

Earth Science Benefits Everyone

Our lives and civilization depend upon how we understand and manage our planet—Earth processes affect us all. Weather patterns influence the availability of water resources and the potential for forest fires; Earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, hurricanes, and floods can kill large numbers of people and cause millions or even billions of dollars in property damage.

Just as Earth systems directly affect each of us, we – as individuals, communities and nations—affect our planet. Expanding technologies and growing populations increase demand on natural resources. As we extract and use these resources, we have an impact on Earth today, which will in turn affect those who come after us. To enhance our stewardship of the environment, we must proceed into the future with a sound understanding of Earth systems.

Earth science knowledge enables us to think globally and act locally— to make sound decisions about issues important in our lives as individuals and citizens. People who understand how Earth systems work can make informed decisions about where to buy or build a home out of harm's way. They can debate and resolve issues surrounding clean water, urban planning and development, national security, global climate change, and the use and management of natural resources.

An informed society, conscious of our complex relationships with our planet, recognizes the importance of and insists on Earth science education at all grade levels— elementary, secondary, and adult education. When we emphasize Earth science education, everyone benefits.
