

PROSPECTUS
FOR THE
ENACT ECOLOGY CENTER,
INCORPORATED

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INTRODUCTION

Earth Day, April 22, 1970, awakened America to the critical state of our environment and the necessity for immediate action. Environmental violence now infringes upon the rights of each member of our society and affects the quality of everyone's life. All are threatened--all must unite. Earth Day proved that political ideology, age, social, and educational background need not be barriers to action.

Ecological problems facing society are extremely complex, and many cannot be solved quickly. The issues, in the broad sense, include most social problems of our time. Ecological solutions demand changes in our current priorities. Needed is a redirection of our technological resources, an examination of our economic policies, and a more equal distribution of social benefits.

Increasing our fundamental appreciation of the land, and the environment which sustains and enriches our existence, is necessary for our survival. This appreciation must extend into individual, industrial, and governmental decision-making processes. The consequence of failing to reduce our population growth should be evident from our daily experience. At our present rate of growth over one hundred million people will be added to our country by 2000 A. D. An increased population must inevitably deplete our already limited natural resources. Abortion reform, increased family planning services, and sensitive legislation are needed to encourage a stable population.

American economic policies and consumer habits must also be re-evaluated. The destruction of our air and aquatic resources by industry and domestic usage is an unnecessary tragedy, with technological solutions available. As our air, water, and other natural resources become more scarce, the removal of contaminants becomes more critical. Increased efforts in recycling research may save non-renewable resources in the future.

Our environmental crisis can no longer be treated as only a topic for discussion and rhetoric. Responsible action must be initiated.

Environmental Action for Survival (ENACT) and subsequently the ENACT Ecology Center were founded to meet this need for responsible environmental action.

ENACT

ENACT is a trans-disciplinary group of students, faculty and community volunteers, formed at the University of Michigan in September, 1969. The group is united by a concern for all aspects of human survival on our planet. Through our work, in the Ann Arbor community, around the State of Michigan, and beyond, we seek to stimulate awareness of the delicate balance upon which life depends, and to generate a sincere concern that will lead to action which will halt the tide of environmental destruction. Our credo is summed up in the simple slogan, "Give Earth a Chance." ENACT's first major undertaking was a teach-in on the environment held March 11 to 14, 1970, that served as a prototype for many others across

the nation on Earth Day. Over 35,000 people attended the scheduled lectures, hearings and workshops, and many thousands more were able to hear the discussions through live or taped radio and television broadcasts. ENACT has served as a nucleus for many environmental groups in the State of Michigan and elsewhere. We have supplied advice, literature, and buttons for fund raising to more than 200 groups in high schools, junior colleges, and universities; and an active speaker's bureau has sent guest lecturers to most area schools and colleges, as well as to service clubs and industrial meetings.

Since the Teach-In, ENACT has sponsored major addresses by environmental leaders and provided continuing support for other environmental groups. In addition, ENACT has organized a major clean-up on the Huron River, worked with industry on the problems of recycling, urged increased corporate responsibility, and actively supported federal and state legislation. More recently, ENACT opened an Ecology Center to further its goals and to better serve the community.

The Ecology Center, Inc.

To meet the need for increased environmental education and to promote coordination of environmental groups ENACT has founded the Ecology Center. This educational institution will not engage in activities of environmental action which would conflict with laws governing its pending tax-exempt status. Such activities can, and will be effected by ENACT, a registered student

organization at the University of Michigan.

The Center will provide a framework for citizen education on environmental issues, and will supply accurate information and advice to all seeking it. Despite the barrage of popular information, it is still difficult for the non-specialist to obtain accurate information on the spectrum of environmental problems. Too often, scientists write only for other scientists, and even the best popular scientific journals reach only a small audience. The Center attempts to bridge the gap between campus, high schools, and community and compile material useful to everyone. Work is carried on by volunteers from all parts of our society: scientists, businessmen, students from all levels, housewives, and others who have formed a bond to protect the Earth's ecosystem.

Through a vigorous program of publication and other means of communication, the Ecology Center seeks to provide environmental information to a much broader community. By providing a physical facility in which meetings can take place and ideas exchanged, it will fill a critical need in the unification of the environmental movement in the Ann Arbor community. The Center provides a continuing forum for the expression of the environmental viewpoint. Beyond that it is a first step in providing individual citizens with the opportunity to create a life-style compatible with the natural world.

PROGRAMS

The Ecology Center has initiated three programs to fulfill its role in the community: Education, Coordination and Volunteer Services.

I. Education - A strong environmental education program in the community is a primary goal of the Center. This is being achieved by building a data bank; keeping a library; publishing original and reprinted material; and providing lectures, workshops, films, and other information services.

A. Data Bank - The data bank is maintained by volunteers through a diligent study of newspapers and ecological and conservation journals. It includes up-to-date files on ecological issues and consumer news. Data has been compiled on the whole range of ecological problems from detergents and pesticides to federal land use. Files are available for use in the Center and special arrangements may be made to check out material. Written and phoned requests for information are answered where possible through the data bank.

The data bank also keeps cross references of the personnel and activities of the hundreds of environmental organizations in the country. This listing will primarily include governmental agencies, educational institutions, and private businesses, as well as environmental action groups. With increasing interest in ecological problems an up-to-date list of organizations and activities will be of continuing value.

B. Library - Scientific literature may be found at the University of Michigan general library, located a few blocks from the Ecology Center. In addition, there is an excellent public library in this city. The Center's library compliments these collections by emphasizing periodicals in the ecological fields. In addition, government reports and a modest collection of environmental books provide the general public, and specialist, rapid access to current information on ecological topics. Films, film strips, and slides are also available to interested groups and individuals.

C. Publications - An extensive publication program of original work and reprinted material is provided by the Center. Several categories of publications exist:

-Newsletter: a bi-weekly paper which discusses the internal functioning of the Center and important environmental issues throughout the country. A widely diversified audience, 'Friends of the Ecology Center' have purchased subscriptions.

-Reviews: reprinted articles on all aspects of environmental problems. The articles are selected from scholarly and popular publications and provide detailed information useful for answering specific questions, especially from the hundreds of teachers, college, and high school students who write and call for advice.

-Reports: environmental articles and studies commissioned by the Ecology Center. These articles vary in length from a few pages to book size.

-Journal: a bi-monthly journal is planned to cover ecological topics selected for the non-specialist. Contributions which demonstrate changing life styles and practical means consumers may combat pollution will be included.

-Current Issues: reprints of clippings and articles dealing with current issues. These publications will have two parts: local issues, and state and national issues.

-Course List: an up-to-date file of environmentally oriented courses at the University of Michigan is kept at the Center. Before each semester, the appropriate list is updated and published.

-Booklist: a summary of books published on environmental problems.

-Filmlist: a collection of environmental films and the sources from which they may be obtained.

D. Lectures - A variety of lectures, seminars, and workshops are planned for the Ecology Center. These include:

-Citizen Action Seminars are a bi-weekly series designed to provide the public with information on local issues. Topics include pollution of local creeks and rivers, zoning, recycling of solid wastes. A workable dialogue is facilitated by inviting representatives from industry, government, citizen and scientific groups to present diverse viewpoints on a common problem. These seminars go a long way toward removing the misunderstanding which frequently accompanies broad interest in specific issues.

-Environmental Book Discussion Groups are being formed as a means of providing knowledge on the whole spectrum of ecological problems. These discussions offer the unique opportunity for mutual education, with individuals of a specific background complementing the deficiencies others may have.

-Environment and Foundation discussion series will appeal to students and others interested in a non-expanding society. Led by experts from diverse specializations, this series will be devoted to a synthesis of many types of environmental problems. Future life-styles will be examined in light of contemporary technological development and cultural trends. The philosophical basis of our culture will be discussed and solutions will be sought to the problem of preserving the gifts of Western society without universal destruction.

-Luncheon Discussions. The discussions and seminars described above will all be held in evenings in various community and campus facilities, as well as at the Ecology Center. Informal discussions on various topics will be held regularly at noon hour.

-Lecture/Workshop Series. The most ambitious operation of the Ecology Center is providing the community with a continuing, top level lecture series. Key individuals involved with the problems in ecology will be brought into the city from all over the country; these include government specialists, noted conservationists and ecologists, and crusaders of earth problems. Arrangements are being made so that speakers may attend monthly meetings. The program is designed with monthly topics; there will be Population Action Month, Chemical Pollution Month, Urban Planning Month, and others. Workshops are being planned in conjunction with the series. The lectures and workshops will strive to overcome departmental bias, to inform the community, and provide opportunities for action. ENACT and the Ecology Center are cooperating to promote this valuable lecture series.

II. Coordination - With a core of talented volunteers and its established physical location, the Center provides assistance to local and regional conservation groups. Locally, the Center furnishes volunteer service, work space, information, and publicity in coordinating efforts to achieve a common goal. ENACT has assisted newly formed groups in schools all over the country by providing advice and fund raising material. In a few cases, substantial funds were donated to start up a new organization. Such efforts, where possible under the charter of the Ecology Center, will be continued.

Reprinting services and mimeograph facilities are available to local organizations. Such services are available at cost to most organizations, and are occasionally free, if the Ecology Center finds the publication useful for distribution.

While recognizing the broad range of ecological interests, the Ecology Center is an effective unifying agent for many organizations involved with conservation and the environment.

The Center prevents a duplication of service and effectively channels energy from one group's concern to other issues.

III. Volunteers - The Ecology Center offers a marvelous opportunity for enjoyable and mutually beneficial volunteer work. Regardless of what an individual's particular talents or interests may be, there is something he can do at the Ecology Center. Eight working committees have been established - publicity, finances, publications, information, research, library, bookstore, and special projects. Volunteers interested in working on any of the committees are urged to contact the Chairman of each committee or the Director of the Center for additional information.

The Ecology Center and the Office of Economic Opportunity are cooperating to provide employment for local underprivileged children. Children employed through the O.E.O. program are given training in a number of technical skills and in environmental science, and help with the administration of the Center. The O.E.O. - Ecology Center Program sets a new precedent in the education of underprivileged youth and will hopefully contribute to an understanding between environmental groups and urban organizations.

Volunteers are an integral part of environmental action, and working in the Ecology Center is an exciting way to help solve our ecological crisis. The more volunteer involved, the broader we may make our programs.

CONCLUSION

The primary purpose of the Ecology Center is to provide a foundation for continuing education and action on the enormous environmental problems which face a common humanity. Resolving the critical question of the probability of future human survival on the planet earth is difficult-impossible without community awareness, concern and action. It is to this end that the Center provides a framework in which citizens may discuss and obtain information on the pressing ecological issues, and the actions needed to protect their environment and the quality of their lives. The Ecology Center through education programs and a network of information exchange will hopefully evolve action which will prevent the further misuse of the environment, and encourage the wise use of all of our resources.