scoring for the WV Envirothon will be as follows:

1. Four natural resource tests and a preliminary oral presentation will be given for a maximum score of 500 points (100 points each).
2. The combined scores from the 5 stations will be totaled to determine which 5 teams will advance to the final oral presentation round.
3. The top 5 highest scoring teams will give a final oral presentation in front of a different panel of judges for a maximum of 100 points to be added to their score.
4. Final team placements (places 1 to 5) will be determined by adding the 5 station test scores to the final oral presentation score.
5. Final oral presentation scores will be based on a scoring criteria sheet provided by the WVEC.
6. In the preliminary and final oral presentations, the highest and lowest judges scores per team will be dropped.
7. Tiebreakers shall be in the following order: preliminary round current 5<sup>th</sup> Topic score, soils/land use score, aquatic ecology score, forestry score, and wildlife score.
8. Final scores for the top 10 teams shall be posted at the awards presentation.

**G. Appeals/Grievances:**

1. If a team should have a grievance, the team advisor must submit the grievance to the WV Envirothon Executive Committee prior to the final oral presentations.

2. Appeals must be submitted in writing to the WV Envirothon Executive Committee according to a procedure announced in the team advisors' meeting.

## **II. Participation Guidelines:**

### **A. Registration**

1. All students, advisors and guests must be registered to participate in the WV Envirothon.
2. A non-refundable registration fee shall be set up by the WVEC.
3. Advisors must submit registration forms for team members along with guest information by the date set by the WVEC.
4. Advisors must also submit the medical release and parental consent forms for students at the time of registration. The WVEC requires a completed and signed health form and must be informed of all participants taking prescription drugs and of any medical condition, including medication administered by an inhaler or mechanical device, special diets, allergies and special learning and/or training disabilities. Upon such notification, the WVEC will make any reasonable accommodations within their limits.
5. All volunteers must be registered and must complete the medical release form.

All medications must be labeled with the name of the medication, name of the patient, name of the physician, date and directions (e.g. specific dose to be administered). Prescription medications must be labeled by a registered pharmacist unless ordered from a pharmaceutical company. Safe refrigeration will be provided by the WVEC if needed. A parental consent form is also required for all students under the age of 18.

A trained medical professional will be onsite during the competition.

6. **The team photo taken during the registration period is mandatory. Any team that does not participate in the team photo during the designated time period may be subject to**

disciplinary action as determined by the WV Envirothon Executive Committee.

**B. Team Formation:**

1. The WV Envirothon is open to students enrolled in grades 9 through 12 or equivalent home school ranking in the school year immediately preceding the current competition. Ninth grade students attending a junior high/middle school may participate if the junior high/middle school is a feeder to the named high school.
2. Each team will consist of 5 students from the same school, home schooled group, or organization.

**C. Alternates/Substitutions:**

1. Alternates may participate in the WV Envirothon competition as long as they are registered. It is an option to allow alternates from different teams to be placed on a team to compete. However, their scores will not count toward the final standing.
2. Emergency substitutions can be made from the list of registered alternates.
3. Substitutions/alternates can be utilized up to the day of the competition. After team registration, teams are restricted to use only alternates from the existing registered team.
4. Substitute team members cannot come from any currently registered members of the other teams competing at that competition.
5. It is strongly advised that each team has an alternate(s). This is particularly important for the first place team competing in the NCF-Envirothon competition.

**D. Competing with fewer than 5 Members:**

1. In the event of an emergency or an illness that would prevent a registered 5-member team from competing in the WV Envirothon, the WV Envirothon Executive Committee may allow a team to compete with fewer than 5 members. The Envirothon Executive Committee will determine if a penalty shall be assessed to a team in the oral presentation for the absence of a complete 5-member team.

2. To be eligible for first place, a team must compete with a full 5-member team.

**E. Advisor/Chaperones:**

1. Each team must be accompanied by adult team advisor(s). Each team must arrange for an adult male to chaperone male team members, and an adult female to chaperone female team members.
2. Advisors/chaperones will be responsible to ensure that teams display proper conduct during the competition.
3. Teams are responsible for any damages that occur during the WV Envirothon competition.
4. No team members are allowed to leave the testing/competition sites without first notifying the advisors and WVEC members.
5. Advisors must attend the advisors' meeting.
6. All team members and advisors/chaperones are expected to attend all scheduled functions.
7. Advisor(s) and chaperones may accompany teams to practice sites and to the practice oral presentation.

**F. Disciplinary Policy:**

1. A student causing a disruption during the teaching or testing period will receive a warning from the station presenter or team buddy to discontinue the disruptive behavior. If the behavior continues, the presenter or buddy will have the offending student escorted to the team advisor. After discussion with the advisor, and at the discretion of the advisor, the individual may be taken back to the team to continue the competition. If the behavior continues, the individual will be disqualified immediately from the WV Envirothon. Dependent on the approval of the WV Envirothon Executive Committee, the team may continue to participate without the disruptive student.
2. An advisor who is causing a disruption during the teaching period will receive a warning from the station presenter or team buddy to discontinue the disruptive behavior. If the behavior continues, the advisor will be asked to leave the teaching sites for the remainder of the day.
3. Upon agreement of both a station presenter and a team buddy that a student was cheating during the competition, the student

will immediately be disqualified from the team and will be escorted to the team advisor. If two or more team members are caught cheating, the team will be disqualified immediately and asked to leave the WV Envirothon. Other actions considered as cheating would be copying answers from another team and sharing test information with another team during the testing.

4. Disruptive or other improper behavior by a student or advisor at venues and times other than teaching and testing periods will not be tolerated.
5. The WV Envirothon Executive Committee has the authority to determine and administer disciplinary measures.

#### **G. Testing Regulations:**

1. No team, team member, team advisor(s)/chaperone or resource persons associated with a team are permitted at test sites prior to the competition without written approval from the WV Envirothon Executive Committee.
2. Any team, team member, team advisor(s)/chaperone or resource persons associated with a team that is discovered on, near or around the testing sites or stations prior to or during the competition may be subject to immediate disqualification. The decision of the WV Envirothon Executive Committee will be final.
3. No copies of the test shall be distributed to any individual or team prior to the official testing. Strict secrecy shall be maintained on the test questions at all times.
4. Each station test will be a minimum of 30 minutes and will be worth a total of 100 points.
5. The testing stations will be comprehensive in nature, with the students expected to have an extensive knowledge of the subject matter.
6. Team members are required to wear a WV Envirothon shirt provided by WVEC during the competition. Team members are not allowed to wear any attire during the competition that identifies affiliation with a school or representing association.
7. Each team will receive one copy of the station test and are to work together as a team.
8. A signal will sound to start the test, to signal 5-minute warning, and a signal at the end of each station test.

9. During the testing events, the advisor(s) may not travel with their respective team(s).
10. Only materials supplied by the WVEC can be utilized at the testing stations.
11. No electronic, battery powered or solar powered equipment (*including cell phones, smart watches, and other smart devices*) may be used by team members during the instructional periods, field testing, or oral presentations unless such equipment is provided by the WVEC for use during the competition, and/or approved by the WV Envirothon Executive Committee (for example to compensate for a disability) prior to the start of the station testing competition.
12. The use of all other materials during the station testing and oral presentation will be prohibited.
13. The West Virginia Envirothon is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged electronic equipment/devices, nor the replacement cost of student and/or advisor/chaperone electronic devices brought to the competition.
14. All tests, score sheets, and any related testing materials will be submitted to the chairperson of the Education Sub-Committee at the completion of the competition.

#### **H. Oral Presentations:**

1. The length of time for oral presentations of the current environmental topic will be specified with the fifth topic scenario.
2. All 5 team members must participate orally in the presentation. However, no penalty shall be assessed to a team in the event of a certifiable injury or illness to a team member during the competition.
3. During oral presentations, all team members must wear the WV Envirothon shirt that is provided by the WVEC. No school, club, or group ID, either written or verbal, is permitted. Five points will be deducted from oral presentation score for any one of the following: any items of clothing with ID, any mention of school in introduction, or if name of school is in the presentation.
4. Visual aids must be prepared by team members before the competition and will be collected at registration. Visual aids will be specified with the fifth topic scenario. No additional

props will be permitted. Five points will be deducted for violations.

Teams will use PowerPoint slides. A maximum of 10 slides may be used. No videos, sound or hyperlinks will be allowed. Slides may use the animation features that are available with the PowerPoint software. Teams will turn in their flash drive and notecards when they register. The flash drive will be given to the team at the time scheduled for their 15-minute practice session. To receive full credit, presentations must be between 5 minutes and 7 minutes. Points will be deducted according to the score sheet if they take less time. Teams will be stopped at 7 minutes. This will allow time for a three-minute Question and Answer session with the judges.

5. 3 X 5-inch notecards can be used to read from; cannot be used as visual aid.
6. Windows operating system will be used for all presentations utilizing Microsoft Office PowerPoint.
7. Absolutely no props. Pointer will be provided.
8. Five (5) points will be deducted for any infractions of these rules.

### **III. Housing & Meals**

- A. Requirement:** Team members and advisors/chaperones are required to use the lodging and meal service provided by WVEC based on availability for lodging unless prior approval is granted by WV Envirothon Executive Committee.
- B. Housing:** Team members and advisors/chaperones will be housed together, or in close proximity, depending on the lodging site.
- C. Costs:** Costs for meals and lodging during the state competition will be the responsibility of each participating school or organization.
- D. Responsibility:** Lodging, meals, transportation, and liability for team members enroute to and from the state competition will be the responsibility of each participating school or organization.

## **IV. Awards/Scholarships**

- A. Scholarship Amounts:** The WVEC will determine the scholarship amounts based on availability of funds.
- B. Scholarship Application:** Winning teams will be provided scholarship applications at the conclusion of the closing ceremonies of the WV Envirothon competition. Students must submit the completed scholarship application to the WV Envirothon treasurer at the end of the competition.
- C. Scholarship Payment:** Recipients will submit proof of enrollment to any university, college or technical school with payment request to the WV Envirothon Treasurer.
- D. Scholarship Time Limit/Forfeiture:**
  - 1. Scholarships must be claimed within 2 years of high school graduation. Scholarships not claimed within 2 years of high school graduation will be forfeited to the WVEC.
  - 2. Students may request a 4-year military deferment in writing to the WVEC.
- E. Other Awards:** Other awards and recognition may include but are not limited to shirts and certificates for all participants, plaques for the top 5 teams, and certificate/plaque to the highest scoring FFA team. A rookie team award will be awarded to the highest scoring first year competing team in the amount of \$600 for the team, broken down to \$100 per member and \$100 to the coach along with a certificate and plaque.

A Rookie Team is defined as a team with a new advisor and all new team members. Rookie teams deemed eligible to compete with less than 5 team members by the WVEC will be eligible for the rookie team award.

**F. Timing of Checks:** All award checks will be written at the WV Envirothon competition and will be available at the end of the awards ceremony.

**G. Station Awards:**

1. All teams are eligible.
2. Station Awards will be presented as follows:
  - a. For the purpose of stimulating conservation and environmental education, students will be awarded \$250 per team for the highest team score at each station. The stations include Forestry, Aquatics, Soils, Wildlife and current 5th topic.
  - b. For the purpose of stimulating conservation and environmental education within the classroom, \$250 will be awarded to the station winner's Advisor/Teacher. The stations include Forestry, Aquatics, Soils, Wildlife, and current 5th topic.
3. Awards will be presented to the top scoring team in each subject category: Forestry, Aquatics, Soils, Wildlife, and current 5<sup>th</sup> topic.
4. Ties will be settled by a tie breaker question or questions presented at each testing site: Forestry, Aquatics, Soils, Wildlife, and current 5<sup>th</sup> topic.
  - a. If a tie in the current 5<sup>th</sup> topic occurs the award will be awarded to both top placing teams.

**H. \$500 Attendance Award**

1. The top five placing teams, station award teams and rookie team are NOT eligible for the attendance award.
2. All members of each team must be present at the final presentation to be eligible.
3. The drawing will be held prior to the announcement of the 1st place team.
4. The purpose of this award is to encourage teams to stay until the closure of the competition.

**V. NCF-Envirothon**

- A. **First Place Team:** The first-place, winning, WV Envirothon team will be eligible to attend the NCF-Envirothon competition to represent West Virginia.
- B. **Notification:** The winning team must notify the WVEC of its intentions to attend the NCF-Envirothon within two weeks (14 days) after the conclusion of the state competition or the team registration deadline set forth by the NCF-Envirothon, whichever comes first.
- C. **Invitation:** If the winning team at the state competition declines the invitation to the NCF-Envirothon, or if their decision is not received within the above timeline in writing, the invitation to the NCF-Envirothon may be extended to the next highest scoring team. This process will continue until a team accepts the invitation.
- D. **Team Registration:** The WVEC will pay the NCF-Envirothon registration fees for the 5-member team and up to 2 advisors (one male and one female advisor/chaperone if the team consists of both genders).
- E. **Team Budget:** An estimated team budget will need to be prepared by the WV Envirothon team and presented to the WVEC for approval, explaining transportation costs, mileage, meals, lodging, passport etc. in advance of the NCF-Envirothon.
- F. **Team Expenses:** The WVEC will cover team expenses associated with the NCF-Envirothon for the 5-member team and the 2 advisors/chaperones. At the conclusion of travel, a detailed list of receipts will be provided to the WVEC for final reimbursement.
- G. **Team Advancement:** The WV Envirothon team may request up to a 75% advance of approved budget.
- H. **Team Trading Items:** The WVEC may provide shirts for the trading session at the NCF-Envirothon. If additional trading items are required, they must be associated with West Virginia and be approved by the WVEC before the team leaves for the NCF-Envirothon.
- I. **Team Passports:** In the event that the NCF-Envirothon is held in a country other than the United States, team passports (for 5 students and 2 advisors) will need to be obtained.

## VI. Miscellaneous

- A. **Changes:** The WV Envirothon Policy & Procedure Manual is subject to change pending approval by a majority vote of the WVEC. Changes will be provided in advance to all teams and advisors.
- B. **Teachers Workshop:** a workshop will be held in the fall of each year, in person or virtual. Dates will be determined by the WVEC. Teachers must attend the workshop in order to receive the stipend. There will be no stipend for watching the training videos on the WV Envirothon Website. These videos will be for reference only.
- C. **Animals:** No animals other than service animals on which an individual is physically dependent will be allowed at the WV Envirothon competition testing sites.
- D. **Drugs:** Tobacco, vaping, illegal substances, and all alcohol products are prohibited during the entire competition.
- E. **Non-prescription/prescription medication:** No medication is to be taken by the student without being dispensed or being approved by the advisor/teacher or nurse as instructed by the medical form at the event.
- F. **Discrimination:** Discrimination and/or sexual harassment will not be tolerated in any form. The offender will be disqualified and asked to leave the competition.
- G. **Photography:** No photographs or video recording shall be allowed at teaching and test sites except with prior approval by the WV Envirothon Executive Committee.
- H. **Evaluation:**
  - 1. An evaluation sheet shall be developed by the WVEC to evaluate the WV Envirothon competition.
  - 2. Every team member and Advisor in attendance at the WV Envirothon competition must complete the evaluation sheet.
  - 3. The evaluation summary report shall be presented to the WVEC at the meeting following the competition.

- I. **Nondiscrimination Policy:** In accordance with applicable civil rights laws, the WV Envirothon is prohibited from and shall not discriminate based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by the WV Envirothon.