

## **100th Youth Climate Summit On the Horizon**

The Wild Center's free Youth Climate Toolkit sparks action around the world

CONTACT: Erin Griffin, Youth Climate Program Manager. [egriffin@wildcenter.org](mailto:egriffin@wildcenter.org)

In 2009, a group of high schoolers held the first-ever Adirondack Youth Climate Summit at The Wild Center, a natural history museum in upstate New York.

Since then, the model they inspired has been replicated everywhere from New York City to Sri Lanka—and next spring, students are expected to stage the 100<sup>th</sup>—ever Youth Climate Summit.

Many of those events have been inspired by the Youth Climate Toolkit, a free set of resources provided by The Wild Center's Youth Climate Program. The toolkit includes a step-by-step guide for creating a summit from start to finish, as well as sample agendas, budgets, evaluation templates and more plug-and-play resources for summit planning. It also includes a Climate Action Planning Workshop Facilitator Guide with sample lesson plans, slide deck, worksheets and tips from youth on how to facilitate a workshop specifically for students.

“Local action is as much a part of the solution to climate change as coordinated international response,” said Jen Kretser, Director of Climate Initiatives at The Wild Center. “We’ve seen over and over that youth have the drive, desire and ability to inspire change in their own communities. This toolkit gives them a roadmap to plan their own Youth Climate Summits, which have turned students around the world into leaders on this issue.”

Thousands of students have taken part in Youth Climate Summits, which have been held in nearly 50 different communities in six countries and on three continents. Many communities hold Summits each year. The conference-style events provide opportunities for high school and college students to learn about place-based climate science, explore climate change solutions and collaborate with a team to create a community-wide climate action plan.

The Youth Climate Toolkit, available at the Youth Climate Program webpage, has been downloaded over a thousand times since it was published in 2020. A Partner Summit Media Kit is also available to help event organizers maximize publicity. The kit includes sample photos, press releases and social media posts, as well as guidelines how to acknowledge The Wild Center in promotions.

“Climate change affects everybody—but every community is affected differently,” said Erin Griffin, Youth Climate Program Manager. “The Summits empower youth to come up with climate solutions that fit challenges they face where they live. And you don’t need to be a climate expert to get started. You just need to want to take action.”

Our first Youth Climate Summit focused on the Adirondack Park, a 6-million-acre region of public and private land. For more than a century, it has been a model for showing how humans and nature can co-exist. At The Wild Center, located in Tupper Lake, N.Y., we use the lessons of the Adirondacks to encourage visitors to examine their own relationship with nature.