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## **Students: High Marks for Outdoor Adventure Education Skills Classes**

DALLAS (Aug. 6, 2013)—Secondary-school students across Texas are giving high marks to recently accredited coursework that teaches traditional outdoor skills such as fishing, hunting and camping, according to a 2013 survey commissioned by the Dallas Ecological Foundation (DEF) and funded by an educational grant from the Dallas Safari Club.

The fast-growing Outdoor Adventures Education program (OAE) will reach about 16,000 students this year at more than 160 secondary schools that have formally adopted the curriculum.

DEF, an education partner with Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, developed the curriculum, which aligns with national education standards and is accredited by the state of Texas. Teaching units within the program cover camping, boating, archery, hunter education, shooting sports, orienteering, survival skills and outdoor cooking. Conservation is a theme woven into each of the units.

“Survey results definitively and quantitatively support the anecdotal reviews that students, parents and teachers have been sharing with DEF from the beginning. This program introduces young teens to outdoor activities that they enjoy and value,” said Scot McClure, OAE coordinator for DEF.

He added, “Greater human participation and involvement in the outdoors tends to strengthen understanding of—and ultimately stewardship of—wildlife and natural resources. So, we’re very optimistic that student enthusiasm for OAE will translate to a lifetime of good conservation.”

### STUDENT QUOTE HERE

Highlights of the survey include:

- 90 percent of students gave favorable overall ratings to OAE.
- A whopping 92% of students responded that OAE prepared them to hunt, fish, shoot, camp, or go boating on their own or with a family member.
- Overwhelmingly, students indicated that OAE had improved their skills in each of these activities and prepared them to enjoy time outdoors either alone or with family members. In before-and-after surveys, students reported developing from “good” to “excellent” abilities to participate in sports or physical activities, develop friendships with other students, maintain good relationships with teachers, stay out of trouble and get good grades.

McClure added, “The outdoor industry also will be thrilled to learn that the survey indicated marked increases in all types of equipment purchased after participating in the program. After all, OAE is not your traditional PE course. Instead of teaching with basketballs and tennis rackets, we use rods and reels and bows and arrows.”

Teachers participating in OAE receive special training, complete scope and sequence, syllabus, daily lesson plans and cross-curricular opportunities in math, science, writing, technology and other applications, and more.

Responsive Management, a premier survey analysis company, conducted the survey using a representative sample of 4,957 students.

**About Dallas Ecological Foundation (DEF)**

DEF is a 501(c) 3 nonprofit charitable foundation. Its mission is to serve as a grant and funding medium for public and youth education and wildlife and habitat conservation programs worldwide. Through the foundation, DEF is addressing conservation and education issues worldwide. Learn more at [www.dallasecologicalfoundation.org](http://www.dallasecologicalfoundation.org).