



# Environmental Science Project



Does the natural world fascinate you? Do you want to know more about how nature, its resources, and how we as humans interact with it and care for it? Then consider exploring the Environmental Science project! From the food we eat, to the clothes we wear, to the air we breathe, the natural environment affects us daily. You pick the topic and then learn and make a difference. Become active in your community, school, club, and home with your newfound knowledge of the environment.

## Starting Out *Beginner*

- Find a local nature trail to hike. Observe and document the sights, sounds, and smells!
- Create a collection of tree leaves. Try and identify them.
- Research where your electricity comes from. Go on trip to see where it begins and the path it takes to you.

## Learning More *Intermediate*

- Explore a local stream (with permission) to find and identify macroinvertebrates and their relationship to water quality.
- Plan and plant a pollinator garden.
- Plan a recycling program for your home or club.

## Expanding Horizons *Advanced*

- Visit and report to your club about a local wastewater treatment or recycling center.
- Shadow a local environmental professional.
- Track your home utilities and their impact on the environment.

## Inspire Kids to Do

### Explore

#### **"I might like to do this."**

Youth who explore a variety of interests before high school, through experiences like 4-H camps and educational events, can develop early interest in a career path and improve their academic performance.

### Learn

#### **"I can do this."**

4-H project-based learning, guided by adult volunteers, improves youth understanding of skills and concepts, as well as their ability to problem-solve and collaborate.

### Practice

#### **"I'm interested in this."**

Youth who have participated in sustained hands-on learning and engaged with professional mentors and volunteers before entering high school are more likely to explore studies and potential career paths.

### Experience

#### **"I will be this."**

Real-world application is key — 91% of Kansas 4-H members have a plan for reaching their goals. Youth that have been active participants in hands-on learning, combined with strong decision-making skills, are more able to effectively navigate life.

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## Expand Your Experiences!

### Healthy Living

- Lead an outdoor hike for club members at local park or nature trail.
- Test your drinking water and other local sources to identify its contents.

### Science and Agriculture

- Investigate the life cycles of flora and fauna.
- Create an aquarium or terrarium to highlight a local environment.
- Create or assist with an apiary (beehive) operation.
- Combine with horticulture by planting an environmentally friendly garden.

### Community Vitality

- Research an environmental issue and prepare a presentation to government officials for resolution.
- Lead a local park or natural area clean-up or adopt a highway.
- Plan and conduct an energy fair for younger kids.

### Communication and the Arts

- Create an arts project using all-natural materials. Identify each item used.
- Present environmental projects to local 4-H clubs, schools, or civic groups.
- Write a poem documenting your experience exploring the natural world.

## Career Development

- Visit a nature center or park and visit with the environmentalist.
- Volunteer at a nature center or zoo.
- Ask to shadow an environmental scientist, for example, a biologist, environmental engineer, or soil conservationist.
- Attend an environmental conference or educational event.
- Research and attend a university experience visit.

## Local Contact Information

Resources and Events	Curriculum and Resources	4-H Record Keeping	Project Exhibit Ideas
<p>Participating in educational events and learning opportunities will expand your knowledge and skills in the project area. Contact your local K-State Research and Extension office for local opportunities. Take part in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Club project meetings</li><li>• County Fair</li><li>• Judging events</li><li>• Wildlife Habitat Education Program (WHEP)</li><li>• Kansas Association for Conservation &amp; Environmental Education (KACEE)</li><li>• Rangeland Camp</li></ul>	<p>Project materials to assist youth in learning may be available through your local extension office or you can order directly.</p> <p>Exploring Your Environment (4-H Mall)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ecosystem Services (08410)</li><li>• Earth's Capacity (08411)</li><li>• Facilitator Guide (08412)</li></ul> <p>Projects Wet, Wild, and Learning Tree</p>	<p>Learning to keep accurate records is a life skill. The following forms can help you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Setting 4-H Project Goals (4H1100)</li><li>• Kansas 4-H Record Keeping</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reuse your family's food scraps by building a composting bin.</li><li>• Create artwork using natural objects. Explain how the objects are connected.</li><li>• Develop a workshop on planting pollinator or monarch habitat.</li><li>• Create an informational poster about an environmental topic.</li></ul>

