

## **ANJEE HISTORY & DEVELOPMENT**

### **ANJEE: THE BEGINNING**

On April 25, 1984, twenty environmental educators from around New Jersey gathered in the basement of NJ Audubon's Sherman-Hoffman Center in Bernardsville. They all had two things in common; they loved the natural beauty of the Garden State and they had a commitment to using environmental education as an instrument of change. With the goal of coordinating and networking environmental education in the state, they formed the Alliance for New Jersey Environmental Education – ANJEE. Then, as now, its members included environmental educators from school districts, universities, colleges, museums, zoos, nature centers, park commissions, NJ Department of Environmental Protection, NJ Education Association, and other private, municipal, county, state, and federal agencies.

ANJEE Constitution adopted September 23, 1985.

### **ANJEE: THE PLAN**

One of the first standing committees created by ANJEE was the Master Plan Committee. Its purpose was to review the previous efforts for statewide commitment to environmental education, examine the master plans for E.E. from other states and evaluate the need for a new state Master Plan for Environmental Education. The 1971 NJ Environmental Education Act was reviewed and found to be too outdated to meet current needs. There was a consensus to start anew.

In late 1988, ANJEE approached Commissioners Saul Cooperman of the NJ Department of Education and Christopher Dagget of the NJ Department of Environmental Protection with the proposal to create new legislation for a Master Plan for Environmental Education. It was decided that the most effective route would be to first create a Commission on Environmental Education representing a cross section of the state citizenry. These commission members were to draw up a document that defined the knowledge attitudes and skills necessary for environmental literacy. This document would then be used as a basis for creating a working master plan. ANJEE members in DEP and DOE assured this structure was put in place.

### **ANJEE AND THE NEW JERSEY ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION COMMISSION**

The history of the NJ Environmental Education Commission and the development of the working master plan entitled "Environmental Education in New Jersey: A Plan of Action" is documented below. Ten of the 24 members of the commission were ANJEE officers or members. During "down" times, ANJEE members sent letters to keep the process alive. Letters were sent to the Governor and DEP Commissioners Yaskin and Wiener reminding them of the important work the commission still had to do.

**THE NEW JERSEY ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION COMMISSION**  
**“ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION IN NEW JERSEY: A PLAN OF ACTION”**

On April 24, 1989, Governor Thomas Kean’s Executive Order No. 205 created the Commission on Environmental Education and authorized that body to study environmental education in New Jersey. The commission’s report (a.k.a. “*The Mauve Document*”) was submitted to Governor Florio on Earth Day (April 22), 1990.

In January 1991, former NJDEP Commissioner Judith Yaskin reconvened the commission through an Administrative Order. In January 1992, NJDEPE Commissioner Scott Weiner charged the Commission with developing a Plan of Action for Environmental Education. The commission completed the Proposed Plan of Action in November 1992. A public review period, including three regional public hearings, was conducted from December 1992 until February 1, 1993.

On Earth Day, 1993 (April 22), the final plan, entitled “Environmental Education in New Jersey: A Plan of Action”, was presented to Governor Florio with the request that the recommendations be implemented. Prior to leaving office, in 1993 Governor Florio signed Executive Order No. 111 which reconvened the commission. However, for years about 1/3 of the commission was not appointed and the group met informally to implement parts of the Plan of Action.

A copy of “Environmental Education in New Jersey: A Plan of Action”, can be obtained from Tanya Oznovich, NJ DEP, Office of Communications, PO Box 402, Trenton, NJ 08625

Governor Whitman finally appointed the vacant seat in the commission ..... *(to be completed)*

## **NEW JERSEY'S ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION BILL**

While the Plan of Action was being developed (circa 1992), a group of commission members worked with Assemblyman Ernie Oros and his staff to draft the EE proposed legislation. Assemblywoman Maureen Ogden agreed to co-sponsor the bill. Senators MacNamara and Little later sponsored this bill in the Senate. The companion bills were introduced in 1993 and underwent reviews and minor changes in 1993 and 1994.

In the last week of the 1995 legislative session, the bill was posted in both the Assembly and Senate and passed with a better than two to one majority. Governor Whitman, however, conditionally vetoed the act with three changes: to remove all the funding (already reduced to \$75,000), to remove all responsibilities sited for the state Board of Education (should this be Dept. of Education?), and to increase the responsibilities of the Interagency Working Group (consisting of one member of the major departments of state government).

The bill was passed, with changes, in January 1996.

## A LIGHTER LOOK AT ANJEE HISTORY

### **Environmental Education and ANJEE** **“A time tested recipe for New Jersey”**

Metaphorically speaking, Environmental Education evolved in our State, much like the way a good hearty soup is made. Chilly weather often brings out the soup in me. Over our 14 year history, it has take a combination of proper utensils, savory ingredients, correct proportions, persistent preparation, to create a nutritious and tasty blend that has become a success story for New Jersey.

If interested in offering the recipe to friends or family in other states, please follow the ingredients in order and in the combination listed.

1. An appropriate container is recommended. Good pots make good soups. We recommend use of Executive Order 205, signed by Governor Kean, in 1971. Like all good pots, 205 was a bit useless for many years until the proper ingredients were introduced into its hollow shell.
2. Base ingredients needed, 22 or 25 (the number varies) diverse environmental educators, vintage 1985, the Bernardsville cellar variety recommended. Combine together with 6 cups disappearing coastal marsh waters. Finely chop and add into this brine, vision and persistence to form this necessary ANJEE roux. of 1985.
3. Stir vigorously throughout Trenton with enough heat to get mixture to a boil without scorching. Add equal portions of DEP and DOE to complete this base stock.
4. Continue heating at a rolling boil, stirring occasionally with a dash of added persistence or until the Commission of Environmental Education begins to form on the surface of your mixture. Approximate cooking time 4 years since the birth of ANJEE.
5. Stir until 22 representatives for the Commission are well formed from all sectors, public, private and education well blended and prepare,
6. Take a Plan of Action for Environmental Education for New Jersey. Simmered slowly for 2 ½ years to insure an appropriate consistency and worthy of submission to Trenton and the Governor.
7. Allow to cool 3 years, **straining off all ingredient in controversy, carrots, celery and funding**, or until the Environmental Education Act is in a form suitable for signing January 1996.
8. While the stock is settling, finely chop and integrate Environmental Education into the N.J State Frameworks via our DOE.
9. Sprinkle liberally with Core Curriculum Content Standards and homogenize into the settled broth.
10. Garnish with the Informal Education sector working hand in hand with the Formal, to assist with a working comfort level for incorporating Environmental Ed, Standards and useable lesson into a harmonious mixture.
11. Serve to New Jersey’s students a hands-on, skill developing, content delivery, critical thinking, systems thinking, cooperative learning experience. Bread optional.

**Enjoy your soup because the main course is yet to come!**

*Tastefully submitted by Cory Ogden 2/99*