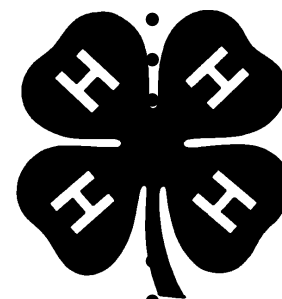


The 4-H Wildlife Habitat Evaluation Program (WHEP) teaches young people valuable lessons about wildlife management, conservation, leadership, teambuilding, citizenship, and communication.

# WHEP

Created in the early 1980's as a state program in Tennessee, WHEP has since been enhanced and expanded to become the largest and most visible 4-H wildlife program in the United States, involving thousands of participants each year in most U.S. states. WHEP is a national program conducted on local, state, regional, and national levels. The national WHEP contest is attended annually by about 25 state teams, consisting of 4 senior-aged (14-18) 4-H members. Since its inception in 1989, the national contest has hosted over 1,000 4-H'ers and countless adult volunteer leaders. Collectively, participants have reported improving thousands of acres of wildlife habitat on private lands as a result of participation in WHEP.

WHEP teaches young people about concepts like wildlife habitat needs, endangered species conservation, hunting and fishing as management tools, wildlife damage management, and the benefits of private lands management to wildlife resources now and in the future. We know that 4-H'ers are likely to become community leaders as adults, and WHEP better prepares them to make decisions about wildlife and natural resources conservation. And like all 4-H programs, WHEP introduces young people to new opportunities in life; about 5% of our past participants entered a career in natural resources management.





WHEP is open to youth 8-19 years of age. Each participant's experience in WHEP culminates in a competition at the local, regional, state, and possibly, national level.

The benefits of the WHEP are many, and extend beyond the number of acres managed for wildlife by past and current participants or natural resource career guidance. Benefits include:

- Teaches youth about mainstream wildlife conservation
- Encourages youth to be outside and active
- Enhances confidence and self-esteem
- Exposes youth to different regions and cultures of the country
- Teaches communication skills and team building
- Builds critical thinking
- Exposes future voters to natural resource issues
- Develops leadership and citizenship skills
- Stimulates increased education about wildlife management among adult volunteer leaders and coaches
- Assists youth and adults in understanding the land ethic and how to become good stewards

In the years since its inception, WHEP has become synonymous with youth conservation education. Awarded The Wildlife Society's Conservation Education Award in 1996, WHEP is poised to further expand and involve even more youth in the future.

For further information, please view our website ([www.whep.org](http://www.whep.org)), or contact:

Dr. Nicole Frey  
USU Extension Wildlife Specialist  
BI Continuing Education Coordinator  
Biology Department, SUU  
435-586-1924

The contest portion of the WHEP is divided into 5 activities: identifying common wildlife foods, interpreting wildlife habitat from aerial photographs, prescribing wildlife management practices, developing a rural wildlife management plan, and developing an urban wildlife management plan. In addition, participants must give oral reasons to a panel of judges to explain some of their decisions.

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We need help to ensure a bright future for WHEP. Increasing costs and participation make it more difficult each year; just hosting the national WHEP event for 25 teams costs about \$50,000 annually. You and your agency or organization can become a partner in fostering youth education and natural resources conservation by participating financially, through other resources contributions, or both.

