



Ontario Forestry Association

Focusing on the 3 E's: Education, Environment, Envirothon! Ontario Students test their "natural" ability at Provincial Competition

(St. George, ON) May 4, 2011 – From May 4-7, 2011 high school students representing 22 regions from across Ontario will showcase their environmental smarts at the 2011 Provincial Envirothon Competition.

The unique team competition is part of a broader environmental education program encouraging students to get outdoors and experience nature first hand in a fun and informative environment. Local conservation organizations partner to provide students with interactive field trips and workshops to help them understand forests, soils, wildlife, aquatic ecosystems and the human impact on the environment. In addition to raising awareness of the needs of Ontario's forests, Envirothon encourages critical thinking, problem solving, teamwork and communication skills among participants.

Participating in this unique hands-on competition often provides students with their first exposure to environmental management career opportunities. "Envirothon made me realize that winning wasn't the end goal," says Jacob Cecile, former Envirothon participant. "Competing in Envirothon inspired me to pursue a career in restoration ecology, to listen to both sides, to think critically and most importantly to never stop trying to heal the world"

Each year, Envirothon allows students to explore a current environmental issue and relate it to the core topics – forestry, soils, wildlife and aquatics. This year the focus has been placed on estuaries and the many ecological goods and services these important ecosystems provide.

"What's really remarkable about Envirothon students is their genuine understanding of core environmental topics and how they can be applied to current environmental issues," says Carla Grant, Executive Director, Ontario Forestry Association. "This is tangible knowledge that can't necessarily be learned in a classroom."

Since its inception in 1994, the annual competition program has grown to reach over 10,000 Ontario students each year with opportunities to learn about the environment. There are 22 regional qualifying challenges throughout Ontario, and the top team from each region advances to the Provincial Championships. The winning team at the 2011 Ontario Envirothon Championship will move on to represent Ontario at the North American Envirothon taking place in New Brunswick from July 24 to 29, 2011.

Ontario Envirothon is a program of the Ontario Forestry Association (OFA), a non-profit, registered charity dedicated to raising awareness and understanding of Ontario's forests, and to developing stewardship of forest ecosystems. Visit www.ontarioenvirothon.ca for more information.

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