

Project WILD Evaluation: Final Report of Field Test

M. Lynette Fleming

July 1983

The primary purpose of this evaluation was to discover what effect Project WILD had on students and teachers. These effects included changes in student learning and attitudes about wildlife as well as teachers' reactions to the Project WILD implementation and materials. 259 teachers and 6,000+ students from Colorado, Virginia, and Washington were involved in the study. (These states were sponsors of Project WILD, and met other criteria needed in order to generalize from the study.)

Project WILD had a definite impact on students and teachers. Students showed significant gains in learning and developed attitudes toward wildlife that were consistent with Project WILD goals.

Primary students gained the most, followed by intermediate classes, then grades 7-9, while grades 10-12 gained the least.

Teachers found the activities stimulating and worthwhile in their classes, and were able to integrate them in their curricula.

Elementary teachers were much more interested in teaching about wildlife than their secondary counterparts and did more Project WILD activities. Elementary teachers were better able to incorporate Project WILD into their curricula.

Teachers requested worksheets, charts, or additional student aids.

Teachers felt there was a need for time for planning to coordinate Project WILD activities with the curriculum and district requirements.

There were no significant differences in student gains between students whose teachers had attended a Project WILD workshop and those teachers who had received the material without attending a workshop, although teachers made positive comments about the workshop and indicated its importance in establishing interest in and confidence about the Project WILD materials (especially at the primary level).

71% of teachers who had attended a workshop agreed that the workshop was useful in helping them to implement Project WILD activities.

No significant differences were found in gains of students in rural, suburban, and urban areas. Project WILD was equally effective in all three settings; neither student learning nor student attitudes changed from area to area.

Teachers who attended Project WILD workshops by their own choice were more likely to use the materials than teachers who were "required" to attend. Teachers who felt strong pressure to attend the workshop had almost no success with the project.

Most elementary teachers incorporated Project WILD into science.