

BEFORE THE METRO COUNCIL

FOR THE PURPOSE OF APPROVING 2019) RESOLUTION NO. 19-4985
NATURE IN NEIGHBORHOODS)
RESTORATION AND COMMUNITY) Introduced by Interim Chief Operating Officer
STEWARDSHIP COMMUNITY GRANTS) Andrew Scott in concurrence with Council
) President Lynn Peterson

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, to fulfill the goals of this regional initiative, the Metro Council approved Resolution No. 05-3580A to establish the Nature in Neighborhoods grant program for local communities;

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

WHEREAS, in May 2013, voters in the Metro region approved the 5-year local option levy which included new and expanded funding for this grant program, referred to in the levy as Nature in Neighborhoods community grants;

WHEREAS, Metro awarded the first round of Nature in Neighborhood Restoration and Community Stewardship grants in September 2014 via Resolution 14-4554;

WHEREAS, Metro awarded the second round of Nature in Neighborhood Restoration and Community Stewardship grants in November 2015 via Resolution 15-4644;

WHEREAS, Metro awarded the third round of Nature in Neighborhood Restoration community grants in September 2016 via Resolution 16-4725;

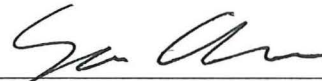
WHEREAS, the Metro Council confirmed the grant program’s purpose and funding via Resolution No. 16-4690, when the council referred the renewal of Metro’s local option levy for Metro’s parks and natural areas to the voters;

WHEREAS, the Metro Council approved Metro’s Strategic Plan to Advance Racial Equity, Diversity and Inclusion via Resolution No. 16-4708, which directs the agency to incorporate racial equity into all aspects of its work;

WHEREAS, Metro has solicited and received applications for 2019 Nature in Neighborhoods 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 community grant program; now therefore,

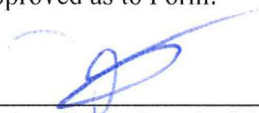
BE IT RESOLVED that the Metro Council hereby approves the award of the 2019 Nature in Neighborhoods Restoration and Community Stewardship community grants to those recipients listed in Exhibit A and for the amounts listed for each individual award.

ADOPTED by the Metro Council this 13th day of June, 2019.



Sam Chase, Deputy Council President

Approved as to Form:



Nathan Sykes, Interim Metro Attorney

**Nature in Neighborhoods Restoration and Community Stewardship Community Grants
2019 Grant Review Committee Recommendation to Metro Council**

Backyard Habitat Certification Program – Washington County Expansion and Equity Project

Recipient: Audubon Society of Portland

Grant amount: \$64,658

Project Partners: Tualatin Soil & Water Conservation District, Tualatin Hills Park & Recreation, Clean Water Services and the Cities of Tigard, Tualatin and Beaverton

Program summary: Expansion of the Backyard Habitat Certification Program to provide technical assistance, incentives, resources, and recognition to Washington County residents as they enhance native wildlife habitat, control invasive weeds, reduce pesticides, and manage stormwater at home while deepening the diversity, equity and inclusion training for program staff.

Young Black Environmentalists Internship Program

Recipient: Camp E.L.S.O. Inc.

Grant amount: \$100,000

Project Partners: BEAM Village (Black Educational Achievement Movement), Friends of Tryon Creek, The Blueprint Foundation, Crag Environmental Law Center, Portland Harbor Community Coalition and Reed College

Program summary: Internships, education, and exposure to all levels of environmental careers for Black students to increase leadership, engagement, and representation for people of color in the broader environmental movement.

Seiben Creek Landowner Stewardship Engagement Project

Recipient: Clackamas River Basin Council

Grant amount: \$22,000

Project Partners: Clackamas River Basin Council, Clackamas Soil and Water Conservation District and the Clackamas River Community Cooperative

Program summary: A riparian zone restoration and residential stewardship education project on the property of the Clackamas River Community Cooperative, a nonprofit, resident-owned manufactured home community with riverfront property along the Clackamas River.

[Depave the Centennial School District](#)

Recipient: Depave

Grant amount: \$42,000

Project Partners: Centennial School District: Powell Butte, Patrick Lynch, and Oliver-Parklane elementary schools, Mercy Corps Northwest, Portland Bureau of Environmental Services Clean Rivers Education and Johnson Creek Watershed Council

Program summary: This project will develop, plan and implement two to three re-greening projects at Title 1 Centennial School District elementary schools. Depave will conduct a community design process, and create ~10,000 sf of new greenspaces with 800 native plants, nature play and on-site stormwater elements.

[Collaborative Community Stewardship: Restoring Public Land through Traditional Knowledge](#)

Recipient: Ecology in Classrooms and Outdoors

Grant amount: \$75,452

Project Partners: Wisdom of the Elders, Portland Parks and Recreation and Portland Public Schools: Lent, Kelly, and Marysville school sites

Program summary: Project Partners will create a collaborative approach to improving local habitats, whereby members of Indigenous groups mentor students in Traditional Ecological Knowledge while meeting the restoration needs of public lands.

[Gladstone Nature Park Butterfly Hill](#)

Recipient: Friends of Gladstone Nature Park

Grant amount: \$11,600

Project Partners: Gladstone School District, Boskey Dell Nursery, City of Gladstone and Exceed Enterprises

Program summary: This project will rehabilitate a 25-foot tall hill located in the Gladstone Nature Park using park and city volunteers, along with middle and high school students and their families, to restore it with native plants that will attract pollinators including butterflies.

Mitchell Creek Floodplain Restoration

Recipient: Johnson Creek Watershed Council

Grant amount: \$36,750

Project Partners: Centennial School District, The Nature Conservancy, Portland General Electric, Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board, East Multnomah Soil and Water Conservation District, Wisdom of the Elders, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Program summary: A 35-acre property in the Mitchell Creek Floodplain contains an artificially constructed and impounded in-line pond that is both a fish passage barrier and a cause of lethally high summer temperature for salmonids. This project will remove the barriers and add large wood for habitat.

Re-Indigenizing the Urban Landscapes

Recipient: National Indian Parent Information Center

Grant amount: \$49,819

Project Partners: City Repair, Portland Parks & Recreation, Indigenous Nations Studies at Portland State University

Program summary: An Indigenous multigenerational approach to restoration; healing the land and ourselves. Revitalizing cultural connections to Place by creating an inclusive community utilizing Traditional Ecological Knowledge to restore waterways and wildlife habitats.

Green Job Workforce Development for High School Aged Youth

Recipient: Northwest Youth Corps

Grant amount: \$86,751

Project Partners: Girls Inc., Friends of Trees, Forest Park Conservancy, City of Troutdale, Portland Workforce Alliance

Program summary: A collaboration with Girls Inc. to improve the ability of high school aged youth from historically marginalized groups to help restore the region's natural areas, as they earn money, and engage in green job workforce development.

Student Crew Leadership Training Program

Recipient: Portland Opportunities Industrialization Center Inc.

Grant amount: \$50,000

Project Partners: Friends of Trees, Portland Parks & Recreation, Gresham Parks and Recreation, Friends of Nadaka Nature Park, Columbia Slough Watershed Council, Friends of Columbia Children's Arboretum and Ecology in Classrooms & Outdoors

Program summary: Through the Student Crew Leadership Training Program, project partners provide low-income youth and youth of color with the opportunity to restore local habitats and receive career-track natural resource mentorship/education.

SW 25th Ave ROW Community Trail Restoration

Recipient: Oregon Wildlife Heritage Foundation

Grant amount: \$12,500

Project Partners: Habitat Restoration NW, LLC, SW Watershed Resource Center, West Multnomah Soil and Water Conservation District, SOLVE, Mittleman Jewish Community Center, Portland Jewish Academy, Hillsdale Neighborhood Association

Program summary: This project is located along a popular SW Portland community trail used by a diverse group of people. This project engages the community in a variety of restoration and educational programs to improve and maintain this neighborhood green space.

Balch Creek Restoration Partnership

Recipient: The Forest Park Conservancy

Grant amount: \$100,000

Project Partners: Portland Parks and Recreation, Rosario Franco, Inc., Ash Creek Forest Management, City of Portland Bureau of Environmental Services, Portland State University

Program summary: The Balch Creek Restoration Partnership has three elements: 1) Habitat restoration, 2) Promotion of community stewardship, and 3) Improving economic and environmental equity. The project will directly benefit 200 acres of Forest Park in the Balch Creek Watershed.

[From Labor to Leadership: Advancing People of Color into Restoration Careers](#)

Recipient: Verde

Grant amount: \$30,599

Project Partners: Columbia Slough Watershed Council, VOZ Workers' Rights Education Project, Hacienda CDC and City of Portland Bureau of Environmental Services

Program summary: This project will provide a series of site-specific restoration trainings in the Columbia Slough Watershed designed by low-income people of color, taking Verde Landscape from labor to leadership in the local environmental sector.

[Restoration Equity: Stewardship and Job Skills for Immigrant Workers](#)

Recipient: Voz Workers' Rights Education Project

Grant amount: \$50,000

Project Partners: City of Portland Bureau of Environmental Services, People-Places-Things, Verde, Oregon State University Master Gardener Program and East Multnomah Soil and Water Conservation District

Program summary: Project partners will work together to provide restoration skills trainings and hands-on restoration experiences that improve economic outcomes for day laborers.

[Westside Wildlife Corridor for People and Habitat](#)

Recipient: West Willamette Restoration Partnership

Grant amount: \$63,000

Project Partners: Portland Parks & Recreation, Columbia Land Trust, Friends of Marquam Nature Park, Friends of Terwilliger, West Multnomah Soil and Water Conservation District, Wisdom of the Elders, Community Engagement Liaison Services, Central City Concern and Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership

Program summary: The West Willamette Restoration Partnership will enhance 20 acres of forest habitat in SW Portland and implement a community engagement project with culturally-specific organizations to inform planning for trails and access to nature.

STAFF REPORT

IN CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION 19-4985, FOR THE PURPOSE OF APPROVING 2019 NATURE IN NEIGHBORHOODS RESTORATION AND COMMUNITY STEWARDSHIP COMMUNITY GRANTS

Date: May 16, 2019

Prepared by: Crista Gardner, 503-797-1627
Juan Carlos Ocaña-Chú, 503-797-1856

BACKGROUND

For nearly two decades, the Metro Council has provided funding for grants to community groups, non-profits, and other organizations, designed to support and create partnerships in local communities that improve water quality, fish and wildlife habitat and connect people 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, which was referred to the voters by Metro Council (Resolution 12-4398). The Metro Council awarded Nature in Neighborhoods restoration and community stewardship grants in 2014 (Resolution 14-4554), in 2015 (Resolution 15-4644) and in 2016 (Resolution 16-4725).

In November 2016, voters renewed the Metro parks and natural areas levy with the approval of Measure 26-178, referred to the voters by Metro Council (Resolution 16-4690), which continued funding for Nature in Neighborhoods community grants. Furthermore, in June 2016, the Metro Council adopted the Strategic Plan to Advance Racial Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (Resolution 16-4708), which directs the agency to incorporate racial equity into all aspects of its work.

Grant program staff used the framework provided by Metro Council in Resolutions No. 12-4398, No. 16-4690, and No. 16-4708 to develop an outreach plan, application materials, review committee and evaluation criteria for these community grants, referred to as Nature in Neighborhoods restoration and community stewardship grants. Staff aligned Metro's grant criteria with state, regional and local conservation plans and community initiatives in order to achieve multiple benefits.

Grant Evaluation Criteria

The following are the purpose and three goal categories for funding. Fulfillment of these purpose and goals are the primary evaluation criteria for the proposals submitted to the Nature in Neighborhoods restoration and community stewardship grants program:

Purpose: Restoration grants support and create partnerships in local communities that improve water quality, fish and wildlife habitat and connect people with nature.

Goal 1: Improve water quality, fish and wildlife habitat. These grants will 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: Community partnerships. These grants support and create partnerships in local communities to connect people to nature and respond to community needs; increase people's awareness of the need for – and benefits of – protecting and managing natural areas; and improve the ability of all communities (especially communities of color and other historically marginalized groups) to learn about, help restore, experience and connect with nature and the region's natural areas.

Goal 3: Economic and environmental equity. The restoration and community stewardship grants help diversify the conservation movement. The grants provide access to outdoor, environmental, and natural resources; economic opportunities; protected natural areas; and the positive impacts of clean land, air and water to communities of color and other historically marginalized groups in greater Portland.

Review committee

Parks and Nature Director Jonathan Blasher selected this year's review committee from a pool of applicants. Participation on the grant review committee is by application, which is open to all and broadly advertised. The review committee included local experts in habitat restoration, natural area land management, conservation planning, mentorship and job skill development, diversity, equity and inclusion, community partnership development, philanthropy, and grant management.

The members of the 2019 Nature in Neighborhoods restoration and community stewardship grants review committee are: Charlotte Trowbridge, Tualatin Soil and Water Conservation District; Danielle Jones, KairosPDX; Gabrielle Haber, Opal Creek Ancient Forest Center; Jeff Merrill, Metro; Jennifer Wilson, Metro; Jihane Nami, Institute for Sustainable Solutions, Portland State University; Patty Lyons, The Wetlands Conservancy; Ruby Bucholtz, Tualatin Riverkeepers; Shannah Anderson, Bureau of Environmental Services, City of Portland; and Valerie Oster, Anchor QEA, LLC.

Committee members declared any direct conflict of interest with the proposals and did not score or participate directly in the discussion or ranking of an application where they had a conflict. Perceived conflicts were also noted and recorded in meeting minutes.

2019 Nature in Neighborhoods restoration and community stewardship grant review discussion

Due to the large number of applications, Metro's Nature in Neighborhoods restoration and community stewardship grant program follows a two-step process including a pre-application phase and a full application phase. The review committee evaluated pre-applications and full applications based on the information submitted by applicants, the stated evaluation criteria, and the review committee's professional and collective judgment.

In this round of the Nature in Neighborhoods restoration and community stewardship grants, the review committee valued the range of organizations, project types and project scales represented in the pre-applications submitted. The received project proposals came from smaller, volunteer-led or neighborhood-based groups all the way to large, well-established organizations. The applicants shared their own interpretation and meaning of restoration from the neighborhood to the regional

scale. Proposals emanated from a mix of culturally specific organizations and conservation focused organizations.

The review committee identified compelling projects which address career pathways in the environmental field and remove barriers for marginalized communities to enter that field. They emphasized the importance of on-the-ground restoration projects and appreciated the use of emerging technologies in conservation efforts, such as drones and cameras that offer a different perspective on nature.

The review committee valued projects which aligned with the Nature in Neighborhood grant program goals, individual organizations' plans or priorities, and state, regional or local conservation strategies. They found proposals stronger when they demonstrated progress according to their priorities, plans or strategies. They also found it compelling when applicants used relevant data that is not typical in restoration projects and plans to share data with others locally, nationally or internationally.

The review committee welcomed how applicants addressed their diversity, equity and inclusion experience at any level with honesty. Returning committee members noted an overall improvement in response to the diversity, equity and inclusion question from previous grant cycles. They valued proposals by organizations led by and for people of color and that nature-based organizations proposed projects which advanced their core missions while being more inclusive. They appreciated the openness of groups that are new to diversity, equity and inclusion to learning more, and projects in less diverse geographic areas applying different methods to be more inclusive. They also found compelling projects that made clear connections between conservation and restoration, where applicable, and traditional ecological knowledge and food, plants and wildlife significant to First Peoples.

Finally, the review committee valued authentic, long-established or newer partnerships. They noted partnerships that included clear plans to connect regularly and evaluate their work together. The committee also acknowledged the difficulty and appreciated effort of applicants to establish true, long-term partnerships with larger, complex organizations.

Recommendation

Staff recommends the approval of the slate of grants indicated in Exhibit A of this Resolution. Metro received 33 pre-applications, totaling \$1.9M in funding requests and 19 full applications, totaling \$1.09M. The review committee reviewed the pre-applications and full applications according to the grant criteria and recommends **fifteen (15)** grants for funding a total of **seven hundred ninety-five thousand one hundred twenty-nine dollars (\$795,129)** to the Metro Council (see Exhibit A).

Pending Metro Council approval, grant-funded projects will begin July 1, 2019. Grant applicants may have up to two years to complete their projects.

ANALYSIS/INFORMATION

1. Known Opposition

None.

2. Legal Antecedents

Resolution No. 16-4690, For the Purpose of Referring to the Voters of the Metro Area Renewal of the Metro's Local Option Levy for Protecting Water Quality, Restoring Fish and Wildlife Habitat and Connecting People to Nature.

Resolution 16-4708, For the Purpose of Approving the Strategic Plan to Advance Racial Equity, Diversity and Inclusion.

Resolution 16-4725, For the Purpose of Approving the 2016 Nature in Neighborhoods Restoration and Community Stewardship Community Grants.

Resolution No. 15-4644, For the Purpose of Approving 2015 Nature in Neighborhood Restoration and Community Stewardship grants.

Resolution No. 14-4554, For the Purpose of Approving 2014 Nature in Neighborhood Restoration and Community Stewardship grants.

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 2019 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 July 1, 2019. Projects may be up to 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. The adopted FY 2019-20 budget includes the necessary appropriation authority for reimbursement of these grants.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

The Interim Chief Operating Officer recommends approval of Resolution No. 19-4985.