

BEFORE THE METRO COUNCIL

FOR THE PURPOSE OF APPROVING 2014)	RESOLUTION NO. 14-4554
NATURE IN NEIGHBORHOODS)	
RESTORATION AND COMMUNITY)	Introduced by Chief Operating Officer Martha
STEWARDSHIP 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;

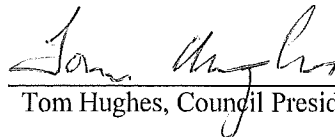
WHEREAS, the Metro Council reiterated the community grant program’s purpose, eligibility and funding criteria via Resolution No. 12-4398 referring the 5-year local option levy to the voters, and called for the creation of a committee to review grant applications and make award recommendations to the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

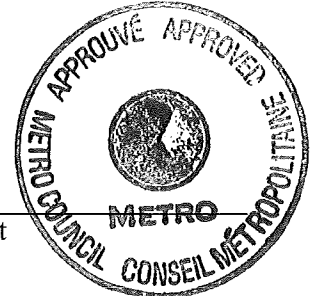
WHEREAS, Metro has solicited and received applications for 2014 Nature in Neighborhoods community grants, now known as “Restoration and Community Stewardship” grants, and the grant review committee has identified the proposals which best meet the grant criteria and the goals of the Nature in Neighborhoods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

WHEREAS, the Metro Council adopted Resolution No. 14-4515 approving \$800,000 in the FY 2014-15 Budget and Appropriation Schedule for 2014 Nature in Neighborhoods Restoration and Community Stewardship grants; now therefore

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

ADOPTED by the Metro Council this 18th day of September, 2014.


 Tom Hughes, Council President



Approved as to Form:



 Alison R. Kean, Metro Attorney

2014 Nature in Neighborhoods Restoration and Community Stewardship Grants

Review Committee Recommendations to the Metro Council

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Nature in Neighborhoods Restoration and Community Stewardship grant review committee recommends the following 14 proposals for funding. They are listed in alphabetical order by the name of the applicant(s).

Backyard Habitat Certification Program: Portland Metropolitan Expansion

Audubon Society of Portland and Columbia Land Trust (Co-Applicants) \$ 25,000

Backyard Habitat Certification Program is an initiative within the Portland metropolitan area that engenders community stewardship and improves habitat in developed areas. Participants act as partners in conservation by integrating native plants, removing invasive plants, reducing pesticides, stewarding wildlife and managing storm water in backyards.

Partners: City of Gresham, Friends of Nadaka Nature Park, Friends of Tryon Creek, East / West Multnomah Soil and Water Conservation District, City of Lake Oswego, Friends of Baltimore Woods, local green businesses and nurseries

Clackamas River Confluence Restoration Project

Clackamas River Basin Council \$ 95,626

Clackamas River Basin Council and partners seek to improve 9.5 acres of riparian/off-channel habitat in the highly visible Dahl Beach Park area, at the confluence of the Clackamas and Willamette Rivers. The project includes engineering designs, off-channel alcove habitat construction, floodplain revegetation, and community stewardship.

Partners: SOLVE, City of Gladstone, Clackamas Soil and Water Conservation District, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife

Blue Heron Wetland Restoration Project

East Columbia Neighborhood Association \$ 8,900

Purpose of funding is to ensure eradication of the noxious weed aquatic primrose (*Ludwigia peploides* ssp. *montevidensis*) from the Blue Heron Wetlands of northeast Portland and further engage the residents of the East Columbia Neighborhood with the natural environment adjacent to their residences.

Partners: Bureau of Environmental Services, Multnomah County Drainage District, North Portland Community Works, Portland State University

Restore Forest Park

Forest Park Conservancy \$ 100,000

Restore Forest Park is a long-term invasive plant species control plan to address and control invasive plants throughout Forest Park. The Balch Creek Launch Project is focused on restoring 155 acres in the Balch subwatershed; prioritized for its ecological value and high visibility.

Partners: Portland Parks & Recreation, Balch Creek Partnership (multiple members), Linnton Neighborhood Association, Forest Park Neighborhood Association

South Riverboat Forest Restoration Project

Friends of the Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge \$ 25,000

The project will restore 60 acres of high quality riparian habitat and adjacent forest along the Tualatin River. Community engagement and environmental education will be incorporated into restoration activities. Completed restoration will permanently link the project site to adjacent properties currently undergoing similar habitat restoration.

Partners: US Fish and Wildlife Service-Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge, Clean Water Services, Friends of Trees, Tualatin Riverkeepers, Cascade Education Corps, The Reser Family Foundation (funding committed)

Building Community Partnerships in the Johnson Creek Watershed

Friends of Trees (Johnson Creek) \$ 43,000

Increase and expand native revegetation efforts within the Johnson Creek Watershed focusing on areas adjacent to previous or current revegetation projects and newly prioritized sites at eight natural area sites including site preparation and maintenance and engaging over 1,000 volunteers at 26 events.

Partners: Portland Parks & Recreation City Nature East, City of Gresham Natural Resources Program, Johnson Creek Watershed Council

Tryon Creek Forest Restoration Partnership

Friends of Tryon Creek \$ 34,000

Friends of Tryon Creek and partners will expand community restoration of the emerging Southwest Portland forest corridor, activate hundreds of adult and youth volunteers, while increasing capacity to authentically engage diverse communities.

Partners: Friends of Tryon Creek, Oregon Parks and Recreation Department, Lewis and Clark College, Neighborhood House, Center for Diversity and the Environment, Tryon Creek Watershed Council, Columbia Land Trust, Ash Creek Forest Management, Scholls Valley Native Nursery and Boskey Dell Native Nursery

Johnson Creek Fish Passage Restoration

Johnson Creek Watershed Council (Fish Passage) \$ 58,000

Based on the results of a comprehensive assessment and prioritization of fish passage, the JCWC proposes to work towards removing two high-priority fish passage barriers. Opening fish passage benefits all upstream natural areas and enhances the greater ecosystem for threatened salmon and trout.

Partners: Centennial School District, Pleasant Valley Elementary School, Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife, Private Landowners, City of Portland, City of Gresham, Clackamas and Multnomah Counties, East Multnomah SWCD, PGE Salmon Fund, Portland State University Watershed Capstone Class, Portland Community College GIS Certificate Program, Saturday Academy Apprenticeships in Science & Engineering, Kingfisher Ecological Services, Aquatic Contracting, Johnson Creek Inter-Jurisdictional Committee

Riparian Reforestation in Johnson Creek Watershed

Johnson Creek Watershed Council (Riparian Reforestation) \$ 25,000

JCWC seeks Metro funding to support implementation of its Riparian Reforestation Strategy, primarily intended to provide shade to Johnson Creek and its tributaries and hence lower stream temperatures to levels that fully support native salmonids.

Partners: Wisdom of the Elders, City of Gresham, Clackamas County Soil and Water Conservation District, Private Landowners

Lower Errol Heights Wetland and Stream Restoration Project

Portland Bureau of Environmental Services \$ 85,000

Restore 1.5 acres of wetlands and 300’ of stream through culvert, weir, and pump removal; earth excavation for amphibian habitat; removal of rock armoring; stabilization of stream banks; and native plant establishment, achieved by up to eight project partners.

Partners: Johnson Creek Watershed Council, Friends of Trees, Friends of Errol Heights, Portland Parks and Recreation

Sandy River Delta Restoration

Sandy River Basin Watershed Council \$ 85,800

The Sandy River Basin Watershed Council will coordinate two years of habitat restoration and public engagement on the next 100 untreated acres of Sandy River Delta habitat. The project will remove invasive vegetation while installing more than 132,000 native plants, and offering an array of educational and stewardship opportunities.

Partners: US Forest Service, Friends of the Sandy River Delta, Friends of Trees, Confluence Project, MHCC-Project YESS, East Multnomah County Soil & Water Conservation District, FedEx Corporation, Ash Creek Forest Management, Jubitz Foundation, PGE Habitat Fund

Expanding SOLVE Volunteer Opportunities in Washington County

SOLVE (Washington County) \$ 15,000

SOLVE is expanding volunteer restoration opportunities in Cornelius, OR to facilitate a new partnership with Centro Cultural through their summer camp, afterschool program, and weekend bilingual community restoration events for families.

Partners: City View Charter School, Landowner (Hilja Davis), Clean Water Services, Centro Cultural

Community Partners Restoring Strategy Habitats in Tualatin River Basin

Tualatin Riverkeepers \$ 99,450

This project will engage local agencies, non-profits and businesses in restoration of 60.7 acres of wetland, oak savanna and riparian forest at Cook Park/Thomas Dairy, located in a reach of the Tualatin River deemed regionally significant for public and natural resource values.

Partners: City of Tigard, CleanWater Services, Community Partners for Affordable Housing, Good Neighbor Center, Friends of Trees, Portland Community College, Tigard Public Schools, Intel, REI, Patagonia, Columbia Sportswear, Waggener Edstrom and Anthro Corporation, Intertribal Gathering Garden, Portland State University-Indigenous Studies Program, Cascade Environmental Corps

Sturgeon Lake Restoration Project

West Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District \$ 100,000 (FY 2015-16)

The 3,000 acres of Sturgeon Lake, located just 12 miles from downtown Portland, is home to 180,000 wintering waterfowl and a refuge for juvenile salmonids. Historic levee and dam construction have cut off flows and, without action, the lake is in danger of disappearing.

Partners: Oregon Dept. of Fish & Wildlife, US Army Corps of Engineers, Bonneville Power Administration, Multnomah County, Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde, ODEQ, Ducks Unlimited, US Fish & Wildlife Service, Oregon Wildlife Heritage Foundation, Sauvie Island Academy, Sauvie Island Community Association

STAFF REPORT

IN CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION 14-4554, FOR THE PURPOSE OF APPROVING 2014 NATURE IN NEIGHBORHOODS RESTORATION AND COMMUNITY STEWARDSHIP GRANTS

Date: Sept. 18, 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, which grants are 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 (the “Natural Areas Levy”), 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, which referred the Natural Areas Levy to the voters, to develop an outreach plan, application materials and evaluation criteria for these community grants, referred to as Restoration and Community Stewardship grants, as outlined in the approved work plan. Staff aligned Metro’s Restoration and Community Stewardship grant criteria with state, regional and community initiatives in order to achieve multiple benefits.

Grant Evaluation Criteria

Using the framework provided by Metro Council in Resolution No. 12-4398, Metro’s grant program staff developed an outreach plan, application materials and evaluation criteria for this first cycle of restoration grants. Staff worked to align this new funding with other state, regional and community initiatives so that these grants can achieve multiple benefits. To do this, the grant criteria focused on two categories for funding, based on the Regional Conservation Strategy – Community Stewardship in Developed Areas and Restoration in Natural Areas. Additionally, staff identified two primary goals for all Restoration and Community Stewardship grants:

Goal 1: Preserve and restore fish and wildlife habitat in local communities and support larger conservation initiatives such as the Oregon State Conservation Strategy, Regional Conservation Strategy, Watershed Action Plans or local community plans.

Goal 2: Increase people’s awareness of the need for and benefits of protecting and managing natural areas. Engage people in learning about, protecting and managing natural areas at the community level.

The response to the funding opportunity was great. Metro received 43 pre-applications totaling nearly \$2.1 million in requests for the \$700,000 in funding available.

Due to the large number of applications, Metro’s Nature in Neighborhoods 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. Of the initial 43 pre-applications submitted, the review committee recommended inviting 26 to submit full applications. Those invited had one month to prepare a full application. The same committee reviewed the final proposals using the same evaluation criteria and recommended 14 for funding (see list below).

Nature in Neighborhoods Restoration Grants Review Committee

Participation on the grant review committee is by application, open and advertised to all community members. Natural Areas Program Director Kathleen Brennan-Hunter selected the committee members from the group of applicants. The committee included local experts in project management, habitat restoration, natural area land management, conservation planning, grants administration, non-profit management, volunteer coordination, and community partnerships. Committee members declared any direct conflict of interest in the proposals and did not score or participate directly in the discussion or ranking of applications where there was a conflict. Perceived conflicts were also noted and recorded in meeting minutes.

2014 Nature in Neighborhoods Restoration Grant Review Committee

Andrea Raven, Consultant
Elizabeth (Liz) Redon, Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board
Greg Creager, Tualatin Hills Park and Recreation District
Jenny Dezso, Clackamas River Basin Council
Joe Buttafuoco, The Nature Conservancy
Jonathan Soll, Metro
Kristen Pleyte Acock, City of Portland, Bureau of Environmental Services
Teela Golden, Oregon Zoo volunteer

2014 Restoration and Community Stewardship Grant Award Recommendations

The review committee discussed what they found compelling in their review of both the pre-applications and the final group of full applications. Generally the committee found well crafted applications that clearly stated what would be done, the steps to do the work, how the work would be monitored and maintained and included all of the elements requested in the application. While it was noted that a well written and organized proposal is believed to translate into a well executed project, the committee understood that not every organization has professional grant writing support and tried to look for the heart and intent of the project when the proposal was not as clear. Committee members also considered cost per acre or cost of staff time per volunteer hour and how the proposal tied into the Regional Conservation Strategy, Oregon Conservation Plan, state and/or federal priorities for natural resources in the Portland Metro area and/or local watershed or other local action plans. They found proposals that linked the work to other strategies and plans the most compelling.

The committee also considered the current state of the organization and the project from capacity and experience to funding access. The committee found projects that were ready to 'hit the ground running' to be most compelling, demonstrated through efficiency in the plans and the budgets. For organizations without restoration expertise on staff, they appreciated thoughtful

coordination of contracted services or project management and volunteer follow up demonstrating efficiency by identifying the strengths needed at various points to successfully execute the project. Generally they appreciated a clear plan that included what would be done by the various professionals or volunteers and when. They found budgets that leveraged other funding sources in a thoughtful and efficient way more compelling than those that primarily used staff time as match. While the committee understood that there could be some variance in the request from pre-application to full application as budgets were finalized, they would have liked to see an explanation when there was a significant increase in the request.

The locations of the project were also significant to the committee. They found proposals in key watershed or habitat areas on a regional or local level compelling. They noted, however, projects were most compelling when it was clear that they were creating habitat connectivity, leveraging existing work or recognizing the other work being done in the area and clarifying why the proposed work was important to the whole, particularly in areas with several competing proposals or several restoration projects underway. The committee also appreciated proposals that focused on a specific habitat or species.

The review committee recommended \$800,000 in total grant awards, \$100,000 over the amount programmed in this cycle. This was an exception to past practice but was recommended because of the unusual opportunity for Metro to leverage approximately \$5 million in federal funding for a project important to the region. Although Metro funds for the project are not needed until FY 2015-16, by approving the application from West Multnomah Soil and Water Conservation District in this grant review cycle, Metro funds can help secure the necessary local match and support this important restoration project in the Lower Columbia River Basin. If approved, all other grant contracts will begin Sept. 18, 2014. Grant applicants 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 Restoration and Community Stewardship community grants and begins the individual contract award process for the selected grant applicants with an anticipated project start date on or after Sept. 18, 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. 14-4554.