

2006 Philadelphia Annual Meeting (22–25 October 2006)
Paper No. 72–5

Presentation Time: 9:10 AM–9:25 AM

HISTORIC LANDSCAPE PHOTOGRAPHS INSPIRE LOCAL TEACHERS TO CREATE ENGAGING CURRICULA

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Passionate teachers love to develop relevant and local curricula for their students. In Vermont, we partnered with enthusiastic, local K–12 teachers to develop “best-practices” curricula using landscape images from the NSF-funded Landscape Change Program (uvm.edu/perkins/landscape). The archive of over 13,000 Vermont landscape images began as a way to document changes on Earth's surface, but evolved into a resource to understand local “place” both culturally and physically.

We hosted a two-day K–12 curriculum development workshop as part of a greater effort to get learners of all ages using the archive. Other audiences that we hope to engage in using images to understand the local landscape include Abenaki tribe members, home-school students, and alternative learners. Ten teachers with specialties in language arts, social studies, science, and technology came together for two days of curriculum development, peer critique, and networking. They worked on developing lesson plans for use in classroom settings using printed or on-line images. Field-based curricula will be developed in a second workshop.

After an introduction, teachers created thematic mini-portfolios from the Landscape Change Program to practice using the archive. As a team, they also developed a common curriculum template; this was a positive selling point for high-achieving educators. After fueling their creativity on Day 1, teachers had two weeks to draft curricula. Teachers reconvened for peer review and final editing at the University of Vermont. Teachers reported 1) that they would prefer more “in-house” time rather than working at home and 2) that they benefited from the face-to-face peer review of their own work.

Curriculum dissemination occurs at regional professional development venues coordinated through Vermont's Educational Services Agencies

(ESAs) and National Education Association meetings. In these dissemination sessions, Landscape Change Program staff introduce the archive and offer the existing “best practices” lesson-plans. Professional development participants report that they 1) appreciate the take-home packet of curricula (uvm.edu/perkins/landscape/learn/learn.htm), 2) view the archive as “a tremendous and emerging resource,” 3) prefer a full day format to allow more exploration of the image archive.

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General Information for this Meeting

Session No. 72

Successes in Professional Development of Earth Science Teachers:
Courses, Workshops, Partnerships, and Professional Development
Opportunities that Work I

Pennsylvania Convention Center: 111 AB

8:00 AM–12:00 PM, Monday, 23 October 2006

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