

Comprehensive Colorado River Watershed-Based Curriculum Now Available

The Project WET International Foundation (Water Education for Teachers)

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The Colorado River Basin is notorious for its controversy and contention, but education has the power to bridge political boundaries. Seventy Colorado River Basin educators and resource managers from the U.S., Mexico, Navajo Nation, and Tohono O’odham tribe gathered in Mexicali, Baja California in May to celebrate the publication of a new, international, watershed-based curriculum: Discover a Watershed: The Colorado.

The Discover a Watershed: the Colorado project is an educational program of Project WET International (Water Education for Teachers). The program was initiated in 2002. In January of 2003, educators and resource managers from all nine Colorado Basin states (Wyoming, Colorado, New Mexico, Utah, Nevada, Arizona, California, Baja California, and Sonora) participated in a 3-day intensive curriculum development workshop to lay the foundation for the Discover a Watershed: The Colorado Educators Guide.

The 456-page Educators Guide includes 25 interactive, multi-disciplinary lesson plans for teachers. It is directed towards 6th – 12th grade students and is available in Spanish and English. A colorful, informative narrative provides detailed background information about the watershed. Topics include hydrology, geology, geography, ecology, tribes, history, cultures, economics, management issues, and resource stewardship. Activities are internationally relevant and classroom-tested.

The curriculum is correlated to National Science Education Standards (U.S. and Mexican) and other disciplines in easy-to-use cross-reference charts. An in-depth glossary, index, and ten pages of detailed watershed maps make this guide highly useful to educators and resource managers. A special feature of the guide is its “River Voices,” written by people from throughout the basin to offer diverse, personal perspectives of this remarkable watershed.

A detailed, full-color wall map of the Colorado River Watershed is included with each Educators Guide. The map shows major tributaries, water management infrastructure (dams, diversions, canals, pipelines, and reservoirs), cities, reservations, and national parks.

Curriculum training workshops for Discover a Watershed: The Colorado will be held throughout the Colorado Watershed. Thirty workshops are planned in Baja California and Sonora in 2005, with additional workshops in the U.S. basin states. Visit www.projectwet.org and www.discoverAwatershed.org for more information about the program, or to order an Educators Guide.