Northern New England Campus Compact
Campuses for Environmental Stewardship

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Campuses in NH and Adjoining States Will Address Local, Regional Environmental Issues

Northern New England Campus Compact awards EPA sub-grants to area colleges and universities for projects to improve water quality and stem climate change.

Concord, NH, June 18, 2013—Northern New England Campus Compact, a coalition of nearly 60 college and university presidents across New Hampshire, Maine, and Vermont, has awarded EPA sub-grants to 18 area campuses to develop academic programs that will address some of the region's most pressing environmental issues. Through this two-year initiative, campuses will partner with community organizations to embed sustainable environmental projects into a range of academic courses. Students will learn about environmental stewardship while providing immediate services such as water quality monitoring as well as studying ways to mitigate climate change.

"Preserving our natural resources has become a local as well as a global imperative," says Debby Scire, Executive Director of Campus Compact for New Hampshire, one of the three state organizations spearheading this effort. "Equally important is ensuring that students develop the critical thinking skills necessary for both public problem-solving and employment in a competitive market. Higher education plays a vital role at this intersection, with the ability to prepare students for environmental stewardship and employment."

Funded by a $150,000 Environmental Education grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the sub-grants will provide training and resources for faculty members across a wide variety of disciplines in creating courses that embed environmental projects into the curriculum. Each campus will develop a minimum of four courses. Among the grant recipients are five New Hampshire colleges and universities that have committed to creating programs to study and preserve water sources in the state's communities.

NHTI, Concord's Community College, will provide environmental education opportunities in disciplines as wide ranging as architectural engineering technology, landscape and environmental design, and human services. Community projects in these fields will address storm water management, water quality, and climate change. **Plymouth State University**, which focuses on environmental issues through its Center for the Environment and President's Commission on Environmental Sustainability, will target water quality needs evaluation. Students will work with community volunteers who collect water samples at local lakes and rivers, without whom much of New England's water quality monitoring would cease to exist.

Students at **Saint Anselm College** will examine both drinking water and water quality as an element of river ecology. Laboratory projects will allow students to analyze well water in Manchester and stream water in Francestown, monitoring for temperature as well as quality. Students will also collect and map GPS information from sample locations. **Southern New Hampshire University** will work with state and local agencies to test water quality. Students will also support advocacy and awareness efforts related to testing results and the impact water quality can have on communities.

At the **University of New Hampshire–Manchester**, students will research solar energy and cold climate studies to develop cold climate solar designs for purifying water. In addition, the university will create a long-term program to assess and monitor the water quality of Lake Massabesic, Manchester's primary water source. The project will also involve developing community-based research methods, mobile apps, and data management systems for collecting and analyzing environmental data.

"All of these innovative projects address specific regional environmental issues while preparing students to take an active role in collaborating and thinking across disciplines to solve problems," says Scire. "Students participating in these projects are providing an immediate benefit to their communities, but the true beauty of this work is that it focuses on long-term solutions, in terms of establishing ongoing environmental evaluation processes as well as developing students' knowledge and skills."

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About Northern New England Campus Compact

Northern New England Campus Compact (NNECC) is a regional consortium of college and university presidents who are united in their commitment to the civic purposes of higher education. Comprising NNECC are the Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont affiliates of the national Campus Compact organization, which encompasses more than 1,100 college and university presidents representing some 6 million students. For more information, see http://www.compactnh.org/, http://www.maincompact.org/, and http://www.vtcampuscompact.org/.

About the Environmental Education Sub-grants Program

The EPA's Environmental Education (EE) Sub-grants Program is a competitive grant program that supports EPA's efforts to increase public awareness and knowledge about environmental issues and provide participants in EE grant-funded projects the skills necessary to make informed environmental decisions and to take responsible actions toward the environment.