



YES! Update 12.19.2016

Program Announcements

- We would like to welcome Monica Thompson to the YES! Team! Monica will be working in the northwest region out of Lakes Country Service Cooperative. We are excited to have her on board and look forward to how she will help grow the northwest region. Read more about Monica [here](#).
- Team Reminders
 - If your team has not already done so, please submit at least one project proposal to the website [here](#).

Focus on Water Quality

- Install a BMP such as a rain garden, green roof, or permeable pavement, to help infiltrate water, reduce runoff, capture pollutants, create pollinator habitat, etc. There are a LOT of BMPs to choose from if there is funding.
- Install rain barrels to collect rainwater and use it for watering any flower beds, etc.

Regional Highlights

Northeast: As we prepare for the holiday season, I want everyone to consider how to become more sustainable this year. Using LED lights on your tree or house, recycle used wrapping paper, wear that ugly sweater so you can turn down the thermostat a few degrees, and consider donating unwanted items to a thrift store instead of throwing them away. If we all do our part, we can make a difference in how our global impacts to our environment. Have a safe and enjoyable holiday season, see you next year!—Jim

West Central: Hutchinson is working on a very "tiny" project. The tiny house movement is now occurring where people are choosing to downsize the spaces they live in. According to CBS, 1/3 to 1/2 of American's income goes to putting a roof over their heads. That is equivalent to about 15 years of work just for a home! So why not live tiny and have more freedom and time for other activities! Read more about tiny living [here](#). I encourage all to think about the "stuff" they want this season and if it is truly what you need. Cheers to living tiny!

Central: Melrose is building bat boxes due to the recent addition of the Northern Long-Eared Bat to the endangered species list. North Junior High will be planting a native prairie/pollinator habitat on their school grounds that will also serve as an outdoor classroom. Funding and education are being provided through the Pheasants Forever Youth Pollinator Habitat Program.

Southern: The New Ulm YES! team have found that 27 classrooms want bigger recycling bins, so they are working to secure larger bins for each classroom. Throughout the year, they want to raise awareness of how much recycling currently happens in their school and what they can do to improve recycling rates.

State & National Grants & Other Opportunities

- Recharge Labs has a ton of great kits for last-minute holiday gifts or things to have in your classroom. [Wind-opoly](#) is a wind power themed Monopoly game where players buy properties, build wind turbines, and build wind farms. [Solar Cork Boat](#) kits allow students to engineer their own cork boat, build motorized paddles, and race against peers—a great way to get them interested in the Solar Boat Regatta!
- **November 19, 2016 – January 1, 2017:** Water/Ways Exhibit has officially made its way to the Audubon Center of the North Woods. Water/Ways is a traveling exhibition and community engagement initiative of the Smithsonian Institution's Museum on Main Street program. For more information please visit their [website](#).
- **Deadline December 2016:** [Youth Garden Grant](#) from the National Gardening Association is designed to support school and youth educational garden projects that enhance the quality of life for students and their communities. Any nonprofit, school, or youth program planning a new garden program or expanding an established one that serves at least 15 youth between the ages of 3 and 18 is eligible to apply. The selection of winners is based on demonstrated program impact and sustainability. Apply online [here](#).
- **Deadline December 22, 2016:** [The Green Ribbon Schools Awards](#) from the U.S. Department of Education are available to all prek-12 schools, school districts, and post-secondary institutions. They honor schools that:
 - Reduce environmental impact by conservation of energy, water and waste
 - Improve health and nutrition through gardens, food service and outdoor activities, and
 - Provide effective environmental education
- **Deadline February 23, 2017:** Population Education is conducting the World of 7 Billion Student Video Contest. Create a short video-up to 60 seconds-about human population growth that highlights one of the following global challenges: Climate Change, Ocean Health, or Rapid Urbanization. Find out more information [here](#).
- **May 20, 2017:** The [25th Annual Solar Boat Regatta](#) is happening at Riley Lake in Eden Prairie, MN. Build a solar boat and race against dozens of other teams from Minnesota!

