

BEFORE THE METRO COUNCIL

FOR THE PURPOSE OF APPROVING 2014) RESOLUTION NO. 14-4549
NATURE IN NEIGHBORHOODS)
CONSERVATION EDUCATION COMMUNITY) Introduced by Chief Operating Officer Martha
GRANTS) Bennett in concurrence with Council President
) Tom Hughes

WHEREAS, in 2005, the Metro Council established an initiative designed to protect and restore our region's significant fish and wildlife habitat and connect people with nature as provided in Resolution No. 05-3574A, "Establishing a Regional Habitat Protection, Restoration and Greenspaces Initiative called Nature in Neighborhoods," adopted May 12, 2005;

WHEREAS, the Metro Council established the Nature in Neighborhoods grant program in 2005 to provide local communities support to fulfill this regional initiative (Resolution No. 05-3580A);

WHEREAS, in May 2013, voters in the Metro region approved a 5-year local option levy for Metro's parks and natural areas including new and expanded funding for what were referred to in the levy as Nature in Neighborhoods community grants;

WHEREAS, the Metro Council reiterated the community grant program's purpose, eligibility and funding criteria via Resolution No. 12-4398 referring the 5-year local option levy to the voters, and called for the creation of a committee to review grant applications and make award recommendations to the Metro Council;

WHEREAS, Metro has solicited and received applications for 2014 Nature in Neighborhoods community grants, now known as "Conservation Education" grants, and the grant review committee has identified the proposals which best meet the grant criteria and the goals of Nature in Neighborhoods grant program;

WHEREAS, the Metro Council adopted Resolution No. 14-4515 approving \$700,000 in the FY 2014-15 Budget and Appropriation Schedule for 2014 Nature in Neighborhoods Conservation Education community grants; now therefore

BE IT RESOLVED that the Metro Council hereby approves the award of the 2014 Nature in Neighborhoods Conservation Education community grants to those recipients listed in Exhibit A and for the amounts listed for each individual award.

ADOPTED by the Metro Council this 10 day of July, 2014


Tom Hughes, Council President



Approved as to Form:


Alison R. Kean, Metro Attorney

2014 Nature in Neighborhoods Conservation Education Grants
Review Committee Recommendations to the Metro Council

Total award amount recommended: \$699,498

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Nature in Neighborhoods conservation education grant review committee recommends the following 15 proposals for funding (\$699,498). They are listed in alphabetical order by the name of the applicant(s) in the small and large grant categories.

SMALL GRANTS

Building Environmental Capacity in Communities of Color: *Knowledge, Research and Discourse*

Coalition of Communities of Color

\$20,000

This project will 1) build the environmental knowledge of organizations of color by implementing an environmental education training series; 2) produce community-specific environmental indicators; and 3) provide a community of color vision of conservation that prioritizes environmental initiatives in communities of color.

Creating Change Agents for Inclusion during Restoration

Friends of Trees

\$19,130

Friends of Trees, Johnson Creek Watershed Council and Center for Diversity and the Environment would like to bring together restoration-focused non-profits to participate in a 2.5 day retreat to broaden the reach of these non-profits to diverse ethnic, cultural and economic groups.

IRCO Intergenerational Community Gardens Project

Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization (IRCO)

\$25,000

The IRCO Intergenerational Community Gardens Project will pilot a culturally relevant curriculum centered on native and edible plant gardening activities to unite underserved, intergenerational communities in watershed health education, sustainable and organic gardening, and conservation leadership.

An Online Regional Trail Map for People with Disabilities

Independent Living Resources/Access Recreation

\$25,000

Access Recreation will develop an online, regional trail map that will provide information, through descriptions, photos and videos that will provide people with disabilities – people of all abilities – information needed to know whether a trail will meet their abilities and expectations even before they arrive at the trail.

Northwest Youth Corps' East Metro Stewardship Project

Northwest Youth Corps (NYC)
\$15,000

Northwest Youth Corps requests \$15,000 to support 18 teens in conservation projects in the East Metro area during the summer of 2014. Project will equip participants to become conservation leaders in their communities, as we improve water quality, fish and wildlife habitat and connect people with nature.

Siskiyou Field Laboratory

Northwest Zen Sangha, Inc., (dba Dharma Rain Zen Center)
\$25,000

Five educational institutions will incorporate field studies at a local brownfield into their curriculum. Younger students will restore habitat and perform simple monitoring activities. Older students will develop and apply research questions relating to environmental remediation and ecological restoration. Substantial mentoring across institutions is emphasized.

Oakquest: collaborative mapping and stewardship of Oregon white oak

Urban Greenspaces Institute
\$24,776

Oakquest will enable 50+ citizen scientists to become active stewards in the mapping and conservation of imperiled Oregon white oak habitat. This effort will fill a critical information gap identified in the Regional Conservation Strategy and support career training in natural resources for two Native American college-age students.

Sense of Place: Engaging Indigenous Peoples

Urban Greenspaces Institute (fiscal sponsor)
\$25,000

PSU's Indigenous Nations Studies program, including one Native graduate assistant and 150 college students, will engage tribal and urban Native communities within The Intertwine region to strengthen ongoing partnerships, collaboration and communication regarding eco-restoration, conservation education, and Indigenous stewardship practices among The Intertwine Alliance partners.

The Wisdom Project

Wisdom of the Elders, Inc.
\$25,000

This Native youth leadership initiative provides Native American youth with hands-on outdoor conservation restoration and service learning during daily field trips to place-based natural areas. Paid peer mentors will develop leadership skills and career pathways while helping middle school youth at summer field science camp.

LARGE GRANTS

Environment 2042 Environmental Education (E42 EE) Leadership Program

Center for Diversity & the Environment
\$100,000

The E42 EE Leadership Program will create a cadre of change agents that will build a more diverse, equitable and inclusive culture in the environmental movement while advancing equity and building more diverse leaders in the environmental education field.

STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics)

Centro Cultural of Washington County

\$100,000

STEAM is an after school/summer program that provides educational supports for Latino youth who are struggling with core academic subjects. Centro seeks to enhance the environmental science component of STEAM through partnerships with Clean Water Services, Pacific University, and several school districts in Washington County.

Nadaka 2020 Conservation, Education and Stewardship Programming

Columbia Slough Watershed Council (fiscal agent)

\$61,000

Integrate and expand multicultural environmental education and social service delivery of eight collaborating organizations as part of a 3-year programming and operations and maintenance plan at Nadaka Nature Park and Garden. Programming will serve diverse youth and low-income residents throughout West Gresham and include a natural history ambassador program.

Slough School Community Engagement Project

Columbia Slough Watershed Council (Slough School)

\$66,963

The Slough School Community Engagement Project prepares the next generation of watershed stewards through hands-on ecological programming for elementary through college students in North and Northeast Portland, North Gresham, and Fairview while also connecting citizens to their local natural areas through community-based stewardship projects.

Building a Comprehensive Regional Leadership Model for Conservation Education

The Environmental Education Association of Oregon (EEAO)

\$100,000

The Environmental Education Association of Oregon will hire a Regional Coordinator to lead development and implementation of an inclusive, lasting regional conservation education leadership model that represents a diverse cross-sector of individuals and organizations working together to build a healthy, just, and thriving Portland--Metro region.

PMSP E-STEM Connections

Impact NW, fiscal sponsor of the Portland Metro STEM Partnership

\$67,629

Teacher teams from four local elementary schools will collaborate with four community conservation/environmental STEM (E-STEM) education organizations to enhance and implement place-based and service-learning experiences for students that demonstrate the synergy between the Oregon Environmental Literacy Plan and the Next Generation Science Standards.

STAFF REPORT

IN CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION 14-4549, FOR THE PURPOSE OF APPROVING 2014 NATURE IN NEIGHBORHOODS CONSERVATION EDUCATION COMMUNITY GRANTS

Date: July 10, 2014

Prepared by: Heather Nelson Kent, 503-797-1739
Crista Gardner, 503-797-1627

BACKGROUND

For nearly two decades, the Metro Council has provided funding for grants to community groups, non-profits, local governments and other organizations designed to improve water quality and wildlife habitat and give people of all ages opportunities to learn about and connect with nature.

In May 2013, voters approved Measure 26-152, providing new funding for Metro's parks and natural areas and providing increased funding for Nature in Neighborhoods community grants. Grant program staff used the framework provided by Metro Council in Resolution No. 12-4398 to develop an outreach plan, application materials and evaluation criteria for these community grants, referred to as Conservation Education grants, as outlined in the approved work plan. Staff aligned Metro's Conservation Education grant criteria with state, regional and community initiatives in order to achieve multiple benefits.

Grant Evaluation Criteria

The Conservation Education grant criteria focused on three program categories for funding:

Community Partnerships (capacity building, collaboration, activities across the conservation education sector)

Environmental Literacy (access to nature education and programs for all ages, integration with formal education, increased knowledge and engagement about the environment and natural systems)

Develop Conservation Leaders (leadership development, mentorship, workforce training).

The community response to the funding opportunity was tremendous. Metro received 74 pre-applications totaling nearly \$4 million in requests for the \$700,000 in available funding. More than 450 individual organizations were listed in the applications as partners or participants.

A (voluntary) demographic survey of applicants and their partners revealed that efforts to reach community based organizations that have not historically accessed these funds were effective. One third of the applications came from a culturally specific organization or included such an organization as a key partner. More than half of the proposals focused primarily on underserved communities, defined by the Metro Council resolution (Res. No. 12-4398) as low-income children and communities of color.

Application review and selection

Participation on the grant review committee is by application, open and advertised to all community members. Natural Areas Program Director Kathleen Brennan-Hunter selected this year's review committee from a pool of applicants, including local experts in education program management, philanthropy, grant management, fundraising, community partnership development and volunteer management. The committee included conservation education practitioners and those involved in planning, program evaluation and policy development. Committee members declared any direct conflict of interest in the proposals and did not score or participate directly in the discussion or ranking of application where there was a conflict. Perceived conflicts were also noted and recorded in meeting minutes.

Due to the large number of applications, Metro’s Nature in Neighborhoods Conservation Education community grant program follows a two-step process. The review committee evaluated pre-applications based on the information submitted by applicants, the stated evaluation criteria, and the review committee’s professional and collective judgment. The purpose of the pre-application review is to determine the best proposals to invite for full applications.

After reviewing the 74 pre-applications submitted, the review committee invited 26 to submit full applications. The same committee reviewed the final proposals using the same evaluation criteria and recommended 15 for funding by the Metro Council (see Exhibit A).

2014 Nature in Neighborhoods Conservation Education Grant Review Committee

Lara Christensen, Gray Family Foundation
Tony DeFalco, Verde
Sheilagh Diez, Columbia Slough Watershed Council
Megan Hanson, City of Portland Bureau of Environmental Services
Kristen Harrison, STEM Partnership
Stephanie Puhl, Tualatin Riverkeepers
Neil Schulman, Confluence Environmental Center
Kim Silva, Friends of Outdoor School
Grant Spickelmier, Metro
Elizabeth Williams, Community Member

2014 Conservation Education Awards

In reviewing this year’s group of conservation education proposals, the review committee found most compelling those applications that had the potential to deliver long-term, transformational impacts. Building organizational capacity, furthering regional or statewide conservation education efforts, supporting systemic change within the sector or providing data about the value of conservation education were of particular interest to the committee. Training on diversity, equity and inclusion in the environmental field and programs using traditional mentorship models to “train the trainer” were also highly rated.

Additionally, the review committee found compelling existing, proven programs that serve as regional models along with programs delivered in a culturally relevant manner. They focused on proposals that met the Council’s stated goals of increasing access to nature-based education programs for low-income youth and communities of color and increasing the capacity of all communities to participate in designing and delivering these programs.

Total award amount recommended is \$699,498. Grant projects will begin July 1, 2014. Grant applicants may have up to three years to complete their projects.

ANALYSIS/INFORMATION

1. Known Opposition

None.

2. Legal Antecedents

Resolution No. 12-4398, For the Purpose of Referring to the Voters of the Metro Area a Local Option Levy for the Purpose of Preserving Water Quality, Fish and Wildlife Habitat and Maintaining Metro’s Parks and Natural Areas for the Public.

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

Resolution 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 award of 2014 Nature in Neighborhood Conservation Education community grants and begins the individual contract award process for the selected grant applicants with an anticipated project start date on or after July 1, 2014. Projects may be up to three 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. The adopted FY 2014-15 budget includes the necessary appropriation authority for reimbursement of these grants.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

The Chief Operating Officer recommends adoption of Resolution No. 14-4549.