

A Message from NOAA Administrator Jane Lubchenco

Welcome. I'm Dr. Jane Lubchenco, administrator of NOAA, the National Ocean and Atmospheric Administration. As a parent, teacher and ecologist, I focus on connections – the vital connections that link the land, the sea, the skies and people. I now invite you to join me to explore our ocean connections, the theme of this year's National Environmental Education Week.

I fell in love with the oceans during a college class in Woods Hole, Massachusetts, and it was love at first sight. To a Colorado native, life in the sea seemed exotic and endlessly fascinating. Little did I realize then that life in the oceans is essential to our own health and prosperity, no matter where we live. Perhaps now more than ever before, healthy oceans matter. They matter to anyone who needs clean water or clean air, enjoys fresh seafood, vacations along our shores or on the water, or makes a living from the sea. Healthy oceans are an expression of our commitment to one another, to the rest of life on earth and to our future.

The oil spill disaster in the Gulf of Mexico last year underscored our reliance on and connections to healthy oceans and coasts. That catastrophe is a powerful reminder of how closely peoples' lives and livelihoods are tied to the well-being of our ocean and coastal ecosystems. And of the urgent need to inspire and equip today's students to become tomorrow's environmental stewards.

That's where you come in. Join me and the thousands of educators, schools, parents and community organizations as we engage America's students to learn more about our treasured oceans, coasts and Great Lakes.

Connect, inspire and be inspired. Visit the Environmental Education Week website to learn more.

Thanks.