

The Blue Heron

Sci. Lab & Environmental Edu. Center

Project Overview:

Common Ground for Conservation has been working to create the concept of the On-The-Ground Bus, a mobile-science high-tech laboratory facility prepared with data-collection equipments, environmental education exhibits and a digital environmental media center.

On-The-Ground Bus as a Science Laboratory: An original mobile science laboratory that will bring the latest technology and teaching tools to promote the responsible use of South Florida's ecosystems and resources, and offer a chance to learn how real science works.

On-The-Ground Bus as an Environmental Exhibition & Resource Center: Exhibits on topics such as water conservation and global warming will be assembled in the bus in order to raise awareness and keep the public updated about the progress made in various fields of science. The exhibits would give the visitor/student an opportunity to learn through a process of interaction and discovery.

On-The-Ground Bus as an Environmental Media Center:

The bus will be outfitted with audio, video recording and production technology, and will be used to spread the word about South Florida ecosystems and environmental issues. The Environmental Media Center will include: wireless Internet access via satellite, laptop computers, video podcasting equipment, video camera system and a projector.

The Bus has been donated by the Board of County Commissioners. Comr. Joe A. Martinez. The On-The-Ground-Bus was previously used by the county as one of the buses for community transportation. Now, the bus itself will be an environmental exhibit that promotes energy efficiency and the use of alternative energy sources, displaying solar panels and using vegetable oil or biodiesel.

To meet the air conditioning demand we need to install a generator and the bus will be fixed with solar panels to power our lab, audio and visual equipment, lights, computers and refrigerators. The fuel source is going to be converted to biodiesel or used vegetable oil.

Common Ground for Conservation has an ongoing environmental education awareness campaign in Spanish: "Club Planeta Visión", through a partnership with the Division of Bilingual Education and World Languages (MDCPS) and Univision-Channel 23. It has been an extremely successful project touching the innate curiosity of youngsters to the wonders of science and taping their potential.

Our goal is to have the On-The-Ground Bus equipped as soon as possible, to be able to travel to public schools throughout Miami-Dade County and improve as we go. The purpose is to bring state-of-the-art

equipment to any school and provide hands-on experiments and

lessons that many schools do not have the resources to provide.



There are many ways in which to become involved. Please call Mildred Real at (786) 253-3664