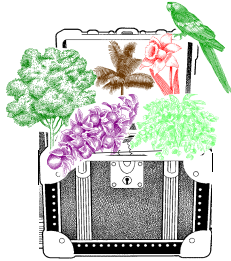


These trainings are offered primarily to middle school teachers (5th to 9th grades), but they are available to community leaders and other private and public agencies that are involved in environmental education.

What is the Tropical Forests' Trunk?

The trunk is an educational resource developed by the El Yunque National Forest to:

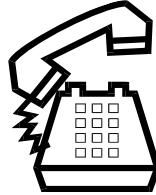


- ◆ Provide a series of activities that develop interest in the conservation of tropical forests. The trunk includes a detailed teacher's guide and all support materials to carry out each activity. It also contains additional materials for the enrichment of the activities as well as reference materials and bibliographies to facilitate a more indepth treatment of the themes.
- ◆ Promote active involvement of students and teachers in the solution of environmental problems in their school and communities.
- ◆ Prepare students for a visit to the El Yunque National Forest or to a protected area close to their school.

What do I need to do to use this resource?

For a more effective use of this resource we recommend that the person attend a workshop on the use of these materials.

Once the training is completed, this person may borrow the trunk for periods of 2 consecutive weeks to use at the school or in the community.



To reserve the Tropical Forests' Trunk please call (787) 888-1880.

How and where can I get the training?

The Forest Service Environmental Education Program offers trainings throughout the year at the El Yunque National Forest. Each training lasts 2 days and can accept up to 30 participants.

For more information about the trainings please call (787) 888-1880. By mutual agreement, the trainers may offer the workshop at universities, schools, or other agencies that have interested groups of at least 30 participants.

"Never doubt that a small group of committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has"

Margaret Mead

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For more information

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(787) 888-1880
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Toward a Sustainable Future



**Environmental
Education Program
El Yunque National
Forest**

Why do we need Environmental Education?

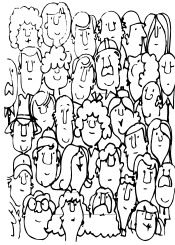
Worldwide:

- ◆ If today's rate of deforestation continues, next year a total of 40 million acres of tropical rain forest will be lost—the equivalent of the entire state of Washington in the United States.
- ◆ 42 million tons of sulfur and nitrogen oxides will be emitted to the atmosphere
- ◆ More than 2 billion people will not have access to clean water or sanitary services.
- ◆ Soil productivity will be dramatically reduced.
- ◆ More than 6,000 plant and animal species will disappear from the face of the Earth forever.
- ◆ Additionally, more than 96 million people—the equivalent of the total present population of Mexico—will be added to the 5.3 billion inhabitants of our planet.



In Puerto Rico:

- ◆ At present, we have a population density of 415 people and 1,740 domestic animals per square kilometer; in both instances among the highest in the world.
- ◆ We confront serious problems with superficial and underground waters.



Building a Sustainable Future

“If you are thinking a year ahead, sow a seed. If you are thinking ten years ahead, plant a tree. If you are thinking one hundred years ahead, educate people.”

Chinese Poet/500 BC

- ◆ We generate 2.5 million tons of garbage and 300,000 tons per year of hazardous wastes and both show increasing rates-- while at the same time available places to properly dispose these wastes are being dramatically reduced.
- ◆ Air pollution is significant and seriously affects the health of entire communities.
- ◆ Poor land use— which includes uncontrolled urban sprawl into the mountains and ecologically sensitive coastal areas—is perhaps our most serious problem.
- ◆ Too many people ignore our environmental problems and the urgent need for conservation. The very foundation of our economic and social development is threatened by our disregard for the environment and the lack of diligent action for its protection.



Consequences

Worldwide:

The consequences of global environmental degradation are inescapable—desertification, pesticide poisoning, water pollution, species

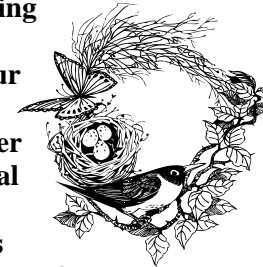
extinction, higher disease rates, hunger, poverty, and the loss of human lives.

We must understand that we are attempting against the integrity of the natural world upon which all human activity and life itself depends.

In Puerto Rico:

- ◆ We have to end the pollution and destruction of our environment.
- ◆ We have to preserve the entire biodiversity of living things and the natural balances they provide to the environment that helps sustain our society.

We have to start thinking about sustainable ways of interacting with nature. **Our own survival depends on finding ways of unifying the productive capacity of our island, its people, and our government in greater harmony with our natural resources. A holistic educational approach is needed to prepare our youth for the challenge of working towards a sustainable culture for the next century.**



The USDA Forest Service Pledge

The Forest Service believes that through environmental education we can extend our radius of influence and action so that more people are motivated to promote a sustainable development that guarantees our economic and social stability.



Environmental Education is the process by which people can become aware of the environmental situation in our island, obtain information and skills, and develop the motivation to commit to a sustainable use of our resources and the provision of a higher quality of life for all.

El Portal Tropical Forest Center was constructed to promote knowledge about tropical forests among residents of Puerto Rico and our international visitors.

This is achieved through different means, from the careful design of its permanent exhibits about tropical forests, temporary exhibits and special activities, guided tours of the forest, school talks and presentations and its training program for teachers and environmental leaders in the use of the **Tropical Forests' Trunk**.

