Environmental Education

At the Tiffin Centre for Conservation

2026 Specialist High Skills Major Programming

NVCA offers Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM) certificate programs in English and French for students interested in environmental sciences and other related professions.

Our hands-on learning program is designed give students real-world experiences and skills.

Gaining leadership skills through the low-ropes challenge course at the Tiffin Centre for Conservation.

SHSM Certification Programs with NVCA

NVCA's environmental educators draw on their own expertise, as well as the knowledge and expertise of fellow NVCA staff. Our staff includes a roster of talented professionals including foresters, environmental scientists, engineers, flood forecasters, and environmental restoration specialists. Together, these on-staff experts offer unique programming for students in the Environmental SHSM sector.

Through NVCA's SHSM program, students benefit from:

- Hands-on and experiential learning
- Practical evaluations
- Receiving certification upon successful completion

Stream health assessments, habitat restoration and wilderness skills such as canoeing, map reading and shelter building are just some of the SHSM programs offered. See the chart on the next page for a full list of programs.

Each year, we continue to add new programs, so if you don't see what you are looking for, contact our education staff to discuss your ideas.

ICE Training

NVCA also offers Innovation, Creativity and Entrepreneurship (ICE) training.

Innovation, creativity and entrepreneurship are three valuable skills for students to gain to help them tackle real-world challenges.

NVCA's ICE training provides students with the opportunity learn directly from an NVCA expert.

Students are first presented with a real-world problem. Then they get together in groups to brainstorm, create ideas, and develop a plan to solve the issue at hand. The last step, they present their plan to the NVCA expert. The expert will evaluate their plans and will assess if it is applicable to their work, offering valuable feedback.

All 19 SHSM sector certifications include ICE training. While our focus is on environmental SHSM, we can tailor our ICE training to almost any sector, including agriculture, business, arts & culture, non-profit, hospitality & tourism and more. Contact our education staff to learn more.

SPECIALIST HIGH SKILLS MAJOR SHSM Ontario.ca/SHSM

SHSM Certification Programs at a Glance

Certification Course	Description	Length	Cost per Student	Location
Introduction to Global Positioning Systems (GPS)	Students learn how to use GPS for navigation. They learn the basics of navigation and are introduced to UTM coordinates.	5 hours	$59.70	Tiffin Centre for Conservation
Species Identification —Tree *available upon special request*	Students learn about the structure and parts of trees, and how to identify a tree through its various parts, culminating with a Orienteering Tree ID. course.	3 hours	$35.80	Tiffin Centre for Conservation
Habitat Restoration 2-part program	Part one: Principles of reforestation and streamside habitat restoration will be explained through presentation and experienced through hands-on stream modelling to witness cause and effect on water quality downstream.	2 hours	$31.20	Your classroom; outreach mileage fee applies
	Part two: Completion of part one puts your class on the list to participate in an active restoration project with NVCA Stewardship.	5 hours	Free	Location TBD, bussing fees apply
Knot Techniques *available upon special request*	Students will learn 8 different knots and be assessed on proficiency within a practical setting	5 hours	$59.70	Tiffin Centre for Conservation
Introduction to Map & Compass Use	Students will learn to navigate using topographic maps and bearings	5 hours	$59.70	Tiffin Centre for Conservation

Cutting invasive Phragmites

Stream Assessment: measurements and characteristics

SHSM Certification Programs at a Glance

Certification Course	Description	Length	Cost per Student	Location
Paddling Techniques *available upon special request*	Students spend half the program time learning water safety and canoe rescues. The second half of the day is spent mastering canoe handling skills on Papa Bear Pond at the Tiffin Centre.	5 hours	Special Prices apply. Contact us to inquire	Local pool, Tiffin Centre for Conservation, or location TBD
Stream Assessment Protocol 2-part program	Part one: Principles and practices of stream assessment. Part two: Students will investigate a local stream and assess its health utilizing standardized methodologies from the Ontario Streams Assessment Protocol (OSAP)	2 hours 5 hours	$31.20 $59.70	Your classroom; outreach mileage fee applies. Hands-on stream assessment at location TBD.
Leadership Skills	To lead effectively is a life skill needed in many circumstances through one's career. Students will run through many different tasks which allows different types of leaders to shine. **This certification is valid for all sectors of the SHSM program.**	5 hours	$59.70	Tiffin Centre for Conservation
Wilderness Survival	Students will participate in an 'Amazing Race' style program designed to emphasize survival needs and experience in constructing emergency shelters and fire building. Included in the cost is 1 free hot dog and hot chocolate per student. **This certification is valid for Environmental, Non-Profit, Hospitality & Tourism, and Justice SHSMs.**	5 hours	$59.70	Tiffin Centre for Conservation

Studying benthic invertebrates, pond ecosystem evaluation, ICE presentations (L-R)

Our Facilities & Equipment

In addition to 300 acres of conservation lands with unique natural features, the Tiffin Centre boasts a wide range of facilities to accommodate your group including:

- 6,000 ft^2 indoor learning centre
- Outdoor classroom
- Picnic pavilion
- Low ropes challenge course
- 9-hole disc golf course
- Group campground
- Accessible trail system
- Snowshoes and kick sleds
- Class set of GPS units
- Operating maple sugar bush
- Green energy demo site
- All-terrain wheelchairs

Group Campground

Program Add-Ons

Campfire Lunch

Let us provide the hot dogs and all the fixings for $3 each! Students roast their own hot dogs over an open fire. Hot chocolate is available for $25 per class.

Group Camping

Looking to combine two programs? Consider adding a night of camping at the Tiffin Centre.

Our group campground can accommodate groups of up to 50, and features level ground, covered pavilion, picnic tables, wood-burning BBQ, fire pit, accessible washrooms, and potable water (warm weather only). Locked storage can be arranged.

Fee: $11.00 per camper (including teachers)
Minimum booking fee: $220.

Fire wood provided.

Program Fees

Please see program chart for specific program fees. Taxes are extra. Teachers and adult volunteers attend free-of-charge.

Minimum booking—15 students per program.

Where a program is located at a site, other than the Tiffin Centre, a site inspection may be required to ensure site appropriateness and safety. A site-inspection fee of $50 would apply.

Cancellation Policy

There is no charge to cancel a booking provided at least two weeks' notice is given before your scheduled visit.

If a cancellation is received **with less than two weeks' notice, your group will be charged for 50% of the scheduled number of participants or the minimum fee.**

In the event buses are cancelled due to inclement weather or teacher union job action, the cancellation fee is not required if the program is rebooked.

Please call to reschedule.

Book your Program

To plan your SHSM certification program, contact NVCA's environmental education team at **705-424-1479 ext. 280 or outdoored@nvca.on.ca** or visit nvca.on.ca

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Nottawasaga Valley
Conservation Authority

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BARRIE ROTARY

This document is available in alternative formats.

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