

# Bay Watershed Education and Training Program

*The NOAA Bay Watershed Education and Training (B-WET) program is an environmental education program that promotes locally relevant, authentic experiential learning focused on K-12 audiences. B-WET fosters the growth of new, innovative programs and encourages capacity-building and environmental education partnerships.*

## Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences

B-WET funding is provided through competitive grants that promote Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences (MWEEs). The MWEE is a learner-centered framework that focuses on investigations into local environmental issues and leads to informed action. MWEEs are composed of multiple components that include learning both outdoors and in the classroom, and are designed to increase the environmental literacy of all participants.



NOAA funding is provided to support student investigations of environmental issues and related professional development for educators. Teachers support and assist students in their inquiry and investigations of local environmental issues that are of interest to them.

*Landmark School students explore macro invertebrates with their high school mentor at Ramsay Park with the Watsonville Wetlands Watch's Wetlands Stewards Program (Credit: B-WET)*

## Areas Served

The B-WET program currently serves seven regions of the country: California, Chesapeake Bay, Great Lakes, Gulf of Mexico, Hawaii, New England, and Pacific Northwest. Regional B-WET programs provide tailored grantee support and capacity building. This allows B-WET to include place-based STEM resources and expertise and respond to local education and environmental priorities.

## Competition Status

B-WET regional funding opportunities are published at different times of the year. Please check the B-WET apply page (<http://www.noaa.gov/office-education/bwet/apply>) periodically for updates on future opportunities.

*Two teachers measure dissolved oxygen in the Comite River, in Baton Rouge, as part of their MWEE training. (Credit: Dinah Maygarden)*



*Coquille Valley Elementary School students share their stewardship project on raising and releasing steelhead salmon at the Student Watershed Symposium as part of Oregon Sea Grant's B-WET project. (Credit: Oregon Sea Grant).*

Since 2002, NOAA has awarded over \$117 million to support 929 B-WET projects. In 2022, this program reached approximately 2,800 educators and 49,000 students with high-quality environmental education programs.

## National Impacts

The B-WET program has created a national evaluation system to monitor program activities and outcomes.

Results of a 2017 analysis of national evaluation data showed that professional development increases teachers' watershed literacy, confidence, and intention to implement MWEEs. And, as a result of participating in MWEEs, students improved in a range of environmental stewardship and science literacy outcomes, such as:

- expressing greater concern for their watershed;
- being more engaged in their learning; and
- increasing their understanding of the nature of scientific research.