

# Bay Watershed Education and Training Program

*NOAA's Bay Watershed Education and Training (B-WET) program is an environmental education program that promotes locally relevant, authentic experiential STEM learning for K-12 students and teachers. B-WET fosters the growth of new, innovative programs and encourages capacity-building and environmental education partnerships. Funded projects advance ocean, climate, and other environmental literacy principles.*

## Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences

B-WET funding is provided through competitive grants that promote Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences (MWEEs). MWEEs are multi-stage activities that include learning both outdoors and in the classroom. MWEEs aim to increase the participants' understanding of watersheds and related ocean, coastal, riverine, estuarine, and Great Lakes ecosystems, as well as the interaction between natural and social systems.



NOAA funding is provided to support student investigation of environmental topics and related professional development for educators. Teachers support students to investigate local and global issues that are of interest to them, identify actions available to address these issues, and understand the value of those actions.

*Binford Middle School student discovers crayfish as part of James River Association's Chesapeake B-WET project. (Credit: Caleigh Remocaldo)*

## Areas Served

The B-WET program currently serves seven geographic areas of the country: California, Chesapeake Bay, Great Lakes, Gulf of Mexico, Hawai'i, New England, and Pacific Northwest. Regional implementation allows B-WET programs to support grantee capacity-building and to connect grantees to local NOAA assets and relevant STEM expertise, while being responsive to local education and environmental priorities.

## Competition Status

B-WET regional funding opportunities are generally published in late summer or fall each year. Please check the B-WET apply page (<http://www.noaa.gov/office-education/bwet/apply>) periodically for updates on future opportunities.

*Teachers gathering water quality data from the English Bayou, LA with Vernier probes as part of a Gulf of Mexico B-WET project (Credit Gary Kratzer)*



*Danbury 6<sup>th</sup> grade students team up to begin their beach scavenger hunt at Long Island Sound from Milford Point, CT as part of Ed Advance's New England B-WET project.*

Since 2002, NOAA has awarded over \$90 million to support more than 700 B-WET projects. In 2018, this program has reached approximately 2,500 educators and 70,000 students with high-quality environmental education programs.

## National Impacts

The B-WET program has created a national evaluation system to monitor program activities and outcomes.

Results of a 2017 analysis of national evaluation data showed that professional development increases teachers' watershed literacy, confidence, and intention to implement MWEEs.

And, as a result of participating in MWEEs, students improved in a range of environmental stewardship and science literacy outcomes, such as:

- expressing greater concern for their watershed;
- being more engaged in their learning; and
- increasing their understanding of the nature of scientific research.