



REPORT TO COUNCIL

City of Sacramento

915 I Street, Sacramento, CA 95814-2604
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Staff Report
March 9, 2010

Honorable Mayor and
Members of the City Council

Title: California Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights and the National Recreation and Park Association National Environmental Stewardship Ethic

Location/Council District: Citywide

Recommendation: Adopt a **Resolution:** 1) endorsing "The California Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights" and the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) National Environmental Stewardship Ethic; and 2) directing staff to develop an implementation plan, with the Sacramento Youth Commission, for "The California Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights".

Contact: J.P. Tindell, Park Planning and Development Manager, 808-1955

Presenters: Ade' Jackson, Sacramento Youth Commissioner; J.P. Tindell, Park Planning and Development Manager, 808-1955

Department: Parks and Recreation

Division: Park Planning & Development Services

Organization No: 19001121

Description/Analysis

Issue: The City and Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) have strong commitments to both youth and sustainability. The City established a new Office of Youth Development in Fall 2007. The City *Sustainability Master Plan* (SMP) was approved in December 2007. The DPR has been proactive in bringing sustainability to its planning, development and operations activities. Formal endorsement of the subject policy framework documents reinforce the City's commitments to children and youth, the children's and youth's relationship to nature and the outdoors, and overall sustainability.

Policy Considerations: Promoting environmental stewardship and opportunities for youth to be outdoors is consistent with the City's strategic plan to achieve sustainability and liveability, and with the City's sign on to the *Regional Compact for Children and Youth* (March 3, 2009).

Environmental Considerations:

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA): Not applicable.

Sustainability Considerations: The recommended action is highly consistent with the goals, policies, and targets of City's Sustainability Master Plan and the *Department of Parks and Recreation Sustainability Plan 2008-2015*. The recommended action is also consistent with the goals of the *Greenprint* to optimize the benefits of trees throughout our region, and to create sustainable urban forests.

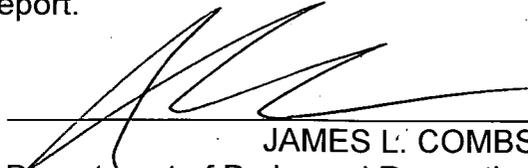
Commission/Committee Action: The Parks and Recreation Commission supported endorsement of the policy by the City of "The California Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights" (Exhibit A, page 8) and the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) National Environmental Stewardship Ethic (Exhibit B, page 19) on December 3, 2009. The Sacramento Youth Commission supported the endorsement of the policy as well by adopting "The California Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights" on December 14, 2009. The Youth Commission also directed staff to develop an implementation plan for the Bill of Rights.

Rationale for Recommendation: The City can further demonstrate its strong support for both youth and sustainability by endorsing these policy documents. Both documents would then be incorporated by reference into the City's *Parks and Recreation Master Plan* and into the *DPR Sustainability Plan*.

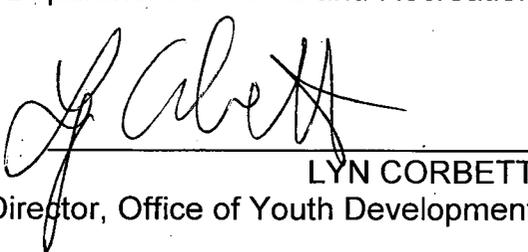
Financial Considerations: As with implementation of sustainability initiatives across the City organization, staff will work progressively to implement them using existing resources and will be proactive to secure funds from new sources such as grants.

Emerging Small Business Development (ESBD): No goods or services are being approved for purchase in association with this report.

Respectfully Submitted by: _____


JAMES L. COMBS

Director, Department of Parks and Recreation


LYN CORBETT

Director, Office of Youth Development

Recommendation Approved:

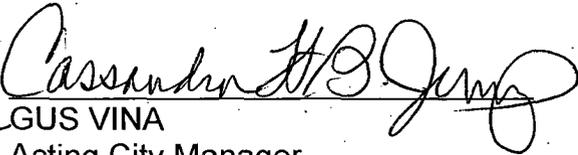

GUS VINA
Acting City Manager

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BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Youth and the Outdoors

There is growing research that demonstrates the importance of an intimate relationship with the natural world and outdoor activity in positive youth development, well being, and health. Participating in outdoor activities results in children being healthier, doing better in school, and having better social skills and self image. Long term environmental sustainability will require that the youth of today become stewards of nature. "Nature Deficit Disorder" has become a broadly recognized phenomenon and "Leave No Child Inside" has become a national movement.

On July 6, 2007, California Governor Schwarzenegger issued a formal proclamation to recognizing the "California Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights", a list of ten experiences every child in California would benefit from before entering high school (see Exhibit A, page 8). In addition, the following California entities have taken similar action: San Bernardino County, San Mateo County, State Parks and Recreation Commission, East Bay Regional Park District, City of Elk Grove, City of San Luis Obispo, CA State Alliance of YMCA's, Arcade Creek Recreation and Park District, City of Calistoga, City of San Leandro, City of Paso Robles, County of Lost Angeles, City of Glendale, CA Biodiversity Council, and CA Park and Recreation Society.

Environmental Stewardship

The City's *2030 General Plan* vision for Sacramento is to be the most livable city in America. The DPR's *Sustainability Plan 2008-2015*, adopted August 2008, is the first City departmental Sustainability Plan. The DPR is active as a member of the City's Sustainability Steering Committee, responsible for these *Sacramento Sustainability Master Plan* (SMP) Focus Areas: 1) Public Health and Nutrition; and, 2) Parks, Open Space and Habitat Conservation. The DPR staff was able to be directly involved with helping to shape the content of the National Environmental Stewardship Ethic (see Exhibit B, page 19); the City of Sacramento is among the first cities in the U.S. to pursue its formal adoption, according to the National Recreation and Park Association.



Office of the Governor

ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER
THE PEOPLE'S GOVERNOR

PROCLAMATION

07/06/2007

Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights

PROCLAMATION

by the
Governor of the State of California

Spending time in the great outdoors can be a wonderful experience for people of all ages, and this is especially true for our youth. Participating in outdoor activities is not only an enjoyable way for kids to get the exercise they need, it also helps them develop a greater appreciation for our magnificent environment.

To promote increased involvement in outdoor activities, the California Roundtable on Recreation, Parks and Tourism – a volunteer group comprising public and private organizations from the federal, state and local levels – has created the Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights. This Bill of Rights provides that every child between the ages of four and fourteen should have the opportunity to:

1. Discover California's past
2. Splash in the water
3. Play in a safe place
4. Camp under the stars
5. Explore nature
6. Learn to swim
7. Play on a team
8. Follow a trail
9. Catch a fish
10. Celebrate their heritage

I encourage parents, educators and other concerned citizens to do all they can to help our state's children experience and enjoy the wonders of Mother Nature – and there is no better place to experience them than right here in our beautiful Golden State.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER, Governor of the State of California, do hereby recognize the "Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights" and encourage children's participation in outdoor activities during the summer months.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF I have here unto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of California to be affixed this 6th day of July 2007.



RESOLUTION NO. 2010-

Adopted by the Sacramento City Council

March 9, 2010

**ENDORING THE CALIFORNIA CHILDREN'S OUTDOOR BILL OF RIGHTS AND THE
NATIONAL RECREATION AND PARK ASSOCIATION'S NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL
STEWARDSHIP ETHIC**

BACKGROUND

- A. The California Roundtable on Recreation, Parks and Tourism has developed "The California Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights" in response to recent concerns about youth detachment from outdoor activities, lack of physical exercise and increased health risks.
- B. "The California Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights" provides that every child should have the opportunity to: discover California's past, splash in the water, play in a safe place, camp under the stars, explore nature, learn to swim, play on a team, follow a trail, catch a fish, and celebrate their heritage.
- C. Parks and outdoor recreation lands are the essential green infrastructure of our communities and nation and are carbon reducing landscapes that help clean our air and waters, recharge aquifers, and reduce stormwater runoff.
- D. Parks make communities livable and desirable and are integral to viable economic development and responsible growth policies.
- E. The City of Sacramento desires to join the National Recreation and Park Association leaders for a national environmental stewardship ethic to promote sustainable landscapes, foster the next generation of stewards, and provide leadership for sustainable communities.

**BASED ON THE FACTS SET FORTH IN THE BACKGROUND, THE CITY COUNCIL
RESOLVES AS FOLLOWS:**

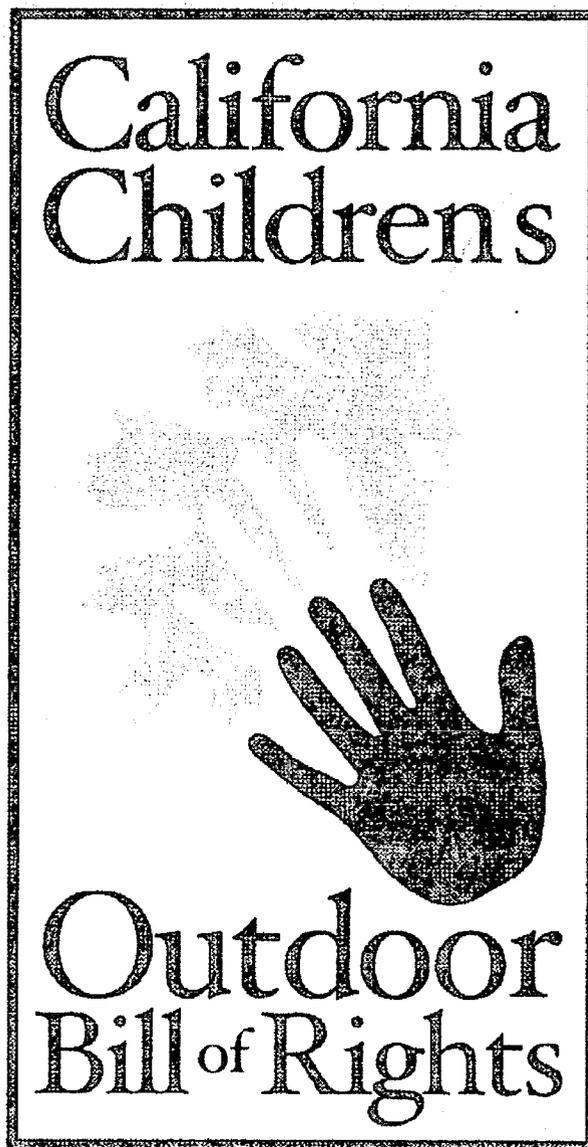
- Section 1. That the City Council endorses "The California Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights" (attached as Exhibit A and made a part of this Resolution) and the National Recreation and Park Association's National Environmental Stewardship Ethic (attached as Exhibit B and made a part of this Resolution).

Section 2. That staff is directed to develop an implementation plan with the Sacramento Youth Commission for "The California Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights".

Attachments

Exhibit A: The California Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights

Exhibit B: National Recreation and Park Association's National Environmental Stewardship Ethic



With recent concerns about youth detachment from outdoor activities, lack of physical exercise and increased health risks, the California Roundtable on Recreation, Parks and Tourism has adopted The California Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights. It is a fundamental list of experiences that every child in California would benefit from experiencing, before entering high school. As studies document that children who do these things are healthier, do better in school, have better social skills and self-image, and lead more fulfilled lives.

The California Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights provides that every child should have the opportunity to:

- Discover California's Past
- Splash in the water
- Play in a safe place
- Camp under the stars
- Explore nature
- Learn to swim
- Play on a team
- Follow a trail
- Catch a fish
- Celebrate their heritage.

MISSION

To encourage California's children to participate in outdoor recreational activities and discover their heritage.

OBJECTIVE

That every child in California, by the completion of their 14th year, have the opportunity to experience each of the activities listed within the California Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights.

RESEARCH

A survey of published research provides the following substantiation of the benefits to children of the activities listed within the California Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights:

DISCOVER CALIFORNIA'S PAST

Why is it good to know history?

- History provides identity to people and groups. (Sterns, 2004)
- Knowledge of history fosters good citizenship. (Sterns, 2004)

SPLASH IN THE WATER LEARN TO SWIM

Why is it good to play in the surf, lakes, streams, ponds and swimming pools?

- Swimming improves your all-round fitness. (Swimming, 2004)
- Swimming boosts your strength, stamina and suppleness. (Swimming, 2004)
- Swimming has all the cardiovascular benefits of running. (Swimming, 2004)
- Swimming works all the major muscle groups. (Swimming, 2004)
- Swimming is a demanding aerobic exercise that helps to keep your heart and lungs healthy. (Swimming, 2004)

Why is it good to go boating?

- Children between the ages of 6 and 19 who boat regularly receive many benefits including the following:

- Children are more likely to be actively involved in other recreational activities, including household projects and volunteer work. (Impulse, 2003)
- Children learn to be more outgoing and less shy or introverted. (Impulse, 2003)
- Children who boat lead more active and healthy lifestyles. (Impulse, 2003)
- Children develop their leadership qualities. (Impulse, 2003)
- Children develop a range of skills and positive attitudes. (Impulse, 2003)
- Children have more quality time with their parents year-round. (Impulse, 2003)

PLAY IN A SAFE PLACE

Why is it good to play?

- Habitual physical activity leads to a reduced resting heart rate and lower blood pressure levels. (Paffenbarger, et. al., 1991)
- Exercise holds the promise of decreasing the incidence or delaying the development of noninsulin-dependent diabetes mellitus. (Helmrich and Paffenbarger, 1992)
- Sustained physical activity leads to a decrease in fat body mass and increase in lean body mass, with resultant increased basal metabolism and a lower risk of obesity. (Bray, 1989; Siscovick, et. al., 1985)
- In childhood and adolescence, habitual physical activity, as opposed to a sedentary life style, leads to increased bone mass and bone strength. (Paffenbarger, et. al., 1991)
- Habitual physical activity increases muscle strength and improved structure and function of connective tissues. (Paffenbarger, et. al., 1991)
- Physical activity may prevent the complex condition leading to chronic back pain syndrome and the extensive debility associated with it. (Tipton, et. al., 1986)
- The role of physical activity in preventing various types of arthritis is uncertain; however, increased muscle strength, bone density, and connective tissue offer promise of a preventive effect. (Lane, et. al., 1986)

- Regular bouts of moderate physical activity reduce the symptoms of mild or moderate depression and anxiety neuroses by improving self-image, social skills, mental health, perhaps cognitive functions, and total well being. (Taylor, et. al., 1985)
- Regular physical activity can help reduce the risk of many adult health problems, including diabetes, obesity, and heart disease. (USDHHS, 1996)
- Participation in physical activity and recreation can provide positive benefits related to psychological health, physical health, familial interactions, peer influence, academic performance, community development and other lifestyle behaviors. ("Impact", 2004)
- Children function better than usual after activities in green settings; and, the "greener" a child's play area, the less severe his or her attention deficit symptoms. (Taylor, 2001)
- For girls, green spaces immediately outside the home can help them lead more effective, self-disciplined lives by increasing their concentration, inhibition of initial impulses, and increasing their ability to delay gratification. (Taylor et al., 2001)

CAMP UNDER THE STARS

Why is it good to go camping?

- Camping has a positive influence on self-image in relatively short periods of time across all age groups, but particularly among younger campers. (Marsh, 1999)
- Children at camp show significant gains in their locus of control and general self-efficacy and this is expected to have some type of carry-over into life beyond the camp setting. (Sekine, 1994)
- Many activities of camp lead to youth feeling better about themselves if they are offered as opportunities for young people to both assert their independence and learn cooperative teamwork. (Chenery, 1991)
- In resident one-week and outdoor school programs across the country, youth with and without disabilities made significant growth in their outdoor skills and personal development. (Brannan et al., 1997)
- Self-reliance, or independence, was a predominant outcome of youth camping. (Brannan et al., 1997)

- Youth with disabilities gained independence, while youth without disabilities improved their social interaction and gained a greater appreciation of people who were different than themselves. (Brannan et al., 1997)
- Campers felt healthier when they were at camp because they ate better, exercised more, were outside in the fresh air, slept better, and enjoyed the pace of life. (Dworken, 1999)
- Campers with disabilities benefit by enhanced self-concept and esteem, personal growth, increased leisure skills, increased social adjustment, enhanced body image and positive behavior changes. (Robb et al., 1987)

EXPLORE NATURE

Why is it good to explore nature?

- Outdoor adventure programs can obtain notable outcomes and have particularly strong, lasting effects. These positive affects occur in the dimensions of academic performance, leadership, self-concept, personality development, interpersonal skills and adventuresomeness. (Hattie et al., 1997)
- Just viewing nature reduces physiological stress response, increases levels of interest and attention, and decreases feelings of fear and anger or aggression. (Kaplan et al., 1989)
- Children who have gone through wilderness survival training showed decreased chances of dropping out of school. (Moses, 1968)
- Children with experience in the wilderness had increased GPAs. (Moses et al., 1970)
- Children who have gone through wilderness survival training have more realistic perceptions of self. (Yenser, 1972)
- Children who have gone through wilderness survival training show reduced signs of racial conflict. (Potts, 1974)
- Children who have gone through wilderness survival training had reduced occurrences of deviant behavior. (Gaston et al., 1978)
- Children who have gone through wilderness survival training show improved self-concept. (Clifford, 1967)

- Authors have identified early-life outdoor experience—whether alone or with others—as the most important factor found in their research in developing environmental concern. (Sward, 1999)

PLAY ON A TEAM

Why is it good to play on a team?

- Organization can also allow for a fair process in choosing teams, matching competitors, and enforcing rules specifically targeted at younger athletes can reduce injuries. (“Organized”, 2001)
- Regular physical activity can help reduce the risk of many adult health problems, including diabetes, obesity, and heart disease. (“Organized”, 2001)
- Organized Sports . . . can be a viable means to increase activity levels in children and, hopefully, lead to the adoption of active lifestyles as adults. (“Organized”, 2001)
- Reasonable goals for children and preadolescents participating in organized sports include acquisition of basic motor skills, increasing physical activity levels, learning social skills necessary to work as a team, learning good sportsmanship, and having fun. (“Organized”, 2001)
- Organized sports for children and preadolescents provide an opportunity for increased physical activity and an opportunity to learn sports and team skills in an environment where risks of participation can potentially be controlled. (“Organized”, 2001)
- Girls who play sports have higher levels of self-esteem and lower levels of depression than girls who do not play sports. (Edwards, 1995)
- Girls who play sports have a more positive body image and experience higher states of psychological well being than girls and women who do not play sports. (Edwards, 1995)
- Girls who play sports learn about teamwork, goal-setting, the experience of success, the pursuit of excellence in performance, how to deal with failures, and other positive behaviors -- all of which are important skills for the workplace and life. (Edwards, 1995)

- Students who play at least one sport are 40% less likely to be regular smokers and 50% less likely to be heavy smokers. Regular and heavy smoking decreases substantially with an increase in the number of sports played. (Escobedo et al., 1993)

FOLLOW A TRAIL

Why is it good to walk, bike and hike?

- 13% of children are overweight. (American, 1994)
- There is no better way to lose weight than walking. (American, 1994)
- The results of walking will be more permanent and pleasurable than any diet or weight loss scheme. (American, 1994)
- Walking lowers high blood pressure. (Bove, 1998)
- Walking decreases anxiety. (Bricklin et al., 1992)
- 90% of adults who describe themselves as active started their activity between the ages of 5 and 18. (Harris, 2003)
- 89% of children enjoy the feeling of accomplishment after participating in an outdoor activity. (Harris, 2003)
- 83% of children said that getting into a natural setting allows them to escape the pressures of everyday life. (Harris, 2003)
- 67% of children said that participating in outdoor activities strengthens their family's relationship with one another. (Harris, 2003)
- 73% of children said that participating in outdoor activities allows them to connect with themselves. 76% of children enjoy activities that are physically challenging. (Harris, 2003)

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Exhibit B

Adopted by the
Board of Trustees
May 15, 2009

**National Recreation and Park Association
National Environmental Stewardship Ethic**

Parks and outdoor recreation lands are the essential green infrastructure of our communities and nation. From the first public commons in colonial American villages to the vast national parks and forests of the American West, our nation's health, wealth and heritage are tied to the acquisition and wise management of parks and public recreation lands and programs. Parks and public recreation lands are carbon reducing landscapes that help clean our air and waters, recharge aquifers and reduce stormwater runoff. They darken our night skies, quiet our communities and provide vital contact with nature for our mental and physical health. They instill a heightened sense of community by serving people of all income levels, all races, all beliefs and all abilities – parks embrace the very essence of our democracy. Parks make communities livable and desirable and are integral to viable economic development and responsible growth policies.

The National Recreation and Park Association, through its national network of park and recreation agencies, professionals, partners and engaged citizens, seeks to serve as a national leader for a revitalized national environmental stewardship ethic. Our embodiment of this ethic includes adhering to the following principles and practices.

Principles

We believe:

- Parks and public lands contain many of our communities' best natural, cultural, historic and recreational resources and thereby preserve our heritage.
- As national leaders, we have the responsibility to create and continuously promote an enhanced awareness of the critical role parks and public lands play in protecting our global environment and cultural heritage, as well as their value as living laboratories for educating the citizens of this nation; particularly our children.
- Parks of all sizes build and enhance a sense of community cohesion and social bonding; as such, park lands must be accessible as amenities and common space for all.
- Public policy must focus on promoting parks, green space and outdoor recreation lands and services that make communities more livable and desirable and serve as a primary driver of effective economic development strategies in that they attract businesses, tourists and the creative workforce.
- As engaged agencies, organizations and citizens, we must advocate for adequate funding and support to protect, restore and expand these resources and establish innovative strategies for developing a new generation of environmental stewards.
- We have the responsibility to develop sustainable practices in land use and facility design, maintenance, and management that serve as models for other organizations and individuals.

Practices

We are resolved that park and recreation professionals, citizen volunteers, supporters, advocates and community leaders must work collaboratively to:

Practice 1: Promote Sustainable Landscapes

- Protect open space, public lands, wildlife habitat, air and water quality, and provide special protections to ecologically and culturally sensitive land and water resources.

- Develop and promote healthy outdoor recreation activities that build a sense of personal responsibility on the part of those individuals using and enjoying our natural and cultural resources.
- Ensure that as stewards of our public lands and parks we uphold the responsibility for measuring and monitoring the health and heritage of these resources and ensuring their long-term sustainability.
- Monitor parks and recreation lands so decision makers and the general public are knowledgeable of when there is a need for expansion or modifications to protect resource values, safety and enjoyment of participants, and quality of life.

Practice 2: Foster the Next Generation of Stewards

- Make connecting to nature possible for citizens of all ages and abilities by providing safe access to public lands, parks, and conservation areas close-to-home.
- Help eliminate the "nature deficit" condition in America's youth through programs and nature discovery opportunities in parks.
- Provide the resources and knowledge to parents and guardians that will enable them to help their children connect with and enjoy the natural world.
- Provide leadership and mentoring for youth to instill in them a sense of hope and joy, a love of nature, and a commitment to stewardship.
- Teach outdoor ethics, recreation skills and practices to reduce impacts to natural, cultural and scenic resources.
- Work collaboratively with young people and educators to determine and implement new environmental stewardship practices.
- Involve local communities, including children and teenagers, in the planning and design of new parks.
- Recruit people of all ages, but especially the younger generation, to volunteer in parks.

Practice 3: Provide Leadership for Sustainable Communities

- Advance sustainability goals beyond parks, recreation and public lands, by modeling sustainable practices in land use, facility design, maintenance, and management, and by engaging with other government, civic, business and education organizations.
- Build new and non-traditional partnerships to foster sustainable lifestyles, responsible energy use, and innovative solutions for community support networks and infrastructure.
- Support the adoption of policies at all levels of government that will advance environmental stewardship and sustainability.
- Use outdoor recreation programs to teach gardening, recycling, food preservation and other sustainable, lifestyle practices that build, support and enhance a personal environmental ethic.
- Support, undertake and apply rigorous scientific research in order to advance our understanding of social, environmental and ecological systems.