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New E-Learning Hands on the Land program introduced by Alligator River and Pea Island National Wildlife Refuges



Staff at Alligator River and Pea Island National Wildlife Refuges invite you to get onboard the electronic learning (e-learning) train. Taking an electronic field trip is possible for anyone with a computer. In addition, it doesn't matter if the weather is bad or you don't have anyone to take you to the refuge!

The first field trip to be offered will be "Marine Debris-It's time to talk about trash!" This is a great learning experience especially with the warm weather approaching. More of us will be outside fishing, boating, or just walking on the shoreline. Learning about marine debris is the first step in becoming a part of the solution to the escalating problem.

Eventually there will be other field trips posted about wildlife and wild lands of North Carolina. Courses will offer slides, videos, worksheets, and basic text pages. Of course, what field trip would be complete without a quiz or exam? Fortunately, participants can complete as much or as little of each field trip as they want. The fun part about the e-learning site is that there will be an area for participants to "Ask an Expert" and even take part in a chat with the staff and other participants. This will be a great way for individuals of all ages to learn about a variety of subjects in a safe, fun online environment. Anyone who visits the course areas can either participate as a guest or as a registered user. It's very simple to become a registered user.

The new e-learning tool is being made available through a partnership with Hands on the Land. This project is a network of field classrooms designed to enhance kindergarten through high school student learning. In addition to the U. S. Fish & Wildlife Service, five other federal

agencies and a nonprofit education foundation created the Partners in Resource Education. They started Hands on the Land in 1999. It has sometimes been called "America's largest classroom." In the process, school subjects are brought to life as students and teachers engage in hands-on activities in natural and cultural settings. Through the Hands on the Land website (www.handsontheland.org), students may learn about other sites and participate in environmental monitoring and other interactive projects. Although there are only a few online field trips at this time, we encourage everyone to check back frequently since many more will be added.

For more information, please contact Cindy Heffley, Visitor Services Specialist, at 252-987-1118 or cindy_heffley@fws.gov or go to www.handsontheland.org.

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