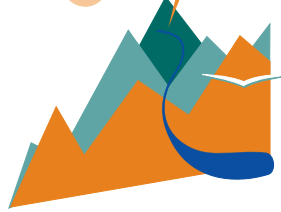


1st Annual California Latino Environmental and Natural Resources Conference

October 5–7, 2002
Sacramento, CA



Sponsored by the National
Hispanic Environmental Council

FACT SHEET

WHO: **The Conference Sponsor is the National Hispanic Environmental Council (NHEC)**, a national, non-profit organization founded in 1995, and located outside Washington, D.C. NHEC seeks to educate, unite, and engage our community on environmental and sustainable development issues; provide a national voice for Hispanics before federal, state, and non-profit environmental decision-makers; and actively assist Hispanics and other minorities to pursue the many career, business, educational, and policy opportunities in the environmental and natural resources field. We operate programs that accomplish this mission, and furthers our guiding credo: **“because it’s our environment too.”**

Major Conference Sponsors include the California EPA, especially the California State Water Resources Control Board and the California Integrated Waste Management Board. Other sponsors in the public, private, and non-profit sectors are also supporting the Conference.

WHAT: **The 1st Annual “California Latino Environmental and Natural Resources Conference”**

The Conference is the first state-wide event of its kind, designed to help engage California Latinos and other people of color on the need to be environmentally conscious. **It will be an unmatched learning, networking, and recruiting vehicle for the Latino environmental community, and for many others.**

In particular, the Conference is designed to inform California Latinos—especially students in environmental and natural resource disciplines—about the wealth of jobs, internships, and educational opportunities with the California state government, Corporate America, federal and local governments, and the mainstream environmental organizations. It offers attendees the latest information, presented by top issue experts, on a wide range of key environmental policies affecting Latinos and other people of color in California. The Conference is being held to show that Latinos are deeply involved in and care about our environment and natural resource heritage.

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Manuel Hernandez
Chairman, National Hispanic Sustainable
Energy & Environmental Conference
Post Office Box 3069
Riverside, CA 92519

Roger Rivera
President, National Hispanic Environmental Council
106 N. Fayette Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
(703) 683-3956 FAX: (703) 683-5125



While there is naturally a focus on issues affecting Latinos, the Conference is not just for Hispanics. **Everyone is welcome and all are encouraged to attend.** We seek the widest possible diversity of participants, issues, and involvement, so that—working together—we can achieve our common goals.

The conference will bring together **over 300 minority students and professional attendees** from a wide range of environmental disciplines, such as: environmental engineers and scientists; forest and park service managers; environmental educators; natural resource and conservation managers; environmental health and safety experts; environmental justice and community activists; green group representatives; small business owners; and many more.

The Conference will offer attendees 3 days of networking, an array of 20+ workshops/general sessions, environmental “site tours,” and a major Exhibit Area/Career Fair. At the Career Fair, companies, government agencies, universities, and non-profit organizations deliver their message while recruiting the best and brightest Latino/minority environmental and natural resource students and professionals.

As part of our mission, each year at our National Conference NHEC offers “Travel Scholarships” to cover the conference expenses (airfare, 3 nights hotel, meals, and incidentals) of college students, graduate and undergraduate, from every conceivable environmental discipline. NHEC is pleased to say that **each year we provide travel scholarships to over 200 such students to attend the Conference from nearly 100 colleges and universities across America.**

NHEC will provide travel scholarships to cover the attendance of at least 300 undergraduate and graduate students—the next generation of minority environmental leaders and professionals in California—to attend the Conference.

The scholarship covers the airfare, hotel, meals, and incidentals of the selected students. To apply, applicants must be currently enrolled in an environmental/natural resources discipline, or a discipline reasonably related; include a current resume; attach a one page cover letter explaining their career goals, why they want to attend, and what they will do in the future with what they learn; and enclose a \$25 registration fee payable to the **National Hispanic Environmental Conference, 106 N. Fayette Street, Alexandria, VA 22314. Only students selected to receive a subsidy will have their checks cashed. There is no fee to apply.**

WHEN: October 5–7, 2002 (Saturday through Monday)

WHERE: The Conference will be held at the **Holiday Inn Capitol Plaza, in Sacramento, CA.** This hotel is in downtown Sacramento, conveniently located to all major Sacramento destinations.

Room rates at the Holiday Inn are \$99 for a single or double room. To make a reservation, call the Holiday Inn directly at 916-446-0100, or call 1-800-465-4329. To receive the Conference rate, you **must call the hotel by September 19, 2002.** Be sure to tell them you are attending the NHEC Conference. The hotel address is 300 J Street, Sacramento, CA 95814.

HOW MUCH: See the attached “**Commitment Form.**” Use this Form to register, whether as a Sponsor, Exhibitor, or Individual Registrant.

WHY: The demographics of America have changed. All studies show, and the 2000 Census confirmed, that a “New America” has emerged. Indeed, the Census demonstrates **that Hispanics are now the largest minority group in the nation.**

California—so often a bellwether for America—is on the cutting edge of the demographic changes sweeping our country. In California, Latinos are now 35% of the state’s 33 million residents, making it the first state to become “majority minority”. **Simply put, every third person in our nation’s largest state is now Latino.**

California’s population changes have finally caught up with the state’s environmental, natural resource, and sustainable development needs. Whether it is severe air and water pollution, a swamped transportation system, unequal access to parks, environmental injustice, decreasing green space for people or habitat loss for wildlife, declining energy sources, and more, it is obvious that California’s environment is impacting—and being impacted by—the state’s new demographics.

Like all Californians, Latinos accept the obligations of environmental stewardship, and are eager to be involved in setting environmental policy. Indeed, polls taken over the last few years confirm that **California Latinos have the highest level of support in the state—averaging over 80%—for protecting the environment.**

Yet, for too long, **Latinos, through no fault of our own, have been disenfranchised from the environmental debate**, and thus from having real input on policies and programs which directly affect us. Further, Latinos are grossly under-represented—by every measure and at every level—in California’s environmental arena, especially at state agencies. No state—and no environment—can afford to have one third of its people disconnected from preserving its natural resources.

For all these reasons, **the time is now** for California’s public, private, and non-profit environmental sectors to reach out to people of color—especially Latinos, and especially our youth—to help build the next generation of environmentally active citizens.

We hope this first ever “California Latino Environmental and Natural Resources Conference” will help fill this need. Modeled after our annual national conference, and based on those experiences over the last seven years, NHEC seeks to help open the doors of opportunity for California Latinos and other people of color. By holding this important event, we seek to explore key environmental issues, engage our community, and help our own meet the responsibility that all Americans share to be good stewards of the earth. This Conference is another in NHEC’s efforts to meet our mission, and especially, to fulfill our credo: **“because it’s our environment too”**.

FOR MORE INFO: **Students** should **first** visit our web page at **www.nheec.org** for more details. For further information, e-mail Juan Rodriguez, Conference Coordinator, at jrodriguezpr@ameritech.net.

All others, please call NHEC at 703-683-3956. Or visit us at **www.nheec.org** for periodic Conference updates, especially regarding the Conference workshop program.