

Village of the Ancients: Summer Myth Camp
Contract Number: 924573
January 12, 2004

Final Report

Grant Activities and Progressive Project Steps

Cascadia Wild! was awarded this Metro Parks and Greenspaces Environmental Education Grant for funding of the *Village of the Ancients: Summer Myth Camp (Myth Camp)* for the summer of 2003. The progressive project steps and tasks that were completed took on many forms. Once this grant was secured the process of securing the volunteer staff for the summer camp began. With three volunteer staff members and a volunteer developmental team, *The Myth Camp* began a progression of creating the mythical story that was the backbone of the camp's existence.

In creating the storyline, Cascadia Wild! volunteers worked for many hours (see volunteer hours below) securing a story that was believable and effective. Moving forward, the site of *The Myth Camp* was agreed upon and reserved. *The Myth Camp* received a generous donation for the land by Terry Kem of *Deer Dance*, allowing the use of his site *Fawn Wood* just outside of Scappoose, OR. to be the center of the story and camp. Volunteers surveyed the site for many hours at a time to make certain the story could be enacted at this specific site.

The administrative and marketing process for *The Village of the Ancients, Summer Myth Camp* was a progression that lasted the entire spring of 2003. Marketing involved attendance at boothings and various camp and travel shows, Earth Day celebrations, and fairs. Volunteers worked to market the camp through trade shows, tabling events, created marketing documents, periodical advertising, flyers, and word of mouth.

Actual Budget

| Line Item | Expense |
|---------------------------------|----------|
| Tents | \$200** |
| Water | \$50 |
| Food | \$800 |
| Miscellaneous Supplies | \$1300 |
| Portable Toilet Rental/Cleaning | \$210 |
| Staff Instructors Honorarium | \$500 |
| Marketing | \$1200** |
| Scholarships | \$2500** |
| Transportation (Buses) | \$1200** |
| Insurance | \$400 |

Total: \$8,360

** notes expenses paid for entirely or partially by the Metro Parks and Greenspaces Environmental Education Grant

Volunteer Hours and In-kind Donations

Curriculum Development Volunteer Hours:

There have been a total of 7 volunteers working on the curriculum development since the beginning of January.

7 volunteers x 9 hrs/week x 4.33 weeks/month x 4 months =
1,091 hours

1,091 hrs x \$10/hr = \$10,911 of curriculum development

Camp Implementation Volunteer Hours:

With a total of 4 volunteer staff working to implement the camp.

3 volunteers x 5 hrs/week x 4.33 weeks/ month x 2 months =
129.9 hours

129.9 hrs x \$10/hr = \$1,290

Marketing Volunteer Hours:

There have been a total of 9 volunteers working to market the camp through trade shows, tabling events, creating marketing documents, periodical advertising, flyers, and word of mouth.

9 volunteers x 5 hrs/week x 4.33 weeks/month x 3 months =
584 hours

584 hours x \$10/hr = \$5,845

Camp Volunteer Hours

With a total of 7 volunteers role-playing various characters to enact the mythological story line.

7 volunteers x 45 hours at camp=
315 hours

Total In-kind contributions from volunteer hours =
2119.9 hours donated

Number of Participants

Sixteen Portland area youth answered the call for *The Myth Camp*. Ten girls and six boys took on the challenge of rescuing the Village for summer of 2003.

Partners

Metro Parks and Greenspaces
U.S. Fish and Wildlife
Deer Dance
Juan Young Trust

Action

Environmental Education Grant
Environmental Education Grant
Donation of campsite
Health, Education, and Welfare Grant

Written Evaluation

Cascadia Wild! created a unique naturalist experience for children, ages 8 through 12 for the summer of 2003 with the help of this Metro grant. The camp promoted and educated local youth in the world of nature awareness, wilderness living skills, ecological systems, local watershed processes, environmental stewardship, and community service. *The Village of the Ancients, Summer Myth Camp* was a five-day, two overnight interactive theatre process that immersed the participants in a world of storytelling while exposing them to the specific skills of a native naturalist. The inspirational vehicle of storytelling connected the participants to the land around them as well as the skills they learned with nature as the ultimate teacher in the entire process. The camp built on the strengths of its participants with respect to children's interest for myth, story, and universal passions. We weaved ecological information, animal tracking, bird language, personal development challenges into the experience, and nurtured teamwork through trials, riddles, puzzles, and physical challenges of the camp's mythical journey.

Each lesson served as a threshold that the participants had to pass to "rescue the village from certain peril". The campers became heroes and heroines of the village as they found true, unfiltered experience in the natural world with each successful accomplishment. Their task was to complete specific goals using various naturalist skills taught through the role modeling of well-trained, experienced volunteer staff members and volunteers. The campers developed personal and social interaction skills that contributed to the decision-making process. Concurrently, the participants experienced the camp as a metaphor for finding the connection between a healthy human community and a healthy environment.

We immersed the children in a temporary mythical culture placed in a local natural area. Participants received non-stop, hands-on experiential learning by acting as participating members of the simulated "village" culture that spanned the entire week. Each camp day focused on teaching a myth cycle. The cycles contained instructional objectives that were implemented through four main elements: Tools, Quests, Challenges, and Celebration. The tools were concrete learning tools. Songs and stories were the most important verbal tools that enhanced the learning experience. Skills such as bird language, animal tracking, cordage making, bow drill fire-making, basket weaving, and debris hut shelter building are examples of skills that were role modeled and taught as tools to help the participants "survive" in the overall mythical story. The Quest aspect of the camp allowed the participants to utilize their tools in order to complete specific objectives. The quests were composed of challenges that tested the participant's memory and cognitive understanding of the tools presented. In order to complete specific quests, the participants had various challenges that tested their abilities. Once quests were completed, the participants had an opportunity to celebrate their accomplishments. The participants told stories pertaining to how they reached their goals, created crafts in commemoration of their deeds, and received accolades for their accomplishments, further cementing their experience and the learning processes pertaining to the natural world.

Curriculum

The curriculum was embedded in the mythological story. Each day of the week had a specific task and a quest that accompanied that task. Campers were presented with the story of *The Village of the Ancients*. The story explained a long-standing relationship between humans, animals, and the Ancient beings of the cardinal directions. On the first day, the campers were participants in a ceremony honoring this relationship. During this ceremony, the character of coyote interrupted the process and stole five objects that held the memories of the cardinal direction characters. Coyote then challenged the students to complete the below listed tasks in order to get the objects back and thus restoring the memories of the participants. Through the art of questioning and role-playing, staff volunteers were challenged in the task of teaching the various skills listed below without giving away answers. Techniques for discovering and enacting the naturalist skills listed below took the form of trial and error for the campers. This is a version of a typical week at *The Village of the Ancients, Summer Myth Camp* with naturalist skills listed below.

Monday:

Bird Language and Debris Shelter Construction

Tuesday:

Animal Tracking and Fire by Friction

Wednesday:

Five minute one match fire and ethnobotany

Thursday:

Edible and Medicinal plants, cordage, and basket weaving

Friday:

Forest and "Village" Ecology