

Conservation on the Ground –

Watersheds in the Classroom by Paul Kennedy, Cawaco RC&D

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Students from Whatley Elementary School in Birmingham, Alabama, are participating in the Watershed Science After School Program, which is sponsored by the Clean Water Partnership. A grant from the Cawaco Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Council made it all possible. The program is a science enrichment program that provides opportunities to elementary and middle schools students who would not have access to the traditional Clean Water Partnership activities. The program primarily serves elementary boys and girls (grades 4-8) who attend high-need elementary and middle schools.

The program was developed to counter the trend of students who tend to lose interest in science during elementary/middle school years. A second objective is to raise the awareness of the importance of clean water in local communities.



Students learn to appreciate the significance of water quality in their own communities.

The curriculum for the program is made up of inquiry-based lab and field activities compiled from many resources of already developed programs in Alabama, such as—What's in Your Water, The Legacy Water Source Book, Project Aquatic Wild, Project Wet, and The Isaac Walton League. Through the use of LaMotte-Alabama Water Watch field testing equipment, the program provides students with experience in water quality assessment and monitoring.

In order to become informed citizens, and, perhaps to pursue careers in science, students need to have a sound science background. The Watershed Science After School Program is designed to renew and keep alive the joy of inquiry, analysis, and discovery, which are the foundation of science and critical skills needed to prepare students for the future.

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