

NEGATIVE POPULATION GROWTH



Press Release

For immediate release

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New NPG Forum Paper Honors Paul Ehrlich’s Legacy and Calls for Ecological Education Reform

Exploring Ecological Education, Carrying Capacity, and the Challenges of Continued Population Growth

Alexandria, VA, (June 25, 2026): Negative Population Growth, Inc. (NPG) has released a new Forum paper by environmental educator and author Karen I. Shragg titled [*Seeking Nature’s Moral Compass: A Tribute to the Legacy of Paul Ehrlich*](#). The publication examines the enduring relevance of Ehrlich’s warnings about overpopulation, resource depletion, and ecological overshoot while arguing for a renewed national commitment to sustainability and ecological literacy.

The paper is dedicated to the memory of Paul Ehrlich, who passed away in March 2026. Shragg argues that Ehrlich’s concerns about population growth and environmental degradation have become even more urgent as the global population has grown from roughly 3.5 billion at the time *The Population Bomb* was published in 1968 to more than 8 billion today.

Throughout the paper, Shragg contends that environmental challenges such as biodiversity loss, climate change, habitat destruction, water shortages, and resource depletion are interconnected with continued population growth and societal expectations of perpetual economic expansion. She also explores the cultural, political, and educational barriers that have made discussion of overpopulation increasingly difficult in recent decades.

“The deck is definitely stacked against telling the truth about overpopulation as Ehrlich discovered throughout his life,” writes Shragg. “To combat this, we must couch it in a more optimistic tone while remaining truthful to science. After all, to ignore overpopulation’s wrath is to welcome a collapse of our biosphere.”

The Forum paper also calls for comprehensive ecological education reforms through what Shragg describes as an “EarthWorks” curriculum — a hands-on educational framework focused on sustainability, ecosystems, carrying capacity, biodiversity, and the relationship between human activity and environmental systems. The proposed curriculum spans preschool through college-level education and emphasizes direct engagement with the natural world.

“While 80% of Americans rate climate change as a major concern, they are mostly unaware of its mechanisms or what they can do about it,” Shragg writes, citing deficiencies in climate and sustainability education across

the United States. She further argues that sustainability conversations must include discussions about population growth and carrying capacity alongside broader environmental concerns. The paper concludes with a call for greater ecological understanding and a cultural shift toward sustainability in an increasingly crowded world.

As debates surrounding sustainability, resource use, and environmental decline continue, the paper emphasizes the importance of broader public discussion about the long-term consequences of continued population growth. NPG maintains that recognizing the ecological impacts of ongoing population growth remains essential to protecting biodiversity, conserving natural resources, and promoting a more sustainable future.

Since 1972, NPG has worked to educate both the public and policy leaders about the impacts of overpopulation. With a steadfast commitment to reducing population growth to achieve a sustainable balance with our environmental resources, NPG continues to be a leading voice of reason in a world often driven by the pursuit of perpetual growth. NPG advocates for the adoption of its [Proposed National Population Policy](#), with the goal of eventually stabilizing U.S. population at a sustainable level – far lower than today’s. We do not simply identify the problems – we propose solutions. For more information, visit our website at [NPG.org](https://www.npg.org), follow us on Facebook [@NegativePopulationGrowth](#) or follow us on X [@npg_org](#).