

# THE ENVIROSCAPE MODEL



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The sun is shining on this beautiful spring day as I travel to an Earth Day Event in Hale County, and I am excited about the upcoming program. I work for the Aquatic Education Program with the Alabama Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries Division's Fisheries Section. I travel throughout the State and teach fishing and casting classes, take students fishing, and share my knowledge about our aquatic resources. It is a very rewarding experience knowing you are sharing information that will make a difference in how a person will view our State's natural resources and environment.

Today is a special day because I have a new educational tool to share with the students. The new tool is an EnviroScape Model that educates students about the dangers of pollution to our aquatic and natural resources. The nonpoint source watershed model shows how rain carries soil, chemicals and oil through the watershed to a pond, lake, river, bay or ocean. The EnviroScape Model has material that you can use to demonstrate the best management practices to prevent pollution. Cocoa is used on the model to represent siltation or dirt, and Kool-Aid powder is used to identify pesticides or fertilizer.

My presentation to the students demonstrates the importance of clean water for healthy fish populations. The students learn through a hands-on demonstration about the best management practices to prevent pollution of our natural resources. What is so unique about this learning tool is that it informs students of all ages from kindergarten up about pollution.

The Aquatic Education Program used the EnviroScape Model at the Samford University Earth Day Program, and was awarded first prize for the most informative display. The EnviroScape Model will be used with a new program we will begin in the fall at Tannehill State Historical Park. The program, "Creek Kids," will focus on teaching students about what lives in the water. We will also discuss the environmental issues associated with why certain species are present and others are not.

This new environmental tool, the EnviroScape Model, would not have been available without the support of the Alabama Conservation Enforcement Officer Association (ACEOA). ACEOA is a non-profit organization founded and supported by Alabama Conservation Enforcement Officers and concerned citizens of Alabama that strive to protect our resources through education. ACEOA purchased the EnviroScape Model and carrying case for our Aquatic Education Program so that we will be able to take it to schools, set it up by a creek bank, or use it on many of our display days. We are proud to have formed a partnership with ACEOA. They are a worthy organization that puts conservation education as a top priority. With the Alabama Conservation Enforcement Officer Association as a partner, we will continue to provide quality programs for the people of Alabama.

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