



Environmental Leadership Training

Kansas Environmental Leadership Program (KELP)

Communities must have ample, high-quality water to attract new residents, industry, and tourists. Economic viability is tied to local water quality. But how can a community find the information and leadership skills to improve water? The Kansas Environmental Leadership Program was created to develop, encourage, and support environmentally informed community leadership. Graduates of KELP training will be able to establish networks, educate the public, develop plans, and begin improvements within their communities and Kansas watersheds.

Leadership and Water

As demands on water resources increase, communities and watersheds need leaders to improve resource management and protect future water quality. Environmental leadership is sharing a vision and collaborating with others to bring about change that benefits communities and the environment on which we all depend. Each community needs individuals who are willing to initiate discussions, collaborate for solutions, and act on water-related issues.

Foundations of KELP Training

Experiential Learning: Because people learn best by doing, KELP training incorporates a mix of activities. Trainees participate in field trips, panel discussions, and group activities. Those involved in local water-related issues talk with the class about water problems, concerns, and solutions in their communities. Training is capped by a challenging Applied Leadership Project. Session days are long and packed with diverse experiences, camaraderie, time for reflection ... and some fun too!



KELP training class in the field

KELP Mission:

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

How KELP training is organized:

- Five sessions, each in a different location, are spread over 10 months.
- Sessions run from noon on Day 1 to noon on Day 3.
- Session locations emphasize differences in water resources, water issues, etc.
- Participants engage in multiple learning processes and conduct a water-related leadership project (see *Foundations of KELP Training*, left).

Developing Leadership Capacity: Sessions examine topics relevant to interpersonal and community leadership. Participants explore:

- influence: how is it achieved and lost; group facilitation
- change: usually resisted, yet necessary
- conflict resolution and negotiation
- power: who has it and how to use it
- working with media
- individual differences: how to make them positive
- community education
- persuasion: it's more than an art
- collaboration: share the work and the glory
- communication: basic to leadership

Applied Leadership Project: Class members apply leadership skills to address a local environmental need. Four to six class members form a team, identify a problem, engage stakeholders, apply for a grant, and work cooperatively to develop and execute their project. Each project brings a positive environmental change within a community.

Outcomes

KELP participants receive a resource manual filled with leadership and water materials. The KELP program strives to support graduates in their efforts to make a difference in their communities. In addition to environmental knowledge, graduates take home a network of contacts, resources, and friends.

KELP's goal is to educate and motivate individuals to initiate cooperative, collaborative leadership benefiting Kansas communities and the environment.

Joining

KELP purposefully recruits potential leaders who reflect diverse backgrounds, knowledge, and viewpoints, both personal and organizational. 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.

For More Information

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 the Web site at www.ksre.ksu.edu/kelp or contact:

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Hands-on training and projects

KELP Alumni say ...

"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. ... I understand so much more about Kansas water systems in both cities and rural areas."

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

"The most important thing I learned in KELP was taking a stand — making a point when necessary. Learning to agree to disagree. ... I gained lasting friendships and networking partnerships. Attending the KELP training was one of the best learning experiences I have had in my career."

Shari Stamer, City of Lawrence water quality manager

"The most underrated component of the program, and in my opinion the most significant, is the establishment of a network of resources. ... I am sure I will call upon my classmates in the future for input and advice."

Shane Munsch, environmental manager, ICL

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