



catalyst

ENVIRONMENTAL LEADERSHIP CENTER

FALL 2008

WARREN WILSON COLLEGE

WWC and National Wildlife Federation to Host Campus Climate Summit

Jolea T. Bryant, National Wildlife Federation Campus Field Coordinator, Campus Ecology Program

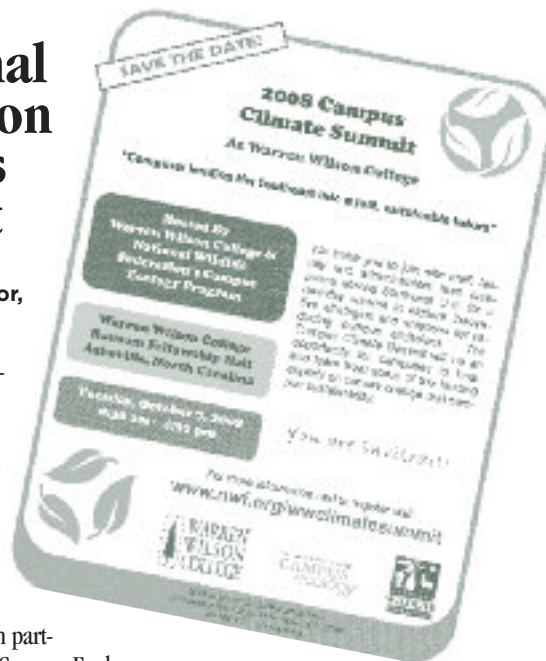
The greatest potential for colleges and universities to help address the climate challenge lies beyond just reducing the climate footprints of their individual campuses. As campuses model the solutions to global warming, they have an opportunity to influence peer institutions as well as businesses, non-profits, and multiple levels of government.

On October 7, 2008, Warren Wilson College, in partnership with the National Wildlife Federation's Campus Ecology Program, will host a Campus Climate Summit, giving colleges and universities in the Southern Appalachian region an opportunity to share successes, challenges, and effective strategies for emissions reduction.

The stakes are high, the challenge is critical, and the need for climate leadership has never been greater. The good news is that campuses are responding to global warming, with more than 500 colleges and universities nationwide committed to achieving climate neutrality. Despite these commitments, however, actual greenhouse gas emissions continue to rise on most campuses. Gains from energy efficiency and conservation have been outpaced by growth in student populations and new construction. While promoting sustainable practices and long-term commitments are good first steps, they do not ensure an immediate reduction of total emissions.

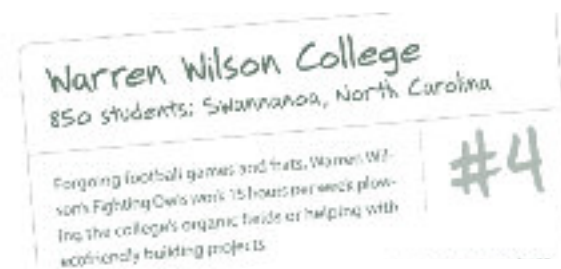
The Climate Summit will explore an array of topics pertinent to campus emissions reduction including measuring and managing greenhouse gas emissions; the challenges of conducting a greenhouse gas inventory; carbon offsets; campus-wide behavior change motivators; and more. Summit organizers have invited some of the most experienced and well-versed individuals in the scientific and higher education fields as speakers and presenters. Participants will certainly leave with a greater understanding of the steps they can take to reduce the carbon footprint of their campuses and become leaders in the fight against climate change.

For more information visit www.nwf.org/wwclimatesummit.



WWC #4 on Sierra Club's 2008 "10 Coolest Schools" List

Ben Anderson, WWC Media Relations Director



A recent surge in green initiatives by public universities couldn't dislodge Warren Wilson College from another top-four ranking among *Sierra* magazine's "10 Coolest Schools" in the fight against global warming. The feature is the cover story of the September/October 2008 issue, which includes *Sierra's* annual "Green College Guide."

The 2008 ranking marked the second consecutive year that Warren Wilson has ranked first in the southeast and among *Sierra's* top four schools nationwide. With an undergraduate enrollment of about 900, Warren Wilson is the only school in the top 10 with fewer than 2,000 students—a stark contrast to large public universities such as Arizona State (51,500 students) that also landed on the list.

According to the magazine, the top schools earned points in 10 categories: policies for building, energy, food, investment, procurement, and transportation; curriculum; environmental activism; waste management; and overall commitment to sustainability.

A perfect score in every area would give a school 100 points. Warren Wilson scored a total of 88.5, behind Middlebury College (93), University of Colorado at Boulder (91.5) and University of Vermont at Burlington (91). The only other college or university in the southeast to crack the "Cool Schools" top 10 was the 50,000-student University of Florida, which ranked No. 7.

According to Environmental Leadership Center Executive Director Margo Flood, "Unlike many other institutions with generous funds to support their commitment to sustainability, Warren Wilson relies upon the Triad of academics, work and service to fuel its progress. Our campus community shares in the work and in the honor of this distinction."

Visit www.sierraclubs.org/Sierra for the full story.

See additional awards on page 2 . . .

INSULATE!

Brittany Cusworth, WWC '08 and Rachel Buedel, WWC '09

INSULATE!, a new program of WWC's Environmental Leadership Center that aims to address climate change by reaching out to those in need, had its official launch this August. Climate change and greenhouse gas emissions are of great concern to the College and pose a serious threat to the well-being of local and global communities. As energy commands an ever-higher premium, people living in poverty are at increasingly greater risk of being unable to afford to heat and cool their homes. With commitment of labor and materials from many of the community partners associated with the ELC's Mountain Green Initiative—a year-round program that fosters sustainable building practices in our region—INSULATE! will help low-income homeowners improve the energy efficiency of their homes at no cost.

It is estimated that 44,000 people in Buncombe County are living below the poverty level and spend upwards to 20% of their income on

energy costs. According to Ben Watts, Economic Development Department Director of Community Action Opportunities, "we anticipate a 40% increase in energy costs for the upcoming winter season." The rising trends in energy costs concern local social service agencies who wonder how those in need will cover all of their expenses for fuel, food, and medicine.

INSULATE! galvanizes higher education, federal and state agencies, private partners and municipal leadership to respond to this need. It addresses economic, environmental, and equity issues and embodies, in every way, sustainable community action.

The ELC INSULATE! student work crew, Nina Otter and Rachel Buedel, work with program manager Phillip Gibson to coordinate the logistics of the program and do some of the insulation work along with volunteer professionals. Warren Wilson's Service Learning Program organizes

student workers to participate in the actual work on the house.

Several community partners support INSULATE! including The Council on Aging of Buncombe County, the Asheville Home Builders Association, Community Action Opportunities, the City of Asheville, Mountain Housing Opportunities, and Progress Energy. These partners, along with the College will insulate three Buncombe County homes in need this fall.

INSULATE! seeks grants and material donations of energy audit and monitoring equipment, and insulation materials. Skilled volunteers are invited to participate.

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Pfeiffer Discusses WWC's Climate Change Partnerships at 2008 Climate Leadership Summit

Sandy Pfeiffer, WWC President



President Pfeiffer and Asheville Mayor Bellamy

In early June, the 2008 Climate Leadership Summit was held in Grand Rapids, Michigan, sponsored by the American College and University Presidents Climate Commitment (ACUPCC), the Wege Foundation, and several others. As a charter signatory of the ACUPCC and an invited speaker, I took part in a panel presentation entitled "Town/Gown Synergies: Scaling Up Climate Action Through Community Engagement." The other panelists included George Heartwell, mayor of Grand Rapids; Edward Balog, president of Aquinas College; and Peter Bardaglio, senior fellow of Second Nature and past provost of Ithaca College.

For my presentation, I described "The Asheville Collaborative Model for Sustainability." First, I discussed the goals of the climate change partnership between the City of Asheville and Warren Wilson College, formalized in July 2007. Next, I highlighted specific partnership results including collaborative discussion in regular meetings; the work of our summer 2008 student intern who assisted Asheville's Energy Coordinator to develop a climate change information campaign for consumers; and public lectures on climate change throughout the year, delivered by local members of the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change scientists. Finally, I described Progress Energy's Community Environmental Action Council (CEAC) on which I serve, a novel initiative between the utility industry and diverse community partners formed to address renewable solutions to our energy challenges.

All in all, the 2008 Climate Summit served as a fine example of the collaboration that will be required to combat global warming. Although some plenary speakers emphasized just how little time we have to make changes that will forestall major climate change, I left the meeting with the hope that collaborations like those we've forged in Asheville will be the template for successful sustainability models. The people and organizations in Asheville are, and will continue to be, national leaders in combating global warming and climate change.

WWC Awards and Recognitions

The magazine *Plenty: The World in Green* selected WWC as "Runner Up" in the category of "Greenest Cafeterias" among college and university dining halls nationwide.

US News & World Report recognized WWC in the 2009 edition of "America's Best Colleges," as one of the nation's 25 leading service-learning programs.

TheDailyGreen.com, an online publication of Hearst Communications, placed Warren Wilson No. 2 on its list of "10 of the Greenest Colleges in America."

The online magazine *Kiwi* featured WWC in its second "Green College Report," as one of the 50 colleges from around the country that offer eco-friendly campuses and programs.

National Wildlife Federation's *Chill Out: Campus Solutions to Global Warming* nationwide competition named WWC "Runner Up" for its comprehensive climate plan.

The Carolina Recycling Association, comprising both Carolinas, gave its first award for Outstanding College or University Recycling Program to Warren Wilson College (see page 6).

Blue Ridge Country magazine recognized Warren Wilson College as one of the 14 places and people, and the only college recognized, for its environmental commitment for "making a difference in Appalachia."

Blue Ridge Outdoors selected WWC as the Southeast's "Greenest College" for the second consecutive year.

Warren Wilson Students Assist in Blue Ridge Parkway Project

Courtesy of Asheville's HUB

As the Blue Ridge Parkway approaches its 75th anniversary, the National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA) is drawing on the GIS (Geographic Information Systems) expertise of students at Warren Wilson College to help it propose a plan to manage secondary road access to the Parkway over the next 20 years. The proposal is aimed at keeping the Blue Ridge Parkway a rural, scenic byway and ensuring that it does not become a commuter road that diminishes the visitor experience.

Learning how to use GIS to capture, analyze and visually present geographically referenced data so it reveals relationships, patterns and trends is part of the curriculum for students in the College's Global Studies program. Warren Wilson students extend their learning and serve the community through the College's service-learning program.

"NPCA staffers and volunteers and Warren Wilson students are putting a lot of painstaking work into creating maps rich in information that users will immediately understand," said David Abernathy, a Geography and Global Studies Professor at Warren Wilson. "Not only will users understand the information faster than if they had to wade through pages and pages of text, but they likely will have a visceral response to the amount of development they see happening near the Blue Ridge Parkway and will want to take steps to protect it."

"The collaboration with Warren Wilson students is exciting," said Greg Kidd, Senior Program Manager at the NPCA's Blue Ridge Field Office in Asheville. "We hope the project is just the beginning of an ongoing relationship."

To learn more about this project, GIS, or Global Studies at WWC, contact David Abernathy, dabernathy@warren-wilson.edu.

WWC's Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory

Stan Cross, ELC Education Director

Colleges and universities across the country are rallying to confront the greatest environmental, social, and economic challenge to face humankind: climate change. Warren Wilson was one of the charter signatories of the American College and University Presidents Climate Commitment, pledging to "initiate the development of a comprehensive plan to achieve climate neutrality as soon as possible." The College's annual greenhouse gas inventory is a vital tool that provides insights into emissions patterns and the data needed to develop plans to fulfill that pledge.

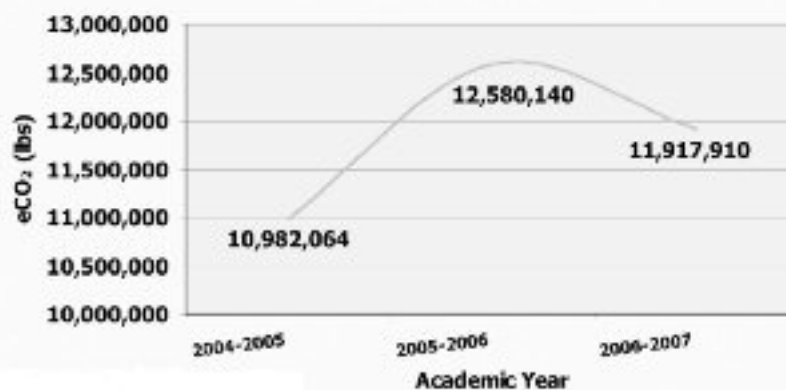
In 2002, Warren Wilson's Campus Greening Crew began tracking campus energy use data to understand the relationship between behavior choices and greenhouse gas emissions. In 2004-05, the first Greenhouse Gas Inventory was compiled from this data by Andrew Phillips, WWC '06, in an independent study project with Chemistry Professor John Brock. Since then the

inventory has become an annual student project. The 2005-06 inventory was conducted by Ryan Morra, WWC '07, and Chelsea Maier, WWC '09, compiled the 2006-2007 inventory.

Completion of this third consecutive greenhouse gas inventory presents the first opportunity to analyze Warren Wilson's trends. For example, over the past three years, the campus population (students and staff) has grown by 5.3% and building square footage has increased by 4.5%. Measured per capita/per square foot during this time period, the College's overall greenhouse gas emissions fell by 2.2%.

The College's Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reductions Task Force is using this trend data to set institutional goals for Warren Wilson's emissions and energy use reductions. A formal plan will be launched in January 2009 to address the College's goal to achieve climate neutrality.

WWC Total Emission Trend



Chelsea Rae Maier, WWC '09

I started compiling the 2006-2007 Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory in August of 2007 and finished the final product during this summer of 2008. The inventory has been the longest project I have ever undertaken and in nearly one year of time and attention dedicated to this effort, I have learned a lot of about energy use, emissions, energy saving strategies, networking and ... Excel.

Warren Wilson does a good job making the community aware of energy consumption and the environmental costs of living in an "em-powered" place; however, the full breadth of energy consumption is hard to comprehend. When you consider all the different power sinks, even on a small campus, it can be overwhelming. I learned that becoming overwhelmed is counterproductive to any cause and that it is the small efforts that every person makes in a community that provoke change and accomplishments.

Compiling the inventory required me to personally meet and work with different people on campus for a common aim. I thank all the Warren Wilson staff, faculty and students that helped me to bring together the 2006-2007 Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory. Without everyone's collaborative effort, the inventory would have been impossible. This experience further supports my belief that communal efforts succeed in accomplishing goals.

THE ENVIRONMENTAL LEADERSHIP CENTER

Executive Director
Margo Flood

Community Outreach Director
Phillip Ray Gibson

Education Director
Stan Cross

Administrative Assistant
Ellen W. Querin

2007 - 2008 Student Crew

Heather Aziz, Callie Baruch, Courtney Cochran, Aubrey DeLone, Jesse Goldsmith, Kevin Lane, Cella Langer, Chelsea Maier, Ansley Rawlins, Graham Sivak, Kathryn Stewart

CATALYST

Editor
Margo Flood

Copy Editor
Dylan Flood

Copyreader
Jennie Vaughn

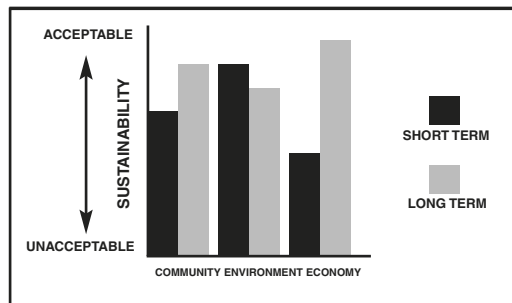
Contributors

Ben Anderson, Paul Bartels, Courtney Cochran, Dylan Flood, Laura Lengnick

Sierra Magazine graphic on page 1 appears with the permission of Sierra, the magazine of the Sierra Club.

Sustainability at Warren Wilson College

Shaping a sustainable and resilient future is the most pressing issue of our time. Our effect upon the well-being of the planet is profound, long-term, and unalterable. Worldwide, we have learned that environmental, social/cultural, and economic conditions are inextricably connected. Communities everywhere, including western North Carolina, experience growth pressures, energy stresses, housing challenges, poverty, loss of biodiversity, threats to public land, and health-care needs as webs of economic, social/cultural, and environmental realities.



Diverse input is essential to develop effective responses to these complex issues. There is a place for everyone at the decision-making table. Cross-sector collaboration builds a compassionate, empowered, and informed citizenry more capable of securing a desirable quality of life for everyone now and for generations to come. At Warren Wilson, students learn that from economics to art, science to anthropology, political science, religion, and more, all of the disciplines of the liberal arts have a unique and invaluable role in problem solving each of the planet's most pressing issues.

In the past three decades, fueled by its Triad of academics, work and service, the College has achieved milestones in sustainable practices for which it has received many awards and distinctions. Thanks to committed student, staff and faculty champions, Warren Wilson has advanced to a national leadership role in sustainability. Energized by this progress, and well aware of the need for continued momentum, President Sandy Pfeiffer and his leadership team, the President's Advisory Council (PAC), have adopted a sustainable decision making model for planning and assessment. In addition, Pfeiffer has appointed Margo Flood, Executive Director of the Environmental Leadership Center, as a PAC member serving in the role of chief sustainability official for the College.

According to Flood, "At Warren Wilson, sustainability is the framework we use to fulfill our pledge to live responsibly. Through formal consideration of the impact of our behavior in all the dimensions of sustainability, we believe we'll make better decisions for the campus community and for the region."

For more information about sustainability at Warren Wilson contact Margo Flood at mflood@warren-wilson.edu.

WWC's Environmental Studies Celebrates 30th Anniversary

The evolution of Warren Wilson's environmental commitment has kept pace with national concerns for decades. This year, the College celebrates the 30th Anniversary of its Environmental Studies Department. Established in the late 1970's by members of the Biology Department, these faculty began leading the campus community in stewardship and offering new courses related to energy and conservation which eventually led to a new major. It became one of the first environmental studies programs in the nation.

Consider the national scene in the '70's. Twenty million people celebrated the first Earth Day. President Nixon created the EPA. Congress amended the Clean Air Act and passed the Clean Water Act. The OPEC oil embargo triggered an energy crisis. Congress passed the Endangered Species Act, the Safe Drinking Water Act, the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, and the Toxic Substances Control Act. In 1977, more Clean Air Act Amendments were passed and Warren Wilson offered its first environmental studies course.

At the peak of nearly a decade of unprecedented environmental concern, the College established an environmental studies major in 1979. It has grown to become the most popular major on campus and now, nearly 25% of all Warren Wilson students select a concentration in environmental studies. They may be awarded either a Bachelors of Arts or a Bachelors of Science in Environmental Studies with a concentration in

Conservation Biology, Environmental Chemistry, Environmental Education, Environmental Policy, Sustainable Forestry, or Sustainable Agriculture.

With the understanding that solutions to today's environmental problems require the collaboration of many disciplines, the department has grown to include faculty members from across the college's academic community. This collaboration provides students with an environmentally focused, interdisciplinary major that investigates environmental issues from a natural science, social science and humanities perspective.

According to a recent survey of all environmental studies alumni conducted by Warren Wilson's Division of Natural Sciences, 69% report they are now working in a related field, 57% have attended or are currently attending graduate school, and 90% said they would major in Environmental Studies again. These alumni are employed in a wide range of environmental careers.

There will be a series of celebrations this year to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the Environmental Studies Department. The first will be held October 3rd when Alan Haney, one of the Department's founders, will speak at Warren Wilson's Homecoming celebration.

For more information about Environmental Studies at Warren Wilson contact Department Chair Lou Weber at lweber@warren-wilson.edu.

Mountain Green ... Working for Sustainability

Lunch & Learns

Join us for *Mountain Green* Lunch & Learns and hear experts discuss sustainable practices in green building, energy use, waste management, native landscaping, sustainable agriculture, forestry and more. After lunch, take a Green Walkabout® tour to learn about Warren Wilson's sustainable practices.

To sign up for a *Mountain Green* Lunch & Learn session and/or a Green Walkabout®, contact Phillip Ray Gibson, ELC Director of Community Outreach, at pgibson@warren-wilson.edu or 828.771.3781. Lunch & Learns are held in Canon Lounge and participants can purchase lunch for \$5 (lunch is optional). Green Walkabouts® are free to the public and begin on the Orr Cottage patio. Directions to campus may be found at www.warren-wilson.edu/info/campus_map.php. Visit www.mountaingreenwnc.org for additional information. *Please sign up at least one week in advance of the luncheon.*

Lunch & Learns Fall Schedule

September 8 / 11:30 - 1:00
Native Plant Landscaping
Tom LaMuraglia and Renee Fortner,
Warren Wilson Landscaping
1:00 -3:00 / The Green Walkabout®

October 6 / 11:30 - 1:00
The Green Payoff: The Economics of Going Green
Anne Jackson, Perkins+Will, IIDA, CDT, LEED® AP
1:00 -3:00 / The Green Walkabout®

November 3 / 11:30 - 1:00
Conducting Energy Audits in Western North Carolina
Terry Albrecht, Waste Reduction Partners
1:00 -3:00 / The Green Walkabout®

December 1 / 11:30 - 1:00
Green Lodging Certification
Mark Petruzzi, Green Seal Vice President of Certification
1:00 -3:00 / The Green Walkabout®

INSULATE!

continued from pg 1

Contact Phillip Ray Gibson, ELC Director of Community Outreach, at 828.771.3781 or pgibson@warren-wilson.edu for more information.



Back Row L to R / Robert J. Deutsch (Chair, Mountain Green Steering Committee), Brittany Cusworth, Caroline Sutton (Asheville Home Builders Association), Phillip Gibson, Franklin Tate, Maggie Ullman (City of Asheville), Martha Thompson (Progress Energy)

Front Row L to R / Nina Otter, Sybil Schaefer (Community Action Opportunities), Donna Case (Buncombe County Council on Aging, Inc.), Ashley Featherstone (SACEE), Rachel Buedel



WWC students and ELC staff Phillip Gibson insulate first house.

Although 6% of one's income is considered the affordable expenditure for energy, NC households with incomes below 50% of the federal poverty level spend 59.3% of their annual income on energy bills. (Fisher, Sheehan, & Colton, *On The Brink, Public Finance and General Economics*, 2007)

Mountain Green Conference

Phillip Gibson, ELC Director of Community Outreach

Warren Wilson recently hosted the second annual *Mountain Green* Conference with leadership from former College trustee Bob Deutsch and a diverse steering committee of area leaders. The Conference is the capstone event of a year-round initiative that includes monthly Lunch & Learns and the INSULATE! Program.

We believe sound building practices come of weighing the environmental, economic and community impact of our choices, especially in our sensitive mountain region. The way we build has everything to do with the quality of our present and our future. The size of our homes, their energy efficiency, where we buy materials, how we manage erosion, whether there is adequate housing for everyone in the community, how we prepare for an energy future different than ever before—these issues all benefit from a sustainability analysis. The *Mountain Green* Conference convenes this dialogue, provokes new thinking, and provides a networking opportunity for professionals in a broad array of fields.

The second annual 2008 *Mountain Green* Conference, held at Warren Wilson on June 25, 2008, attracted 34 sponsors, 41 vendors, and 248 participants. Over 35 speakers presented on best management practices, technologies and case studies that promote the goals of the conference. Sarah Susanka, architect and author of *The Not So Big House*, was the conference keynote speaker.

Plans for the 2009 *Mountain Green* Conference are underway. Visit the *Mountain Green* Conference website at www.mountaingreenwnc.org for more information about these programs or email *Mountain Green* Manager Phillip Gibson at pgibson@warren-wilson.edu.

For the first twenty years of my architectural practice, even when people weren't asking for energy efficiency and sustainable design, that's what we gave them. We did it automatically. It's an integral part of thinking about a whole system – understanding that when you design something beautifully from top to toe, it has to be integrated into its natural environment. It has to function with and support the world that it inhabits. What is fascinating about the people who are attracted to the "not so big" design approach is they make decisions based not just on their own needs but the needs of the planet as a whole. And here is the important distinction: they don't do it out of altruism. They do it because they perceive themselves as part of that whole.

Interview with Sarah Susanka
Builder Architect magazine, June 2008

Haywood County EcoTeam Launches

EcoTeam helps to plant the seed early, for our children who will grow to become the keepers.

- EcoTeam student teacher

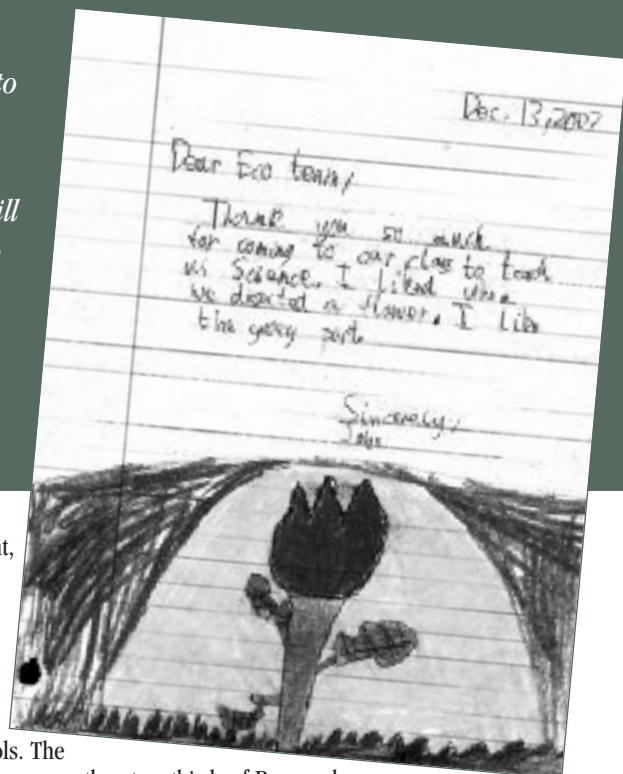
Warren Wilson College received a \$9,150 grant, in 2007, from the Pigeon River Fund to support the expansion of the Environmental Leadership Center's EcoTeam program to Haywood County schools. The EcoTeam already reaches more than two-thirds of Buncombe County third-graders each year. This new financial support will allow students in other counties to receive the program's engaging, age-appropriate instruction.

EcoTeam, a science-based, hands-on environmental curriculum for third-graders, teaches students about their ecological address and the role they play in the health of their watershed. The lessons immerse young people in the concept of stewardship, especially the community service component which has been developed in partnership with the Jane Goodall Institute's *Roots & Shoots* program.

Dave Dudek, a Fish and Wildlife Instructor at Haywood Community College (HCC), worked with ELC Education Director Stan Cross this past year to train a number of HCC students to teach EcoTeam lessons to Haywood County third-graders. The program is off to strong start and thanks to Dave Dudek's leadership, nine HCC students delivered EcoTeam instruction to 85 third-graders this past spring at Clyde Elementary School.

Haywood County EcoTeam instructors are as enthusiastic about EcoTeam as the third-graders they teach. According to one student teacher, "EcoTeam is great! I loved working with the kids. They are at the age where they are not only interested, but they soak up the material, making it easy to teach. If we all had the same enthusiasm for the environment as those kids, think what the natural world could be." EcoTeam works to build knowledge and compassion for the natural world, invaluable qualities for enlightened young leaders.

For more information about EcoTeam, contact Stan Cross, scross@warren-wilson.edu, 828.771.3782.



WWC Partners with US Forest Service

Dave Ellum, WWC Forestry Professor



Warren Wilson College students and faculty now have the unique opportunity to study forest management and ecology in the Shope Creek area of the Pisgah National Forest. Under the guidance of Dave Ellum, a Forestry Professor at Warren Wilson, the College has entered into a partnership with the US Forest Service and local interest groups, including WildSouth, in an effort to initiate community-based management of public forest land.

As part of this agreement, Warren Wilson will have access to the Shope Creek area as a long-term research and education site, resulting in work that could be used to direct future forest management activities. The partnership between the College and other community partners has been influential in developing a modified forest management plan that reduces the number of acres to be harvested for timber while increasing the number of acres set aside as old growth.

The Shope Creek Management Unit is a 1,736-acre tract located approximately five miles northwest of the campus, bounded on the east by the Asheville watershed. The partnership will provide students with the opportunity to study management objectives and techniques for two very different types of forest land: the College's highly fragmented, privately-owned forest and a large, continuous, publicly-owned block. Students will be able to compare the ecology, administration and resource values of these two highly contrasting, but regionally typical, forest types. Students in Ellum's Forest Management class have begun the preliminary work of mapping forest stands and identifying harvest units as a lead-up to project proposals.

Warren Wilson Botany Professor Amy Boyd also plans to use the Shope Creek area for research and teaching starting in spring 2009. She will be conducting research on pollination and breeding systems of sweetshrub (*Calycanthus floridus*), a project supported by a National Science Foundation ecology grant, and will be collaborating with colleagues from Georgia Southern University and Cornell University. Warren Wilson College students will be involved in this research through a project-based course.

In addition, Boyd plans to begin a floristic survey of the Shope Creek area and will involve students in her Plant Taxonomy class in field research and plant identification for this project. As other professors develop projects at the site, Shope Creek will become an important educational asset for Warren Wilson and the surrounding community.

Students Mobilize for Climate Action

Cameron Lash, WWC '09

Last fall, a group of frustrated and fiery students formed the Environmental Action Coalition (EAC) to acknowledge what is "off" about climate change, and to inform, empower, and mobilize the Warren Wilson community toward greater engagement. From participating in *Power Shift*, the nation's first environmental youth summit in Washington D.C., to alerting peers about the simple, everyday behavior changes that have potential for huge energy savings (for example, unplugging electronic devices when not in use can cut energy use by 10%), and protesting the construction at coal-fired power plants, EAC members are hot to act.

This coming fall, the EAC is greeting incoming first-year students with plenty of informative and motivating tools. We will bring speakers to campus and develop campus sustainability projects, thanks to Warren Wilson President Sandy Pfeiffer's recent pledge of support to the group. The coming year will be colorful: networking with other North Carolina schools to organize a fall environmental summit in Charlotte and generating live, online updates of energy use in dorms are just a few examples of what we have planned.

Contact Cameron Lash, clash@warren-wilson.edu or Kat Turner, ktturner@warren-wilson.edu, to learn more about the Environmental Action Coalition.

Congress for the New Urbanism Inspires Students

Cella Langer, WWC '10

This past April, Emmet Fisher, WWC '10, and I participated in the Congress for the New Urbanism's sixteenth annual conference in Austin, Texas, thanks to the support of Warren Wilson faculty and students. The Congress for the New Urbanism (CNU) is an organization of engineers, architects, planners and others who work to create an alternative to suburban sprawl by building livable, walkable communities following green building standards. The conference, held every year in a city that practices these principles, is a gathering of members of the Congress and consists of workshops, speeches, and panels focused around New Urbanism.

Emmet and I have had an interest in New Urbanism for some time, and have read several books by well-known new urbanists. More recently, we participated in Mallory McDuff's "Community Organizing for Sustainable Living" class and attended meetings at the Asheville Design Center. Attending the conference put us in direct contact with the authors we admire and exposed us to knowledge and practical skills that apply to all aspects of our experience at Warren Wilson, including our Community Organizing class.

The workshops we attended at the conference ranged from "LEED-ND" (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design for Neighborhood Development) to "How to Avoid Post-Charrette Meltdown," which guided communities about how to follow through with what they learn in regional planning meetings. We went on virtual tours of contemporary examples of these aspects of new urbanism, which I found both encouraging and inspiring.

Beyond reassurance, though, my experience at the Congress provided practical and useful knowledge that I will be able to apply to my life and work. We need to accelerate the movement towards green urbanism, and thanks to the vast knowledge and experience of CNU experts like those I met in Austin, this task will soon be in the hands of our world's youth. For me, taking on this torch is a great honor, and I look forward to carrying it forward throughout my life to help this planet.

WWC Has First LEED Gold Dorm in NC

Ben Anderson
WWC Media Relations Director



Warren Wilson College, the only college or university in North Carolina with a LEED Gold-Certified Building, now has a second Gold building on its campus. The Village South residence hall, part of a two-building, 80-bed community that opened in August 2006, recently became the first dormitory in the state to achieve LEED certification. LEED is an acronym for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, the rating system of the US Green Building Council that sets standards for the "design, construction and operation of high performance green buildings."

Designed and built with extensive input from students, the Village features apartment-style dorms and an arts-and-crafts, environmentally responsible design. The LEED Gold rating certifies that Village South meets several green building criteria, including benchmarks for energy and water conservation; reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and waste sent to landfills; and indoor environmental quality. The adjacent Village North dorm also seems likely to achieve LEED Gold, as its design is identical to Village South.

Village South follows in the green footsteps of the Orr Cottage, which houses Warren Wilson's admission and advancement offices. In 2006, Orr Cottage became the second building of any type in North Carolina to achieve LEED Gold certification. By the end of this year, the college hopes to have a total of five LEED-certified buildings, including the EcoDorm for which it is seeking Platinum certification – the highest LEED rating.

For more information about WWC's LEED buildings contact Director of Facilities and Technical Services Paul Braese at pbraese@warren-wilson.edu.

WWC Student Wins Thomas Berry Writing Award

Cameron Bargerstock, WWC '09, has won the Thomas Berry Student Writing Award. The Environmental Leadership Center, in partnership with Warren Wilson's Writing Program, gives this award in honor of Thomas Berry, whose books include *The Dream of the Earth*, *The Universe Story* (with Brian Swimme), and *The Great Work* to encourage outstanding student writing on environmental themes. Thomas Berry was involved in establishing this award at Warren Wilson and presented the first year's award on campus, in 2006. The winning essay addresses the crisis in human-Earth relations and the need for a revitalized relationship, taking inspiration from Thomas Berry's writings. Warren Wilson students are invited to offer their own perspective on what Berry calls "the Great Work before us, the task of moving modern industrial civilization from its present devastating influence on the Earth to a more benign mode of presence." A committee comprised of Warren Wilson staff and faculty judge the essays and the selection is then shared with Thomas Berry. An excerpt from Cameron's winning essay follows.

For information about the Thomas Berry Writing Award contact Margo Flood at mflood@warren-wilson.edu or Writing Professor Catherine Reid at creid@warren-wilson.edu.

Let nature teach as if we are learning something for the first time. Sustain the mystery. Listen to the needs of the Earth in the same way we must listen to the needs of the dying. Their acceptance of transformation and change softens our own fear. We can never forget that our actions change the lives of our children for better or worse. As I am hopeful for the coming of the Ecozoic Era that Berry predicts, I realize that only human beings can manifest this change. Arriving on the shore where human beings unite with nature is a place that knows no fear, even amidst death and destruction. We assimilate loss, open our hearts through it with bold intention and compassion for life.

I take to nature as if it is my god. The daunting realization of the environmental crisis asks me to live differently now. I walk the land of Warren Wilson College. The mountains, trails, farm, river, and gardens, nurtured by the hands of our community, silently heal me every time I wander into the thicket looking for peace or hope. Breathing deeply at the pinnacle of Dogwood, racing up Suicide Ridge, descending toward the meditation hut, tracing the river trail on foot, walking through the grasses and woods for hours without seeing a soul, and disappearing into the silent beauty of the natural world revive me and I come out a more conscious and mindful person.

As Berry enters his own end-of-life journey, he leaves the philosophical tools to live harmoniously among the natural world. May we come to know death as a venerable rite of passage and may we respond to the environment as stewards—responsible for protecting, sustaining, and accepting the rises and falls within the human/earth community.

Award Winning Recycling at WWC

Jessica Wooten, WWC Director of Recycling and Waste Management

According to *The Daily Green* blog, "The Warren Wilson Recycling Program is Aces!" Well, thanks! We think we're doing a pretty good job and are excited to share what we've been up to lately.

We were recently named the "Outstanding College or University Program of the Year" by the Carolina Recycling Association. I took six of my Recycling Crew members to the conference to accept the award and to attend educational sessions on a variety of waste management topics. The conference was a great way for the students to see how their work at WWC relates to the "outside world" and to meet professionals in government, business, industry, and non-profit management who share their passion for recycling.

Last year, the 20-student Recycling Crew recycled over 165 tons of materials; composted 37 tons of waste in our GreenDrum composter; and donated over 3 tons of reusable goods to local shelters. We also reduced the amount of trash sent to the landfill by 24 tons, even though the College has increased in size.

In the past few years, over 25,000 items have been given new life through the FreeStore, and the journals and grocery bags that we make from trash have been a big hit at our farmer's market and festivals. With the help of an Environmental Leadership Center Campus Greening Seed Grant, we also set up bulk foods bins in the bookstore to reduce packaging waste on campus.

We're always looking for new ways to reduce consumption and improve our recycling program. Let us know if you have any great ideas!

For information about recycling at Warren Wilson, contact Jessica Wooten, jwooten@warren-wilson.edu.



Jessica Wooten (standing center) and the Recycling Crew

Davis Foundations Grant Supports WWC Interdisciplinary Curriculum

Warren Wilson College has been awarded a \$193,265 grant from the Arthur Vining Davis Foundations to develop a groundbreaking curriculum, *Advancing Environmental Literacy*.

Drawing upon the concept of "full cost accounting," *Advancing Environmental Literacy* provides an opportunity for interdisciplinary study of the holistic implications of critical environmental concerns. The goal is to better understand issues within a framework of sustainability – a "full cost accounting" that considers the environmental, economic and social/cultural impacts of realities and remedies.

"We are excited to receive this generous support from the Arthur Vining Davis Foundations," Warren Wilson College President Sandy Pfeiffer said. "We think the grant will enable us to lead the way in advancing a timely new curriculum model that directly and broadly engages students in pressing environmental issues from the view of a sustainability framework."

Environmental advocate Bill McKibben, author of *The End of Nature*, says *Advancing Environmental Literacy* "puts Warren Wilson College at the leading edge of the curve in undergraduate environmental studies, as one of the few [colleges] to make economics a full-fledged part of the ecological discussion. I'm convinced that this is the next critical wave in environmental studies."

Guided by faculty from environmental studies, economics, writing, art, geography, anthropology, sociology, philosophy, and math, the new curricu-

lum will foster engagement in effective problem solving as students examine issues of sustainability within the framework of Warren Wilson's triad of academics, work and service. Beginning spring semester 2009, on an annual rotation, Warren Wilson students will examine the effects of land-use practices, energy, water, and then air quality both regionally and globally.

According to *Advancing Environmental Literacy* Coordinator and WWC Philosophy Professor John Casey, "The course designed by each of the faculty teams dealing with land issues will provide Warren Wilson students and students at other institutions with a rare opportunity to engage in a collaborative and multidisciplinary investigation of pressing environmental issues. Students are going to have a very hard time deciding which course to take while mourning the lost opportunity to take the other two."

Engagement in community research projects will enhance students' interdisciplinary understanding of these key issues. Other program components include an annual speaker series, a publication of findings, and summer internships that allow students to fully immerse themselves in the issues.

Institutions such as Furman University, LaGrange and Randolph-Macon colleges, and several others will participate in summer workshops held by Warren Wilson that seek to proliferate the new curriculum model.

For information about this curriculum, contact John Casey at casey@warren-wilson.edu.

WWC Students Awarded Campus Greening Grants

Warren Wilson students have inspired many of the initiatives that are now cornerstones of the College landscape – the Cowpie Café, the Community Bike Program, and the EcoDorm to name a few. Many of these initiatives began with the support of Campus Greening Seed Grants. This program was established by the Environmental Leadership Center in 2000, thanks to the generosity of Chris and Ollie Ahrens, to encourage student-initiated projects that advance the practice of sustainability on campus and demonstrate creative solutions to environmental challenges. This year's grant awards represent the spirit and the principles established by the Ahrens gift. The ELC honors these 2008 Campus Greening Seed Grant Recipients:

Compost Creations – A Garden of Waste, Chelsea Graves: Working with Jessica Wooten, Director of Recycling and Waste Management, Chelsea created a lush garden around the perimeter of the GreenDrum food composter, demonstrating that increased soil fertility is the end result of composting.

Rainwater Collection at Morse Greenhouse, Kate Turner: With biology work crew supervisor Natasha Shipman, and in collaboration with the North Carolina Soil and Water Conservation agency, Kate created a rainwater collection demo site to collect water from a section of the College's Morse science complex roof. The water collected will meet the demands of the biology department's greenhouse.

Native Grass and Wildflower Identification, Hilary Collins: With landscape work crew supervisor Tom LaMuraglia and assistant Bruce Willever, Hilary created signs to identify native grasses and wildflowers planted around the College's Jensen classroom building. Her identifications serve to educate the community about the use of plants on campus in order to create a native habitat, reduce turf management needs, and preserve local genome types.

Rainwater Collection at Garden Greenhouse, Chelsea Gray, Cella Langer and Mike Jolly: With supervision by Environmental Studies Professor Mallory McDuff, and Garden Manager Karen Joslin, these students installed a rain barrel in the Garden Greenhouse to collect runoff from its roof, and sustain its own watering demands.

Campus Greening Seed Grants are competitive and the opportunity to apply for a 2009 award will be announced in November 2008. For more information contact ELC Education Director Stan Cross at 1.828.771.3782 or scross@warren-wilson.edu.

Local Food Gains Momentum at WWC

How and what we eat determines to a great extent the use we make of the world and what is to become of it.

Michael Pollan, *The Omnivore's Dilemma*

As is often the case at Warren Wilson, formalizing the College's position on sustainability issues has everything to do with student interest. With its farm school legacy, an organically managed garden and farm that provide food for community use, a twice-weekly local foods market held on campus, a CSA program, a strong Sustainable Agriculture concentration in the Environmental Studies major, a College-wide commitment to sustainability, a resident "local



L to R, Todd Boeva, Laura Lengnick, Jordan Gregson, Michael Gentry, Susan Kask, Mallory McDuff and Eric Soderholm

food cuisine" chef (Michael Gentry), a dining services provider with a commitment to evolve its green practices, a number of academic and service-learning courses that allow for local food research and activism, a local food student work crew, and a summer cooking program on campus focused on deliberate cuisine choices (The Swannanoa School of Culinary Arts), it is not surprising that Warren Wilson students are eager for a formal dialogue about local food. This past spring, Warren Wilson President Sandy Pfeiffer responded to this avid student interest and commissioned further study of the issue through the formation of the Local Food Task Force, chaired by Environmental Studies Professor Laura Lengnick.

The local food movement has gained vigorous nationwide support, and for good reason. According to the WorldWatch Institute, the number of farmers markets in the US has grown from just under 300 in the mid-1970s to more than 3,700 in 2004. Food transportation is among the biggest and fastest-growing sources of greenhouse gas emissions worldwide. For its effect upon our personal well-being, its potential to build diverse community, the benefits to local economy, and positive environmental impact, local food is an interest that has intensified on campus as rapidly as it has in the community at large.

Environmental Studies Professor Laura Lengnick's "Ecology of Food" class conducted a life-cycle analysis of the top ten foods consumed in the College's cafeterias. Economics Professor Susan Kask's "Ecological Economics" class conducted a community food survey which defined and measured the demand for organic, local, and natural food on campus. Environmental Studies Professor Mallory McDuff's "Community Organizing for Sustainable Living" classes worked for several years to label food, create educational signage, and lobby successfully for a local food student work crew, which was formed in 2007. Students in McDuff's "Methods and Materials" course worked with low-income seniors and elementary school students to inspire their interest in local food. In the service-learning course "Ecology of Food," students developed a curriculum to teach good nutrition and to reduce waste in the food system. (Did you know 28% of all food produced in the US is thrown away?) Warren Wilson students have engaged College administrators and the student body on this issue and developed the data and the momentum that has resulted in this formal task force.

For more information about the Local Food Policy Task Force, contact Laura Lengnick, lengnick@warren-wilson.edu.

Tune In to the Swannanoa Journal WWC Students on Public Radio

Jess Goldsmith, WWC '09

Tune in to the *Swannanoa Journal*, a public radio program of Warren Wilson College's Environmental Leadership Center. The broadcast focuses upon environmental sustainability issues that affect western North Carolinians with essays written and recorded by Warren Wilson College students and Swannanoa Journal student work crew members Kathryn Stewart, Katie Miller, and Jess Goldsmith. Phillip Gibson, Director of Community Outreach for the ELC, collaborates with the faculty advisor to the Swannanoa Journal, Warren Wilson Writing Professor Catherine Reid, to produce the program. Thanks to a generous gift from Warren Wilson friends Marilyn and Bill Hubbard, field recording equipment has been purchased and students are now learning to conduct interviews to include in their recordings. Topics that the four-minute radio shows have covered range from a discussion of landslide risks to the health of the Swannanoa River, the discovery of a new species by a Warren Wilson College professor, and prose poetry about our changing geological epoch. To listen to archived Swannanoa Journal recordings, visit www.warren-wilson.edu/~elc/ and link to the site.

Tune in to the *Swannanoa Journal*
88.7 WNCW at 8:00 PM on Thursdays
103.5 WPVM at 12:00 PM on Saturdays

Study Abroad Is ¡Pura Vida!

Lucy Lawrence, WWC Professor of Social Work

During the spring of 2008, Warren Wilson students participated in a study abroad program called "Eco-Social Lifeways in Costa Rica: ¡Pura Vida!" This cross-cultural comparison of western North Carolina and Costa Rica was co-led by Social Work Professor Lucy Lawrence and Environmental Leadership Center staff member Ellen Querin.




Costa Rican friend coaches Ellen Querin.

"¡Pura Vida!" is a common expression in the Costa Rican vernacular. This versatile Spanish phrase translates literally as "pure life." If asked, "How was your day at the beach?" a response of "¡Pura Vida!" expresses not just that you had a good day, but describes the warmth of the water, the pleasant intensity of the sun, and the lulling roll of the tide. If a Costa Rican inquired as to your opinion of a professor, a response of "¡Pura Vida!" could indicate that you considered her the best teacher in the world. So common is the phrase "¡Pura Vida!" in everyday Costa Rican conversation that the term is often used to describe the country itself.

To compare the social and environmental issues affecting Costa Rica and western North Carolina, each student selected a particular social or environmental issue such as pediatric health, the availability of clean drinking water, child prostitution, HIV/AIDS, the environmental impacts of CAFTA (the Central America Free Trade Agreement), gender-based violence, and squatters' rights. For the Asheville component, students learned about the work of such local agencies as Habitat for Humanity, Community Action Opportunities, Southern Environmental Law Center, Pisgah Manor Retirement Community, Western North Carolina Community Health Services and the Asheville Homeless Initiative.

They embarked then upon their Costa Rica component. Their 21-day research venture was indeed "¡Pura Vida!" It included a stay on a family-owned coffee plantation and service for a sustainable, organic, nonprofit farm in the Central Highlands. Students completed several homestays in a Pacific coast community where Lawrence served as a Peace Corps volunteer nearly two decades ago. They were immersed in cross-cultural understanding and gained vivid insight into their responsibility, as global citizens, to manage their footprint upon other nations.


For more information about study abroad at Warren Wilson, contact International Programs Director Naomi Otterness, nottern@warren-wilson.edu.



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ELC Interns Change the World

Each year, the Environmental Leadership Center (ELC) sends up to 25 highly qualified Warren Wilson students to summer internships at some of the finest environmental organizations in the Americas. The 2008 summer interns have returned to campus and now will fulfill their commitment to provide two public presentations about their summer experiences.

We thank all the ELC friends who helped with this year's intern interview process and

also the interns themselves – the outstanding students who have spent the summer expressing their deep commitment to stewardship and their determination to learn, first-hand, what it takes to change the world.



ELC Interns and staff Ellen Querin and Stan Cross

For most students, these internships are life-changing. Reflections upon a summer spent with one of these organizations is expressed by a former intern in this excerpt from an essay about her 2007 internship at The Nature Conservancy on Long Island:

As the rising sun begins to ease the chill of another Long Island morning, two colleagues and I lie sprawled by the ocean, intently watching sand-colored blurs dart between windswept dunes. Although rows of manicured lawns and rambling mansions attest to the ongoing popularity of developing on this fragile barrier island, the beach itself – as on most days – belongs to us alone. Except, that is, for the bumble avian blurs whose territorial antics are entertaining us this morning. These avocado-sized birds called piping plovers are timid, mostly silent, and well-camouflaged – hardly a recipe for fame and glory, but since they are a federally endangered species, a small fleet of biologists is hired each summer to monitor and protect them throughout their nesting season.

– Nora Purcell, WWC '09

We are proud to announce the 2008 interns:

Asheville Institute

Jeremy Lekich
Leah Cameron

City of Asheville/

WWC Climate Change Partnership
Audubon Seabird Restoration Project
Black Mountain Community Garden
CooperRiis Healing Farm

Victoria Hurst
Kate Freeman
Joanna Anderson
Allison Canon

Dogwood Alliance

Great Smoky Mountain Institute at Tremont
North Carolina Coastal Federation
Smithsonian Environmental Research Center

Kenneth Hummel
Kathryn Stewart
Rachel Rasmussen
Adrienne Testa
Ronnie Anderson

Tropical Forestry Initiative

The Nature Conservancy/ Long Island
The Nature Conservancy/North Carolina (Mountain District)
Western North Carolina Alliance
Yawkey Wildlife Center

Steven Sommerville
Mark Begley
Catlin McQueen
Jenn Wood
Jesse Duff-Woodruff
Graham Sivak
Ana Poirier
Conner Soderquist
Mandy Monroe

For information about the ELC Internship Program contact Stan Cross, scross@warren-wilson.edu, or Ellen Querin, querin@warren-wilson.edu.

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These figures calculated using Environmental Savings Calculator at www.neenahpapers.com/environmentalsavings.

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www.warren-wilson.edu/-elc/

Asheville, NC 28815-9000

PO Box 9000

CPO Box 6323

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