

MASSACHUSETTS ENVIROTHON

news release

www.maenvirothon.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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2015 Mass. Envirothon winners announced Bay State teens focus on climate crisis

BELCHERTOWN, Mass. (May 15, 2015) – A school year of preparation paid off for local teenagers who were rewarded for their knowledge of the environment at the 28th annual Massachusetts Envirothon. They were among more than 250 high school students from 30 Massachusetts communities from Boston to the Berkshires who descended on the Quabbin Reservoir on Thursday, May 14th for the outdoor field competition.

At the event, teams rotated through four “ecostations” where they answered written questions and engaged in hands-on activities such as soil analysis, wildlife habitat assessment, tree identification, and water quality measures. Each team can have up to 10 participants who split into specialized sub-teams during the competition, each focusing their efforts at different ecostations.

At the fifth station, the Current Issue, each team gave a 15 minute presentation on “Climate Crisis: Taking Action in Massachusetts Communities” to a panel of judges. Teams researched the Current Issue in their own community in preparation for their presentation. Judges included environmental professionals from government agencies, non-profit organizations, academia and private industry. Teams were asked to assess the effects of climate change in their community and to recommend steps that their city or town and individuals, including young people, should take to address the issue.

This year's top scoring teams are:

Overall Score

1st place	Newton North High School
2nd place	Lexington High School
3rd place	Quabbin Regional High School

Current Issue Presentation

1st place	Quabbin Regional High School
2nd place	Leicester High School
3rd place	Leominster High School
	Newton North High School
	Newton South High School
4th place	Greenfield High School
5th place	Wildlands Trust/Brockton High School

Forestry Ecostation

1st place	Newton North High School
2nd place	Lexington High School
3rd place	Quabbin Regional High School
4th place	Acton Boxborough RHS
5th place	Newton South High School

NOTE to editors & reporters:

Group and action photos of teams are available. Contact [Diane Petit](mailto:Diane.Petit@ma.usda.gov) (contact info above) to request photos of your local team.

(more)

Wildlife Ecostation

1st place	Newton North High School
2nd place	Lexington High School
3rd place	Quabbin Regional High School
4th place	Leominster High School
5th place	Acton Boxborough RHS

Water Ecostation

1st place	Quabbin Regional High School
2nd place	Leominster High School
3rd place	Newton North High School
4th place	Wildlands Trust/Brockton High School
5th place	Ashland High School

Soils Ecostation

1st place	Newton North High School
2nd place	Lexington High School
3rd place	Leominster High School
	Newton South High School
4th place	Wildlands Trust/Brockton High School
5th place	Shepherd Hill Regional High School

"Climate change is one of the most challenging issues the Commonwealth will face in the near and long term, and the Baker-Polito administration is dedicated to ensuring Massachusetts continues to lead the nation in addressing this issue," said Matthew Beaton, Secretary of the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs. "I am pleased that Envirothon gives students from across Massachusetts the opportunity to learn about the environment and brainstorm ways to prepare our state for the effects of climate change."

"These teams work hard getting to know their local ecosystems and how their communities depend on them. We test their scientific knowledge, but we also like to hear their stories about how they have gotten muddy, cold, and tired, and otherwise had fun and fallen in love with nature in their neighborhood. The best hope for the future comes from engaged, scientifically literate citizens who care about their communities and the environment," said Massachusetts Envirothon Steering Committee Chair Will Snyder of the University of Massachusetts Center for Agriculture, Food and the Environment.

"The Envirothon is more than just a competition about environmental knowledge. It's a gathering of the environmental community of Massachusetts. It aims to prepare the next generation for the stewardship work that needs to be done," said Snyder.

The 2015 Massachusetts Envirothon was made possible through the contributions of partnering agencies and organizations, including financial support from the U.S. Forest Service; the Massachusetts Grange; Environmental Business Council of New England; and local conservation districts.

Fifteen federal and state environmental agencies, conservation districts, non-profit organizations, higher educational institutions, and businesses provide expertise and help organize the event. Dozens of volunteers were on hand on May 14th to handle all the event logistics from setting up tents, tables and chairs, checking-in teams, serving food, scoring tests and cleaning up.

For more information on the Massachusetts Envirothon visit www.maenvirothon.org.

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