

Metro Greenspaces Grant Report

for

Clackamas County 4-H Wildlife Stewards Program

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Scope of Project

The Mission of 4-H is to develop youth and adult potential to improve communities through learning to live, learning to make a living, strengthening families and communities, becoming lifelong learners, developing leadership and using the research-based knowledge of the land grant university system.

The 4-H Wildlife Stewards Program was started in response to the growing public concern over the deterioration of our environment and the resulting loss of wildlife habitat. It was recognized that this problem would not be solved until a large percentage of the public became actively involved in the caring for our environment.

To increase the involvement of the American public in our natural environment, two segments of the population has to be made aware of the issues and become actively involved in some of the immediate solutions: 1) Youth, and 2) Urban/suburban populations. Youth needed to become involved in environmental issues, because the solutions to these problems are long-term, and involve changing the ways that we think and live. Further, people living in urban/suburban centers needed to become involved in these environmental issues, because without their ownership of the problems, and their support for proposed solutions, there would be no long-term resolution of these problems.

4-H Wildlife Stewards are trained volunteers in partnership with public and private organizations who assist students and teachers in the development and use of schoolyard wildlife habitats. 4-H Wildlife Steward volunteers create sustainable wildlife habitat sites on school grounds and promote stewardship among youth by inspiring, educating, and connecting communities, schools and natural resource agencies and organizations.

In order to implement and support this popular program in Clackamas County, to ensure that the volunteers and teachers were supported and received ongoing continuing education, to coordinate communications between schools and the trained volunteers, and to provide the latest research-based information from OSU as well as USFW biologists, a part-time Wildlife Stewards Volunteer Coordinator was hired using Metro Greenspaces grant dollars. The Wildlife Stewards Volunteer Coordinator was responsible for the recruitment, screening, selection, placement and support of the Wildlife Stewards into Member Schools within the county. The Coordinator also conducted recruitment, selection, screening and gave support to the Member schools.

Wildlife Stewards completed a 40-hour training course. Training sessions included topics such as "Elements of a Successful Schoolyard Habitat," "Designing and Planting a Schoolyard Habitat," "Using the Schoolyard Habitat as an Outdoor Learning Lab," "Strategies for Working with Teachers, Students and Parents," and "Wildlife Habitat Issues from both an Urban and Rural perspective (a three-day tour to Central and Eastern Oregon co-hosted by the Central Oregon Society of Range Management)."

Member Schools received ongoing support and training including bi-monthly newsletters, monthly meetings/trainings, and site visits by the Volunteer Coordinator. Wildlife Stewards and

Member Schools also received educational materials, plant and wildlife species resources, and curriculum from the three sponsoring agencies.

To become a "Member" School, a school representative completed a school application and was interviewed. Schools were screened and selected for their commitment to education and schoolyard habitats. Schools also provided funds for habitat supplies and materials, additional parent and community volunteers, attended a school representative orientation and gained site approval from the school district and principal. Furthermore, each school ensured that the project was planned, designed, planted and maintained by students. Each Member School received a minimum of 100 hours of volunteer support from the Wildlife Stewards. Wildlife Stewards were trained to support schools by:

- participating in planning committees to ensure project longevity
- working in teams with small groups and large classes to research and plant the schoolyard habitat
- helping map and inventory the schoolyard wildlife habitat site
- help students research, select, and order plants and seeds for the habitat
- assist teachers in presenting lessons and activities in or about the habitat
- work with students to help them learn gardening skills and gain an appreciation of nature
- help students keep portfolios of their work

Progress

The Clackamas County 4-H Wildlife Stewards Program received an \$8,000 Metro Greenspaces grant award in January 2000, and began implementation with member schools in November 2000. During this time the grant year was extended due to un foreseen changes in staff (the coordinator position). As such, the grant period concludes December 2001. Currently there are eleven (11) 4-H Wildlife Steward Member schools established in Clackamas County. Member schools are: John McLoughlin Middle School (Milwaukie), Eccles Elementary (Canby), Eagle Creek Elementary (Estacada), Seth Lewelling Elementary (Milwaukie), Riverside Elementary (Milwaukie), Palisades Elementary (Lake Oswego), Candy Lane Elementary (Oregon City), Jennings Lodge Elementary (Oregon City), Gaffney Lane Elementary (Oregon City), Park Place Elementary (Oregon City), and Sunrise Middle School (North Clackamas). Twenty-five (25) volunteers have completed training, of which 23 are still active. Volunteers have contributed over 900 reported hours (as of 11-27-01) since the program's inception. Volunteers reached 1,047 students in the year 2000, and 2006 students during 2001. With the addition of the Oregon City schools this fall, it is anticipated that the number of students reached over the next year will more than double.

Partners involved in the program include the following:

- Oregon State University Extension - faculty coordinated the volunteer management, assisted with the Wildlife Stewards training and curriculum support; provided office space for the Wildlife Stewards Volunteer Coordinator; and project evaluation supervision. Wildlife Stewards will also be recruited from the OSU Master Gardeners.

- National Wildlife Federation - assisted with the Wildlife Stewards trainings and student curriculum, and certification of the schoolyard habitats.
- Multnomah County Extension Service/4-H - assisted with Wildlife Stewards training and curriculum support, consulting support, student curriculum to support the habitat, office space and associated equipment, and printing and postage services. Clackamas County Extension Service provided lead agent support for the Clackamas County program.
- Wildlife Steward Member schools - provided teachers, class time, habitat supplies and materials, and parent volunteers.
- Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife – provided salmon and trout eggs for 4-H Fish Stewards Project.
- Environmental Learning Center at Portland State University – provided two part-time staff to help coordinate Oregon City after-school program; assisted in recruiting member schools and volunteers for Oregon City schools; provided liaison to Oregon City School District with regard to 21st Century Learning Grant.
- The Central Oregon Society of Range Management - provided housing, meals, training specialists, and curriculum for the three-day education tour to Central and Eastern Oregon.

Volunteer Wildlife Stewards received forty hours of mandatory training, contributing \$1, 125 to the cost of training materials (see attached agenda). Four such trainings were offered to Clackamas County volunteers over the last two years. Additional optional trainings were offered to volunteers and school teachers on topics such as: grant writing, Project Learning Tree, water education, earth science, establishing water gardens, preparing student presentations, ethnobotany, fish stewards, and a tour of Central Oregon. Evaluations from participants indicated that they felt the trainings were very helpful with regard to an increase in knowledge and ability to be a successful Wildlife Steward volunteer/teacher.

Participants also received 4-H classroom curricula for K – 12 grades. Several curricula pieces are included with this report. In addition, participants were provided access to teaching kits (materials) for several curricula pieces. These kits were made possible through over \$5,000 from other grants.

Examples of Wildlife Steward Projects

Eccles Elementary School

The entire school of 508 youth was engaged in developing an unused courtyard into a wildlife habitat that enhances the visual impact of the area and provides an outdoor classroom for teachers and students. Students, teachers and Wildlife Stewards cleaned the courtyard, amended soil, researched and added native plants, and supplemented with feeders for wildlife observation. The students created their own compost through the design and construction of worm bins. They established a butterfly garden, and older grades created a wildlife tile mural on an inside wall overlooking the garden. After studying the natural and early settlement history of the Willamette, the students designed the artwork and laid the cut tile. The first grade classes made colorful stepping-stones portraying the different seasons, which were used to create a path through the wildlife habitat area. Wildlife Stewards volunteers hosted an environmental

education curriculum workshop for teachers and administration to encourage teachers to use the site as an outdoor classroom. See photos and news articles.

Eagle Creek Elementary

The Wildlife Stewards at this school developed a curriculum resource guide and library for teachers; created a website newsletter; taught older elementary students about watersheds using the Ridges To Rivers curriculum and accompanying teaching kits; and explored the world of aquatic insects with the younger grades at a stream on school property. This past year they continued with classroom lessons, started an after-school environmental science & issues club, and created a one-acre native trees education area with students. This last project included removal of blackberry, planting native shrubs and trees, maintenance of a woodland trail, and development of school grounds habitat for insects, amphibians, small mammals and birds. The volunteers have been successful in obtaining several small grants to implement the above projects. This fall they introduced classrooms to the Fish Stewards Program (based on ODFW native fish incubation educational program). See photos and news article.

Seth Lewelling Elementary

This school is fortunate to have a large semi-wooded acreage adjacent to a wetlands (privately owned). Teachers and neighbors were very interested in the program as a way of using the property for education while preventing development of this greenspace. Wildlife Stewards surveyed teachers to see what kinds of projects would interest their classrooms. As a result, each grade adopted a project. For example, third graders planted a butterfly garden; sixth graders enhanced the neighboring wetland by removing invasives and planting natives; and fifth graders started a habitat area to attract birds through artificial feeding, native plantings, nesting boxes, and a natural water features. Last Spring, the whole school celebrated their work/learning with a school presentation from each grade on their project (see enclosed program). Over 20 teachers also participated in a Project Learning Tree workshop to learn how to better use this natural setting as an outdoor learning laboratory with their students. Again this fall, teachers and students are planning new projects including expansion of native plantings, forestry studies, and development of a heritage garden. The Wildlife Stewards are working with school staff and neighbors to support the class projects by recruiting resource people, writing grants, and doing research.

Oregon City Schools (Park Place, Gaffney Lane, Jennings Lodge & Candy Lane

These schools were just added this fall through a partnership with the John Inskeep Environmental Learning Center (ELC) and Oregon City School District through a 21st Century Learning Grant. With grant dollars, ELC was able to hire two part-time staff to work with 4-H Wildlife Stewards (WS) to establish an after-school environmental education program for "youth at risk". Seven of the 11 (WS) volunteers are Sage High School students. No student numbers

have been reported from these schools so far, as the program is just getting underway. Candy Lane is planning to design and develop a habit area for butterflies and birds to increase student knowledge about the importance of habitat. The other three Oregon City schools plan to create sustainable wildlife habitat areas on the school grounds to provide space for wildlife and educational opportunities for students.

Future Direction & Sustainability

The 4-H Wildlife Stewards Program in Clackamas County will continue to grow beyond the grant period. Oregon State University Extension Service has created a permanent agent position to oversee the program in the three metro counties, including Clackamas. The 4-H volunteer Wildlife Stewards are very committed to their member schools. They have a long-term investment in the program because of their association with 4-H and their assigned school (assigned to schools in their neighborhood and/or in which they have children of their own). In addition, a system is in place to replace volunteers as necessary. With each member school, the community (neighbors, businesses, other parents, etc.) has become very involved in the implementation and maintenance of habitat sites and projects. This is a direct result of the efforts of the Wildlife Stewards. Likewise, these volunteers have also been responsible for acquisition of grant dollars for school sites. All of these factors combined indicate that the various projects are sustainable over time.

4-H Wildlife Stewards
Summer 2001 Training Overview

John Inskeep Environmental Learning Center

Located at Clackamas County Community College Campus in Oregon City, OR

Friday, July 20th

Elements of a Successful Wildlife Habitat Project

- 8:00 a.m. Arrival and sign-in
8:15 a.m. Welcome and Introductions
8:30 a.m. 4-H Wildlife Stewards Program Introduction
8:45 a.m. Get Acquainted Activity
9:45 a.m. Break
10:00 a.m. Program Overview
- Power Point Presentation
 - Training Overview
 - 4-H Wildlife Stewards Advancement Program
 - Volunteer/Teacher Commitments
 - Partner Agencies Resources
 - School applications
- 11:20 a.m. Keys to Success for Wildlife Habitat Projects
11:45 a.m. Lunch
12:30 p.m. School District Guidelines
12:45 p.m. School Habitat Tour
- Eagle Creek
 - Seth Llewelling
 - Kellogg Middle School
- 4:45 p.m. Return to Site and Debrief
5:00 p.m. Depart for Home

Saturday, July 21st

Creating Your Habitat

- 8:00 a.m. Arrival and sign-in
8:15 a.m. Welcome and Announcements
8:30 a.m. Native Plants for Your Habitat
10:15 a.m. BREAK
- 10:30 a.m. Inventorying and Mapping Your Site
12:30 p.m. LUNCH
1:15 p.m. What Animal am I?
1:45 p.m. Wildlife Habitat Requirements
- Small mammals
 - Bugs
 - Birds
 - Amphibians/Reptiles
- 4:00 p.m. The Unnature Trail
Habitat for Sale
5:00 p.m. Conclusion of Day

Sunday, July 22nd

Sustaining Your Habitat

- 9:00 a.m. Arrival and sign-in
9:15 a.m. Welcome and Announcements
9:30 p.m. Working with Junior 4-H Wildlife Stewards (Creating a Learning Environment)
10:30 a.m. Sustaining Your Habitat Project
- Developing Your Project Notebook and Documenting your Project through Photo Points
 - Developing a Summer Maintenance Program
 - Grant Writing to Support Your Project
- 12:00 noon LUNCH
12:45 Sustaining Your Habitat Project (continued)
- Developing a Vandalism Prevention Program
 - The Well Being of Youth (Liability Issues) and Paperwork Requirements
 - Promoting Your Program to Others
 - Developing Your Resource Library
- 2:45 p.m. Course Exam and Evaluation
3:30 p.m. Graduation Ceremony
3:45 p.m. Wrap Up and Next Steps

FUTURE SUPPLEMENTAL TRAINING SESSIONS

Supplemental training will be held monthly. 4-H Wildlife Stewards Trainees should select up to 16 hours of additional training.

	Speaker	
September 12 th	OSU Extension	4-H Fish Stewards
September 26, 2001	OSU Extension	Project Learning Tree
As requested	OSU Extension and National Wildlife Federation	On-site School Curriculum Training (must have at least 8 teachers and/or volunteers enrolled)