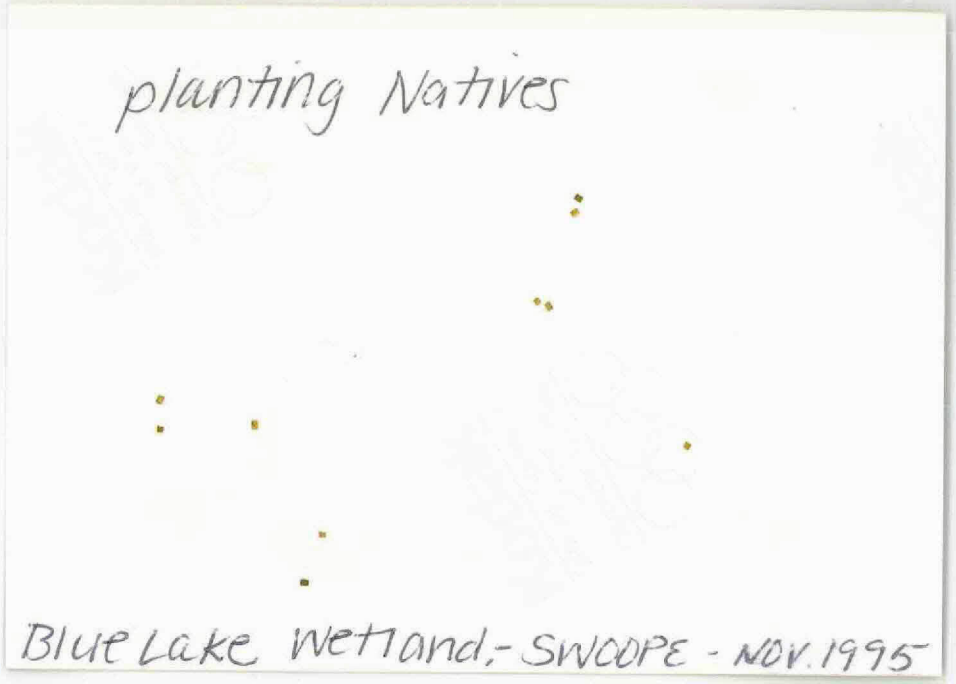
Placement of Plantings (upland)

SWOOPE - Blue Lake Wetlands - March - April 1996

SWOOPE
Nov. 1995
Blue Lake wetland
planting & transplanting native
plants



planting Natives

Blue Lake Wetland - SWCOPE - NOV. 1995

SWOOPE
Nov. 1995
Blue Lake Wetland
Planting & transplanting
native plants

Metro Regional Parks and Greenspaces Environmental Education Project Final Report for Students Watching Over Our Planet Earth (SWOOPE)

Project Contact Person: Teresa Whelan

1.) Written summary of grant activities that include progressive steps on how actual activity/project was completed.

The following phases of the project outline below may differ from the phases proposed in the grant project initially.

Phase 1: Plant I.D./Vegetation Mapping/Exotic Removal/Development of Naturalist Field Study Skills.

During the 1994-5 school year 120 seventh graders (four classes) and 28 fifth graders worked in the field at Blue Lake Park to enhance the plant and animal habitats of the wetland. Both the fifth and seventh graders took five field trips to Blue Lake Park. Each class spent two hours in the field on each field trip. The first field trip in the fall introduced students to the site and to skills in bird watching, animal tracking and water quality testing. All the students had the opportunity to work with an expert for 40 minutes on each activity.

The field trips in March and April of 1995 were focused on community service activities. Students removed exotic plants, identified native and non-native plants and mapped them with the help of volunteers, experts and park's people. The students set out to determine the best method of removing Canadian Thistle and Himalayan Blackberries without the use of pesticides. With the guidance of Nancy Owen Meyers, a freelance entomologist, they designed an experiment using 3 treatments (clear plastic, black plastic and newspaper). In March the students dug up areas of blackberry and thistle and covered each of them with one of the treatments to deprive the plants of sunlight and rain. They left one area uncovered to serve as the control. On their final field trip in June the students made observations and took notes on the best method of plant removal. They found the black plastic worked the best to prevent the plants from growing back.

In addition, in March and April the students identified the native and non-native plants growing in and around the wetland gathering data needed to

create the planting plan for the Blue Lake Wetland. In April they continued removal of exotics encroaching on the growth of the native plants. In May the fifth graders and about 20 seventh graders worked together at Blue Lake Park to map, remove more plants and improve skills in wildlife watching, observation and pond exploration. In June the seventh graders went to Blue Lake for a fun day at the park as a reward for all of their hard work, and the fifth graders visited Smith and Bybee Lake to view a natural wetland.

In the classroom the curriculum expanded on and complimented what the students learned in the field. Major themes included: the study of global problems, recycling, water as a valuable resource, maps and how to interpret them, the functions and values of wetlands, bird and plant identification, wildlife tracking, and endangered species.

The first year of the grant project was a successful one. We made progress in collecting data on existing plant and animal life of the wetland and removed some of the exotic plants. It was a positive experience for everyone involved. The following quotes are from three Mt. Tabor seventh graders who participated in the project:

"I feel that it is really important because it is helping plants and animals survive. I think it's important that kids learn the responsibility of helping take care of our planet." -Megan Hutchinson.

"I think the Blue Lake Wetland project is an excellent way to learn about the values and functions of wetlands, and what it takes to take care of them. I think it's important because it's a habitat of many plants and animals, and a place of recreation for many people. I think it was a positive experience for everyone involved." -Julie Thomas.

"I think it's a good project because we're helping control the wild plants that don't belong there. It was fun and I liked working with nature." - Trevor Graves.

Unfortunately for the grant project, Richard Stever left the area. Thus, he and his fifth grade class were only able to participate in the first year of the grant project. His contribution and support to SWOOPE has been appreciated and will be greatly missed.

Phase 2: Development of a Planting Plan/Plantings of Native Plant Species/Maintenance of Plants/Exotic Removal Continued.

Eleven seventh graders who participated in the first year of the grant project served as mentors to the 1995-96 110 seventh graders. In the fall of 1995 staff from Metro Parks and Greenspaces and consultants used the information the students had gathered on existing vegetation to develop a planting plan for the Blue Lake Wetland. In November of 1995, the mentors and seventh graders, with the help of Enviro Corps volunteers, park's people, biologists, parents and other volunteers planted close to 800 species of native plants in two days in and around the wetland and transplanted several other plants that were originally planted too far from the water's edge.

In the spring of 1996 two more field trips to Blue Lake Park were taken. In March the students checked on the growth of the plants they had planted in November, applied mulch to plants where needed and planted more natives in upland areas and around the wetland such as Douglas Fir trees, Western Red Cedars, Hemlocks , Red Alders, Vine Maples, Oregon Grape, Snowberry, Red Osier Dogwood, Pacific Nine Bark, Red Elderberry, Salmonberry, Thimbleberry, and Serviceberry. The trees and shrubs were planted in communities as you would find them in nature. For example, after a Douglas Fir tree was planted, an Oregon Grape, Snowberry and Serviceberry were all planted near each other allowing for appropriate growing space for each plant. Another community might have consisted of a Western Red Cedar, Pacific Nine Bark, Red Elderberry and a Red Osier Dogwood. Approximately 600 native species of plants were planted by the mentors and seventh graders, with the help of Enviro Corps volunteers, Northwest Service Academy volunteers, park's people, biologists, parents, master gardeners, Reynolds High School students, and other volunteers in two days.

In April the students and volunteers continued to help with the wetland maintenance. They estimated and mapped the square footage of existing exotics (i.e., Canadian Thistle, Bull Thistle, Reed Canary Grass and Himalayan Blackberry), removed exotics, and again applied mulch to plants where needed.

On March 2,1996 the mentors gave a half hour presentation at Madison

High School to community members, environmental organizations, and several other schools and organizations involved in community service projects. It was part of a community outreach program sponsored in part by Metro to increase people's awareness of their urban watershed.

The second year of the grant project culminated in May of 1996 with a visit to Beggars Tick Marsh, a local wetland. The students explored the natural wetland and participated in three activities lead by a professional: plant identification, macro invertebrate observation/water quality testing and animal tracking/bird watching. Each class was divided into three groups of about ten students who rotated with a chaperone to each station after 40 minutes of field study. The same procedure for the Blue Lake Wetland Project to take all four classes and eighth grade mentors out into the field was followed. Two classes (approximately 60 students) were in the field each day over a two day period for about two and half hours of field study.

Finally, in June of 1996 to celebrate all of the hard work and effort put forth by the seventh and eighth graders of Mt. Tabor Middle School we took the students for a boat ride on the Stern Wheeler up and down the Willamette River.

In June of 1996, due to budget cuts from decreased state funding of Portland Public Schools, I was left unassigned and essentially lost my position at Mt. Tabor. I applied for openings in the district and was transferred to the Environmental Middle School (EMS), a new focus school of Portland Public Schools. Fortunately, I was able to take the SWOOPE grant project with me to my new school. EMS has six multi-age classrooms with about an equal number of sixth, seventh and eighth graders in one classroom. During the 1996-1997 school year I was able to take my class (about 30 students) six times to Blue Lake Park to continue the third phase of the grant project. The schedule at EMS allowed me to take my class into the field on either a Tuesday or Thursday for almost the entire school day. On a typical field study day we would leave EMS at 9:15 A.M. by bus, work for about two hours in the morning, take lunch/recess for one hour, and then work for an additional hour in the afternoon returning to EMS by 3:00 P.M..

Phase 3: Maintenance of Plants/Exotic Removal Continued/Development of Naturalist Field Study Skills.

In October of 1996 30 EMS students and several volunteers spent the day getting acquainted with the Blue Lake Wetland and the surrounding upland area. In the morning a lesson in ethnobotany was lead by Deb Scrivens, Educational Coordinator for Metro. We learned how to use the stalks of nettles to make rope much the same way the indigenous people of the area did hundreds of years ago. In the afternoon we divided into three groups of about ten students lead by an adult and took a nature walk around the wetland. The students practiced their awareness skills, took field notes, identified plants using a dichotomous key of the area, bird watched and looked for animal tracks and signs.

In March of 1997 the same EMS students returned to the site to make some observations of what the area looked like in winter. In the morning they were again divided into three groups of ten students lead by an adult. They practiced using their awareness skills, took field notes, made some sketches of the area, identified plants, bird watched and looked for animal tracks and signs. In the afternoon some of the students removed blackberries around the wetland, and some of the students worked in small groups to collect data on the mortality counts of the plantings.

The focus of the remaining four field trips was on the maintenance and care of the new plantings from fall and spring of the previous year. In April and May of 1997 the students returned to Blue Lake Park twice each month. The students, with the help of Master Gardeners, park's staff, and other volunteers, continued to remove exotics, put plastic or paper mulch around the stems of the plantings, and covered the base of the plants with wood chip mulch to prevent weeds and/or exotics from encroaching on the growth of the plantings. Some of the students also helped to create nurse log habitats using existing branches that came from trees injured by the winter ice storms. In addition, in May another group of students worked with Karen Shay, a volunteer botanist, to collect wetland plant samples for our herbarium of the Blue Lake Wetland.

As was the case in the first year of the project, the classroom curriculum for the subsequent two years expanded on and complimented what the students learned in the field. Major themes included: the study of global problems, recycling, water as a valuable resource, maps and how to

interpret them, the functions and values of wetlands, bird and plant identification, wildlife tracking, and endangered species issues.

Hopefully, with the acquisition of additional funding, much of the work that the students have begun will continue over the next two years. In addition, I hope to develop the following:

* **Field trip packets** consisting of lessons, background information and a resource guide to plants and wildlife inhabiting the area;
* **Self-guiding brochures and traveling displays** for use at the Blue Lake Wetland and for checkout to educators outlining the history of the wetland, the work that has been done to enhance it, and the animals and plants that live there; and

Over the years of project implementation and beyond I hope to see native plants thriving, new wildlife inhabiting the area, students committed to enhancing, maintaining and monitoring the wetland, and more educators utilizing the site for environmental education.

2.) Written evaluator and comments by grantee and/or others involved in the activity/project. This should include what worked/what did not work/helpful hints for future project managers.

SWOOPE has provided students the opportunity to work side by side with teachers, biologists, gardeners, park's people, other professionals and volunteers to make a difference on a wetland desperately in need of enhancement. Their hard work is visible and greatly appreciated by Metro Parks and Greenspaces. Because of our project, Metro donated an additional $2000.00 to help fund transportation and supplies for the 1995-96 school year, and Boeing Commercial Airplane Group also donated $500.00 to SWOOPE thanks to the efforts of a supportive parent.

SWOOPE received national and international recognition through the help of Gil Grosvenor, President and Chairman of the National Geographic Society and Werner Zehnder, President of Zegrahm Expeditions, an international travel organization. In October of 1995 Gil Grosvenor, Werner Zehnder and several other representatives of National Geographic visited Mt. Tabor Middle School. Five of the eleven mentors prepared a presentation of SWOOPE for Mr. Grosvenor and his associates. As a result,

Mr. Grosvenor authorized an article about the project in their donor magazine *National Geographic Society Connections* which was published in March of 1996 (see attached copy). Mr. Zehnder offered to donate $1000.00 dollars to SWOOPE if the students would write an article about the project for their magazine, *Zegrahm News*. In December of 1996 the mentors met after school with me twice a week for a month and successfully completed the article. Zegrahm Expeditions published the article in their January 1996 edition (see attached copy) and donated $1000.00 dollars to SWOOPE. This contribution was used to help fund transportation costs for the grant project for the 1996-97 school year.

Overall, in my opinion, the SWOOPE project has been very successful. We were able to accomplish many of our goals and objectives outlined in the grant proposal. With more time and additional funding, it would be possible to accomplish all of goals and objectives originally stated.

Losing my grant project partner, Richard Stever, after the first year of the project was unfortunate. Making all of the decisions on my own, gathering additional supplies, and organizing all of the activities and field studies was both rewarding and challenging. Fortunately, however, the following individuals were incredibly supportive and helpful with every phase of the project: Deb Scrivens, Lynn Wilson, Emily Roth, Dale Vasnik, Mary McGaughey, Maryann Schmidt and Karen Shay. The success of this project is largely due to the time and commitment these individuals and the many volunteers, who participated in the field studies, gave to the project. I sincerely thank all of these people for their hard work and support.

Changing schools in the middle of the grant project was a little unsettling. Participation of Mt. Tabor students for two consecutive years allowed me to develop a mentoring component to the project that was exciting and beneficial to the goals of the project. I was hoping to continue this mentoring component during the following year. The EMS students seemed to bond with the site initially. They, unfortunately, did not plant many of the plants they were being asked to care for, and thus, the motivation level on the part of some of my EMS students decreased as the field work grew more demanding. Plant care and maintenance was clearly not met with as much enthusiasm as was the planting of plants.

For teachers who have not had much experience working in the field with

students I recommend that they take the time needed to plan well thought out field trips. A schedule of activities with times and dates is helpful as well as having all of the supplies needed available, and the volunteers and experts present to supervise the field work. Sending the schedule to volunteers for field study days well in advance of the proposed dates is advisable. Allowing sufficient time for each rotation or activity in the field is beneficial so students and adults do not feel rushed. Dividing the students into small groups whenever possible maximizes the learning time. Having an alternative plan in mind if things do not go as planned is helpful. Delegating responsibility to others is crucial to your survival. Recruiting experts and volunteers well in advance is a must as well as debriefing them on their role out in the field. Planning ahead for substitutes and busses is wise. Preparing the students for inclement weather, and how to dress properly in the field is also very important. And as always, being flexible and having a sense of humor helps everything run a little more smoothly.

Furthermore, fund raisers help supply funds for additional or unforeseen expenses that might arise as the project develops. I suggest recruiting parent volunteers to help with fund raisers as they can be time intensive. Media coverage can be helpful in attracting more volunteers, informing the public of the project and the students contribution to the community, and in opening doors to possible additional sources of funding (i.e., donations).

I was unaware of the time commitment needed to undertake such a grant project. The time needed to successfully manage the project far exceeds the average teacher's work day. The project required, on the average, ten to fifteen additional hours per week apart from the contractual work day. I strongly recommend allocating grant funds for teacher release time to manage the grant project to prevent "teacher burnout" and encourage other teachers to apply for grant money.

SWOOPE has been a very rewarding project. It is exciting to see my students work in the field on a real life science project with enthusiasm and determination. Children often become discouraged and feel powerless when learning about our environmental problems. This grant project has given students the opportunity to give something back to the Earth; to feel empowered through their knowledge and actions in caring for a wetland. SWOOPE has given me the materials, supplies and transportation funds to make the teaching of environmental science, ecology, biology and

geography come alive in the classroom and in the field. Teachers can often feel isolated in their classrooms. The partnerships I have made through the grant project have been beneficial and rewarding to me, my students and the community. I would like to express my gratitude to Metro Parks and Greenspaces, the trustees of Meyer Memorial Trust and all of those who awarded us the seed money for SWOOPE.

3. Photo documentation showing how the activity/project was accomplished. (Please see attached photos.)

4. If the grant included a restoration/enhancement portion please include before/during/after photos of the site. (Please see attached photos.)

5. If the grant included a restoration/enhancement portion please outline the maintenance plan or follow up activities that will ensure success of the project.

Maintenance Plan as outlined in the *Blue Lake Wetland Management Plan* (Draft, June 1996 prepared by Joseph Nichter, EnviroCorps for Metro Regional Parks and Greenspaces.)

"Regular maintenance of the wetland area will be provided by the park staff and services. Most maintenance such as exotic removal, watering and quality control will be done during the growing season which runs from early spring of April to the late fall around the first week of November. Exotic removal is done three to four times in a growing season. Mowing, digging, spraying and using string trimmers in heavily congested areas like Himalayan Black Berry patches; the goal is to prevent the exotics from seeding.

Watering is regulated by the moisture level, as the pond is known to recede three to four feet in a drought. The park staff has a mobil watering tank with a maximum capacity of 300 gallons a load. It pumps 10 gallons every 12 seconds. Most of the trees and plants require eight to ten gallons a week, and depending on the quantity of staff the whole area could take two to three days to complete one watering cycle.

In the spring of 1997 park staff will begin a regular plant inventory of the wetland area to check the mortality of the installed plants to give an idea of the success rate of this project."

If I am able to obtain additional funding for transportation, I hope to include my students in the continued maintenance of the wetland area. They could continue to help with exotic removal and the remulching of plants as needed.

6. Actual product of the grant such as curriculum, video, guide, brochure, etc. that the grant monies funded.

The students have created a reference herbarium of some of the wetland plants of the Blue Lake Wetland. The following plants were included in the herbarium (common name listed here): Pacific Ninebark, Bladder Campian, Red Elderberry, Red Clover,Queen Ann's Lace, Snowberry, Red Alder, Evening Primrose, Red Osier Dogwood, Thimbleberry, Hedgehog Dogtail, Nookta Rose, Field Mustard Rape, Cleavers, Reed Canary Grass, Tufted Vetch, Giant Horsetail, Sheep Sorrel (Sour Weed), and Oregon Iris.

If I am able to continue the project, students could expand the reference herbarium yearly until it was finalized. They could also create another reference herbarium exactly the same for use in school libraries or park offices.

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From "National Geographic Society Connections" magazine Vol 2 March 1996

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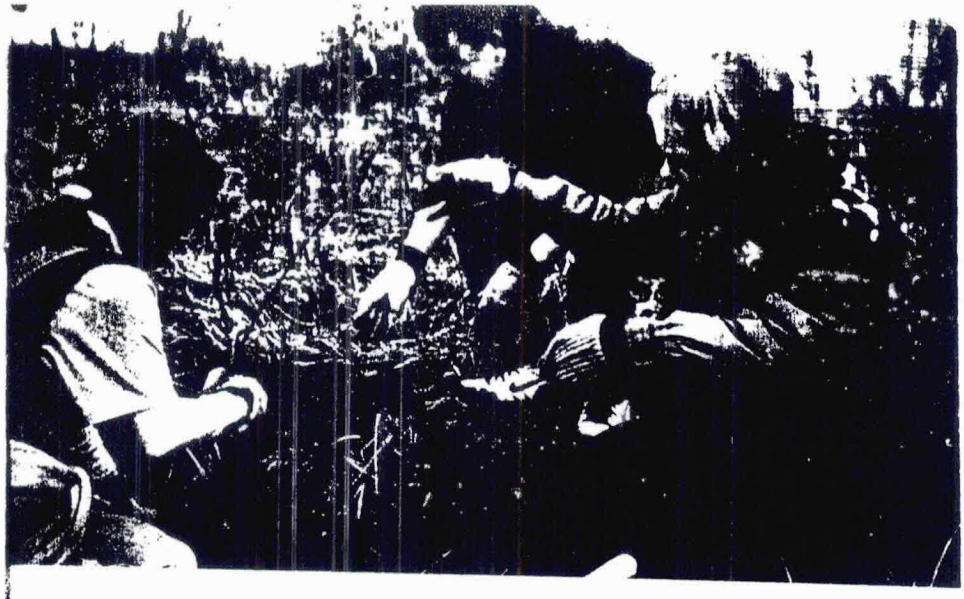

JUMP-START FROM STATE ALLIANCE

Lessons in a Wetland

When Teresa Whelan teaches her 127 seventh-graders about wetlands, it's no boring book session. She takes them right into the field.

This is the second year that her students at Mt. Tabor school in Portland, Ore., have crowded onto buses for expeditions to a manmade wetland at Blue Lake park, where they learn lessons about the land.

tion in the nation's classrooms, contributed $300. The grant was an essential match for a much larger donation from the Meyer Memorial Trust, which made the project possible.

Teresa learned of the funding possibilities while attending a summer institute sponsored by the Oregon Geographic Alliance. "Without National Geographic support this wouldn't have happened," she said.

The program picked up unexpected additional support when Society President Gil Grosvenor attended a student presentation on the wetland program last fall. With him was Grosvenor Council member Werner Zehnder, president of

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ZEGRAHM NEWS

January, 1996

Volume 6, Number 1

STUDENTS WATCHING OVER OUR PLANET EARTH (SWOOPE)

by Erin Koach, Laree Verd, Carl Jansen, Emily Linker, Julie Thomas, Adelle Lennox, Trevor Graves, Socheath Chum, Megan Hutchinson

In the following article, eighth grade students from Mount Tabor Middle School in Portland, Oregon, describe their participation in restoring the man-made Blue Lake Wetland into a more natural habitat, in the process learning invaluable lessons about conservation and ecology.

"The Blue Lake project was hard and discouraging at times, but it had its memorable moments. In the end it was a good experience, and we had a lot of fun. You'd be surprised what some devoted people can do!" - Erin Koach

Originally the Blue Lake Wetland was a driving range. In 1987 a wetland in Portland was destroyed and, because it is a federal law that there be no net wetland loss, the Highway Division of the Department of Transportation decided to transform Blue Lake Park into a wetland.

In 1987 the people constructing the wetland made many mistakes. They made the land around the pond and on the island too steep to promote the growth of wetland plant and animal habitats. They put in many exotic plants which began taking over the native growth. Some plants were put in places where they couldn't survive - either too close or too far from the water.

Mount Tabor Middle School's Blue Lake Wetland Project was started by Ms. Teresa Whelan, a seventh grade biology teacher, and Mr. Richard Stever in the fall of 1994. The initial goal for Ms. Whelan was to involve her students in a community service project where they could work in the field with biologists, gardeners, and other professionals. Ms. Whelan had a contact with the Metro Regional Parks and Greenspaces (METRO) who suggested that she consider man-made Blue Lake Wetland, which needed to be enhanced into a more natural wetland, as a worthy project. With the help of a grant from the Meyer Memorial Trust, Ms. Whelan included restoration work at the Blue Lake Wetland as part of her seventh grade curriculum. As her students last

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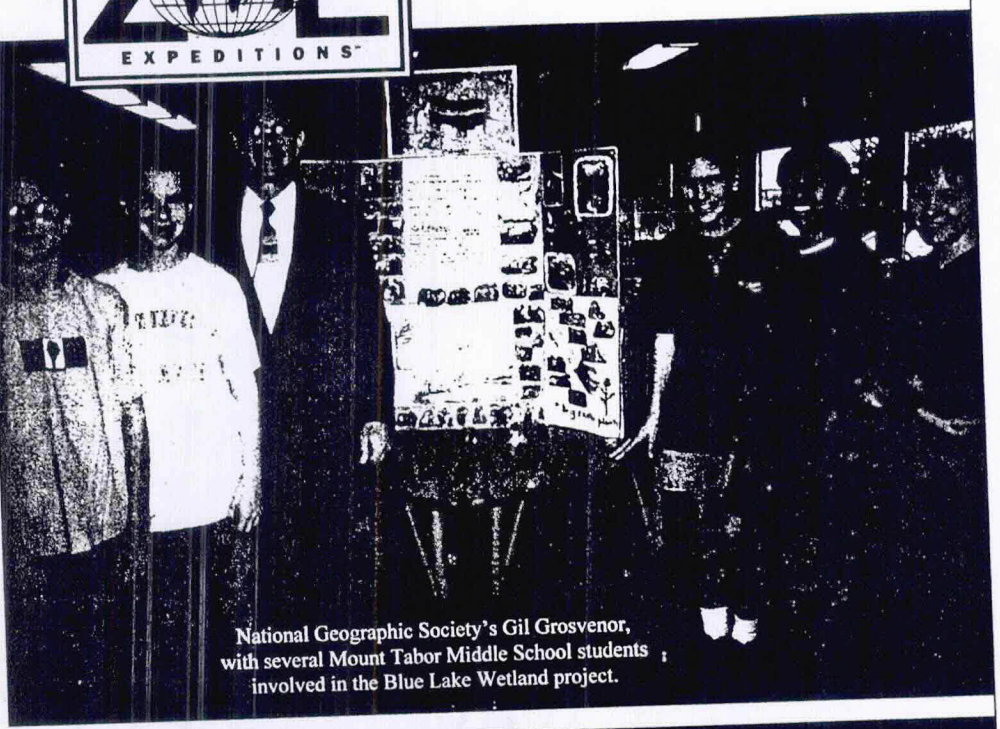

National Geographic Society's Gil Grosvenor, with several Mount Tabor Middle School students involved in the Blue Lake Wetland project.

180° from Ordinary *plus* the A-Team!, *by Nadia Eckhardt*

Sitting on the upper deck of the *Wind Song* in the South Pacific one sunny afternoon in early November, my attention was caught by the unmistakably nautical sound of her giant winches methodically unfurling enormous white sails. The flapping of the sails grew louder as they were raised high aloft, and then subsided as the trade winds filled the canvas. A moment later, the engines were shut off and we continued under sail alone. Then, the only sound was the slapping of the waves against our hull, and the occasional whirr of a sail being adjusted to our course.

Only seven months earlier, on Friday, 28 April 1995, I had been one of six Zegrahm expedition staff who stood on the dock in Papeete, Tahiti and laid eyes on the *Wind Song* for the first time. For us, her appeal as an expedition vessel was immediate and unanimous. I never thought that it would happen, but five months later Zegrahm had a signed contract chartering the vessel for two unique voyages in the South Pacific in the spring of 1997. Now here I was, on a reconnaissance trip in preparation for our own expeditions in a year and a half's time, experiencing for myself the romance of

(Cont.)

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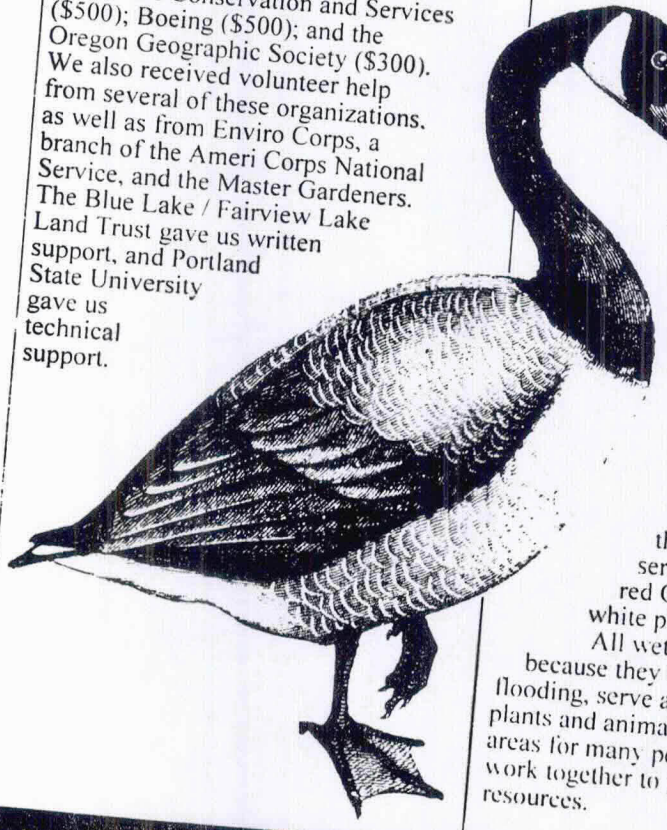
(cont. from front page)

year, we had to participate. This year Ms. Whelan strongly encouraged us to become mentors to her current seventh graders, as we had shown extra interest in the project.

In our second year working on the Blue Lake Wetland project, we are still adding to the long list of things that we have accomplished out at the site and here in school. Last year we began by identifying bird and animal life, mapping the land, and creating data. Then we dug up Canada thistle because they harmed native plant growth and were not native to the area. We tried a few different treatments for killing the blackberries and the Canadian Thistle. We cleared areas of them and covered them with black plastic, clear plastic, and newspaper sheets. We covered them to keep light, heat, and rain out. We hoped this would keep them from growing back. The black plastic worked best. It kept the thistles and blackberries from growing back. Our fourth visit was a reward for all our community service. We went there on a field trip for a fun day at the park.

This year we have compiled data and have started on a map of the park which locates the existing plants, both native and exotic. In early November we were assigned to Ms. Whelan's current classes and went with the seventh graders to work on transplanting and planting plants.

There are many people who have helped us in our project. The following have donated to our project: Meyer Memorial Trust ($7,000); Metro Regional Parks and Greenspaces ($3,700); East Multnomah County Soil and Water Conservation District, and the Natural Resources Conservation and Services ($500); Boeing ($500); and the Oregon Geographic Society ($300). We also received volunteer help from several of these organizations, as well as from Enviro Corps, a branch of the Ameri Corps National Service, and the Master Gardeners. The Blue Lake / Fairview Lake Land Trust gave us written support, and Portland State University gave us technical support.



Transportation via bus cost us $100.00 per class. The rest of the money was spent on soil and water testing equipment, field equipment (garden tools and binoculars.) books, classroom instruction materials, maps, videos and a computer for the library with access to the internet.

During the 1994/95 school year, a total of 120 seventh graders, 28 fifth graders and many volunteers helped with this project. The seventh graders put in over 35 hours of work. To do so, the four classes had to have a plan. On each field trip day two seventh grade classes each spent two hours working in the field alongside biologists, parks people, gardeners, and community volunteers. They used the tools that actual scientists use (i.e., shovels, water testing equipment, field guides and binoculars.) This year, a total of 110 seventh graders, eleven eighth graders (Blue Lake Mentors) and several volunteers have helped out.

We hope the wetland will continue to become an environmental learning center for students and teachers. In the future it will take additional funding for transportation (for the students to get to and from the site) and to replace materials and supplies. It will also require many seventh and eighth graders who are interested in participating in the project and more volunteers to help supervise the field work.

With additional funding we will continue to plant trees and transplant other plants to help Blue Lake become more like a natural wetland. We will also continue to pull exotic plants, as well as map and identify plants and animals. We will monitor the water quality of the pond. Finally, we hope to develop a brochure of the Blue Lake Wetland that tells about the history of the wetland, the work that has been done to enhance it, and describes the animals and plants that live there.

There are many plants and animals at Blue Lake. Some of the animals are the American robin, the American gold finch, tree swallows, muskrats, ducks, mice, deer, and Canadian geese. A few of the plants are western service berry, red elderberry, red Osier dogwood, western white pine and salmonberry.

All wetlands are important because they filter water, help stop flooding, serve as a habitat for many plants and animals, and provide recreation areas for many people. We all need to work together to preserve these valuable resources.

Zegrahm Expeditions is supporting the continuing restoration and educational forum of the Blue Lake Wetland Project. Zegrahm News *readers who would like to make a donation should send it to the attention of Ms. Teresa Whelan, Mount Tabor Middle School SE Ash, Portland, OR 97215.*

"I think the Blue Lake Wetland pro is an excellent way to learn about values and functions of wetlands, what it takes to take care of them. think it's important because it's habitat of many plants and anima and a place of recreation for man people. I think it was a positive experience for everyone involved.
- Julie Thomas

"I think it's a good project because i helping the environment. it's importa that we're doing it because if we weren't, who would?" - Laree Verd

"It's a good project because we're learning through the experience and we're helping the wetland. I like bein a mentor better than a student becaus I get to be in charge. And I got to do different things than the seventh graders." - Socheath Chum

"I think it's a good project because we're helping control the wild plants that don't belong there. It was fun and liked working with nature."
- Trevor Graves

"I think it's a good cause and more people should get involved. It was hard work but in the end I'm glad I did it because it's helping the environment."
- Emily Linker

"I feel that it is really important because it is helping plants and animals survive. I think it's important that kids learn the responsibility of helping take care of our planet.
- Megan Hutchinson

"I think it's good to give the public a better idea of what a wetland is really like. It's important because it gives animals a home and filters the water. The project is turning out well, but it takes a lot of work." - Carl Jansen

"I think it's really important that we're helping fix the Blue Lake Wetland. it's a good learning experience for us and the new seventh graders. I feel good knowing that I've helped restore and fix some of Blue lake's natural resources."
- Adelle Lennox