

**Maryland Partnership for Children In Nature
2012 Action Items**

DRAFT

The following actions are listed here to provide information on main activities recommended as a result of work of Partnership members over the course of several meetings. The next step for these actions, once approved by the Leadership Team, is for work groups to be formed and to develop these items more fully, as well as to prioritize and adjust the activities to meet what we are able to accomplish in one year. What steps need to be taken to accomplish these actions and what is the timeline to achieve each of them in 2012? Each of the actions and associated work groups must have a lead contact identified. Many of the actions listed here have a lead in place, but many do not yet. A more complete table with lead agencies and contacts will be provided at the meeting on 1/19/12. This version is just to review, so that Partners can consider where they would like to commit their time and energy. There are numerous opportunities to participate in this work!

ACTION	Notes
Focus Area: Outreach and Communication	
“Celebrate Maryland Outdoors” event: joint promotional week- or month-long event to get as many people outdoors enjoying nature as possible at once.	June is Great Outdoors Month. All Partners invited to provide activities at their locations.
Develop campaign plan to change attitudes and behaviors about using the outdoors. Apply existing or new social marketing research and methodology to assess target audience(s), barriers, and benefits of outdoor play/use and identify specific actions to be promoted and tracked.	
Continue and expand statewide marketing efforts. Identify and activate vehicles for regular communication with the public about outdoor activities, positive messages about outdoor play, opportunities to access public lands, etc.	<i>Work at county level to promote outdoor/ nature play; utilize popular media, beyond websites; work through partner orgs.</i>
Provide current information about CIN actions, related issues, events and EL (see also <i>EL webinar, below</i>).	Determine most effective/ preferred format(s).
Develop and distribute quarterly progress reports on CIN actions.	All Leads provide information on actions and progress.
Coordinate/streamline outreach efforts among CIN, MD NCLI and MAEOE.	
Focus Area: Environmental Literacy – Support for EL in schools and in the community	
Plan and host a webinar to provide information about EL graduation requirement.	Target audience is non-formal envi educators but all will be invited.
Plan and conduct regional EL meetings between formal (LEA) educators and environmental educators (EE providers).	Follow-up planning sessions to be scheduled.
Plan and conduct additional training opportunities for EE providers (re aligning w/ curriculum, school requirements/ needs, providing quality outdoor experiences, etc.)	MAEOE conference and others.
Plan and conduct additional professional development opportunities for LEA educators, provide guidance materials/ tools.	MAEOE conference; Common Qualities document; others .
Establish regional liaisons to help provide assistance for schools and nonformal EE providers in developing/ implementing EL plans.	MAEOE can assist by working through Green Centers
Host a forum with representatives of higher education to determine how to improve coordination between higher ed and preK-12, and to contribute to teacher preparation and professional development programs re EL.	<i>Make recommendations for implementation of strategy(ies) identified.</i>
Promote schoolyard habitats through increased integration with the MD Green Schools program.	part of application/ recommendations/ training
Assist with planning and holding the 2012 Youth Summit in conjunction with MAEOE and Green Schools Awards Ceremony.	
Support National Green Ribbon Schools Program – provide process for nominating MD schools; assist schools in preparing applications.	
Develop written recommendations for meeting goal of providing an outdoor experience for “every student every year.”	Includes guidance for schools as well as nonformal EE providers/ sites, etc.
Develop a tool to effectively collect and report numbers of students getting quality outdoor experiences.	In conjunction with Federal Mid-Atlantic EL strategy.

Determine how to support/ cooperate with Youth in the Great Outdoors and/or Urban Waters Initiatives or other Federal/ National initiatives.	<i>Make recommendations for implementation of strategy(ies) identified.</i>
Expand EE program offerings to help serve needs of local schools to meet EL and annual outdoor experiences.	e.g., DNR MPS is developing a strategic approach to increasing EE programs at parks to serve area schools.
Focus Area: Communities and Community Planning	
Work across agencies to develop and provide more interactive trail maps.	
Provide input into land planning plans that include recreation and open space accommodations (e.g., Long Range Recreation and Parks Plan).	Deadline for LRRP Plan input is January 2013.
Complete the Park Equity Analysis and use it with local planners, parks and others to identify needs and priorities.	
Work with federal, state, and local governments to enhance the state trail network, identify opportunities for and provide new trail connections between schools, communities and our public lands.	
Engage students and youth groups in mapping routes from schools and communities to local parks, identifying access barriers and using results to recommend improvements.	Using interactive Internet mapping tool (see model from NJ).
Establish lines of communication among state/county/local parks to identify and address needs for improving access to nature and interpretive/ recreational programs; Develop/ provide guidance e.g. working with schools, serving "new" populations (diversity, language/ cultural matters).	
Nature Play Spaces – Promote new pattern book/ materials to guide development of new model projects; Distribute guidance among planning professionals.	
Identify a common need that CIN can meet to advance ability of orgs to provide after school and community / family programs that connect people to nature and mirror EL taught in schools	<i>What can we do collectively to promote, guide, assist, lay the groundwork?</i>
Inventory all natural play spaces and make information available for users.	<i>This is a placeholder – need action(s) to continue nature play spaces work, development of site, promotion.</i>
Focus Area: Health and Food (Agriculture) Connections	
Host a forum with representatives of health field to determine objectives and actions to integrate outdoor activity into health initiatives.	<i>Make recommendations for implementation of strategy(ies) identified.</i>
Promote/ contribute to expanding Docs in the Parks and/or Prescription for Nature programs (prescribe active outdoor time to improve health).	e.g., participate in events sponsored by these programs; host additional training for medical professionals, tie into Federal initiatives.
Explore feasibility of providing CIN participant in advisory board for Institute for a Healthiest Maryland.	
Help develop, expand, replicate and promote smoke-free parks.	Can be part of parks initiatives work group noted above.
Determine how CIN can advance agriculture education initiatives, integrating them more in schools and community programs.	<i>Make recommendations for implementation of strategy(ies) identified.</i>
Promote and support the Healthy Kids Outdoors Act.	<i>Make recommendations for implementation of strategy(ies) identified.</i>
Connect with and support the Let's Move and Be Out There campaigns.	
Develop and promote means to incorporate more community youth vegetable gardening programs; increase awareness of benefits and ability to access locally grown foods.	<i>Develop or adapt an existing model that includes youth entrepreneurship? Through youth orgs or Vo-tech programs?</i>