Environmental Service Committee

www.txstate.edu/esc

Committee Report
2009-2010

Contents

1. History and Structure

In 2000, the Environmental Service Fee (ESF) was conceived by Texas State's student chapter of the National Association of Environmental Professional (NAEP). For several years, NAEP worked with the Associated Student Government of Texas State and the Texas Legislature to enact the ESF. The first meeting of the Environmental Service Committee (ESC) was held on September 23, 2004. (For a more detailed history, visit http://www.txstate.edu/esc/about/history.html.)

The ESC is a university committee under Finance and Support Services. It is comprised of 7 voting members (3 faculty members and 4 students) and 4 non-voting members (2 students, a VPFSS representative who serves as account manager, and a Facilities representative). This includes a student chair and secretary; these were John Montoya and Kathryn Wilcox, respectively, for the 2009-2010 school year.

According to the bylaws, the purpose of the ESC is "to distribute funds collected from the Environmental Service Fee in order to provide funding for environmental improvements at the University through services such as environmental education, recycling, transportation, employment, product purchasing, distributing small grants or matching funds, planning/maintenance, beautification, and irrigation."

Past projects (some of which are still in operation) include the Bobcat Blend Composting Project, the Cardboard Collection Campaign, Chinese Tallow Tree Removal, Texas Recycles Day, and Wild Rice Seeding in the San Marcos River. University students, faculty, staff, alumni or members of the community of San Marcos may apply for funding from the committee.

The ESC meets bi-weekly. A quorum of 5 is required for voting, and the public are invited to observe and join in the discussion. There are usually two or three student non-members who are interested in the committee's work and attend regularly, which also helps when recruiting new membership.

2. Progress this Year

The 2009-2010 school year was a time of expansion for the Texas State ESC. Due in part to a marketing campaign with the Texas State student chapter of the American Marketing Association, meeting attendance increased dramatically. Support for Environmental Service Fees (or "Green Funds") grew

across the state as similar initiatives were passed at Texas A&M, UT Austin, UT El Paso, University of Houston, UT San Antonio, University of North Texas, UT Pan American. Texas State currently collects $1.00 per student, with a cap of $6.00. The new legislation (under which the previously mentioned universities' green funds operate) states an initial fee of $5.00 per student, with a limit of $10.00. The quality and quantity of project applications has also improved throughout the year, a trend the committee expects to continue into 2010-2011 with the Common Experience Theme of Sustainability. Results of the Environmental Services Fee are visible across the Texas State campus, as will be discussed in the next section.

3. Funds Allocated FY 2010

Projects	Allocation (Dollars)
1. AATCC Booth-Earth Day	52.33
2. Aluminum Water Bottles	13,271.00
3. AMA Marketing Campaign	3,000.00
4. Bike to School Day	210.89
5. Biology Greenhouse - Rainwater Recycling	6,200.00
6. Bobcat Blend (2009)	19,454.27
7. Bobcat Blend (2010)	7,500.00
8. Calories for Kilowatts	9,875.00
9. Campus Clean Up	100.00
10. Chinese Tallow Removal	18,126.72
11. Earth Day	1,000.00
12. E-Waste Recycling	2,500.00
13. Food 4 Thought Organic Garden	13,861.99
14. Living Library Wildlife Habitat	1,300.00
15. Pack It Up and Pass It On	5,500.00
16. Plant a Tree - Gamma Sigma Sigma	200.00
17.Solar Line Drying Project	5,500.00
18. Vermicomposting	4,881.50
19. Texas Stream Team Volunteer Recognition	3,318.00
TOTAL	115,351.70

4. Description of Funded Initiatives

1. The American Association of Textile Chemists and Colorists hosted an educational booth at the Aquarena Earth Day Celebration to help people be more eco-friendly with their laundry. AATCC passed out baggies with the proper amount of detergent in them, with a note attached that gives eco-friendly tips for washing clothes. The booth displayed various garments such as t-shirts and jeans and a poster board filled with interesting facts such as how much water/detergent is used per load, which detergents are most eco-friendly, etc.
2. Aluminum water bottles were distributed at Paws Preview the fall 2010 semester to kick off the Common Experience on Sustainability program, publicize the Environmental Services Committee, and to promote recycling and reuse.
3. Texas State American Marketing Association developed a marketing campaign for the Environmental Services Committee to make student organizations aware of the Committee and ability to fund projects.
4. Bike to School Day (April 22, 2010) was an informative and interactive event for Texas State and San Marcos community. The goal was to garner attention for alternative, sustainable forms of transportation and improve community knowledge of the various resources available to cyclists through a marketing campaign including fliers, signs, and a visual display in the Quad.
5. The main objective of this proposal is to install a rainwater collection system at the Biology Greenhouse. The rainwater collection system will irrigate plants that are used for teaching, research and landscaping. The rainwater collection system will help the university save money on water usage costs, and promote and reflect efficient use of a valuable renewable resource to students, the community and other universities. Environmentally, collecting rainwater reduces flow to storm water drains, reduces non-point source pollution, and reduces the amount of water that needs to go to water treatment plants. Plants irrigated with rainwater are overall healthier than plants receiving tap water, which translates in to less money spent on replacing plants used for teaching each semester.
6. The Department of Agriculture developed a student education and composting operations called Bobcat Blend. The composting project allows students to source separate their waste into designated waste stations that are be marked as organic waste, bottles, cans, and trash. The organic waste from the university cafeterias along with cardboard, food packaging paper products, and invasive river plant species gathered from the San Marcos River will be mixed together and composted at the Texas State composting site. This program educates students on compost production and makes them more aware of their own use and

production of waste products. The final output from the waste is a nutrient rich soil amendment that will be placed back on the campus landscape.

7. This amount was used to continue the Bobcat Blend project. The Bobcat Blend Project was featured on News 8 Austin and Go Green Tube. Please see the following links:
   www.news8austin.com/content/living/go_green/?ArID=253633&SecID=626
   www.gogreentube.com/watch.php?v=ODkwNTYz
8. The Department of Campus Recreation retrofitted thirty elliptical machines with technology called ReCardi, using the kinetic motion of aerobic exercise to convert heart energy produced by gym equipment into renewable electricity. A typical thirty-minute workout produces approximately fifty watt hours of clean electricity. Texas State University was the first university in Texas to utilize this technology that converts human powered energy into a useable form of renewal energy that is connected to the university power grid. The project was also featured on many news broadcasting stations including KXAN, Dallas Morning News, Fox Austin & Austin American Statesman.
9. Members of NRHH, RHA and residence hall occupants met on April 10th, 2010 for a two hour Campus Cleanup. Teams received bags designated for trash, glass, paper, and aluminum so that materials could be sorted as they cleaned. Trash was discarded and recyclable materials taken to Recycling. Breakfast was provided to participants at the end of the cleanup.
10. Removal of Chinese Tallow (Triadica sebifera) at Aqaurena. Chinese Tallow is a highly invasive and noxious tree that is firmly established in the headwaters of the San Marcos River at Aquarena. Chinese Tallow produce toxins that irritate skin and causes vomiting if consumed by humans and livestock, and secretes allelopathic chemicals that kill native plants and trees. Seeds survive on water for several weeks, enabling them to be distributed downstream. Removal with chemical treatment is the only solution for eradication in order to stop downstream establishment and demonstrates a strong commitment to conservation.
11. Project request to acquire 10 - 10' X 10' tents for the Aquarena Center 4th Annual Earth Day Celebration. The event was free to the public and included recreational activities, educational booths, local food and vendor booths, live musical performances and keynote addresses from national, state, and local political representatives.
12. Recycle Now, Electronic Waste Collection Event hosted by Texas State, PSC Environmental and the City of San Marcos was held Saturday, April 17, 2010 at the Bobcat Stadium parking lot. Faculty, staff, students, and the community

brought TVs and monitors, computers, laptops, cell phones, computer peripherals, fax machines, scanners, electronic toys, gaming systems, CD/DVD players, cords and cables to recycle in a safe and secure manner. Profits from the event are going back into making it an annual project that does not continue to require ESC funds. $2500 from the event went to another campus event, the Sustainability Exploration, which took a group of students on a field trip discovering various aspects of sustainability on campus and in San Marcos.

13. The Food 4 Thought project is a fusion of ideas centered on wholesome, farm-fresh food for students at Texas State. The main objective of this project was to continue development of a horticulture teaching garden as part of the campus arboretum and Master Plan concept in support of the horticulture program in the Department of Agriculture with the goal of the projects being independently sustainable in terms of maintenance. Students oversee the garden and volunteer under the direction of Dr. Tina Marie Cade. The hillside area will be cleared and terraced and will be planted with fruit crops (grapes, olives, citrus, peach, fig, loquat, persimmon, pear, etc.). The flat area will be designed to include raised beds for square-foot vegetable gardening plots.
14. This project further expanded the Texas State Living Library as a sustainable habitat by incorporating elements that attract wildlife and pollinators. The students gathered knowledge of nature's biological cycles by allowing visible interactions between plants, insects, and wildlife. The Living Library has become a certified National Wildlife Federation Backyard Habitat and a certified Monarch Waystation. A beehive has been added to the project to pollinate the Organic Garden plants, and honey is being harvested.
15. Pack It Up and Pass It On, the university's end-of-the-semester recycling program, benefits more than 1,000 San Marcos needy people, who "shop" for free among seven tons of items mainly donated by students living in residence halls and on-campus apartments. This project expanded the program to an off-campus apartment complex on a pilot basis and improved the efficiency of the program by utilizing student worker positions. A storage POD was placed at an off-campus apartment complex so that more students had the opportunity to donate unwanted items instead of throwing them away. The storage pod was manned by the apartment complex management or resident assembly organization and all items collected were in the distributions.
16. Gamma Sigma Sigma planted a tree in Sewell Park to enhance the beauty of the campus and the park. The goal was to bring more awareness of the environment to community and a greater sense of respect for nature.

17. This video production project emphasized sustainability and a low carbon diet. Featured in the video are students talking about their research and first-hand experience with solar drying - one example of living green. Highlighting choices, this video shows how individuals can make a positive impact on the planet. This student-driven project addressed the social issues of sustainability while illustrating the power of students to help change the campus and the world. The video won silver in the Force for Change Award competition through Net Impact. Of over 200 internationals chapters, Texas State University is ranked 2nd.
18. An on-campus vermicomposting location was created for the processing of food waste to soil amendment. An on campus shed that was already planned for vermicomposting to grow worms and produce worm castings. Project cost included purchase of 10 pounds of composting worms, installing a small A/C unit, insulating the shed, running power to it, and purchase of containers needed to grow worms. Once the shed is cooled, a student worker or volunteer will manage the project (around 10 hours a week).
19. Texas Stream Team, with River Systems Institute, is a Texas State University Program, currently housed in the Landing building on Spring Lake. Every school year, TST holds a handful of water quality training sessions open to all members of the community, free of charge. Students make up most of the local trainings; hundreds have participated in the TST program. The new trainees are encouraged to rent test kits from TST to monitor the quality of local water bodies, and report the data back to TST. Even if students graduate and move on, they can continue to monitor water quality from their new location, as TST collects data from across Texas, though many of the water monitoring activities take place locally. Texas Stream Team held a Volunteer Recognition Event on June 25th and 26th, 2010. All water monitors trained under the Texas Stream Team program were recognized for their efforts. The event was also dedicated to volunteers with the San Marcos River Foundation, Aquarena Dive for Science Program, and the San Marcos River Rangers.