

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

Objectives

Through this hands on activity students will be able to...

- ...define stewardship and land management
- ...work together towards accomplishing certain land management goals
- ...learn about the habitat or ecosystem they are working in
- ...help improve or maintain natural areas around camp
- ...experience a sense of accomplishment, knowing they each can make a difference

Equipment

- work gloves
- for most projects, long pants are needed to protect legs from branches or sharp tools
- additional equipment depends upon project (see “Work Projects for Student Groups” for general equipment lists)

Introduction

So that the students may get a better understanding of how one person can make a difference, ask them what things they can do (or not do) in every day life to make (or not make) a difference. Try to get them to focus their answers on environmental actions they can take, such as planting a tree, starting a compost pile, or using recyclable products. If students have trouble believing that one person can make a difference in something, ask them if one team member can change the score of a game, or if one person playing the wrong notes in a song can ruin the music. After naming other examples where one person can make a difference, ask the students what would happen if everyone in the group did one of the actions that were mentioned. What if everyone in their school did it? Everyone in the United States?

Activity

Define **stewardship** and **land management** for the students. Stewardship is taking care of the land and water by managing it to protect wildlife and resources. Ask the students what factors may need to be considered to manage the land for wildlife and resources. (For example, we must consider the needs of plants and animals as well as people). Tell the students that today they will be participating in stewardship projects that help make Camp Edwards and the environment a better, healthier place for plants, animals, and people. Each one of them will help make a difference!

Briefly explain to the students what project they will be working on, whether it be collecting trash or removing brush, etc. If the project involves the pine or hardwood forests, refer to the background information sheets written on the goals for these areas. This information will help explain the reason for the specific project and how it will benefit the environment. Finally, before students begin, have them look around the project area and take a mental picture of how it looks before they start, especially if they are helping to clear brush in the forest. Do the same thing once the project is completed.

These “before” and “after” images give the students a lasting impression of what a difference they can make!

Discussion

Bring the students together and collect any tools/garbage bags/etc. that were used. If they used tools, have them make a final scan of the area to make sure all the equipment has been picked up. Ask the students to look around the project area and think about how much they accomplished. How do they feel? Do they feel a sense of accomplishment? Review again what the purpose of their project was. Was this particular project anything that they could do again at home or at school? If they worked in the pine forest, did they find lots of baby pine trees? What will happen to those young pine trees now?

*An Edwards staff member will be present for this activity.