

**Cooperator:**

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**Project Title:**

Western painted turtle habitat enhancement

**Cooperative Agreement Number:**

1448-13420-97-J002

**Report time period:**

8/1/04 – 4/30/05

**Activities and accomplishments:**

This project is complete. The old parking lot has been demolished, fresh topsoil was brought in, and native plants were installed in winter 2004-05. The attached photographs show the newly established plants and the area that was restored. In our grant application, Metro listed a number of success measures for the project. The following list includes those measures and our progress toward them to date.

- Cessation of boat launching into the slough and ponds: no boating activity has been observed in the slough and ponds since the parking lot was demolished and replanted. There is no evidence of foot tracks/canoe slides, therefore, this objective has been met.
- Cessation of driving and bicycling on the nesting area: one set of vehicle tracks was observed in late fall 2004. No vehicle tracks have been seen since. Bicycle tracks are observed on occasion, however, increased patrolling of the area by Metro park rangers begun in 2005 should reduce or eliminate this use.
- Turtle numbers remain high in the slough and ponds area: record numbers of turtles were counted during spring 2005 visual surveys.
- Woody plants in the revegetation area are established: plant survival has been good to date. Imported native topsoil (local silt loam) was tilled into the area and provided a good planting medium. Plants were mulched after installation, and recent mild, wet weather has contributed to good survival and growth.
- Established herbaceous plant community: four species were seeded into the area (*Agrostis exarata*, *Bromus stichensis*, *Hordeum brachyantherum*, and *Prunella vulgaris*). These plants are beginning to sprout, but their establishment will not be known for another month or two.
- Human access to the nesting grounds nearly eliminated in five years: results to date are encouraging. Few footprints are observed in the nesting grounds, and visitors appear to be remaining on the trails. The parking lot is no longer adjacent to the nesting grounds, and the paved trail to the interior of the natural area does not take visitors near them. As the new plantings grow, they will form a visual

barrier between the trail and the nesting grounds, which should further reduce traffic.

**Expenditures:**

All project funds have been expended. A detailed list of costs is attached.



Figure 1. Removing asphalt from the old parking lot at Smith-Bybee.



Figure 2. Another view of asphalt removal; the asphalt was recycled.



Figure 3. View of old parking lot as new soil is added.



Figure 4. Spreading local, native silt loam to prepare for planting.



Figure 5. New plants installed and mulched where old parking lot had been.



Figure 6. Snowberry (*Symphoricarpos albus*).



Figure 7. Young cottonwood (*Populus balsamifera*).



Figure 8. Cluster rose (*Rosa pisocarpa*).



Figure 9. Bigleaf maple (*Acer macrophyllum*).



Figure 10. Oregon ash (*Fraxinus latifolia*).