

# Research in Outdoor Education

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## Preface

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## Preface

This ninth volume of *Research in Outdoor Education*, published by the Coalition for Education in the Outdoors (CEO), is an outgrowth of the Ninth Biennial CEO Research Symposium. Although CEO has existed for 22 years and the symposium for 17, both are new to some people, making the background on CEO, its research symposium, and this publication worth repeating here.

The Coalition for Education in the Outdoors (CEO) is a network of organizations, businesses, institutions, centers, agencies, and associations linked and communicating in support of the broad purpose of education in, for, and about the outdoors. The Coalition was established in 1987 at the State University of New York (SUNY) at Cortland by a group of outdoor educators from around the country following a retreat at SUNY Cortland's Outdoor Education Center on Raquette Lake in the Adirondacks.

The purpose of the Coalition is to identify the networking and information needs of its affiliates and the field of outdoor education and, insofar as is financially practical, to meet those needs. Through its publication *Taproot*, CEO presents a broad view of education in the outdoors and a means for outdoor educators to stay abreast of developments in the field, especially those outside their primary interest area. In this way, CEO does not duplicate the work of other organizations, but provides readers with access to that work.

The founders of CEO envisioned that it could play an important role in addressing the research needs of the field. In its early years, CEO formed a research committee, which led to the organization of these biennial research symposia and the refereed publication now known as *Research in Outdoor Education*. Indiana University's Bradford Woods was chosen as the site of the first symposium, held in 1992 and coordinated by Camille Bunting of Texas A&M. Things worked out so well at Bradford Woods that CEO's Research Committee abandoned the idea of rotating the location. The CEO-Bradford Woods partnership in this venture is an excellent example of what CEO's founders envisioned.

Seventeen years later, the CEO Research Symposium has more than doubled in attendance and tripled in the number of papers presented. Fortunately, the event is still not large, and it has retained the informal and highly interactive atmosphere that people valued from the start. The purpose has remained the same as well.

The aim of the CEO Biennial Research Symposium is to assist outdoor educators in advancing the empirical, theoretical, and philosophical bases of outdoor education. It does so in several ways. First, the symposium enables scholars to present their work to one another and, through the publication, *Research in Outdoor Education*, to others in the field. Second, the symposium fosters conversations and builds a sense of community among researchers in outdoor education. Third, the symposium provides a forum to address areas of new or ongoing concern to researchers and scholars in outdoor education.

Papers for CEO symposium are selected through a blind-peer review. That process not only identifies the papers that are most suitable for the event, but also provides feedback to authors, a step that enhances the already high quality of abstracts selected for the symposium. Following the symposium, presenters have the opportunity to prepare and submit full papers for yet another blind review. Through that process, papers were selected, revised, and edited for inclusion in this volume of *Research in Outdoor Education*.

Previous editions of *Research in Outdoor Education (ROE)* are available through the CEO website ([www.outdooredcoalition.org](http://www.outdooredcoalition.org)). Abstracts of all symposium papers are now compiled separately and also available on-line. CEO has recently made arrangements with EBSCO Publishing, Inc. to make *Taproot* and *ROE* available to wider audiences.

I hope readers of this volume will join me in thanking some of the many people who make the research symposium and publication possible. The reviewers, the CEO Research Committee, and the authors, all listed later, are the ones who bring this program and publication to life. Anyone who has been to Bradford Woods knows what a wonderful place it is. We thank John Koenig and his staff who make getting there and being there so comfortable. Bradford Woods is an extension of the Department of Recreation and Park Administration at Indiana University. We thank that department, both staff and students, for their continued support of Bradford Woods and the CEO Research Symposium. Human Kinetics Publishers also provides support for the symposium, and we thank Gayle Kassing for nurturing this partnership for many years. Jennifer Hinton, lead editor, guided the review process, timetable, and final editing with much grace and competence. Co-editor Jim Sibthorp played critical roles every step of the way. Finally, our thanks go to SUNY Cortland President, Erik Bitterbaum, and Provost, Mark Prus, for their continued support of the Coalition for Education in the Outdoors and to Charles Yaple and Michael Anderson who keep it going.

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For the CEO Research Committee