

Greenspaces Environment Education Grant  
Final Report *Contract # 921696*  
Riverside Elementary

Submitted by,  
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## **1. Grant activities and progressive steps**

This project was split into two parts. With this grant, we accomplished Stage I, which was monitoring and field research. We also obtained designation as a school with Wildlife Habitat by 4H Wildlife Stewards program. We are in the process of creating restoration plans to enhance the area with native vegetation to invite wildlife into the space.

The milestones and measurable objectives are embodied in the following activities/outcomes:

### **Students present project findings to greater school community and neighbors:**

- 4th and 5th grade students have teamed with primary age students to share and explore the greenspace.
- 4th grade students presented the greenspace as a learning classroom on the school district's cable access channel (aired daily for months).
- Students shared their knowledge with Lynn Wilson, Cascadia Wild, Friends of Trees and Stephanie Wagner at Tryon Creek and 4-H.
- Students met with neighbors to share their goals for the greenspace.

### **Area becomes designated as a Greenspace:**

- after many discussions with the school district, we have "officially" been granted the space with recognized boundaries for student use and study as well as permission to enhance the area.

### **Students trained in surveying and monitoring the area:**

- Sampled macroinvertebrates to determine water quality
- Measured dissolved oxygen, flow and mapped water.
- Collected and identified insects and spiders with pitfall traps.
- Soil samples were taken and analyzed by students.
- Plants identified and plotted.
- Wet and dry areas mapped.
- Data collected, organized, and displayed data
- The second grade teachers have begun Classroom Feeder Watch

### **Creation and compilation of student made field guides:**

- Rudimentary field drawings and descriptions created by students in a pamphlet format to be used by other students.

### **Student led presentations of the progress and restoration enhancement plan:**

- Intermediate students presented their greenspace projects to primary students.
- 4th grade students presented the greenspace as a learning classroom on the school district's cable access channel (aired daily for months).

### **Documenting progress with digital camera and video for presentation:**

- Molly Morrow and Genevieve Bouwes used digital photos and video shorts to present this project to other district teachers at a Project Based Learning Conference.
- Project display boards with photos up in the school.
- Staff meetings to present
- Molly Morrow and Genevieve Bouwes used digital photos and video shorts to present to Riverside staff which has elicited more interest and support from other teachers in the building.

### **Mathematical calculation of specific properties within quadrants:**

- Elementary graphing, mapping, testing of the area

### **Knowledge of native and exotic plants appropriate to the area:**

- Students have researched using a variety of resources such as field guides, web sites and books to determine existing plants and plants which would do well in the area.
- Students have learned properties of invasive species such as reed canary grass.

### **Knowledge of animal ecosystems involved within the area:**

- Students have researched using a variety of resources such as field guides, web sites and books to determine existing animals which would do well in the area.
- Heidi Jandro a graduate student of Portland State University did a bird study of the area with fourth grade students.

### **Students kept field journals**

- They recorded information, made observations, defined new words and reflected on the various stages of the project and their learning.

## **2. Hours/Participants/Partners**

We have formed partnerships with groups such as Cascadia Wild, Friends of Trees, 4H, The Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts, GI Joe's, parents, as well as with our school district. We also have received a Diack Ecology Grant.

<b>Participants/Partners</b>	<b>Number of Participants</b>	<b>Total Volunteer Hours:</b>
Students	400	20,160
Teachers	7	1,500
Cascadia Wild	3	90
Friends of Trees	1	4
Lynn Wilson	1	15
Heidi Jandro	1	30
Boy Scouts	5	20
Parents	8	60
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	426	21,883

## **3. Evaluation**

The implementation of our grant was challenging. We had a very difficult time finding experts to work with us in a capacity which addressed our needs and the needs of our students. We had a general idea of what we could do and how to do it, however, we were lacking in expertise and those with expertise were lacking in the ability to teach children and manage large groups of students. It was also more expensive than we anticipated to hire a consultant and difficult to find a consultant who could envision the potential of the space. For the first year, we found ourselves interviewing potential partners, collecting tons of information, and exploring options as we searched for a framework. It became evident that the framework we were looking for did not exist.

The turning point for us was the realization that we needed to become the experts. We have the experience teaching this population of students, group management skills, curricular understanding as well as the flexibility of in house scheduling of time with our students. We have continued to take classes, read, and access knowledge of experts. We have taken a wider view in that we see this as a project that will continue to evolve and change as well as expand to include all

grade levels at Riverside Elementary. The project is on going and we continue to work with students in our Greenspace as we move on to the design stage of this project.

Our partnership with Friends of Trees has been an exciting beginning. Jeff White, the coordinator, is enthusiastic about the potential of the space and is working with us to create a design using native vegetation. He can really envision the potential and sees the value inherent in what it already is.

GI Joes is located down the street from Riverside Elementary. We could not have bought near what did without their generous discounts. We were able to purchase two full class sets of rain gear at cost, as well as binoculars, boots, and compasses at a great discount.

Another success was our relationship with the North Clackamas School District. It has taken a number of years, numerous meetings and phone calls to reach a mutually agreed upon boundary for the greenspace. It seems the district has acknowledged the value of this space for our students and the wider community. Last year there was a proposal to turn our greenspace into a parking lot for the school. Because of the students' involvement and use of the area, this option was eliminated from consideration.

We have had much support and interest from other grade level teacher. Teachers at all grade levels are incorporating the study of the Greenspace into their existing curriculum. There is an area in the school that has been designated as the "Greenspace Closet" where teachers can check out materials to use with their students outside.

Raised awareness on the part of parents has provided classes with various opportunities. Two picnic tables were made by parents for student use outside next to greenspace. Another parent is building a kiosk for display in the greenspace to house student created habitat information and artwork. Parents have found grants available to pay for related field trips. Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts are interested in summer maintenance and watering once we begin our planting.

Overall, we are pleased with the progress we have made thus far. While we don't have as many tangible products as we thought we might, this project has become deeply embedded in our school culture. One of our greatest triumphs is recognition that this previously unused, mowed area is valued for wildlife and for student learning.





















































