

BEFORE THE METRO COUNCIL

FOR THE PURPOSE OF APPROVING SEVENTH) RESOLUTION NO. 13-4431
ROUND FUNDING FOR NATURE IN)
NEIGHBORHOODS RESTORATION AND) Introduced by Heather Nelson Kent
ENHANCEMENT GRANTS)

WHEREAS, Metro has established a regional fish and wildlife protection, restoration and greenspaces initiative called “Nature in Neighborhoods,” as provided in Resolution No. 05-3574A, “Establishing a Regional Habitat Protection, Restoration and Greenspaces Initiative called Nature in Neighborhoods,” adopted May 12, 2005; and

WHEREAS, the Metro Council established the Nature in Neighborhoods Restoration and Enhancement grant program and appropriated \$1,250,000 from the General Fund in 2005 for the initial grants (Resolution No. 05-3580A); and

WHEREAS, the Metro Council appropriated an additional \$250,000 from the General Fund in 2007 for additional grants (Ordinance 07-1160B); and

WHEREAS, the Metro Council adopted Ordinance No. 09-1215B approving \$92,500 in the FY 2009-10 Budget and Appropriation Schedule for a fifth round of grants in Spring 2010; and

WHEREAS, the Metro Council adopted Ordinance No. 10-1235B approving \$150,000 in the FY 2010-11 Budget and Appropriation Schedule for a sixth round of Nature in Neighborhoods Restoration and Enhancement Grants; and

WHEREAS, the Metro Council adopted Ordinance No. 12-1274A approving \$200,000 in the FY 2012-13 Budget and Appropriation Schedule for a seventh round of Nature in Neighborhoods Restoration and Enhancement Grants; and

WHEREAS, it takes sustained efforts to restore and protect the region’s wildlife habitat areas and preserve our natural systems as our region grows. This challenge provides unique opportunities for communities, organizations, governments, businesses, people and property owners to create new partnerships to protect and restore the region’s natural areas; and

WHEREAS, Metro has solicited and received applications for the Nature in Neighborhoods Restoration and Enhancement grant program and selected the projects which best meet the grant criteria and the goals of Nature in Neighborhoods initiative; and

WHEREAS, by restoring and enhancing our natural areas, the region can protect our region’s clean water and the health of our watersheds and enjoy the benefits of nature in neighborhoods for years to come; and

WHEREAS, attached as Exhibit A to this resolution is a list of grant award recipients and respective funding amounts and an example of the individual contract agreement; now therefore

BE IT RESOLVED that the Metro Council hereby approves the award of the seventh round of Nature in Neighborhoods Restoration and Enhancement grants to those recipients listed in Exhibit A and for the amounts listed for each individual award.

ADOPTED by the Metro Council this 30 day of May 2013.


Tom Hughes, Council President



Approved as to Form:

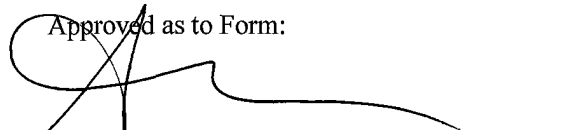

Alison Kean Campbell, Metro Attorney

Exhibit A to Resolution No. 13-4431

2013 Nature in Neighborhoods Restoration and Enhancement Grants

Project and Program Grants Recommended for Funding

Adelante Mujeres & Tualatin Riverkeepers **\$30,000**

Adelante Conservación (Move Forward Conservation)

The Adelante Conservación project expands the existing relationship between Tualatin Riverkeepers (TRK) and Adelante Mujeres. The project will integrate hands-on nature education curriculum into Adelante Mujeres current programming and supports participation in leadership and relationship development activities designed to foster understanding of programs, vision and mission between TRK and Adelante Mujeres board, staff and volunteers. In total, 440 low-income Latino students will be reached through participation in the Adelente Chicas and Adelante Educación programs. With support from Center for Diversity and the Environment both agencies will work to build the collaborative relationship bridging social service and conservation organization, finding shared values and created a shared vision.

Friends of Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge **\$15,000**

Expanding Engagement: Serving Our Whole Community

Friends of Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge (the “Friends”) will expand its nature based education programming to increase participation of diverse and underserved audiences. Through development and collaboration with a diverse group of partners, The Friends of the Refuge will examine programming and outreach to learn perspectives, values and cultures of the community and adapt the work appropriately. The Friends plan to provide outdoor learning experiences for 2,500 youth and 850 family members and build professional capacity for 300 educators and volunteer mentors to incorporate nature based learning into classrooms and youth organizations. Partners include US Fish and Wildlife Service’s Division of Diversity and Civil Rights, Oregon Natural Resources Education Program, Five Oaks Middle School, Gaston School District, Muslim Educational Trust and Woodside Consulting.

Johnson Creek Watershed Council **\$25,000**

Johnson Creek Riparian Reforestation

Johnson Creek Watershed Council will carry out necessary plant establishment work on 20 high priority sites in order to protect and enhance past investments and keep sites on trajectory toward meeting restoration goals. The project areas total 20 acres and will include providing tree cover to more than two miles (14,000 lineal feet) of Johnson Creek and its tributary streams. Activities will include the planting of 10,000 new plants, invasive plant removal and seeding and mulching of new and existing plantings. The work will also support and enhance existing partnerships with public and private landowners providing on the ground assistance with past projects and in the case of private landowners, supply technical instruction and support to allow them to take over future maintenance. Partners include City of Portland Bureau of Environmental Services, Portland Parks and Recreation, City of Gresham, Multnomah Youth Cooperative and private landowners.

Exhibit A to Resolution No. 13-4431

Lent School, Portland Public School District **\$29,750**

Springwater Ecology Project

Advances the partnership between Lent School, community members, local non profits and the City of Portland (Bureau of Environmental Services and Parks and Recreation) providing experiential learning opportunities for underserved students and community members. During the two-year project, Lent students will receive 48 hands-on ecology lessons, engage in 12 field trips and participate in hands-on habitat restoration with Ed Kerns of the Lent’s Springwater Habitat Restoration Project (LSHRP). LSHRP will also hold 20 community planting days in association with the project. Restoration efforts will result in the planting of 4,000 native plants and spreading of 330 yards of mulch in this nature-deficient area.

Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership **\$23,074**

Meldrum Bar Park Habitat, Education and Job Training Garden

The Meldrum Bar project will build on the success of previous and current work at this 11-acre natural area in Gladstone. At-risk teens, local school students and community volunteers will work to remove invasive plants and install native trees and shrubs within three new portions of the natural area. 48 at-risk youth will participate in a job training program in partnership with the Clackamas County Juvenile Department which provides job skills training, college credit and restitution. 350 local fourth through sixth grade students from 14 classrooms will receive three in-class lessons and link to a service learning field trip. Four community volunteer days will also be held engaging approximately 100 citizens in natural area restoration. The project also connects to larger restoration efforts at the adjacent Rinearson Creek Wetlands. Partners include Wilderness International, City of Gladstone, Clackamas County Juvenile Department, SOLVE and Friends of Rinearson Creek.

Portland Parks and Recreation **\$30,000**

Greenspaces Restoration & Urban Naturalist Team (GRUNT)

The GRUNT program connects at-risk teens to nature through year round environmental education, stewardship, recreation and employment. 175 youth participants, many from culturally diverse and economically disadvantaged communities, complete 600 hours of stewardship and learn job skills to be successful in pursuing careers in the environment. The program also provides long-term mentoring and connections to careers with the goal of seeing more diverse individuals choosing an environmental career path. Partners include All Hands Raised, Student and Family Refugee Network, and many individual teachers and councilors serving schools and organizations in culturally diverse communities.

SOLVE **\$25,000**

Beaver Creek - The Home Stretch

This project is the last phase of SOLVE’s active restoration of the Lower Beaver Creek riparian corridor. It will result in a healthy stream corridor from the confluence of Beaver Creek with the Sandy River upstream to Mt. Hood Community College. The project also adds an additional 1.5 acres to the total restoration project area. Eight service learning events will be held with 40 Green Team students from Reynolds High School and Portland Lutheran School as well as 10 community tree planting events. In total the project participants will plant more than 3,600 native trees, shrubs and plants, enhance 80 linear feet of stream bank, clear 200 square feet of invasive plants and remove 100 pounds of trash. Partners include Multnomah County Land Use Transportation Department, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Sandy River Basin Watershed Council.

Exhibit A to Resolution No. 13-4431

Xerces Society

\$13,000

Community Based Freshwater Mussel Study on Crystal Springs

Xerces Society continues its citizen-science investigations of the effects of improved fish habitat on existing populations of native mussels and invasive Asian clams following restoration activities in Crystal Springs Creek. As Part of the Crystal Springs Partnership, this is a collaboration of community members, academic organizations and natural resource agencies. Local residents will be engaged in citizen-science activities that contribute much-needed data on stream biota while helping volunteers gain a greater appreciation for Crystal Springs Creek. Additionally, the program provides expertise and training that will allow for the immediate salvage and relocation of mussels that would perish during restoration projects being implemented in 2013 and 2014. The program plans to involve 150 volunteers and agency staff per year through outreach, education and training, monitoring and salvage events. Partners include Crystal Springs Partnership, City of Portland BES, Johnson Creek Watershed Council and Friends of Crystal Springs.

Planning Grants Recommended for Funding

City of Troutdale

\$15,000

Sandy River Access Plan

The Sandy River Access Plan will undertake a schematic master site planning effort to identify the best solutions for community access and trail design to a portion of the lower Sandy River in downtown Troutdale. The goal will be to provide people access to enjoy the Sandy River for angling and other recreational activities while restoring and safeguarding riparian conditions along 1,700 lineal feet of riverfront. An ADA-accessible platform is included in preliminary designs to address access for all users. The property is situated at the easternmost segment of the 40-mile Loop Regional Trail with access from the trail creating a destination point for users and Troutdale residents.

STAFF REPORT

IN CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION NO. 13-4431, FOR THE PURPOSE OF APPROVING SEVENTH ROUND FUNDING FOR NATURE IN NEIGHBORHOODS RESTORATION AND ENHANCEMENT GRANTS

Date: May 30, 2013

Prepared by: Heather Nelson Kent, 503-797-1739

BACKGROUND

For nearly two decades, the Metro Council has provided funding for grants to community groups, non-profits, local governments and other organizations for habitat restoration, environmental education and other nature-related projects. From 2006 to 2011, the Metro Council awarded 96 Nature in Neighborhood Restoration and Enhancement grants for a total of \$1,725,000. This money has leveraged \$8 million of additional investments, engaged hundreds of partner organizations and generated 100,000 volunteer hours to restore local rivers and streams, fight invasive weeds, provide trips into nature for children and service learning opportunities for all ages.

The Nature in Neighborhood Restoration and Enhancement grants program was created in 2005 when the Metro Council passed Resolution No. 05-3580A appropriating \$1,250,000 in the General Fund. The initial source of funding came from the Recovery Rate Stabilization Reserve. The Metro Council continued the program in September 2007 with the approval of Ordinance 07-1160B, transferring an additional \$250,000 from this fund for a third cycle of grants. The Metro Council approved \$250,000 in the FY 2008-09 Budget and Appropriation Schedule for the fourth round of Nature in Neighborhoods Restoration and Enhancement grants. In 2009 the Metro Council included \$92,500 in the FY 2009-2010 Budget and Appropriation Schedule to fund a fifth round of Nature in Neighborhoods grants. In 2010 the Metro Council included \$150,000 in the FY 2010-2011 Budget and Appropriation Schedule to fund a sixth round of grants. Funding for this program was not included in the Metro Council's FY 2011-12 budget. The program was restored the following year by the Metro Council. The new funding appropriated in the Metro Council's FY 2012-13 budget is \$200,000.

The grant program has been successful at achieving stated objectives regarding engaging citizens in watershed restoration. To date the funded projects have achieved the following results:

- Leveraged more than four dollars of activity for every one dollar invested by the Metro Council
- Generated an estimated 100,000 hours of volunteer-donated time and talent
- Engaged nearly 100 different public agencies and more than 300 private partners
- Supported the participation of dozens of classrooms and thousands of students – particularly low-income students – every year in environmental education programs and service-learning projects in their local watersheds.

More than 40 non-profit and environmental organizations signed on to an April 2012 letter to the Metro Council supporting the Nature in Neighborhoods Restoration and Enhancement grant program. The letter suggested adding social equity goals to the program to make it more consistent with the Metro Council's commitment to making this a great place for all people. In the summer of 2012, staff reached out to community groups and other stakeholders about this feedback. Approximately 150 people offered comments and filled out a survey asking questions about how the program could be more accessible and what barriers exist that prevent organizations from accessing these funds. The program goals, objectives and evaluation criteria were updated to reflect the feedback that was received and to place a greater emphasis on supporting projects that connect, in particular, low income and communities of color to these grants.

Metro announced a seventh round of available funding in the fall of 2012. In January, 41 applicants requested a total of \$862,700 in grant funding. Sixteen projects were invited to submit full applications. A committee made up of Metro staff and local experts in restoration, environmental education, community organizing, park planning and grant administration helped review and rank the proposals selecting those that stood out based on our criteria and program objectives. Nine are being recommended for \$205,824 in funding, including one planning project.

The recommended projects represent innovative community-based investments that:

- restore and enhance some of the region's rarest habitats in important water ways such as Johnson Creek, Crystal Springs, Beaver Creek and the Clackamas River
- engage thousands of residents in improving nature in their own neighborhoods
- reach low-income and underserved school children in Sherwood, Portland, Forest Grove, Gladstone and many other communities around the region
- provide job and skills training to at-risk youth
- include hands-on environmental education opportunities for students.

The total recommended award for the seventh round of funding is \$205,824. This includes \$200,000 in new funding approved by Metro Council in the FY 2012-13 Budget and Appropriation Schedule as well as a total of \$5,824 in previously committed but unused Nature in Neighborhoods Restoration and Enhancement Grant Program funds from previous granting cycles. These projects will begin after July 1, 2013. Projects are two years in length.

ANALYSIS/INFORMATION

1. Known Opposition

None.

2. Legal Antecedents

Resolution No. 05-3551, Metro Council Project Proposal titled "Nature in Neighborhoods."

Resolution No. 05-3574A, Establishing a Regional Habitat Protection, Restoration and Greenspaces Initiative called Nature in Neighborhoods.

Resolution No. 05-3580A, Transferring \$1,250,000 from the Balance of the FY 2004-05 Recovery Rate Stabilization Reserve to a General Fund Reserve for Nature in Neighborhoods Restoration Projects.

Ordinance No. 07-1160B, Transferring \$250,000 from the Recovery Rate Stabilization Reserve Fund for Nature in Neighborhoods Restoration Projects.

Ordinance No. 09-1215B, approving \$92,500 in the FY 2009-10 Budget and Appropriation Schedule for an additional round of Nature in Neighborhoods Restoration and Enhancement grants.

Ordinance No. 10-1235B, approving \$150,000 in the FY 2010-11 Budget and Appropriation Schedule for an additional round of Nature in Neighborhoods Restoration and Enhancement grants.

Ordinance No. 12-1274A, approving \$200,000 in the FY 2012-13 Budget and Appropriation Schedule for an additional round of Nature in Neighborhoods Restoration and Enhancement grants.

3. Anticipated Effects

This Resolution approves the seventh round funding and award for Nature in Neighborhood grants and begins the individual contract award process for the selected grant applicants with an anticipated project start date on or after July 1, 2013. Projects are two years in length.

4. Budget Impacts

This Resolution authorizes award of contracts in an amount previously identified by the Metro Council in the budget for this purpose. Sufficient appropriation authority has been included in the current fiscal year budget and in the approved FY 2012-13 budget for these expenditures, including holding amounts in reserve for expenditures anticipated in future fiscal years.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

The Chief Operating Officer recommends adoption of Resolution No. 13-4431.