

Environmental Studies Schools

The Living Earth Environmental Studies Schools are composed of a minimum of forty hours of study of specific units divided into four Courses of ten hours, each of which includes a two-hour field trip. The Courses investigate AIR, LAND and WATER. The units are divided into Ecology and Environmental Science, Life on Earth and Earth Stewardship.

A school may be sponsored by the National Garden Clubs, Inc., a Region of NGC, Inc., a State Garden Club, a District or Council of Garden Clubs, or a National or International Affiliate.

Environmental Studies Schools are open to everyone, whether or not they are garden club members. Many couples enjoy attending the schools. A member of NGC, Inc. may take the exams to be an Environmental Consultant and may become a member of the Environmental Consultants' Council in his/her home state.

After passing two Courses a student may become a Provisional Consultant and join an Environmental Studies Council (or Bi/Tri-Council). These groups provide programs and tours that further the education of members. After completing all four Environmental Studies Courses, a Consultant Card is issued recognizing the achievement of NGC member, but does not convey professional status.

Other NGC Educational Programs

Gardening Study Schools - focusing on the study of the many aspects of horticulture and field tours.

Flower Show Schools - focusing on the study of horticulture, design and flower show procedure.

Landscape Design Study Schools – focusing on recognizing and practicing good land use.

Students

Member Students

A member student belongs to a garden club that is a member of a State Garden Club in NGC or to one of NGC's International Affiliate clubs.

Non-member Students

The Courses and exams are open to everyone. However, the Consultant Card is only issued to members of NGC. A non-member student who has successfully completed the four Courses may apply for a Consultant Card upon joining a NGC member garden club within one year after completing the four Courses. Certificates of Achievement may be awarded to non-NGC students attending the four Courses.

Certification of Students

Requirement: To be eligible for an Environmental Studies Consultant Card students must have a passing grade of 70% on all exams in the four Courses. The four Courses must be completed within seven years. While the Courses are most useful to the student when taken in order from I through IV, taking them in any order is permitted.

Member students attending Courses for credit are encouraged to have a subscription to *The National Gardener*, the official publication of NGC. Updated information pertaining to the Environmental Studies Schools and Consultants can be found in each issue of *TNG*.

When a student obtains Consultant status, a NGC Environmental Studies Consultant pin may be purchased from NGC Headquarters Member Services.

Application for Consultant Card

The State ESS Chairman in the state where the fourth Course was completed supplies the Consultant with the Consultant Application (Form #5) for a student's certification. The State ESS Chairman sends the Application with the Course Roster to the NGC Accrediting Chairman for the region, who notifies the School Secretary at NGC Headquarters.

The NGC Accrediting Chairman sends the Certification Card to the State ESS Chairman, who updates the records and forwards the cards to the new Consultant. The Certification Card carries the student's last Course date and expiration date.

Consultants

Procedures for Maintaining Certification Refreshing

Consultants must refresh by the end of the fifth calendar year of the date following the last Course or Refresher event by completing one of the following :

- Attend in full, an ESS Course, no exams required.
- Attend in full a Refresher event which has been approved by a NGC ESS Accrediting Chairman.
- Attend in full, a NGC Accredited Environmental Studies Refresher event. Including Bi-Refreshers or Tri-Refreshers.

Credit for Refresher events can be granted only once a calendar year.

Master Consultants

To become an ESS Master Consultant: a Consultant must refresh four times at any of the four Courses or Refreshers; attend all classes and pay all fees; no exams; refresher fee must be paid and complete ESS Application for Environmental Master Consultant (Form #7).

Consultant Emeritus Status

Granted only to Master Consultants who indicate in writing to the State ESS Chairman that they are no longer able to continue active participation. Need not take Refresher(s) to maintain accreditation. May maintain ESS Council membership as permitted by Council Bylaws. The State ESS Chairman recommends the Emeritus Status to the NGC, Inc. ESS Accrediting Chairman using the Emeritus Application Form (Form #9).

NGC 4-Star and 5-Star Members

Members who have successfully completed all four of NGC's Educational Programs are honored as **NGC 4-Star Members**. Members who complete all four NGC Educational Programs and refresh their certificates to the Master Status in all disciplines are honored as **NGC 5-Star Members**. Applications are available on NGC Website www.gardenclub.org, Clubs, Forms. State Presidents must verify information with the State Schools Chairmen before submitting applications to NGC 4-5-Star Member Chairman. Certificates may be presented at the NGC National Convention and or State Convention/Meeting.

Out of State Credit

A student or Consultant may receive credit for Course(s) taken out of state in which their credentials are maintained provided that the student/Consultant submits evidence that they met all Course requirements, passed the test (if applicable) and paid all fees.

Record Keeping

After verifying the record for each individual, the State ESS Chairman sends copies of the Roster, Consultant Applications and fees for those refreshing to the NGC ESS Accrediting Chairman for that region. The NGC ESS Accrediting Chairman verifies the information on the Roster and Consultant Application(s), records information on ESS data base and sends the signed Roster, Consultant Application(s) and fees to the School Secretary at NGC Headquarters. The NGC ESS Accrediting Chairman sends the signed Roster and Consultant Application(s) to the State ESS Chairman with orange Consultant Card(s) for students completing 4 Courses and/or white Master Consultant Card(s) for Consultants completing 4 Refreshers. The NGC Accrediting Chairman places a copy of the Roster and Consultant Application(s) in their file and sends the fourth copy of the above to the ESS Chairman who will record the information on the master data base.

Yellow Consultant Refresher Cards and white Master Refresher Cards for state-sponsored Refreshers may be distributed by the State ESS Chairman.

Extensions

- If a **student** cannot complete all four (4) Courses, student may request an extension in writing from the State ESS Chairman prior to the expiration of the seven year period for completion.
- If a **Consultant** cannot refresh within a five-year period, a Consultant may request an extension in writing from the State ESS Chairman prior to the expiration.
- The State ESS Chairman requests an extension from the NGC, Inc. ESS Accrediting Chairman using the Extension Application (Form #10). If approved, the NGC, Inc. ESS Accrediting Chairman notifies the ESS State Chairman and the NGC, Inc. School Secretary. The State Chairman then notifies the student of the time limit of the extension. The State ESS Chairman retains a file copy.

Reinstatement

- When a NGC, Inc. Consultant allows the certificate to expire and become invalid within a five-year period, status may be reinstated only by attending and successfully completing the exam with a passing grade of 70% in two (2) ESS Courses.
- Then application may be made for an Environmental Consultant Certificate by completing the Application for Reinstatement (Form #11).
- Send completed form plus the \$5.00 fee to the State ESS Chairman.
- If a Consultant is seventy (70) years old or older, the exam requirement is waived.

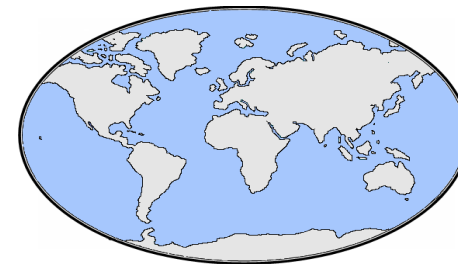
Removal of Records

- When a student has not completed the four (4) Courses within the required seven-year period and no extension has been requested, the student's records are purged from the State Chairman's files.
- Consultants' records will be retained for a period of seven (7) years from the last year of accreditation. After this period, an individual's records are removed from all files.

National Garden Clubs, Inc.



Environmental Studies Schools



Guide for Students and Consultants

www.gardenclub.org