



MASSACHUSETTS ENVIROTHON

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2021 Virtual Massachusetts Envirothon winners announced

WESTFORD, Mass., May 25, 2021 – The results are in from the 2020-2021 Massachusetts Envirothon education program and competition for high school students, which was held remotely due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. The Groton School was the top overall scoring team and will represent Massachusetts at the 2021 National Envirothon Competition being held virtually in July 2021.

The competition included two components, for which teams prepared for and presented remotely: the Natural Resource Challenge and the Current Issue. This year's Current Issue topic was "Water Resource Management and Climate Change." Winners were determined based on overall combined scores for both components.

Lexington High School placed second and Newton South High School placed third overall in the competition.

Eight teams, with three to 10 members each, participated: Acton Boxborough Regional High School, Brockton High School / Wildlands Trust, The Groton School, Lexington High School, Millbury Jr. Sr. High School, Newton South High School, Quabbin Regional High School and Shepherd Hill Regional High School (Dudley/Charlton).

The Natural Resource Challenge allowed teams to apply their knowledge of the four natural resource topic areas – soil, wildlife, water, and forest – by taking on the role of an environmental consultant. Each team submitted a 30-minute or less video presentation on their review of a fictional school building proposal. The school was to be built on a currently forested woodlands and wetlands parcel owned by a town. In their video presentations, teams identified environmental or human health issues and determined if this was the best placement for the proposed school and supporting services. They also used GIS mapping and answered questions about site soils, the Mass Wetlands Protection Act, carbon sequestration, drinking water regulations and wildlife. The Groton School (first place), Lexington (second place) and Newton South (third place) scored the highest for this challenge.

For the Current Issue portion of the Envirothon program, each team explored a significant environmental issue as it occurs in their own community and produced a 10-minute video on their research. Panels of five judges reviewed these videos and then engaged in twenty minutes of questions and discussion with each team in a live on-line meeting. To make the competition as fair as possible in this new format, a second round of judging was added, with a single panel of judges reviewing and ranking the three top scoring presentations: The Groton School (first), Lexington High School (second) and Acton-Boxboro Regional High School (third).

The Massachusetts Envirothon challenges young people to get outdoors and explore, gaining hands-on knowledge and experience of Massachusetts ecosystems. They engage with their communities and develop skills for investigating local environmental issues, and learn how to actively participate in community decisions.

The competition provides a challenge that allows participants to test their environmental knowledge and skills.

"We hope that Envirothon participants will grow in their commitment to stewardship of the environment and natural resources, and cultivate their curiosity and love of learning," said Mass. Envirothon Steering Committee Chair Kelley Freda of the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation-Division of Water Supply Protection. "The Envirothon also increases students' awareness of career opportunities in the environmental field."

The 2020-2021 Massachusetts Envirothon was made possible through the contributions of partnering agencies and organizations, including financial support from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs, the U.S. Forest Service, the Massachusetts Grange, Environmental Business Council of New England, individual contributions and local conservation districts.

Multiple federal and state environmental agencies, conservation districts, non-profit organizations, higher educational institutions, and businesses are involved in planning and delivering the Massachusetts Envirothon program each year. For more information on the Massachusetts Envirothon visit www.massenvirothon.org.

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