



NCF-Envirothon
509 Capitol Court NE
Washington, DC 20002
1-800-825-5547
envirothon.org

Suggestions for Alternative Testing for State/Provincial Envirothon Events

If you are unable to host your regular area/regional and/or state/provincial Envirothon events in person (for example, if your state/provincial schools are unable to travel to your previously scheduled testing site), the NCF-Envirothon has the following suggestions for hosting a distance Envirothon competition:

Please note that this list is just a list of some suggested alternatives and may not work for every state/provincial Envirothon program. It is not a comprehensive list and may not include ideas your state/provincial committee are employing.

Online Testing

Online testing is a convenient option for your state/provincial competition that would allow the students to still showcase what they have been learning all year, even if you are unable to host a traditional Envirothon event. There are several ways to organize an online competition.

University Online Testing Platform

If a college or university was involved in your state/provincial competition (particularly if they were your host site), consider reaching out to them about using their online testing platform. Most colleges and universities have access to a platform such as Blackboard or Moodle through which online tests can be taken. These platforms will frequently have built-in features such as timers and automatic grading to facilitate the testing and grading processes. Short answer questions would still need to be graded by test writers/resource professionals.

Google Forms

If you do not have access to a University Online Testing Platform, or using one would be cost-prohibitive, Google Forms offers a free service that would allow you to input test questions and receive answers online. Be sure to check with your sponsoring agency about the use of Google services as many governmental agencies restrict the use due to cybersecurity. Google Forms will not automatically grade responses, so that would need to be done after submission of the test.

Testing with Paper Copies

Using hard copies of the tests for your state/provincial Envirothon competition is also an option. These hard copies would need to be distributed to all schools participating, and then collected for grading by your state/provincial Envirothon.

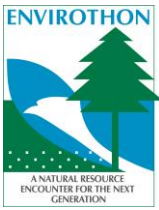


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Test Content

Unfortunately, due to the nature of distance testing, some parts of the traditional Envirothon tests will need to be modified:

- Hands-on questions will need to be rewritten so that they can be answered without the students being on-site. Some suggestions for this are:
 - For identification questions, include pictures and/or diagrams of your intended species, keeping in mind what characteristics the students will need to see to identify the photo.
 - For field/sampling questions, consider how you might be able to rewrite these questions so that the students may still address these concepts. Some examples include:
 - Describing the sample site in words, including all relevant information the students would need to know to make management recommendations
 - Applying the hands-on concept in a different way. For example:
 - For Soils and Land Use – Instead of requiring the students to identify the color of the soil sample using a Munsell book, give the students the hue, value, and chroma and ask them what that indicates about the soil in conjunction with a description of the landscape.
 - For Forestry – Where students might normally determine the number of logs in a tree using a Biltmore stick, ask the students to calculate board feet using given measurements.
 - Some hands-on questions may not be adaptable to a distance testing method and may need to be cut or replaced.
- Questions involving resources such a soil survey book or identification key will need to be rewritten in a way that allows all participating schools to have access to the materials needed. For example, sending a soil survey book to each participating school is not feasible, but including a photocopy of several relevant pages to attach to the test would work well.



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The Testing Environment

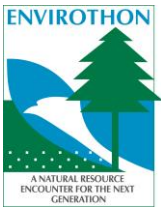
Since teams will be unable to be gathered at a single location under the eyes of watchful volunteers, special parameters must be put in place to ensure fairness and equality in testing.

- Impartial testing proctors will need to be present with the team as they take the test to ensure there is no use of reference materials, the internet, or any other forms of cheating.
- Proctors will also ensure that time limits for testing are observed.
- If an online testing format is used, please ensure that there is a paper-based method available if a participating school does not have internet access or computer availability.
- For Testing with Paper Copies, a secure method of test delivery and retrieval to and from participating schools must be established.

Oral Presentation

States/provinces may opt to omit the Oral Presentation from their competition should time constraints or resources be prohibitive. Oral Presentations can also be submitted and judged electronically.

- Teams would record their presentations in video format. While this does not allow for the question and answer section by the judges that is normally included in the regular competition, it still preserves the spirit of the Oral Presentation component.
- Teams may upload their presentations to YouTube or to another website designated by the state/provincial Envirothon.
- Judging panels will need to be established by the state/province to electronically judge the presentations, with adjustments made to the scoring sheets to accommodate the electronic videos.
- Video format and Oral Presentation parameters would need to be set by the state/province. For example:
 - How long will students have to prepare the presentation?
 - Will the students be allowed access to reference materials during the preparation period?
 - Will you allow video editing, such as special effects?
 - In which file format do the videos need to be uploaded?
 - Will students be allowed to do “retakes?”



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- Depending on your state/province's Oral Presentation parameters, an impartial proctor may be needed to ensure that the teams follow established rules (e.g. do not use reference materials or the internet, et cetera). However, your state/province Envirothon committee may elect to loosen parameters given the unique circumstances of this year.

These suggestions will need to be adapted to the specific needs of your state or province. Thank you for your hard work and dedication to keeping the Envirothon spirit alive in the wake of COVID-19.

All the best,

NCF-Envirothon

If you have any questions about these recommendations, please feel free to reach out to Stephanie Tolar, the NCF-Envirothon Education Specialist at stolar@envirothon.org or 1-800-825-5547 ext 4.