

Welcome to Earth Matters – field notes on the geology of New Mexico's enchanting landscapes. Celebrating Earth Science Week, I am Leah Tevis.

When thinking about the sustainability of our planet, it may seem overwhelming. Climate change affects each of us at every turn, including mega-droughts, hotter and drier days, unpredictable seasons, and blazing wildfires. It can seem like an impossible task to make Earth sustainability a priority or even a thought in our daily lives. But, I'm here to tell you, it's possible through Earth science education.

Earth science teaches one how to look at the world through a new set of lenses, lenses set to view the environment as it was and how it has changed. Earth science allows a person to see the formation of the Rio Grande rift, the uplift of the Sandias, and the eruptions of Mt. Taylor. It permits one to see how dire our need for a more sustainable lifestyle has become through our dwindling natural resources to our uncertain growing seasons.

The goal of sustainability is to live in an environment that meets our needs without compromising the future generations' ability to meet their needs. Through education in Earth science, we can fit everyone with a pair of lenses to see the processes and consequences that create and debilitate our environment, equipping them with the tools and resources to make sustainable life choices.

Earth science education is not confined inside the walls of academia. It is taught through community outreach programs, museums, talking to a neighbor that has lived here for 60 years, observing the changing seasonal landscape on that same drive you have taken over and over, in your backyard, and probably, maybe even on Tik Tok.

Education in Earth science is vital for a sustainable world. Promoting and securing Earth science education for all ages is a major step towards a more sustainable planet. I will leave you with a thought experiment. What if we treated our cities, towns, and neighborhoods similar to how we treat National Parks, by leaving them better than we found them?

Celebrating Earth Science Week, this is Leah Tevis, with New Mexico Tech.