

Rural Action, Inc.
9030 Hocking Hills Drive
The Plains, OH 45780

March 17, 2023

Dear Carolyn Watkins,

I am writing to express support for your SFY 2024 Annual Agenda for the Ohio Environmental Education Fund (OEEF). Rural Action's Environmental Education program has been working in Appalachian Ohio for over 20 years and reaches more than 3,000 people annually through our school programs, day camps, and citizen science initiatives with a full time staff of two and five Americorps National Service member educators. Additionally, we are a member of the Environmental Education Council of Ohio (EECO), and I am currently serving as the EECO Region 7 Program Coordinator. I am happy to offer this letter of support both as the EE Program Director and on behalf of all of the interrelated work that Rural Action is engaged with in our communities that intersects with the work of your office.

The Ohio EE Fund is an important part of the support that helps Rural Action to continue to work with students in classroom programs, school teachers through our Green Teachers Project, and in our growing body of work related to career development through paid internships for high school students. The internship initiative has grown to include collaborations with multiple school districts, counties, and career development agencies allowing more than 130 students to have an internship opportunity over the next two years. The alignment of priorities reflected in the SFY 2024 Annual Agenda to have robust environmental education opportunities from the state level through local communities is essential towards developing a sense of connection to place for youth, but also to realizing opportunities that allow these students to remain connected to their communities in meaningful ways.

Rural Action Environmental Education looks forward to the many opportunities that will continue to evolve through our connections with EECO, the Ohio EPA Office of Environmental Education and the Ohio EE Fund. Thank you so much for your efforts and commitment to the shared work of all the people that make up the Environmental Education community.

Regards,

Dan Vorisek

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