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§ 5501. Findings and policy

(a) Findings

The Congress finds that—

(1) Threats to human health and environmental quality are increasingly complex, involving a wide range of conventional and toxic contaminants in the air and water and on the land.

(2) There is growing evidence of international environmental problems, such as global warming, ocean pollution, and declines in species diversity, and that these problems pose serious threats to human health and the environment on a global scale.

(3) Environmental problems represent as significant a threat to the quality of life and the economic vitality of urban areas as they do the natural balance of rural areas.

(4) Effective response to complex environmental problems requires understanding of the natural and built environment, awareness of environmental problems and their origins (including those in urban areas), and the skills to solve these problems.

(5) Development of effective solutions to environmental problems and effective implementation of environmental programs requires a well educated and trained, professional work force.

(6) Current Federal efforts to inform and educate the public concerning the natural and built environment and environmental problems are not adequate.

(7) Existing Federal support for development and training of professionals in environmental fields is not sufficient.

(8) The Federal Government, acting through the Environmental Protection Agency, should work with local education institutions, State education agencies, not-for-profit educational and environmental organizations, noncommercial educational broadcasting entities, and private sector interests to support development of curricula, special projects, and other activities, to increase understanding of the natural and built environment and to improve awareness of environmental problems.

(9) The Federal Government, acting through the coordinated efforts of its agencies and with the leadership of the Environmental Protection Agency, should work with local education institutions, State education agencies, not-for-profit educational and environmental organizations, noncommercial educational broadcasting entities, and private sector interests to develop programs to provide increased emphasis and financial resources for the purpose of attracting students into environmental engineering and assisting them in pur-

suage the programs to complete the advanced technical education required to provide effective problem solving capabilities for complex environmental issues.

(10) Federal natural resource agencies such as the United States Forest Service have a wide range of environmental expertise and a long history of cooperation with educational institutions and technology transfer that can assist in furthering the purposes of the¹ chapter.

(b) Policy

It is the policy of the United States to establish and support a program of education on the environment, for students and personnel working with students, through activities in schools, institutions of higher education, and related educational activities, and to encourage post-secondary students to pursue careers related to the environment.

(Pub. L. 101-619, § 2, Nov. 16, 1990, 104 Stat. 3325.)

SHORT TITLE

Pub. L. 101-619, § 1(a), Nov. 16, 1990, 104 Stat. 3325, provided that: "This Act [enacting this chapter] may be cited as the 'National Environmental Education Act.'"

§ 5502. Definitions

For the purposes of this chapter, the term—

(1) "Administrator" means the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency;

(2) "Agency" means the United States Environmental Protection Agency;

(3) "Federal agency" or "agency of the United States" means any department, agency or other instrumentality of the Federal Government, any independent agency or establishment of the Federal Government including any Government corporation;

(4) "Secretary" means the Secretary of the Department of Education;

(5) "local educational agency" means any education agency as defined in section 7801 of this title and shall include any tribal education agency;

(6) "not-for-profit" organization¹ means an organization, association, or institution described in section 501(c)(3) of title 26, which is exempt from taxation pursuant to the provisions of section 501(a) of title 26;

(7) "noncommercial education broadcasting entities" means any noncommercial educational broadcasting station (and/or its legal nonprofit affiliates) as defined and licensed by the Federal Communications Commission;

(8) "tribal education agency" means a school or community college which is controlled by an Indian tribe, band, or nation, including any Alaska Native village, which is recognized as eligible for special programs and services provided by the United States to Indians because of their status as Indians and which is not administered by the Bureau of Indian Affairs;

(9) "Federal natural resource management agencies" means the United States Forest

¹ So in original. Probably should be "this".

¹ So in original. Probably should be "'not-for-profit organization'".

Service, the Bureau of Land Management, the National Park Service, and the Fish and Wildlife Service;

(10) “environmental engineering” means the discipline within engineering and science concerned with the development and application of scientific and technical solutions to protecting the aquatic and atmospheric environment, including, but not limited to, all phases of water resources planning, water supply, water treatment, air pollution characterization and control, remediation of hazardous substances, environmental transport of contaminants in surface and ground water and atmosphere, and methods for assessment and control of pollution;

(11) “environmental education” and “environmental education and training” mean educational activities and training activities involving elementary, secondary, and post-secondary students, as such terms are defined in the State in which they reside, and environmental education personnel, but does not include technical training activities directed toward environmental management professionals or activities primarily directed toward the support of noneducational research and development;

(12) “Foundation” means the National Environmental Education and Training Foundation established pursuant to section 5509 of this title; and

(13) “Board of Directors” means the Board of Directors of the National Environmental Education and Training Foundation.

(Pub. L. 101-619, §3, Nov. 16, 1990, 104 Stat. 3326; Pub. L. 103-382, title III, §391(m), Oct. 20, 1994, 108 Stat. 4023; Pub. L. 107-110, title X, §1076(n), Jan. 8, 2002, 115 Stat. 2092.)

AMENDMENTS

2002—Par. (5). Pub. L. 107-110 substituted “7801” for “8801”.

1994—Par. (5). Pub. L. 103-382 substituted “local educational agency” for “local education agency” and reference to section 8801 of this title for reference to section 198 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 2002 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 107-110 effective Jan. 8, 2002, except with respect to certain noncompetitive programs and competitive programs, see section 5 of Pub. L. 107-110, set out as an Effective Date note under section 6301 of this title.

§ 5503. Office of Environmental Education

(a) Establishment

The Administrator shall establish an Office of Environmental Education within the Environmental Protection Agency.

(b) Duties and functions

The Office of Environmental Education shall—

(1) develop and support programs and related efforts, in consultation and coordination with other Federal agencies, to improve understanding of the natural and built environment, and the relationships between humans and their environment, including the global aspects of environmental problems;

(2) support development and the widest possible dissemination of model curricula, edu-

cational materials, and training programs for elementary and secondary students and other interested groups, including senior Americans;

(3) develop and disseminate, in cooperation with other Federal agencies, not-for-profit educational and environmental organizations, State agencies, and noncommercial educational broadcasting entities, environmental education publications and audio/visual and other media materials;

(4) develop and support environmental education seminars, training programs, teleconferences, and workshops for environmental education professionals, as provided for in section 5504 of this title;

(5) manage Federal grant assistance provided to local education agencies, institutions of higher education, other not-for-profit organizations, and noncommercial education broadcasting entities, under section 5505 of this title;

(6) administer the environmental internship and fellowship programs provided for in section 5506 of this title;

(7) administer the environmental awards program provided for in section 5507 of this title;

(8) provide staff support to the Advisory Council and Task Force provided for in section 5508 of this title;

(9) assess, in coordination with other Federal agencies, the demand for professional skills and training needed to respond to current and anticipated environmental problems and cooperate with appropriate institutions, organizations, and agencies to develop training programs, curricula, and continuing education programs for teachers, school administrators, and related professionals;

(10) assure the coordination of Federal statutes and programs administered by the Agency relating to environmental education, consistent with the provisions and purposes of those programs, and work to reduce duplication or inconsistencies within these programs;

(11) work with the Department of Education, the Federal Interagency Committee on Education, and with other Federal agencies, including Federal natural resource management agencies, to assure the effective coordination of programs related to environmental education, including environmental education programs relating to national parks, national forests, and wildlife refuges;

(12) provide information on environmental education and training programs to local education agencies, State education and natural resource agencies, and others; and

(13) otherwise provide for the implementation of this chapter.

(c) Director and staff

The Office of Environmental Education shall—

(1) be directed by a Director who shall be a member of the Senior Executive Service;

(2) include a headquarters staff of not less than six and not more than ten full-time equivalent employees; and

(3) be supported by one full-time equivalent employee in each Agency regional office.

(Pub. L. 101-619, §4, Nov. 16, 1990, 104 Stat. 3327.)