

North American Association for Environmental Education 35th Annual Conference - October 10-14, 2006



Walking the Talk for Sustainability at the 2006 NAAEE Conference

NAAEE tries to be environmentally conscious at our annual event, but some cities are more accommodating than others. This year in St. Paul, we can offer some of the most "green" initiatives ever, thanks to the work of our local Sustainability Committee to help us

- 1) Account for conference related carbon emissions,
- 2) Reduce the amount of solid waste produced from conference activities, and
- 3) Incorporate local, organic, and fair trade goods into conference materials and events.

1) Accounting for Carbon Emissions – Donate to offset!

The bulk of conference related carbon emissions stem from attendees traveling to the conference site. Attendees will be able to offset their travel emissions through NativeEnergy, a privately held Native American energy company that develops renewable energy projects. Look for the energy calculator on the kiosks at various locations and be prepared to make a donation. NativeEnergy also will estimate the kWh of electricity used during the conference and offset the associated carbon emissions through a donation to wind energy project on a reservation in South Dakota. The energy for heating and cooling at the conference is provided by District Energy, which uses woodchips, a renewable energy source, to heat and cool downtown St. Paul. Information about Metro Transit, the Twin Cities public transit provider, is available online at <http://www.naaee.org/conference/hotel-travel-information>.

2) Reducing Solid Waste – One Internet connection at a time

Electronic information kiosks, donated by Hamline University, will reduce the use of paper handouts. Announcements, presentations synopses, and conference information will be accessible electronically at the six kiosks, the eight laptops located in a cyber café, and through wireless Internet (for those with a personal computer). The conference programs are made with recycled content and printed with soy-based ink. Nametags are reusable and will be recovered at the end of the conference. Don't forget to turn yours in at the registration desk. Food waste at the conference site, Crowne Plaza Saint Paul Riverfront Hotel,, is separated and sent to a livestock producer to feed pigs and cattle. In addition, unserved banquet food will be donated to a food rescue program. The Crowne Plaza Saint Paul Riverfront Hotel separates and recycles cardboard, newspaper and mixed paper, glass, aluminum cans, and grease.

3) Incorporating Local, Organic and Fair Trade Goods

The Opening Reception at the Minnesota History Center will be catered by Bon Appétit Management Company, a company that emphasizes local, organic foods. The

chef at Crowne Plaza will buy some local produce and has plans to incorporate local seasonal vegetables into the menu for the conference. Peace Coffee, a Minneapolis-based organic, shade grown, fair trade coffee roasting company, will provide coffee for the Thursday opening dessert ceremony. The tote bags given out at the conference are made of organic cotton.

These efforts are gradual steps towards the ultimate goal of a fully sustainable NAAEE conference. Don't forget to bring your own coffee mug, and we'll see you in October!!



See You in St. Paul!

For more information, go to www.naaee.org
or www.naaee.org/maee