

Cacapon Institute

POTOMAC HIGHLANDS WATERSHED SCHOOL

“This was great!

This was the hardest school work that I have done in my whole life.”

2005 Student Participant

Dear Chesapeake Bay Trib Teams, Watershed Associations, Educators, and Friends;

Cacapon Institute is currently enrolling high school classes throughout the Chesapeake Bay watershed for the 2nd Annual **Stream Cleaner Environmental Forum (SCE Forum)**. Housed in our internet-based Potomac Highlands Watershed School, students participating in the Forum explore the scientific, agricultural, and societal challenges of cleaning up the Chesapeake Bay. Students then question one another across the internet to find socially and environmentally acceptable solutions to this complex environmental problem.

SCE Forum - March 5th through March 23rd, 2007

The Forum is an opportunity to engage high school classes and, through them, the broader community in seeking solutions for environmental issues. We invite students, educators, and watershed enthusiasts to encourage their local school to participate in the SCE Forum. New for this year's SCE Forum: classes are given a chance to go beyond the internet-based discussion to implementation of best management practices for improved watershed stewardship. Participating schools will have a chance to receive technical and financial support to design and implement their own real-world stewardship projects. We ask watershed enthusiasts to act as mentors to students on the importance of good stewardship. ***This could mean real-world resources for BMP installation in your watershed!***

Cacapon Institute's internet-based Environmental Forums challenge students to think deeply about complex issues that are relevant to their lives – and challenge their peers across the internet to do the same. The result can be electrifying:

“I was shocked and amazed to observe the strong stances that many of my students took on their points of views... The most rewarding experience for me was the students' response at the end of consensus work. All the students leaned back in their chairs and collapsed with a sense of satisfied accomplishment.”

Sharon Harman, Ph.D., Petersburg H.S., West Virginia



Visit us at: <http://www.cacaponinstitute.org/high.htm> (Click on the phone  to see student's work in previous Environmental Forums). The Environmental Forum is available to high school classes in any discipline - social studies, science, vocational agriculture, others. In addition to the **Environmental Forum**, the **Potomac Highland Watershed School** has elementary, middle, and high school activities. The web site features teacher resources including lesson plans for increasing understanding of, and enhancing appreciation for, water resources and land management (http://www.cacaponinstitute.org/e_classroom.htm).

For more information contact Neil Gillies, Director; or Frank Rodgers, Education & Outreach.

PHWS is sponsored by the MARPAT, National Fish and Wildlife, and Spring Creek Foundations; and our members.

Cacapon Institute, P.O. Box 68, High View, WV 26808

(304) 856-1385. CI@cacaponinstitute.org . www.cacaponinstitute.org

*From the Cacapon to the Potomac to the Chesapeake Bay,
We protect rivers and watersheds using science and education.*



Sign Up Now For The Spring 2007 Stream Cleaner Environmental Forum! March 5th through March 23rd

The **Chesapeake Bay** is a national treasure but, after years of pollution, it is in trouble. Reducing nutrient and sediment loads will help restore it to health. The Bay States (DE, MD, NY, PA, VA, WV), Washington D.C. and the EPA are working together to help clean up the Bay. Broad-based education and outreach are a priority in achieving public awareness and personal involvement on behalf of the Bay and local watersheds. To help, Cacapon Institute developed an internet-based school to teach watershed science and ways of protecting rivers and watersheds.

Cacapon Institute is asking you; as environmental educators, friends groups, and watershed associations, to help recruit schools for a web based multi-school learning exchange called the **Stream Cleaner Environmental Forum**. **The SCE Forum**, in its second year, is open to any school in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed - urban, suburban, or rural. Students explore the science and challenges of non point source pollution, roll play as stakeholders, formulate point of view positions, build consensus, propose real world solutions, and even implement projects.

The SCE Forum starts with *Stream Cleaner*, an interactive program that models estimates of pollution loads and costs related to land use and land management practices. The activity encourages critical thinking and leads students into the key elements of the Environmental Forum. The Forum has four distinct stages:



Background reading, including essays from experts, and links to other resources;

Stakeholder Groups of "farmers", "land owners", "environmentalist", etc. are formed in each class to draft positions;

Position Papers are posted and participating schools check out their peers' work, ask questions across the web, and refine positions;

Final Consensus Plans that balance the needs of all stakeholder groups are negotiated in each classroom and posted to the web.

New for Spring 2007! Participating Chesapeake Bay watershed schools will compete for grants to implement their own watershed stewardship project in their community!

Visit the school at <http://www.cacaponinstitute.org/high.htm> - click on the phone to see the Forum or click on the chalk board to try the Stream Cleaner activity. Contact Cacapon Institute for more information.

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