

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Opening Lesson: Our Home



MONTANA AND KUMAMOTO PREFECTURE: SISTER-STATES

In 1979, Mike Mansfield, U.S. Ambassador to Japan, recommended that the Governors of Kumamoto and Montana establish a sister-state relationship. After three years of discussion, Kumamoto Governor Issei Sawada and Montana Governor Ted Schwinden signed a sister relationship agreement at a ceremony in Helena, Montana's State Capitol on July 22, 1982. In signing this agreement, Montana and Kumamoto Prefecture agreed to promote interchange in the fields of industry, culture and education; encourage the growth of goodwill and understanding between the people of both the State and the Prefecture.

In October of 2015, 25 individuals representing seven institutions from Montana and Kumamoto formed the Kumamoto Montana Natural Science Museum Association. The *Our Home, Our World* curriculum is a joint project between those institutions and is designed to foster understanding and cultural connections through science education.

Participating institutions in Kumamoto are the Mifune Dinosaur Museum, Goshoura Cretaceous Museum, Aso Volcano Museum, and the Kumamoto City Museum. Participating institutions in Montana are the Museum of the Rockies at Montana State University, and the Carter County Museum. Professional staff from each institution contributed in crafting this curriculum, offering their expertise in the fields of astronomy, geology, paleontology, and education.