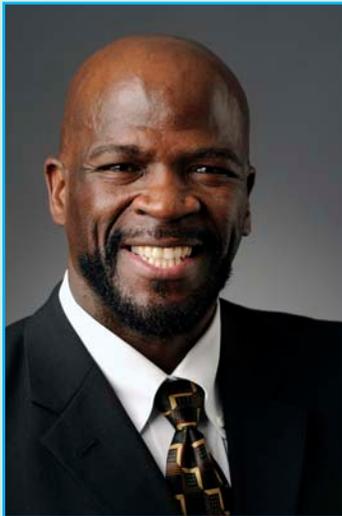


CONNECTION

The voice of the Earth Team volunteer.

Make Room for Earth Team Volunteers

By Astor Boozer, Acting Regional Conservationist - West



Astor Boozer
Acting Regional
Conservationist - West

Effective April 15, 2011, Congress eliminated funding the RC&D program. This decision has impacted many people, communities and programs. NRCS has never closed a program before, but we will get through this process. We will take care of our people and we will continue our conservation work.

This program closure also impacts Earth Team. Each year RC&D projects account for tens of thousands of Earth Team volunteer hours. RC&Ds have done a lot of great work and our volunteers have accomplished much for RC&Ds. They have built up communities, sponsored environmental education programs, promoted tourism and supported many economic development projects. NRCS will continue to value this partnership albeit with a few changes.

Due to the elimination of the RC&D coordinator positions, the type of tasks volunteers can do has also changed. Earth Team volunteers are only allowed to work on tasks paid NRCS employees can complete so some RC&D volunteers will have to shift their focus to more traditional conservation efforts. Additionally, Earth Team volunteers must be supervised by an NRCS employee. Compliance with these task and supervision rules is important because we need to make

sure that we can offer Worker's Compensation and Tort Coverage for all Earth Team volunteers.

I realize these recent events and changes could result in a significant drop in the numbers of Earth Team volunteers and the hours they contribute. I don't want that to happen in the West Region. I encourage each NRCS office to reach out to our valuable RC&D volunteers and keep them in Earth Team. Use them to assist with projects in your field offices. Help them continue their conservation work in support of NRCS' mission, initiatives and objectives.

The national Earth Team goal is for every office to have at least one volunteer. I know of one West Region field office with 219 Earth Team volunteers, so an office finding one volunteer to assist them is very achievable. The 100 percent Earth Team office participation goal should be obtained. Look for work a volunteer can do. Brain storm, conduct a needs assessment, get help from your state volunteer coordinator or the national Earth Team office and make this goal a reality.

Reach out to RC&D Earth Team members and let's take care of our volunteers. Get Earth Team volunteers to help you put more conservation on the ground.

This is a Time for Opportunity and Growth

By Michele Eginore, National Volunteer Coordinator

Every big company you know started small and adapted as they grew. Apple Computer began in a garage. The John Deere Company started in a blacksmith shop.

Even eBay, now employing 18,000 people and worth billions, was founded in 1995 in the living room of a computer programmer. These huge companies had to embrace change in order to grow and be successful.



Michele Eginore

Their leaders had to keep reinventing their companies by adding new products and product lines and adapting to market forces in order to grow and prosper.

Change is occurring at NRCS. We see that taking place in the RC&D and watershed programs. As Earth Team coordinators and managers, our role is to successfully navigate our volunteer programs through the murky waters of change. Some may look at this with dread, but I hope you will follow the examples of Apple, John Deere and eBay and use change to help Earth Team grow.

It won't be easy, but it can happen--with your help.

I encourage you to.....

- Study the General Manual (GM_360_428) and understand its provisions. Some may say the General Manual offers definitions and restrictions. I say it also offers opportunities.
- Review the *Earth Team Information for Volunteer Supervisors* pamphlet for many helpful, proven ideas and tactics designed to help your Earth Team organization grow and prosper. (Google the title to download or call 888-526-3227 to order a free copy.)
- Encourage field offices to update or conduct needs assessments. Ask district conservationists and managers to unleash this powerful tool and uncover jobs volunteers can do. It will also help everyone better understand how Earth Team can help field office staff reach their goals and objectives.

Finally, have some fun and innovate. Sabrenna Bryant, South Carolina state volunteer coordinator, was working with an Earth Team volunteer who was required to complete a video internship project to meet degree requirements at

the University of South Carolina. Sabrenna needed more Earth Team volunteers in her state. Sabrenna thought, "Hey, let's make an Earth Team recruitment video!" The end result is a YouTube video anyone can use to explain Earth Team and recruit more volunteers.

See the video at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tLDLtDdLQwo> or http://www.sc.nrcs.usda.gov/SC_EarthTeam.html.

I enjoyed the video very much. Something said in it struck me. James Wilkins, speaking of Earth Team volunteers, said, "The people get this. The work we are doing here is going to far outlive us and it's our kids and our kids kids and people we don't even know who are going to really reap the benefits of our Earth Team volunteer work."

James Wilkins is right. Not only do we have an opportunity to improve the environment and people's lives, we have the opportunity to improve the lives of future generations through Earth Team work done now. Embrace change. Navigate. Take the challenge. Grab for opportunity and grow your Earth Team program for yourself and for future generations.

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Newspaper Announces Earth Team Staff Addition

Submitted by Pat Hoeffken, Arkansas State Volunteer Coordinator



District Conservationist Tom Counts (left) looks at a newspaper article with Earth Team Volunteer James Dean. Counts sent the Paragould Daily Press a news release announcing employee and volunteer staff additions to the field office staff in Paragould, Ark. The newspaper printed the announcement describing Dean as a registered forester, part-time Earth Team volunteer and how he is interested in becoming an NRCS employee.

Volunteer Voices Praise of Earth Team

Submitted by Gail Hendricks, Public Affairs Specialist and Darryl Williams, Florida State Volunteer Coordinator

Chief Bobby Johns Bearheart, of the Perdido Bay Tribe of Southeastern Lower Muscogee Creek Indians in Florida, celebrated National Volunteer week in April by praising Earth Team on the Southeast AgNet Radio Network's 67 radio stations.

In an interview arranged by Florida Public Affairs Specialist Gail Hendricks, Chief Bearheart said it's been a dream to work with NRCS as an Earth Team volunteer. "I'm working alongside these professionals that are trained in the art of conservation and (I get to) learn from them," he told his radio listeners.



Chief Bobby Johns Bearheart

Chief Bearheart predicts Earth Team will grow in Florida because people care about the environment and they are starting to see what the problems are and how easy it is to improve the situation.

He did the telephone interview from his home in Pensacola. It can be heard at: <http://southeastagnet.com/2011/04/13/fl-nrcs-celebrating-their-earth-team-volunteers/>

Earth Team Volunteer Valued Member of Field Office Staff

by Clare Kerofsky, Scott County SWCD Watershed Coordinator

The NRCS field office staff in Scott County, Iowa, really likes Earth Team Volunteer Dan Meden. The 24 year old began volunteering in their Davenport office in May of 2010 and they say he has been a valued volunteer ever since.

Meden says volunteering provides him with an opportunity to meet people, increase his knowledge, learn new skills, stay active, and it provides networking opportunities. He is looking for a career in a research field that will benefit wildlife and agriculture. He hopes his experience as an Earth Team volunteer will help him land his dream job.

Meden grew up in Kentucky and Indiana and also in Germany, graduating from high school in Weisbaden. He completed his associates of arts degree at the University of Maryland University College in Weisbaden, Germany, and received his Bachelor of Science Degree in May 2010

from Augustana College, Rock Island, Ill.

As an Earth Team volunteer, Meden assists field office staff with many activities including conservation planning, surveying, water sampling and environmental education.

Meden was named the field office's 2010 Earth Team Volunteer of the Year.



Dan Meden

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Earth Team Volunteers Serve Up a Winning Combination of Conservation Education and Hot Cooking

By Pamela Aguon, Submitted by Antonette Tornito, Volunteer Coordinator for Guam

Earth Team volunteers staffed an outreach event in February at the Hot Pepper Festival on the Island of Tinian, of the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands (CNMI). They helped promote conservation education and walked away with a cooking contest win.

The CNMI is in a political union with the United States and consists of 15 islands about three-quarters of the way from Hawaii to the Philippines. It is served by the NRCS office in Mongmong, Guam.

The festival was created to celebrate the island's main crop, the hot pepper locally known as Donne'/Donni Sali. The festival's activities included educational booths, dance, volleyball and boat race competitions; cultural performances, a cooking contest and a hot pepper eating contest.

NRCS outreach activities were held in the main pavilion during the two day event. Conservation staffers were assisted by three Earth Team Volunteers: William A. Aguon, Vincent J. Reyes, and Sheryl Y.M. Sablan. The Earth Team volunteers set up an NRCS display and helped staff explain to participants the importance of conservation planning and the benefits of installing conservation practices.

They also won first prize! Earth Team volunteers Aguon and Reyes took an hour off and teamed up to walk away with top honors in the festival's cooking contest. Their work was judged best in taste and presentation. They used a recipe which featured hot peppers and was served in cut, mature coconut shells.



The winning dish

The voice of the Earth Team volunteer.

Ninety Year Old Volunteers Make an Environmental Impact in North Dakota

By Dick Tremain, NRCS Public Affairs Specialist

Two women have been helping make an environmental impact in North Dakota and Stark and Billings Counties for nearly two decades. Lyla Schulz, 91, and Jean Herauf, 90, have each volunteered over 1,000 hours doing routine office work to free conservationists with USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service so they can spend more time working directly with farmers and ranchers.

"This allows us to give better service and get more conservation on the ground," said District Conservationist Russell E. Jordre. "When Lyla and Jean volunteer, they increase our ability to work directly with

landowners so we can improve the environment for everyone."

Schulz and Herauf assist with client mailings, file maintenance, photocopying, form preparation, and educational projects.



Jean Herauf (L) and Lyla Schulz hold a "thank you blanket" given at a local award presentation to recognize their 19 years and more than 1,000 hours each of volunteer service in the Dickinson, N.D., field office.



Earth Team Volunteers William A. Aguon (L) and Vincent J. Reyes show their first place cooking contest certificate earned during a break in an educational outreach effort on Tinian. The men set up a display and helped NRCS staff members work with producers.

Earth Team Volunteers are Everywhere

By Mary Giles, Public Information & Outreach Coordinator with NRCS South Missouri Water Quality Project

Potential Earth Team volunteers are everywhere, but you need to look for opportunities to connect with them. Sometimes a connection can be made through unusual circumstances, such as when I met Earth Team Volunteer Obed Barron.

I met Obed several years ago in an English-as-Second Language (ESL) class in which I was invited to speak. The challenge I faced as a guest speaker was to use no higher than a first grade vocabulary in order to properly communicate with the class. This was fascinating because the people in the audience had university degrees but were just beginning to learn the English language.



Earth Team Volunteer Obed Barron

Obed asked me about becoming an Earth Team volunteer after my presentation. He was visiting relatives in the United States and soon became an international Earth Team volunteer.

Obed provided over 600 hours of service on a graphic design project before returning to his home country. He then came back to the United States, became a naturalized citizen and works now as an IT professional.

Earth Team volunteers play an important role in helping NRCS work with people to protect and conserve our nation's natural resources. I know NRCS leadership values their contribution in expanding our conservation services, and they appreciate our role in this



Mary Giles

process.

I challenge you to act on the opportunities you have to network every day. Build relationships. Provide service opportunities. Connect. Soon you may find yourself talking with a talented future Earth Team volunteer, too. Their name may not be Obed, but they could be making an Obed-sized contribution to conservation in your county.

Editor's note: When Mary Giles says NRCS leadership values the contribution of Earth Team coordinators she isn't kidding. In late March she received a telephone call from Chief Dave White. He was looking at a copy of a children's book created by Missouri Earth Team volunteers and was calling to say, "Good work." Mary said she felt honored Chief White called to personally thank her for her NRCS volunteer efforts.

Earth Team Volunteer Harvests Rainwater

By Kate Giannini, Soil Conservationist, Johnson County SWCD



Earth Team Volunteer James Grizzard gives a presentation on rainwater harvesting systems to 50 "Partners of Scott County Iowa" to promote urban conservation practices in eastern Iowa. Grizzard has studied water conservation systems in South America and

he has five years of experience working for a water conservation system design/build company in Texas. He is now a student at the University of Iowa in Iowa City and shares his experience as an Earth Team volunteer.

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EARTH TEAM PROGRAM: A Family Affair

By Melissa Blair, Texas USDA-NRCS, Zone 3 Public Affairs Specialist

More than 11 years ago, brothers Mark and David Garcia were too young to join the Earth Team Volunteer Program, but as most kids are, they were eager to help their father, Vivian Garcia, Texas NRCS Rangeland Management Specialist for south Texas, with whatever events or projects they could. As soon as they turned 14, both brothers signed up as Earth Team volunteers and have been actively helping their father ever since. The brothers have assisted with prescribed burn workshops, prescribed burns, Individual Plant Treatment (IPT) workshops and demonstrations.

Mark has also volunteered for soil sampling for the National Resources Inventory (NRI).

Sherry Garcia, Mark and David's mother, has also been an active Earth Team member making service to NRCS a Garcia family affair. She has helped her husband, Vivian, with editing publications, taking photographs and assisting with workshops and events.

Today, Mark, age 19, is a freshman at Texas A&M Kingsville majoring in Industrial Technologies. David, 23, is a senior at Texas A&M Kingsville majoring in Business Management. As students, they tell others about Earth Team volunteer opportunities and careers with NRCS. Although neither Garcia brother is planning on following in their father's steps as a rangeland management specialist, they still plan to continue volunteering with the Earth Team program after graduation.



Texas NRCS Rangeland Management Specialist Vivian Garcia (bottom left) pauses during a project with his family of Earth Team volunteers. Joining him are wife Sherry Garcia and sons Mark (back left) and David Garcia (back right).

Future Leader Visits Earth Team Headquarters



Waymon McNeal, Jr. (left) receives Earth Team literature from National Volunteer Liaison Bonnie Allely (right) during a visit to the national office in Des Moines. McNeal is participating in NRCS' Business Management Leadership Program, an intensive two-year program that provides a combination of formal training with rotational work assignments. McNeal was working in nearby Adel, Iowa, and was introduced to the NRCS Distribution Center and national Earth Team staff by District Conservationist Brad Harrison.

The NRCS Earth Team Connection is looking for articles for our next issue.

The deadline for submission is August 13, 2011. Please send your stories, tidbits, photos and photo captions to:
dick.tremain@ia.usda.gov.

Teamwork Key to Kansas Earth Team Program Success

By Jan Klaus, Kansas State Volunteer Coordinator



What does it take to make the Earth Team (ET) Volunteer Program a success? If you ask the State Volunteer Coordinator (SVC) from Kansas, she will tell you it takes a great team of coordinators and that is exactly what she has. The Program in Kansas is managed by a state volunteer coordinator and five area coordinators. At the end of each quarter, this team of coordinators meet to review their area accomplishments and transfer ideas and information which allows them to administer the program more effectively within their respective areas.

Kansas is fortunate to have full Program support by the state conservationist (STC) who sends a clear message to the field staff of his high expectation on the use of volunteers. The STC takes a hands-on approach with field staff by inquiring about their use of volunteers, and encourages

the distribution of keepsakes to recognize volunteer contributions. A budget is also prepared by the SVC and approved by the STC for the purchase of these keepsake items. Year after year, the field staff continues to surpass the bar in volunteer utilization.

Knowledge has proven to be power. The more information that is delivered to the field about the program, the more volunteer activity is generated. A business plan is prepared annually and reviewed each quarter. The NRCS staff within each Management Unit (MU) is strongly encouraged to complete a "Volunteer Needs Assessment" quarterly, but a minimum of annually. Kansas also supplements the General Manual (GM), Title 340, Section 404.14, to include overall management of the program as part of the Management and Administrative Review process in each office. In addition, state guidance has been added to the GM,

Title 360, Section 428.46 regarding activities that can be captured as volunteer hours.

Kansas ET coordinators also take time to share the tools used to promote and implement the Program by posting materials developed on the National ET SharePoint site. This includes information regarding the Kansas Apprentice Program (KAP); an instruction sheet developed for filling out the official Volunteer Services Agreement for Natural Resource Agencies (Form OF-301A); the criteria created for our unique "District Manager Award"; and newly developed individual and group time sheet forms to capture hours contributed by volunteers. In addition, you can check out the many ET resources and success stories on the Kansas NRCS website at http://www.ks.nrcs.usda.gov/intranet/earth_team/index.html.



Jan Klaus, (standing, second from the left) state volunteer coordinator for Kansas, credits her area coordinators for the success of Earth Team in her state. Shown with Klaus are (standing, left to right) Jeff Schmidt, Area 3 coordinator; Klaus; Tracey Martin, state office and Plant Materials Center coordinator; Alex Miller, Area 4 coordinator. Seated are Jamie Johnson (left), Area 2 coordinator and Toni Flax, Area 1 coordinator.

Coordinator's Work Becomes Front Page News

by Dick Tremain, Public Affairs Specialist

Kansas Earth Team Coordinator Tracey Martin was featured in a front page article in the Salina Journal on Sunday, April 24. The article appeared on page one of Section D. The profile examined her work as an office administration assistant and her win as the national 2011 Earth Team Volunteer Coordinator Award.

Salina Journal has a daily circulation of 30,000 in Salina and North Central Kansas.

Reporter Tim Unruh's copyright article discussed her work at the Kansas NRCS state office and her Earth Team duties. Unruh wrote about how Martin coordinates volunteers to help improve natural resources and the environment and how she recruits students into the Kansas Apprentice Program to introduce them to conservation careers.

The article discussed how Martin became an Earth Team coordinator in 2008 and tripled the number of volunteers and volunteer hours in just three years time. It ended with a quote from Kansas NRCS State Conservationist Eric Banks referring to Martin's Earth Team job as being a "very important collateral duty."

Volunteer Partnership Enables Maine Earth Team Success

by Dick Tremain, Public Affairs Specialist

District Conservationist Kevin White is thrilled. He has added the equivalent of one full-time staff member to his Skowhegan, Maine, office at no cost to NRCS thanks to Earth Team and a program called the National Able Network. By combining the programs, two Earth Team volunteers overlap their part-time work schedules to give the office full-time telephone and reception coverage freeing NRCS staff to do other conservation work.

National Able Network (NAN) is a nonprofit agency which provides job training and support to help people enter or re-enter the workforce. NAN can also help them learn new job skills.

NAN job seekers Rose Caron and Pam Guerin were recruited to join Earth Team. They now assist at the Skowhegan USDA Service Center. Caron, a retired secretary, works mornings and Guerin, a former L. L. Bean customer service representative, covers afternoons in the Somerset County Soil and Water Conservation District office. They help with contract assembly, filing and cover the office when everyone else is doing field work.

“This is a big boon to us,” said White. “Rose and Pam have great people skills and they can direct telephone calls and visitors to the right person. This allows us to give more personalized service



District Conservationist Kevin White, works on a conservation plan with Earth Team Volunteers

Pam Guerin (center) and Rose Caron in the Somerset County, Maine, USDA Service Center.

to our customers and it frees our conservationists to work more closely with clients. As a result, our office is more productive and our staff is happier, too.”

White and District Executive Director Carol Weymouth interviewed the women, learned their likes and dislikes to tailor their volunteer work. “We provide a training site to boost the resumes for participants and NAN provides continuing education classes on subject like Excel and Word,” said Weymouth. “I love this program because it is so helpful to this office and Rose and Pam are wonderful

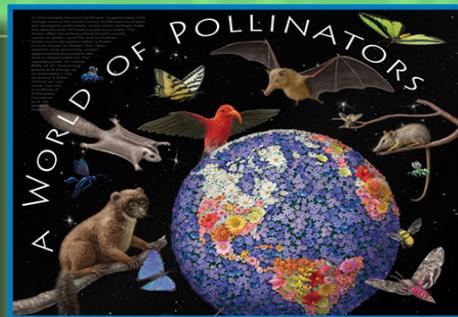
additions to our family of Earth Team volunteers.”

The two Skowhegan Earth Team volunteers also helped their field office receive recognition for being the top county in the State of Maine for the number of donated hours in 2010.

“The Earth Team volunteers have really assisted in moving forward our Farm Bill programs,” said White. “Frankly, I encourage other district conservationists to see if this program will work in their county.”

For more information on NAN, visit www.nationalable.org.

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Retiring Show-Me-State Coordinator has Shown-‘em

By Dick Tremain, Public Affairs Specialist

Missouri Area Earth Team Coordinator Laura Cowart is retiring after 20 years of Earth Team service and 21 years with NRCS. State Volunteer Coordinator Sarah Szachnieski says Cowart is leaving behind a legacy of success.



Laura Cowart

“Look at Earth Team in southwest Missouri. It is in great shape thanks to Laura and it will remain so far into the future,” said Szachnieski. “It’s easy to count on Laura. She always has her hours in and her reports are complete. In fact, look at what she did to find her replacement. She doesn’t retire for months and she has already recruited Mary Giles, a national Earth Team award winner, to replace her!”

Cowart started her career with NRCS in April 1990 in an RC&D office and soon learned about Earth Team. In August 1992, she became the area administrative coordinator in Springfield, in the southwest corner of Missouri, and became the area Earth Team coordinator at the same time.

Cowart says Missouri Earth Team uses a system of area and field coordinators. “We do extremely well with Earth Team because we have great office participation. We have field coordinators in combined county offices

Field Office Honors 72 Earth Team Volunteers

Submitted by Debbie Smith, Smith County District Clerk

During National Volunteer Week, NRCS honored its 72 Smith County, Miss., Earth Team members for their many conservation activities which included helping the district with Youth Conservation Field Day, Farm Safety Day, Watershed Harmony Programs, third grade school programs, tree planting week and the district’s poster contest.

District Clerk Debbie Smith said not all NRCS volunteers could attend. Several members of the Mississippi National Guard are deployed to

Afghanistan and several Forestry Commission and Forestry Service volunteers are on an assignment fighting forest fires.

Debbie Smith said there is a big benefit to having so many volunteers. She says a lot of conservation work gets done, we don’t over work anyone and when we need it, we get a lot of help. She also likes Volunteer Week. She says Earth Team members love volunteering and during Volunteer Week we get a chance to love them back.



District Conservationist Ron Read, (eighth from the right), of Raleigh, Miss., is hidden by some of his district’s many active Earth Team volunteers during a photo shoot at a volunteer appreciation day in April. Included in the picture are guest

speaker Clarence Finley, assistant to the acting state conservationist, second from the left; District Commissioner Wayne Thornton, sixth from the right; and District Clerk Debbie Smith, front row left.

to help promote ET at the local level,” said Cowart. “That local person has an impact instead of me two hours away in Springfield.”

Cowart says her area has had 100 percent Earth Team office participation for years.

Sometimes there are challenges. Cowart says occasionally it is tough to get offices to use Earth Team volunteers because of the investment of staff time. “It’s hard to get DCs to look at jobs, but the needs assessment helps identify tasks volunteers can do. The needs assessment works—if people will take the time to complete it. It shows what jobs volunteers can do,” she said.

What’s on the retirement agenda?

Travel—lots of travel. After Laura and her husband both retire August 26, 2011, they will leave their Springfield, Mo., home and start a three week trip to Europe followed by vacations in Napa Valley and New England. The mother of three grown children says they plan a lot of trips to Kansas City, too. “I have grandchildren to visit which will involve plenty of “grandma stuff,” she said.

Sometime between trips, Cowart says she will sign up as an Earth Team volunteer. “I’ve got a lot of things I still want to accomplish,” she said. “Maybe part of what I’ll do is help district conservationists conduct needs assessments in their counties.”

Earth Team Members Help Build the Future by Merging Reading and Conservation

by Lynn Porter, Earth Team Coordinator and District Administrator, Hinds County SWCD

Seventeen Earth Team volunteers spent a day promoting literacy and conservation by reading a Dr. Seuss book to elementary students in Hinds County, Mississippi, on March 2, 2011. It was all part of a special day to commemorate Theodore Seuss Geisel's birthday and celebrate the national Read Across America Program.

Earth Team volunteers from the NRCS Jackson, Miss., Field Office participated.

Read Across America is a year-round reading motivation and awareness program that calls for every child in every community to celebrate reading and the birthday of beloved children's author Dr. Seuss.

Theodore Seuss Geisel, better known as Dr. Seuss, was the author of 44 imaginative, rhyming children's books.

Dr. Seuss' "The Lorax" is

considered one of the best conservation books for children and adults. The book records the condition of the environment and is recognized as a fable concerning industrialized society and the danger it could pose to nature.

Earth Team volunteers started their day off by being interviewed three times by NBC television affiliate WLBT, Jackson, Miss. Starting at 9:00 a.m., Earth Team volunteers, wearing Dr. Seuss style red-striped hats, started reading to the first of 25 elementary grade classes. Afterwards, they left a copy of the book for the students of each class.

Jackson Field Office staff challenge all Earth Team volunteers to participate in "Read Across America" sponsored by the NEA-National Education Association organization. They say, "You're

never too old, too wacky, too wild, to pick up a book and read to a child."

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NRCS Earth Team volunteers prepare to read Dr. Seuss "The Lorax" to students at John Hopkins Elementary School, Jackson, Miss., during Read Across America Day, March 2. The annual event is aimed to help bring conservation to the classroom and promote reading to young people. Pictured (from left) are Lynn Porter, Jackson Public Schools Assistant Superintendent Dr. Michelle King, Carolyn Crechale,

Merry Stockwell, Craig Royston, Edith Hildebrand, Anna Royston, Margie Sasser, Ed Porter, Mary Sue Bullock, Wynne Powell, Assistant Principal Stephen Johnson, librarian Melissa Strauss as the "Lorax", Pat Sigrest, Barbara Ryan, Peggy McKey, NRCS Public Affairs Specialist Jeannine May, Debbie Thurman, Jeff Wilson, Principal Vicki Conely and Harriet Lowe.