

# **New Hampshire Environmental Literacy Plan**



Presentation to  
NH State Board of  
Education March 2012

# Environmental Literacy

## *Definition*

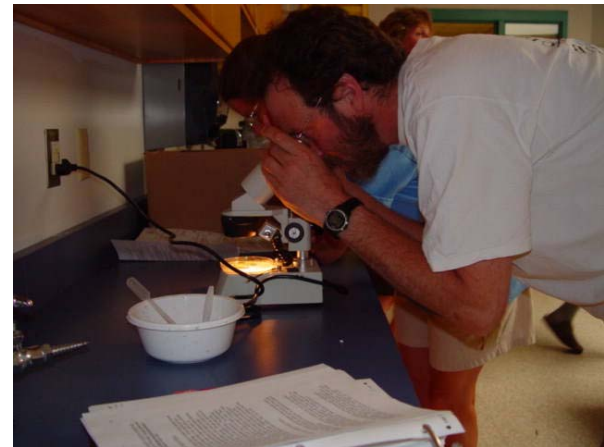
- Understanding of the natural world and its systems
- Ability to make decisions about the environment based on scientific, social, economic and aesthetic considerations.



# Research Findings

## *Environmental Education:*

- Increases overall student engagement and motivation.
- Increases critical thinking and problem solving.
- Increases academic achievement and performance on assessments.
- Increases physical and mental health.
- Increases positive collaboration among educators.



# Proposed Federal Legislation

Environmental literacy is included in the proposed definition of a well-rounded education-Title IV of Elementary and Secondary Education Act.





# New Hampshire's Planning Effort

- Gap analysis and curricula crosswalk
- Community Engagement-- forums, stakeholder groups, teachers
- Time Line
- Strong communication across populations
- Implementation of writing process



NH ELP Online Focus Group hosted on OPEN NH.

<http://opennh.net/course/view.php?id=200>

NH Environmental Literacy Plan Website

<http://nhenvironmentalliteracyplan.wordpress.com/>

# NH Environmental Literacy Plan

## *Key Areas of Strategic Planning for Environmental Literacy*

- Standards
- Graduation Requirements
- Professional Development
- Assessment
- Funding and Support
- Community Connections



# Strategic Planning *for Environmental Literacy*

## *Connecting to Standards*

- Demonstrates existing connections between science and social studies curriculum frameworks and the *Excellence in Environmental Education Guidelines for Learning*.
- Encourages the development of an online data base of local NH environmental education resources for teachers.
- Encourages the establishment of student-learning outcomes and competencies in Environmental Literacy.
- Encourages interdisciplinary approaches for inclusion of environmental literacy across the curricula.

# Strategic Planning *for Environmental Literacy*

## *Connecting to Graduation Requirements*

- Encourages the increase in extended learning opportunities that include opportunities for environmental literacy.
- Builds on existing work with schools to meet science and social studies curriculum framework requirements.
- Encouraging the development of alternative pathways to environmental literacy.



# Strategic Planning *for Environmental Literacy*

## *Connecting to Professional Development*

- Encourages the establishment of a network of field-based training organizations and opportunities to enhance educator competency in environmental literacy.
- Encourages the incorporation of environmental literacy competency into high quality professional development offerings.
- Encourages colleges and universities to include competencies in environmental literacy for in-service and pre-service teachers.

# Strategic Planning *for* Environmental Literacy

## *Connecting to Assessment*

- Encourages the development of a strategic plan for how NH will measure student competency in environmental literacy.
- Encourages local schools to include competency in environmental literacy as a graduation requirement.
- Encourages non-formal education partners to develop instruments to determine student learning.



# Strategic Planning *for Environmental Literacy*

## *Connecting to Funding and Support Streams*

- Encourages the formation of formal and informal partnerships to seek funding for environmental literacy.
- Encourages partnerships with the business community to provide work study opportunities involving green initiatives and the environment.
- Encourages partnerships and connections to other funded initiatives, such as STEM, that can incorporate environmental literacy into learning outcomes.

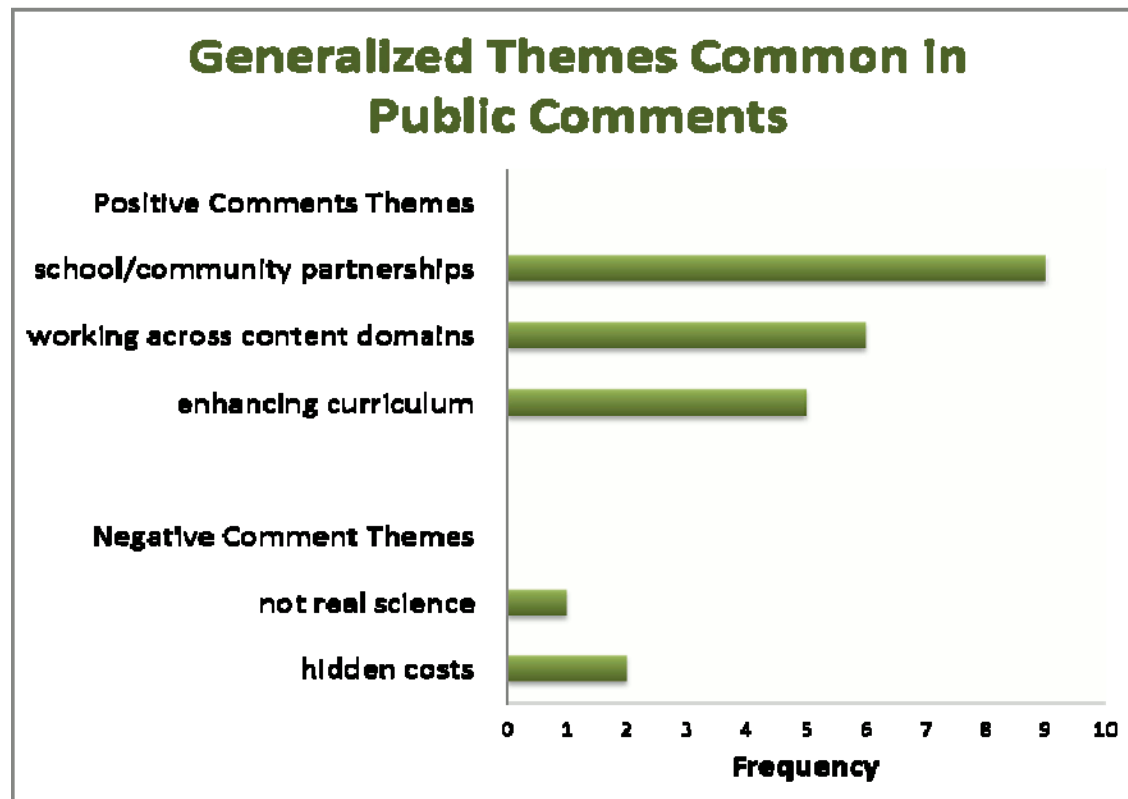
# Strategic Planning *for Environmental Literacy*

## *Connecting to Community*

- Encourages the development of an Environmental Literacy Advisory Committee comprised of representatives from a wide variety of agencies, organizations, and individuals.
- Encourages the inclusion of meaningful outdoor learning opportunities and experiences for all New Hampshire students.
- Encourages the utilization of place-based and service learning projects that incorporate environmental literacy into learning outcomes.
- Encourages schools to develop of local projects that involve citizens in the decision making process.

# Public Comments on the Plan

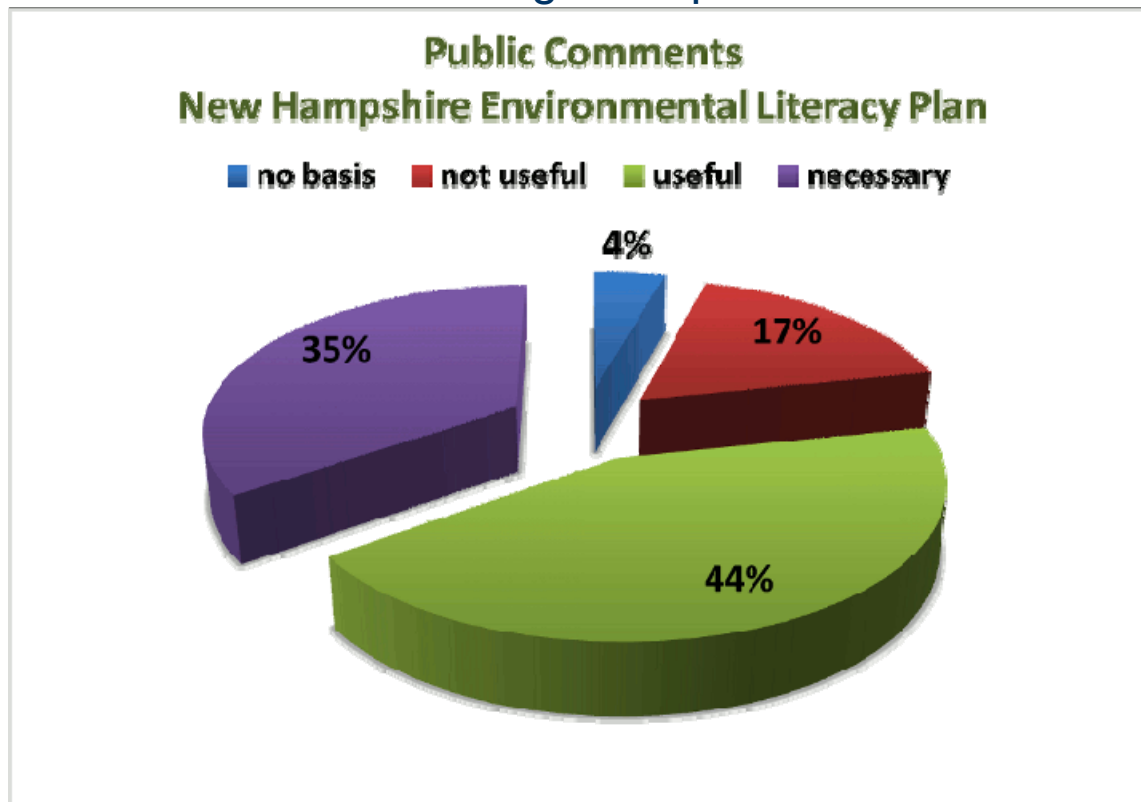
Positive comments outweighed the negative by nearly 7 to 1.





# Public Comments on the Plan

79% of those who commented thought the plan was useful or necessary.



# NH Planning Team Partners

- New Hampshire Environmental Educators
- NH Children in Nature Coalition
- NH Fish and Game Department
- NH Department of Environmental Services
- NH Division of Forests and Lands
- NH Department of Education
- Squam Lakes Natural Science Center
- Southern NH University
- The Margret & H.A. Rey Center
- Plymouth State University
- Antioch University New England
- NH Sierra Club
- Appalachian Mountain Club
- United States Forest Service
- University of NH, Durham