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The Bay Foundation Offers 6th-8th Graders, Teachers Fun & FREE Tools to Check and Change Conservation Habits

Website Featuring Open-Access Activity Packet is Now Available

LOS ANGELES (May 18, 2017) [The Bay Foundation](#) (TBF) has launched a website open to all educators who work with 6th, 7th and 8th graders, providing a complete activity packet of tools to help students first identify their water and energy use, and then educate them to effect a conservation-focused change in their habits. This behavior-impacting program with its accompanying materials is funded by a grant from [LADWP's](#) Community Partnership Program, and is the second such partnership grant through which TBF has created conservation-education tools free to the public.

The [new website](#) is the final phase of the grant's objective to promote energy, water, and natural gas conservation throughout L.A. Unified School District (LAUSD) by implementing innovative educational opportunities and outreach strategies that can change habits at a community level. Teachers can use the online Activity Packet—as it fits into their class plan—to track progress or offer incentives for changing habits, or students can complete them without supervision and in conjunction with LAUSD curriculum (as a supplemental activity).

"I'm very pleased with the structure and execution of this project. The curriculum and supporting materials clearly convey where our water and electricity come from, along with infrastructure environmental impacts, while empowering the students to evaluate and determine how they can conserve both at home and in their daily activities," states TBF Executive Director Tom Ford. "This project creatively delivers the application and knowledge that we should conserve, that we can conserve, and that we each make a difference when we take steps to do so."

Prior to the website launch, TBF's Watershed Program staff Melodie Grubbs and Rod Abbott worked with classes in person. They visited select middle schools, and talked about conservation needs and solutions using tools now on the website:

- engaging infographics about water, energy, native CA plants, and climate change
- interactive story maps, including about L.A.'s water history



- videos, including "[Water and Energy Conservation for LA Kids](#)"; funny, educational videos created during TBF's aforementioned LADWP grant (i.e. "[Power Spinning](#)"); and a [Rain Garden How-To](#)
- links to LADWP's conservation pages, LAUSD eco-friendly sites, NASA links, etc.

"The classroom lessons exceeded my expectations. The quality materials provided, the hands-on projects, and the enthusiasm of the instructors created a very engaging learning environment for the students," stated Vanessa Garza, Principal, Girls Athletic Leadership School (GALS LA) in Van Nuys. "In this era of [LAUSD] transitioning to Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), it's critical to share real-life connections and provide students with the application of science beyond the classroom. Collaborating with the Bay Foundation enhanced my students' learning experiences."

Prior to the first of two visits to each class, students took a short online survey about their attitudes and behavior concerning water and energy conservation, and they were provided with conservation devices from LADWP such as bath & kitchen aerators and low-flow showerheads if needed.

Teachers then integrated the packet's activities into their curriculum over about 4 weeks, offering students the opportunity to earn up to 10 badges (i.e. Water Footprint Badge). When Grubbs and Abbott returned, they followed up on water and energy conservation efforts, reviewed why it's important to conserve water and energy in Los Angeles, and had the students re-take the survey to measure any change in attitude and behavior. They collected the students' activity packets and those who completed activities and earned badges were entered in a prize drawing. Prizes included solar rover and salt-water powered robot kits.

At the second visit to GALS LA, Earth Day was also discussed, and time was spent on group activities where the students created terrariums, built a windmill that generated light when the propellers spun, and built a light that was powered by a hand crank.

The resulting website offers educators all the tools, to use anytime throughout the year. "The Bay Foundation provided a very engaging and educational classroom experience for our middle school students, as well as amazing curriculum to support student learning after their visit. I highly recommend these materials, which are now online, for free to download, for any of my colleagues and students," stated David DeFrenza, Athletic Director / Science Teacher at Los Angeles Academy of Arts & Enterprise.

To visit the website: <http://www.santamonicabay.org/energy-and-water-conservation/>. For any questions about the program, contact Rod Abbott at rabbott@santamonicabay.org.



About The Bay Foundation (TBF)

The Bay Foundation, also known as the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Foundation, is a 501(c) 3 non-profit environmental group founded in 1990 to restore and enhance Santa Monica Bay (from the LA-Ventura county line to the Palos Verdes Peninsula) and local coastal waters. The Foundation is the non-profit partner of the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission, raising and expending funds for research, education, planning, cleanup efforts and other priorities identified in the Commission's *Santa Monica Bay Restoration Plan*. As advocates for the Bay, TBF works collaboratively with a broad group of stakeholders, including government agencies, industry, environmental groups, and scientists, to implement innovative policies and projects that clean up the waterways, create green spaces and natural habitats in the Los Angeles region. TBF conducts research and mentors student interns and volunteers through its Center for Santa Monica Bay Studies at Loyola Marymount University. (www.santamonicaBay.org)

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