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On Wednesday, April 22, 1970, the world celebrated the very first Earth Day. Forty-eight years later, as we celebrate Earth Day this Sunday, efforts to consider the environment in all elements of life continue in a variety of important ways. In this edition of RMCREF Spotlight, we feature projects funded by the RMC Research & Education Foundation that have been environmentally-focused.

In 2010, the leadership of the RMC Research & Education Foundation felt so strongly about the importance of sustainability that they specifically incorporated the concept into the Foundation's Vision as part of the Foundation's Strategic Plan revisions, changing it to: "The RMC Research & Education Foundation is a lasting resource for increasing quality, professionalism, and sustainability in the ready mixed concrete industry by funding high quality, high value, non-proprietary research and education programs".

Part and parcel of the Foundation's new emphasis on sustainability was the establishment of the Concrete Sustainability Hub (CSHub) at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in partnership with the Portland Cement Association. In the years since, the [CSHub](#) has made tremendous strides in exploring innovative solutions for concrete applications and quantifying the full life cycle impacts of projects including the important "use" phase. For [buildings](#), the research has focused on durability, energy efficiency, and resiliency. For [pavements](#), the research has focused on improving structure and design that can result in increased fuel efficiency, lower maintenance costs and better life cycle planning.

One of the important ways the building community has sought to make sustainability an integral consideration in construction is the development of the [United States Green Building Council's \(USGBC\) Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design \(LEED\)](#) program. The Foundation has supported guides to assist ready mixed concrete producers in understanding how concrete can contribute to gaining LEED points in projects, the most recent of which is the [NRMCA Materials Ingredient Reporting Guidance](#) document.

The Foundation has also funded a variety of other environmentally-focused projects, including several pervious concrete projects, recycled materials use including [crushed recycled aggregate](#) and [fly ash](#), and the [Sustainable Concrete Plant Guidelines](#), all of which may be found on the Foundation's [Sustainability Projects](#) page on its [website](#). Environmental education of our industry's workforce is another important component which has been woven throughout the course work funded by the Foundation for personnel in key positions, such as operations. Visit the Foundation's [Recruitment, Education & Training](#) page for more information.

As we celebrate Earth Day this year, the ready mixed concrete industry can be proud of the advancements it's made toward protecting the environment and helping to make our product the most environmentally-friendly building material available.

For more information on the work of the RMC Research & Education Foundation, please visit www.rmc-foundation.org or contact [Julie Garbini](#) or [Jennifer LeFevre](#).

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