

Project Learning Tree

Learning is in our nature.



Introduction

Project Learning Tree uses trees and forests as windows on the world to increase students' understanding of the environment and actions they can take to conserve it. Since 1976, PLT has reached 145 million students and trained 765,000 educators to help students learn how to think, not what to think about complex environmental issues.

Project Learning Tree helps develop students' awareness, knowledge, and appreciation of the environment, builds their skills and ability to make informed decisions, and encourages them to take personal responsibility for sustaining the environment and our quality of life that depends on it. From its beginnings in 1976, PLT has exemplified high-quality environmental education.



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Project Learning Tree® (PLT) is an award-winning environmental education program designed for teachers and other educators, parents, and community leaders working with youth from preschool through grade 12.

Mission

- Advance sustainability through forest-focused collaborations
- Provide students with the awareness, appreciation, skills, and commitment to address environmental issues
- Enable learners to apply scientific processes and higher order thinking skills to resolve environmental problems
- Advance environmental literacy, stewardship, and career pathways
- Encourage creativity, originality, and flexibility
- Inspire and empower students to become responsible, productive, and participatory members of society

History

Mid-1970s: PLT launched as a collaboration between the American Forest Institute (AFI), the Western Regional Environmental Education Council (WREEC) and natural resources agencies from 13 western states.

1982: AFI executed a licensing arrangement with the American Forest Foundation (AFF), which thereby became the co-sponsor with WREEC of PLT.

1993: AFF became a wholly independent, publicly supported, 501(c)(3) non-profit education organization and took over all administration for PLT.

2017: AFF transferred PLT to the Sustainable Forestry Initiative Inc., an independent, non-profit organization dedicated to the future of our forests and promoting sustainable forest management.

Today: Project Learning Tree is one of the most widely used preK-12 environmental education programs in the United States and abroad. California PLT is housed within UCANR with the 4-H team.

Benefits

- Effective and adaptable curriculum
- Improves academic achievement
- Breaks the indoor habit
- Improves student physical and mental health
- Supports STEM
- Improves focus and cognition
- Creates strong natural resource partnerships



“PLT really forms the core of my curriculum. It has such vibrant, engaging activities for both children and adults. Trees and forests can be used to teach any subject”

-Karen Christenson, science and inquiry teacher