Duck River Watershed Education Committee

P.O. Box 210, Shelbyville, TN 37160

DUCK RIVER EDUCATION DAY (DRED)

The Duck River Watershed Education Committee (DRWEC) mission statement is *" To promote, protect, preserve and improve the health of the Duck River, its tributaries and the entire watershed through continuing education and by providing assistance, historical information, facilities and support to all interested parties, agency partners, governmental entities, school systems, industries, local and regional businesses and environmental groups in the affected watershed".* The DRWEC recognizes the unique rich biological diversity of the Duck River and the water resources that support the Duck River Watershed and plans to reach out to the community with educational events and programs.

In 2005 the DRWEC conducted their first educational event known as the Duck River Fest, which is now referred to as 5th Grade Duck River Education Day (DRED). The DRED event is targeted to 5th grade students in the Duck River Watershed. The students are bused to a designated site close to the Duck River in the local community river front park during school hours. The number of educational sessions depends on how many students attend DRED. Sometimes one is held in the morning and another after lunch. It is recommended that 10 classes or groups (groups are made up from splitting classes if needed) be assigned to each session. Usually, 30 to 35 students plus a teacher is as large a group each station can accommodate . Smaller groups allow the students more time to interact with each professional.

A school educator/coordinator from the local area school system works with the DRWEC, making assignments and agendas for each class participating. After unloading from the buses by classroom, each class goes to a designated education station that has already been assigned to the teacher. Ten education stations are staffed by experts and professionals from different organizations, including state and federal agencies. Each station covers one topic about the importance of protecting the Duck River. Students rotate between stations on 10 minute intervals. The total time students are at DRED is about two hours, with 1 hour and 40 minutes rotating between stations. Then they are bused back to their school.

Once the students are back in the classroom, the second part of DRED is initiated, and competition is added to the event. The students practice their writing skills by authoring an article for a magazine or newspaper that will be judged by the education committee. The student who submits the best article wins a pizza party for their classroom.

Since 2005, DRED has reached more than 12,000 5th-grade students to learn more about the biological and economical importance of the Duck River. In 2017, Friends of Henry Horton State Park partnered with the DRWEC to bring DRED to Marshall County and then added part of the Maury County school system in 2018. This partnership has added significant resources that have made it possible to reach other counties in the Duck River Watershed. Hopefully, a larger audience will be reached as the students share with family and friends the things they learned during DRED.

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DRED does have resource needs to bring the students to the event and help support the volunteers. The bus transportation cost for students, lunch for the volunteers, and sometimes additional Port-a-Potties are needed for the day. Without sponsorships and grants from the local communities, DRED would not be possible.

Below is a list of topics that have been presented during DRED (the topics change because of the lack of resources to present them):

- **Water Quality Testing**
- **Duck River Mussels**
- **Non-Point Source Pollution**
- **Duck River Fish**
- **Ground Water and Karst**
- **Endangered Species**
- **Duck River Aquatic Insects**
- **Riparian Zone**
- **River Safety**
- **In-Stream Flow Needs**
- **Water-Use and Conservation**
- **Water Treatment**
- **Waste Water Treatment**
- **Recycling and Litter Control**

Below are a few pictures of a DRED:

