



Environmental Leadership Training

Kansas Environmental Leadership Program (KELP)

Overview



Community leaders have long recognized that the availability of high quality water is fundamental to attract new residents, industry, and tourism. To protect economic viability, communities must invest time and energy to protect and improve local water resources, but they may lack the information and leadership skills to move toward the desired water improvements.

In response to these needs, the Kansas Environmental Leadership Program (KELP) was created. KELP encourages and supports development of local leadership within communities. The total KELP experience is for individuals throughout Kansas who wish to better understand water issues and improve their leadership skills. The learning environment is designed to help participants enhance their knowledge of water resources and water quality concerns, regulations, and treatment. This knowledge is combined with the practice of skills that help individuals become more articulate and effective leaders. KELP training is patterned after other state and nationally recognized leadership training programs, with specific application of Kansas water resources and water quality. Graduates of KELP training will be able to establish networks, educate the public, develop plans, and begin improvements within their communities and watersheds across Kansas.

How KELP training is organized:

- Five sessions are spread over 10 months, each in a different location.
- Sessions begin at noon the first day and conclude about noon on the third day.
- Session locations emphasize differences in water resources, water problems, etc.
- Participants work in groups, receive class instruction, review and discuss case studies, and take field trips.
- Class members choose a water-related topic to explore during the class.

Mission

KELP prepares individuals to practice leadership through working cooperatively to produce positive environmental changes for the future of Kansas.



Rock Creek, Bourbon County

Leadership

Leadership is an influence relationship between people. Leadership is sharing a vision and collaborating with others to bring about change. In this time of increasing demand on water resources, leadership is needed in communities and watersheds to improve water resource management and protect water quality for the future. Environmental leadership is the responsibility of all people — working to benefit each other and the environment we all depend on.



KELP class field trip

Water

Water is essential for life. The quality of surface and ground water for drinking, recreation, industry, and municipal use is important for all of us, as well as supporting aquatic life. Every Kansan has an investment in water resources. Each community needs individuals who are willing to initiate discussions, collaborate for solutions, and act to address water-related issues.

Session Activities:

Research indicates people learn and retain information best when they are actively involved in the learning process. Each KELP training session involves a mix of presentations, local experiences, and active learning opportunities for participants.

Activities include:

- small group discussions
- teamwork exercises
- visual models
- group capstone project
- presentations
- field trips
- simulation activities
- work in pairs

Information presentation methods:

- video
- slide presentations
- verbal presentations
- group assignments
- overhead visuals
- computer modeling
- written materials
- panel discussions

The training also includes designated times and materials for reflection and concept application.

Key KELP Training Aspects



Surveying water quality indicators

Applying Concepts:

Concepts are matched with actual Kansas case studies and realistic scenarios. Those involved in local water-related issues make presentations to the class about water problems, concerns, and solutions in their community.

Developing Leadership Capacity:

By understanding and practicing aspects of the leadership process, we can develop greater leadership capability. KELP sessions examine topics in the context of interpersonal and community leadership. Topics include:

- influence
- group facilitation
- change
- conflict resolution
- power
- working with media
- individual differences
- community education
- persuasion
- collaboration
- communication
- negotiation

KELP

Key KELP Training Aspects

KELP Provides Opportunities To:

- study and practice elements of leadership
- try leadership ideas in a supportive learning group setting
- understand the importance of leader-follower dynamics
- learn about relationships between people
- examine and evaluate case studies and situations

Applied Leadership Project:

Class members have a chance to apply leadership skills in an actual local situation through the applied leadership project. Participants identify a problem and work cooperatively within groups to plan and implement a project, bringing about positive environmental change within their community.



Kansas River

Through involvement with KELP training, it is our goal to educate and motivate individuals to initiate cooperative, collaborative leadership benefitting Kansas communities and the environment. The KELP program strives to support graduates in their efforts to make a difference in their communities.



Water is a vital resource

What participants learn:

- concepts in leadership
- understanding the hydrologic cycle
- persuasive communication
- public issues education
- facilitation and mediation skills
- community involvement
- examining effective communication
- Kansas water resources
- water supply and wastewater treatment
- point and nonpoint source pollution
- developing water protection plans
- conflict avoidance and resolution

Outcomes

KELP participants receive a reference manual containing leadership and water resource materials. Graduates will have enhanced understanding and skills including:

- personal and group leadership
- public policy education
- networking with others to share ideas
- understanding of water resources
- the identification, understanding, and control of pollutant sources
- community issue identification and analysis
- creating a legacy for improved quality of life
- college and/or continuing education credit
- how to inspire people and help communities make changes

Joining

Selection for the training class purposely includes a mix of background, knowledge, and organizational viewpoints. Having a mix of participants representing agriculture, government, environment, education, and business interests is an important part of the learning experience. Leadership background and a strong commitment to a quality environment are also considered.



Macroinvertebrate identification

“Controversy over water is as old as the land itself. KELP lays all the issues on the table and turns the controversy into cooperative problem solving. KELP helped me become a more informed and effective water quality educator. I understand so much more about Kansas water systems in both the cities and the rural areas. We saw city wells and infrastructures, innovative private wastewater systems, outdoor cattle shelters, aquatic life in streams and everything in between.”

Barbara Lilyhorn, K-State Research and Extension,
Reno County



“KELP gave me the self confidence to effectively communicate my views on environmental issues. More importantly, I was given an opportunity to meet people with very different professional backgrounds. Each class member shared their expertise, which greatly enhanced our group’s level of environmental awareness.”

Rob Beilfuss, Kansas Department of Health and Environment, Bureau of Water, Nonpoint Source Section

“The most important thing I learned in KELP was taking a stand — making a point when necessary. Learning to agree to disagree. KELP is worth participating in because there is ALWAYS something to learn. Knowledge is power — you make it what you want. I gained lasting friendships and networking partnerships. Attending the KELP Workshop was one of the best learning experiences I have had in my career.”

Shari Stamer, City of Lawrence, Water Quality Manager

To learn more about the Kansas Environmental Leadership Program — including application form, schedule, fees, college credit, professional continuing education, speakers, and financial assistance — please visit www.bae.ksu.edu/kelp or contact:

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