

David Prouty Envirothon 2010

Background

Many people took part in helping the David Prouty High School Envirothon team in their preparations for the 2010 Envirothon. Within our small town of Spencer, MA, it is amazing the number of people willing to help. These people were first and foremost all the team members: Catherine Wood, Alex Corbin, Nick Tobin, Sam Laney, Amy Gebo, John Dymek, Jesse Sears, Sarah Sears, Michelle Wzniak, Eric Lammi, and Lauren Alcorn. The biggest influence on the team were the coaches: Mrs. Mary McLaughlin and Mrs. Mary Baker-Wood. There were also many other contributing benefactors: Mr. Ernie Grimes, a local environmental advocate, Mr Greg Korpwicz, the water plant operator, Mrs. Virginia Scarlet, hydrologist engineer, Judy Lochen, Conservation commission, and the Spencer Conservation Commission.

Challenge #1

We want to be able to make sure that not only human beings, but all living creatures have a safe decent water supply to thrive from. To do this, we strongly suggest putting money into loans to help the water management treatment plant. We strongly recommend this because it is DEP mandated, and the money will be spent to fix the problem whether we get a loan/grant or not.

Challenge #2

The 2010 DPHS Envirothon team has been a wonderful experience for all involved. We've all become more environmentally aware on a tour of the water department. We've all had the opportunity to see, first hand, where our water comes from. We learned a lot of information about water conservation and pollution. We also had the opportunity to educate not only ourselves about the groundwater issues, but the Spencer residents and influential people such as our Senators and State Representative by showing our presentation at the water department. Over all the DPHS Envirothon team has benefited from our research and community service.

The team members of the 2010 DPHS Envirothon team have had a wonderful time being part of this organization. We have learned about all sorts of different environmental topics. We learned MAD CAP HORSE, Maple Ash Dogwood-CAPrifoliaceae-HORSEchestnut, a way to remember which trees have opposite buds. We learned about redoxomorphic features, which is the discoloration of the soil when the oxygen gets the iron in the soil and oxidizes. We learned that impervious surfaces can cause water to erode the landscape and carry pollutants to water bodies. We learned about the carrying capacity (the amount of life an environment can sustain) and limiting factors (factors that limit population size). We learned new skills such as how to measure trees. With all this information it was difficult to gather and sift through what we needed. Then we had to find out what Spencer's main problem really was. That was probably the most difficult part. Some ways that we investigated the issue were that we went to different training sessions and interviewed many people. Some of these people were water department employees who answered many of our questions. We thankfully worked so well together as a team that it was easy to sit down and brainstorm ideas with each other.

The only problem was getting the whole team together at once. We would advise teams to start research earlier, use the many resources that Envirothon gives you, and have a plan set from day one. Despite all these difficulties we accomplished a lot. We managed to complete our community action project by presenting an educational program at the water department open house a little less than a week before the Envirothon. This educated not only numerous Spencer citizens about ground water issues, but also some very influential people such as State Representatives and Senators. We presented our project about our main issue of the Water Management Treatment Plant not being able to hold the storm water overflow. The only problem was the exact thing we were speaking about happened. It down poured. We had trouble just getting our posters into the building without them being obliterated. On the bright side, we had a fantastic example to speak about. Overall, the team had an amazing experience with the Envirothon.