FINAL REPORT

THIRD YEAR GRANT FROM METRO GREEN SPACES PROGRAM

BUTTERFLY MEADOW

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY AT VANCOUVER

Richard Hansis
Coordinator

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The site, approximately one and one half acres of meadow, slopes gradually to the southeast toward Mill Creek. Surrounded by forest on the other sides, blackberry had begun to invade the planted tall fescue and other grass and forb species including thistle.

Site preparation consisted of two types of activities, assessment/planning and action. Assessment was done under the direction of consultant Maurita Smythe who determined existing conditions and presence of specific species of butterflies and the possible native ones that could be reintroduced. Given the surrounding forest for cover and food, she drew up a plan that suggested the planting of additional host species to diversify the native plant species present.

Activities undertaken were two. The first was the beginning of the removal of exotic species. The field was rototilled after placing black plastic sheeting over the grass. Americorps workers worked at pulling out blackberries around the edge of the meadow, but especially in the area near the stream. University students then planted willow along the stream and native rose bushes slightly above the willows.

GOALS AND BENEFITS

The replacement of planted exotic grasses with native species provides a habitat for a wider variety of species of butterflies than existed before. Butterflies, key pollinators for many plants, sometimes eystone species.

Besides creating a more diverse flora and fauna, the goal of the butterfly meadow is educational. The main educational benefits so far have been confined to students directly involved in environmental coursework. As the WSU new campus begins to serve more students and community residents, the butterfly meadow, as part of a larger set of restoration projects, will provide further educational benefits, both in the form of raising peoples' awareness of habitat loss issues and in the form of ongoing projects of monitoring and intervention.

WORK TASKS AND TIMELINES

Assessment and planning took place in the spring and summer of 1995. The first workday took place in early September, 1995, when Americorps sent 36 volunteers to the site for training purposes. Part

of the training involved the beginnings of blackberry removal. Two weeks later, a team of 12 workers spent four days removing the blackberries and spreading black plastic over the grass. Rototilling followed in early October, but a second pass was prevented by heavy rains, thus the planting of sterile oats did not take place. Planting of willow and rose took place in early November. The flooding in the winter wiped out most of the plantings as well as covering part of the meadow in muddy silt. Monitoring took place from late February and continues into the present by students taking a restoration class. Planting of additional native species and propagation of additional plants is presently taking place.

BUDGET

WSU contributions	
Staff	5800
Volunteers	3025
Americorps	2907
Equipment	75
Mileage	137
Indirect Costs	5375
Total	$17319
METRO contributions	
Consultant	1000
Wages and benefits	2743.37
Materials, plants	1179.69
Total	$4923.06

PROJECT STAFF

Richard Hansis, Project Coordinator
Kali Robson, Instructor
Maurita Smythe. Consultant
Jerry Hall, Grounds and Maintenance

VOLUNTEERS

WSU students
Americorps volunteers

RELATION TO GREEN SPACES PROGRAM

This project used Metro Greenspaces money to mobilize students and other volunteers in support of the creation of more diversity in flora and fauna. It will also serve as an ongoing educational/demonstration site for the University and the community. The site is already being used to train students in monitoring procedures.

HINTS AND ADVICE

1. Contract administration often takes longer than expected.

2. Thinking about the 100 year flood and its possible impacts would be wise.

3. It is easier to carry out activities and monitoring when the agency has a permanent presence at the site.

4. If possible, incorporate plant propagation from local materials. Buy what cannot be propagated from the site.

MONITORING AND MAINTENANCE PLAN

As part of a new campus being occupied from June, 1996, onward, the butterfly meadow project will be incorporated intp class activities in botany and ecology. This process began in the spring of 1996.