

Horace Mann School

John Dorr Nature Laboratory

Location	Washington, Connecticut	Size	19,000 square feet
Architect	Centerbrook Architects & Planners	Cost	\$8 million
Services	MEP/FP, Sustainable Design	Completed	2009
LEED	<i>LEED Gold Certified</i>		
Awards	<i>Connecticut Chapter of the USGBC Merit Award, 2011</i>		



Almost all of the initial work in preparing the building site for the John Dorr Nature Lab was done by the students of Horace Mann School. They split wood, cleared trails, stream beds, and built shelters. The original lodge had no plumbing or shower, only an outhouse accommodating eight. The lab was then, and is now, an exemplification of the school's belief that educational institutions should provide experiences both inside and outside the traditional classroom.

All students of the school visit this 275 acre outdoor campus as part of the academic curriculum. In this living laboratory, an awareness and appreciation of the earth and environment are instilled. There's no question that sustainability was a major concern for when plans were being made for John Dorr's new lodge and bunk house.

Kohler Ronan's extensive sustainable design experience was applied throughout the design process for this project. Our team devised new HVAC, electrical, plumbing, and fire protection (MEP/FP) systems with the idea that all sustainable elements would be an integral part of the learning environment. Rainwater harvesting, photovoltaic, electrical generation, solar water heating, water conservation, and radiant floor warming systems were designed to be easily studied on student visits.

