

# Opportunistic Water Education

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Many natural resource and water educators follow the idea that there is a need for more and more new and unique educational events, when, in reality, there is a need to become more opportunistic. Over the past four years, the University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service sought out existing events or programs to integrate water education.

- A three-hour water curriculum was integrated into all 4-H summer camps in 2005.
  - Campers explored the quantity of fresh water available on Earth
  - Campers learned how they make an impact on their camp's water resources
- Water-related topics lead the way in two, week-long teacher workshops that explored land use in central Kentucky.
  - Educators explored water issues through field techniques and literature connections
- The Kentucky Forest Leadership Program now has a major water component in its five-day summer program for high school students.
  - Students test water quality in a wetland and a lake
  - Students explore watershed principles and apply them in land use decisions

- Two, three-day water camps were conducted with KY and TN 4-Hers.
  - Campers explored why water is important and water quality parameters
  - Campers learned watershed concepts and how they impact local water resources



- Water education became a major focus of a summer program for minority youth.
  - Students explored biological and chemical water quality indicators



Integration into existing programs has depended on building strong partnerships with other agencies and groups. This team-building has strengthened water education programs, reached new audiences with water education, and kept all partners from being stretched too thin.