

IMPACT



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Central Idaho Natural Resource Workshop

The Situation

Although Idaho's population is only 1.2 million, its people depend heavily on its abundant natural resources. Idaho's major industries are manufacturing, agriculture, tourism, food processing, timber, and mining. Each depend on the state's water, forest, rangeland, wildlife, and soil resources. Idaho's people need to learn about these important natural resources, and they need to understand the issues related to competing uses of our natural resources, the trade-offs in environmental management, and their responsibilities as citizens.

Our Response

The University of Idaho Cooperative Extension System and the Idaho Association of Soil Conservation Districts sponsor a natural resource workshop near beautiful Sun Valley for 12- to 14-year olds and teachers. The workshop is a week-long, hands-on experience where students and teachers learn basic concepts and management issues related to Idaho's soil, water, wildlife, range, and forest resources. Instructors are professionals in related natural resource fields from the University of Idaho Extension, Natural Resource Conservation Service, Idaho Department of Lands, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. In addition to outdoor lectures and hands-on labs, students and teachers apply their new natural resource knowledge in activities such as the *Lewis and Clark Expedition*, where teams hike a nature path and answer natural resource questions related to the survival of early our explorers. Other activities include the *Natural Resource Bowl*, where

teams compete against each other in a game-show showcasing natural resource facts, and the *Big Wood Land Use Simulation Game*, where teams represent various industries and present a proposal to a county land-use board in a public hearing format.

Students and teachers also enjoy outdoor activities such as hiking, rappelling, fishing, volleyball, firearm safety, and target shooting. Night activities include special guests from the local area and fireside sing-alongs.

Program Outcomes

The 2001 Central Idaho Natural Resource Workshop enlisted 71 students. Fifty-nine students were sponsored with scholarships from 22 local Soil Conservation District and U I county extension offices. Students were tested on their knowledge of natural resource subjects upon arrival at the workshop, then again at the end of the workshop. Test results, provided in figure 1, show a significant increase in natural resource knowledge gained after attending the workshop.

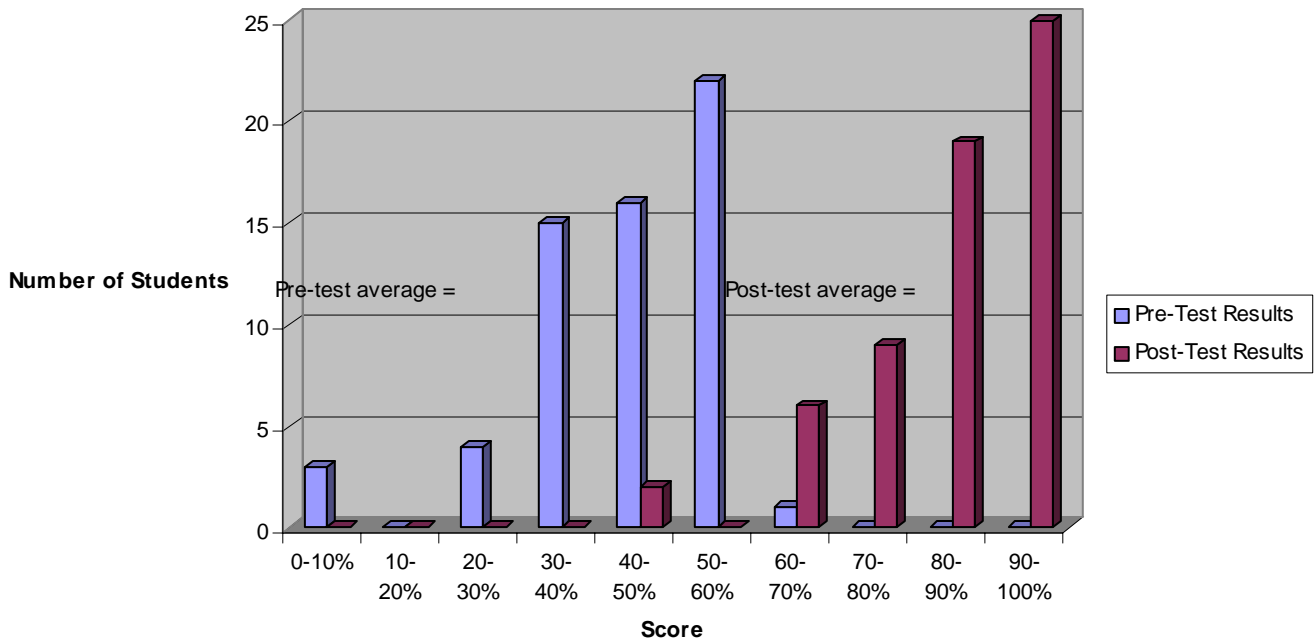
Sixteen students returned from 2000 workshop to be cabin leaders.

Cooperators and Co-Sponsors

The success of the project is largely due to the undying commitment of our faculty and the support of the Idaho Association of Soil Conservation districts (IASCD) through scholarships and efforts of the local Soil Conservation Districts in recruiting students with the scholarships. The Idaho 4H

Figure 1.

2001 Natural Resource Camp Pre/Post Test Results
Total Number of Students Tested = 61



Endowment Board supports the camp with funding.
The Idaho Council on Industry and the Environment
also assists.

For More Information

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