

## NATIONAL CONSERVATION FOUNDATION-ENVIROTHON

# Annual Competition Rules and Regulations

Amended: February 13, 2024

**The National Conservation Foundation Envirothon Annual Competition (NCFE Annual Competition) shall 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 Annual Competition).**

**Nondiscriminatory Statement:** In accordance with applicable civil rights laws, the National Conservation Foundation-Envirothon (NCFE), its offices, 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.

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

1. The NCF-Envirothon (NCFE) Annual Competition is open to students enrolled in grades 9 - 12 and who are of age 14 – 19 at the start of the current year's competition. Non-traditional schools and youth organizations must follow the grade level and age limitations set above.
2. Each U.S. state and Canadian provincial Program Member (in good standing as per the NCFE Program Policy) of NCFE is entitled to send one team to the current year's NCFE Annual Competition. Each Partner Nation Member (in good standing as per the NCFE Program Policy) of NCFE is entitled to send up to three (3) teams 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 state/provincial/partner nation Envirothon representative.
  - b. Team members and any substitutions must have participated in a current year's

Envirothon program/training prior to their state/provincial/partner nation  
Envirothon competition in order to compete at the NCFE Annual Competition.

- c. All teams must be affiliated with their local conservation district or equivalent sponsoring organizing agency.
  - d. As part of the online registration and to be eligible to participate in the NCFE Annual Competition, all team members, team substitute candidates, advisors/chaperones, volunteers, guests 21 years or older ("Guests"), and state/provincial/partner nation Envirothon representatives and staff must read, agree to, and sign the NCFE Rules and Regulations and respective Code of Conduct.
3. All team registration fees must be paid in full prior to arrival on the Host campus unless arrangements have been made in advance with NCFE. Team registration, set by NCF, is due by June 1 of each year. Team registration fees paid after June 1, but before the closing registration date (to be determined by the Host and NCFE) will incur an additional \$150 fee.
  4. All registration forms listing the names and other information of team members, team substitution candidates, advisors/chaperones, and guests must be submitted by the date set by the NCFEOC and Host and provided as directed to NCFE. All students (team members and substitution candidates), advisors/chaperones, and guests must be registered with NCFE to participate in the NCFE Annual Competition.
  5. Each team must be accompanied by adult team advisor(s) and/or state/provincial/partner nation Envirothon Representative(s).
    - a. Each team must provide an adult male, age 21 or older, to chaperone male team members and an adult female, age 21 or older, to chaperone female team members.
    - b. Advisors/chaperones are only permitted to chaperone students from their own state/province/partner nation.
    - c. Team members and advisors/chaperones are required to participate in the lodging and meal service provided by the Host.
    - d. Team members and advisors/chaperones will be housed together, in the same building, but in separate rooms.
    - e. Advisors/chaperones are responsible for their students' behavior and actions.

- f. No student or advisor will be allowed in the opposite gender's designated housing area between the hours of 11:00 pm to 7:00 am.

NCFE will not be responsible for improperly chaperoned 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 allow up to two substitutions provided they completed registrations for substitutes at time of team registration. The respective state/provincial/partner nation Envirothon Representative must certify the legitimacy of the emergency or conflict and contact the NCFEOC and/or designated NCFE staff no later than two weeks prior to the start of the NCFE Annual Competition to confirm complete registration for substitute and allow time for changes to be made to team materials reflecting substitution's information.

## **II. Team Member Substitutions**

1. During the NCFE Annual Competition team member registration period, the team advisor may designate up to two (2) additional students who will serve as team substitution candidates if an emergency or unresolvable time conflict prevents members of the original five-member team from competing in the NCFE Annual Competition.
2. Substitution candidates will not attend the NCFE annual competition as a student participant unless they are needed to replace an original team member.
3. In the event an emergency or unresolvable time conflict prevents members of the original five-member team from competing, the respective state/provincial/partner nation Envirothon Representative must certify the legitimacy of the emergency or conflict and notify the NCFEOC and/or designated NCFE staff about the team substitution no later than two (2) weeks prior to the start of the NCFE Annual Competition.
4. Substitution candidates must meet ALL of the following criteria in order to be considered:
  - a. Must be enrolled in grades 9 -12 and reach age 14 – 19 at the start of the current year's competition. Non-traditional schools and youth organizations must follow the grade level and age limitations set above.

- b. Must be from the same school, non-traditional school, or youth organization as the original competing team.
  - c. Must have participated in an Envirothon program/training prior to their state/provincial/partner nation Envirothon competition in order to compete at the NCFE Annual Competition.
  - d. Must be affiliated with their local conservation district or equivalent sponsoring organization agency.
  - e. Must complete all official team member registration forms by the set registration deadline.
  - f. Must read, agree to, and sign the NCFE Rules and Regulations and Student Code of Conduct by the set registration deadline.
5. The state/provincial/partner nation Envirothon Representative will certify the eligibility of the substitution candidates at the same time they certify the official team members during team registration.
  6. No substitution will be made if a team does not designate substitution candidates during the team registration process. If substitution candidates were not designated at that time, then the remaining team members may attend the NCFE annual competition but will compete as exhibition only (see V.2.).

### **III. Guest Registrations**

1. All registered guests interested in attending the competition, must comply with the following conditions:  
  
*Please note: The following conditions apply to all guests attending the NCFE Annual Competition, including those who are staying off campus.*
  - a. Must be 21 years of age or older.
  - b. Must register as a guest and pay the appropriate guest registration fee.
  - c. Will adhere to the NCFE Rules and Regulations and the Codes of Conduct set forth within.
  - d. Will be expected to attend all general sessions and other scheduled group activities for the day(s) registered.
  - e. Will not be allowed in the designated student/advisor housing areas between the

hours of 11:00 pm to 7:00 am.

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

1. Violating the competition rules and regulations, IN ANY WAY or AT ANY TIME, is prohibited by students, advisors, chaperones, and guests!
2. The Host will identify and/or provide reference materials to assist students in their preparation for the 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 Host and/or NCFE may be used by the students during the training, testing, and/or oral preparation and presentation portions of the competition.
4. No electronic equipment or devices may be used by or be in the possession of team members during the instructional periods, field testing, oral presentation preparation, or oral presentation delivery unless such equipment is provided by the Host and/or NCFE for use during the competition, and/or approved by the NCFEOC (for example to compensate for a physical or mental disability) prior to the start of the competition.
5. Training and testing sites:
  - a. Any team, team member, team advisor/chaperone, or resource professional associated with a team discovered on, near, or around the training site, testing site, or testing stations prior to or at times other than only during scheduled times during the competition may be subject to immediate disqualification.
  - b. Any team, team member, team advisor/chaperone, or resource professional associated with a team shall **not** arrive at the Host campus prior to the day designated by the Host committee. Any early arrival fees shall be at a cost designated by the Host. Early arrival fees shall be paid at the time of registration.
6. Oral Presentations (OP)
  - a. Language requirements shall be as set forth in the NCFE Program Policies.
  - b. The Host must provide a checklist in the study material packet that includes:
    - i. The NCFE Judges scoring form

- ii. A list of items that are in each bag or presentation material container
    - iii. A list of the items prepared and returned by each team
    - iv. A sign-off list to be signed by the team captain and the person receiving the completed material following the orals preparation session
  - c. Team oral presentations will be twenty (20) minutes maximum in length, followed by ten (10) minutes of questions to team members by the judges.
  - d. 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 may receive a two-point deduction per each missing team member.
  - e. During oral presentations, all team members must wear the designated NCFE OP shirt, if provided; otherwise, students are to wear appropriate presentation clothes. Please ensure that presentation clothing has no indication of where the team is from (e.g., school, city or state/province/partner nation).
  - f. During oral presentations, no state/provincial/partner nation identification, either written or verbal, is permitted.
  - g. Visual aids must be prepared on-site by team members using only materials provided by the Host and/or NCFE.
  - h. Oral presentation scores will be based on a criteria sheet approved by the NCFEOC and NCFE.
  - i. During the preliminary oral presentation rounds, with permission of the team, advisors/chaperones/guests may observe and/or record only the team they have accompanied to the NCFE Annual Competition.
    - i. If permitted to observe, no contact is to be made between the advisors/chaperones/guests and the team or judges during the presentation.
  - j. No photography or video recording shall be allowed during the final oral presentation round, other than as approved by the NCFEOC.
7. It will be considered an infraction of the rules of the competition for an advisor or other non-team member to give input to their students in any manner once their team has begun the official oral presentation portion of the NCFE Annual Competition, until its conclusion. The oral presentation portion of the NCFE Annual Competition

includes the following: the OP scenario presentation/training, the OP preparation (team sequestration), the preliminary OPs and the final OP presentations. (*This does not limit the advisors/chaperones 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.*)

8. No animal, other than a service animal on which the individual is physically dependent, will be allowed at the NCFE Annual Competition. Animals used for the purpose of training, testing, or demonstration will be permitted as determined by the Host.
9. Judges/proctor decisions for all events will be final unless submitted to the NCFEOC for review.

## **V. Scoring**

1. Scoring for the NCFE Annual 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. One or more tiebreaker questions will be designated per station test to determine the station winner in the event of a tie.
  - d. The scores from 1 (a) and 1 (b) will be totaled to determine which teams will advance to the final oral presentation round.
  - e. If the total of scores from 1(a) and 1(b) result in a tie for overall team placement, the scores from the following subjects will be used to break this tie, in this order: Current Issue score; Soils/Land Use score; Aquatic Ecology score; Forestry score, and Wildlife score.
  - f. 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. The NCFE Annual Competition Rules and Regulations are subject to change pending approval by a majority of the NCF Board of Trustees and/or NCF Executive Committee. Changes will be provided in advance to all teams and advisors/chaperones. (Host rules and additional items will be provided in writing and in advance to all teams and advisors/chaperones.)
2. The NCFE Code of Conduct signed by each student and advisor is an extension of the NCFE Rules and Regulations.
3. Instructions, guidelines, schedules, and requirements as approved by the NCFEOC and provided during the competition by the Host or by the NCFEOC or announced during the advisor briefings/student briefings or during the morning announcements as it applies to that for the training or testing or for any other aspect of the competition will have the force of rules.
4. Except during off-site events organized and conducted by the Host, no team members, advisors, or chaperones are allowed to leave the Host site without first notifying the Host.
5. All team members, advisors/chaperones are required to attend all scheduled functions.
6. Any violation of these rules will result in disciplinary action or disqualification.
7. Decisions of the NCFEOC, as applicable, are final.

## **VII. Codes of Conduct**

1. **Student Participants**– NCF-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, 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/chaperone.
- 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. Students are expected to attend all general sessions and other scheduled activities. Please be prompt and show respect to those in the audience and on stage.
- e. Students are expected to observe the designated curfew.
- f. Students are to immediately report any accident, injury, or illnesses to their advisor/chaperone and/or state/provincial/partner nation Envirothon representatives.
- g. If a student is determined to be responsible for stealing, vandalism, or other activity that results in damage to property, the individual and their parent/legal guardian will be expected to pay any and all damages.
- h. Harassment, intimidation, or bullying behavior by any student is strictly prohibited, and such conduct may result in disciplinary action, including disqualification from the event.
- i. 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.
- j. If a student is determined to be cheating or disregarding the NCFE Rules and Regulations, this Code of Conduct, and/or the NCFE Program Policies they will be subject to stringent disciplinary action or team disqualification, and may be sent home at the expense of their parent/legal guardian. Parents/legal guardians of the student will be notified immediately.

Any violation of these rules and regulations will result in disciplinary action or

disqualification.

2. **Adult Participants** (Operating Committee members of the NCF-Envirothon, state/provincial/partner nation Envirothon representatives, registered guests, advisors/chaperones, and volunteers) – NCF-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, 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 participant behavior at all times should be such that it reflects credit to themselves, their state/province/partner nation, and NCF-Envirothon.
  - d. Adult participants are expected to attend all general sessions and other scheduled activities. Please be prompt and show respect to those in the audience and on stage.
  - e. Adult participants are to immediately report any accident, injury, or illnesses to the Host and NCFE for assistance.
  - f. Adult participants are requested to observe the designated curfew.
  - g. Any adult participant determined to be responsible for stealing, vandalism, or other activities that are in conflict with the NCFE Rules and Regulations, Code of Conduct and/or Program Policies will be asked to leave the competition at their own expense and expected to pay for any damages.
  - h. The following are not to be consumed in the presence of students and only in designated locations decided by the Host:
    - \* Tobacco and vapor products (including smokeless)
    - \* Alcoholic beverages

NO Possession or USE of the following:

- \* Illegal/illicit drugs
  - \* Weapons including firearms; unless they are carried in the official line of duty (law enforcement, park rangers, wildlife officers, etc.).
- i. NCF-Envirothon requires all adult participants to adhere to a strict anti-fraternization policy. For this reason, all adult participants shall refrain from having any personal contact that may be perceived as inappropriate with any student of the NCFE Annual Competition during the event.
- i. Adult participants are required to read and certify their compliance with the NCF-Envirothon Guidelines for Working with Minors.
- j. If an adult participant is determined to be disregarding of the NCF-Envirothon Rules and Regulations, Program Policies, and/or the Adult Code of Conduct they will be asked to immediately leave the event at their own expense and may be prohibited from participation in future events associated with NCF-Envirothon.

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