

## NATIONAL CONSERVATION FOUNDATION ENVIROTHON VIRTUAL COMPETITION RULES AND REGULATIONS

The Virtual 2021 National Conservation Foundation Envirothon (NCFE) Competition will be conducted under the following Rules and Regulations, as provided by the National Conservation Foundation (NCF), the National Conservation Foundation Envirothon Operating Committee (NCFEOC) and the Host (group assigned to coordinate and deliver the NCFE Competition).

### **I. Team Eligibility Requirements**

1. The NCFE Annual Competition is open to students enrolled in grades 9 - 12 and who reach age 14 – 19 by August 8 of the current competition year. Non-traditional schools and youth organizations must follow the grade level and age limitations as set above.
2. Each Member (in good standing as per Program Policy) of Envirothon is entitled to send one team to the current year's NCFE Annual Competition.
  - a. Each team will consist of five students from the same school, non-traditional school or youth organization. All teams must be sponsored and certified by a NCFE state/provincial representative.
  - b. Team members and any substitutions must have participated in a current year's Envirothon program/training prior to their state/provincial competition in order to compete at the NCFE Annual Competition.
  - c. All teams must be affiliated with their local conservation district or an equivalent conservation agency.
  - d. As part of the online registration and to be eligible to participate in the NCFE Annual Competition, all team members, advisors/chaperones, volunteers, guests and NCFE state/provincial representatives and staff must read, agree to and sign the NCFE Rules and Regulations.
3. All team registration fees must be paid in full prior to the start of the 2021 annual competition as determined by the NCF and the Host. Team registration fees are due by May 15, 2021. Team registration fees paid after May 15<sup>th</sup> will incur an additional \$50.00 fee.
4. All registration forms listing the names and other information of team members, advisors and guests must be submitted by the date set by the NCFEOC and Host and provided as directed to the NCFE. All students, advisors and guests must be registered with the NCFE to participate in the NCFE Annual Competition.

5. Each team must be supervised by adult team advisor(s) and/or public agency or Conservation District Representative(s).
  - a. Each team must be properly supervised according to the rules and policies set forth by their local school administration or sponsoring agency.
  - b. Advisors are responsible for their student's behavior and actions.
  - c. The NCF, NCFEOC and Host will not be responsible for improperly supervised teams.
6. In the event of an emergency or unresolvable time conflict that would prevent all members of a registered five-member team from competing in the NCFE Annual Competition, the NCFEOC may allow a team to compete with fewer than five members or the NCFEOC may allow up to two substitutions. The respective NCFE State/Provincial Representative must certify the legitimacy of the emergency or conflict by email or letter to the NCFEOC at least two weeks prior to the NCFE Annual Competition. (see Section II for Substitution rules and criteria)

## **II. Substitutions**

1. Any substitutions to the original competing team after the state or provincial event must obtain approval in writing from the NCFEOC, at least two weeks prior to the Virtual NCFE Annual Competition. No substitute may participate in any NCFE Annual Competition without prior approval from the NCFEOC. Failure to comply may result in the team's disqualification.
2. A maximum of two (2) substitutions to the original competition team shall be allowed.
3. Substitutes must meet ALL of the following criteria in order to be considered:
  - a. Substitutes for any NCFE team must be enrolled in grades 9 -12 and reach age 14 – 19 by August 8 of the current competition year. Non-traditional schools and youth organizations must follow the grade level and age limitations as set above.
  - b. Substitutes must be from the same school, non-traditional school or youth organization as the original competing team.
  - c. Substitutes must have participated in an Envirothon program/training prior to their state/provincial competition in order to compete at the NCFE Annual Competition.
  - d. Substitutes must be affiliated with their local conservation district or an equivalent conservation agency.

- e. As part of the online registration and to be eligible to participate in the NCFE Annual Competition, all substitutes must read, agree to and sign the NCFE Code of Conduct.

### **III. Guest Registrations**

1. Guests (volunteers, NCF Representatives, State/Provincial Representatives, additional team advisors or public) interested in attending the virtual 2021 NCFE competition, must comply with the following conditions:
  - a. Must register as a guest and pay the guest registration fee.
  - b. Adhere to the NCFE Rules and Regulations and the Codes of Conduct set forth within.
  - c. Will not assist any competing team during the official training/testing/oral presentation portions of the virtual competition.

### **IV. Competition Rules and Regulations**

1. Violating the competition rules and regulations, IN ANY WAY or AT ANY TIME, is prohibited by students, advisors and guests.
2. The Host will identify and/or provide reference materials to assist students in their preparation for the Virtual NCFE Annual Competition. References may include printed materials, websites or other sources of information about natural resources or environmental issues. Language requirements shall be as set forth in the NCFE Program Policies.
3. Only materials identified by the NCFEOC and the Host may be used by the students during the training, testing and oral preparation and presentation portions of the virtual annual competition.
4. Equipment needed during the competition to compensate for a physical or mental disability must be approved by the NCFEOC at least 2 weeks prior to the start of the competition. Only electronic equipment or devices approved in advance by the NCFEOC and the Host may be used by or be in the possession of team members during the training, testing and oral preparation and presentation portions of the annual virtual competition. Before testing starts, smartphones and other such devices should be placed out of reach for ALL team members.
5. Training – Due to the nature of the virtual event, no formal team training will take place. Teams are instead asked to submit 2 questions per test topic and OP scenario no later than Monday, July 19. Those questions will be compiled and a minimum of 5

questions per test topic will be randomly selected to be answered by the resource professionals and answers will be posted by July 25 on the event platform.

6. Team Gathering – If allowable by local and/or state/provincial rules and health guidelines, teams are asked to be present in the same room during testing and oral presentations. Teams should follow all local social distancing and mask requirements at all times when together. In the event that a team is unable to test and/or give their oral presentation together due to COVID-19 restrictions, quarantine mandates or an extenuating circumstance related to COVID-19, then the Team Advisor must contact the NCFE immediately to apply for a variance. This will be reviewed on a case by case basis.
7. Testing – Tests will be provided by the Host using the designated testing platform as approved by the NCF, NCFEOC and Host. Teams are to follow the procedures as set forth in the 2021 NCF-Envirothon Test and Oral Presentation Rules and Guidelines document developed by the Host and approved by the NCFEOC.

- a. Proctors

- i. Each team must have a designated proctor present at all times during the official testing portion of the competition. Please be sure to follow local health guidelines and regulations regarding COVID-19 safety at all times.

- ii. Proctor Criteria – each state/provincial/partner nation Envirothon representative will identify at least two (2) individuals (1 primary and 1 alternative) to serve as proctor during the team testing on July 26<sup>th</sup>. Individuals who may serve as proctors include school officials/teachers (those not involved in Envirothon team training/organization), state/provincial/partner nation Envirothon representatives, state/provincial/partner nation Envirothon program committee members, conservation district representatives or others not directly related to any team members or involved in their training in any way.

- iii. If the state/provincial/partner nation Envirothon representative is unable to identify a Proctor that meets the criteria as set forth above, then they will need to contact the NCFE immediately to apply for a variance.

- iv. Each state/provincial/partner nation Envirothon representative will report the name and contact details (email/cell phone numbers) of the identified proctors to NCFE and the Host committee by July 1.

- v. The identified proctors will be required to complete and sign the Adult Code of Conduct and adhere to all Rules and Procedures set forth for Proctors.

- vi. Proctors will be responsible for ensuring teams are following all testing rules as set forth in this document and the 2021 NCF-Envirothon Test and Oral Presentation Rules and Guidelines document.
  - b. Each test must be completed within the designated timeframe included in the test instructions. Test settings are fixed to automatically end the test when a team submits its test or if the time runs out.
  - c. Teams will have one (1) chance to open and complete each test. No Advisor is permitted to complete or assist teams in completing tests. If it is found that an advisor attempts to complete the test or give any help in answering test questions, the team will be disqualified.
  - d. In the occurrence of technical issues (power failure, internet connection issues, computer crashes, etc.), the proctor must immediately contact a pre-assigned member of the Competition Advisory Team to report the issue. Contact information will be provided with the test instructions. Technical issues will be reviewed on a case by case basis.
8. Oral Presentations
- a. Language requirements shall be as set forth in the NCFE Program Policies.
  - b. The Host will provide a checklist of materials for the team to use when preparing and delivering its oral presentation. Such materials may include:
    - i. The NCFE Judges scoring form
    - ii. A list of items that are allowed to be used by the students
    - iii. A copy of the scenario
  - c. During the Oral Presentation portion of the contest, teams will use an electronic slideshow medium to generate their presentation graphics and will follow the procedures as set forth in the 2021 NCF-Envirothon Test and Oral Presentation Rules document developed by the Host and approved by the NCFEOC.
  - d. Team oral presentations will be twenty (20) minutes maximum in length, followed by ten (10) minutes of questions to team members by the judges.
  - e. All five (5) team members must equally participate orally in the presentation. If a team is participating with less than five team members, that team will receive a two-point deduction per each missing team member.
  - f. During oral presentations, all team members must wear the NCFE Oral Presentation shirt provided.
  - g. During oral presentations, no state/provincial identification, either written or verbal, is permitted.

- h. Oral presentation scores will be based on a criteria sheet approved by the NCFEOC.
  - i. Team advisors and affiliates can not interact with judges during the presentation.
  - j. It will be considered an infraction of the rules of the competition for an advisor or other non-team member to give input to students in any manner once their team has begun official oral presentation development. *(This does not limit the advisors from interacting with their students as long as it is understood that absolutely no discussion of the presentation topic or the execution of the presentation itself will be held.)*
9. Judges and/or proctor decisions for all events will be final, unless submitted to the NCFEOC for review.

## **V. Scoring**

1. Scoring for the Virtual NCFE Competition will be as follows:
  - a. Each of the five station tests will comprise 1/7th of the total score.
  - b. Preliminary oral presentation will comprise 2/7th of the total score.
  - c. Tiebreakers shall be as follows: Current Issue score; Soils/Land Use score; Aquatic Ecology score; Forestry score, and Wildlife score.
  - d. The scores from 1 (a) and 1 (b) will be totaled to determine which teams will advance to the final oral presentations round.
  - e. Final team placements will be determined by adding the five station test scores to the final oral presentation score. (Preliminary oral presentation scores will not be used to determine team placement in the final round.)
2. Registered teams with fewer than five students are not eligible to compete for awards or recognition. Such teams will compete as exhibition only.

## **VI. Concluding Rules and Regulations**

1. Virtual NCFE Competition Rules and Regulations are subject to change pending approval by a majority of NCF board members. Changes will be provided in advance to all teams and advisors.
2. The NCFE Code of Conduct signed by each student and advisor is an extension of the NCFE Rules and Regulations.
3. All team members and advisors are required to attend all official competition scheduled events.
4. Any violation of these rules will result in disciplinary action or disqualification.

5. Decisions of the NCFEOC, as applicable, are final.

## **VII. Codes of Conduct**

1. **Students** - Envirothon participants have an excellent reputation for honesty, sportsmanship and integrity. Individual conduct at any Envirothon function should make a positive contribution to the reputation that has been established by previous participants.
  - a. In accordance with applicable civil rights laws, the National Conservation Foundation Envirothon (NCFE), its offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering NCFE programs are prohibited from and shall not discriminate based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by the NCFE.
  - b. Student conduct is the responsibility of the student and their advisor.
  - c. Student behavior at all times should be such that it reflects credit to themselves, their school/conservation district, their state/province/partner nation and the Envirothon.
  - d. Participants are expected to attend all general sessions and other scheduled activities. Please be prompt and show respect to those also online.
  - e. The following are strictly prohibited at any and all Envirothon functions; student participants may not be in possession of or use:
    - i. Tobacco and vapor products (including smokeless)
    - ii. Alcoholic beverages
    - iii. Illegal/illicit drugs
    - iv. Weapons, including firearms and knives.
  - f. If a student is determined to be cheating or disregarding NCFE Rules and Regulations, this Code of Conduct and/or the NCFE Program Policies they will be subject to stringent disciplinary action and may result in disciplinary action or disqualification.
2. **Adult Participants** (Advisors, Guests, NCFE Representatives and Volunteers) - Envirothon participants have an excellent reputation for honesty, sportsmanship and integrity. An individual's conduct at any Envirothon function should make a positive contribution to the reputation that has been established by previous participants.

- a. In accordance with applicable civil rights laws, the National Conservation Foundation Envirothon (NCFE), its offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering NCFE programs are prohibited from and shall not discriminate based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by the NCFE.
- b. Adult participants' conduct is the responsibility of each individual at the event.
- c. Adult behavior at all times should be such that it reflects credit to themselves, their state/province/partner nation and the Envirothon.
- d. Adult participants are expected to attend all general sessions and other scheduled activities. Please be prompt and show respect to those also online.
- e. Adult participants are to report any accident, injury or illnesses to the NCF-Envirothon committee for assistance.
- f. The following are not to be consumed in the presence of student participants:
  - \* Tobacco and vapor products (including smokeless)
  - \* Alcoholic beverages
- g. NO Possession or USE of the following:
  - \* Illegal/illicit drugs
  - \* Weapons including firearms and knives.
- h. The NCF-Envirothon requires all adult participants to adhere to a strict anti-fraternization policy. For this reason, all Adult Volunteers, Advisors and Guests shall refrain from having any personal contact that may be perceived as inappropriate with any participant of the NCF-Envirothon including, but not limited to minor guests during the event.
- i. If an adult participant is determined to be disregarding of the NCF-Envirothon Rules and Regulations, Program Policies and/or Code of Conduct they will be restricted from the remainder of the virtual event and may be prohibited from participating in future events associated with the NCF-Envirothon.

**VIII. All NCF/NCFEOC decisions will be final.**