

# RiverHealth Stewardship Program Grant Accomplishments 2024-25



## History

The Clackamas Water Environment Services (WES) Board of Directors authorized the RiverHealth Watershed Stewardship Program (RHSP) and process for awarding grant funding to community groups for projects that enhance the health of District watersheds in a resolution on November 14, 2013 (Board Resolution 2013-92). The Board authorized the WES Director to develop, administer and expend funds for the program and directed that a report regarding the same be delivered to the Board annually.

## The Program

The RHSP supports community groups, businesses and property owners who work to improve the health of WES watersheds. The RHSP can provide up to \$30,000 for projects that protect and enhance water resources in the District and/or provide watershed education and outreach. Citizen groups, businesses, schools, nonprofits, student groups, faith organizations, neighborhood or business associations, and service groups working to improve watershed health are eligible to apply. Examples of eligible projects include riparian restoration, stormwater features, habitat improvements, and education and stewardship events.

Each year, WES staff prepare a program guide and submittal forms for organizations to apply for these funds, advertise the information, accept proposals and evaluate them with a selection committee, and monitor project progress. Project proposals are solicited in the spring and awarded at the beginning of the fiscal year in July. The proposals are evaluated according to established criteria. Through this program, grantees have conducted outreach to neighborhood groups, schools and stream-side landowners, and worked with volunteers to improve watershed health through riparian planting projects. As the demand has grown, with budget approval from the Board, WES has increased the annual funding amount to the program from \$152,000 in the first year to \$300,000.

The projects have helped the District meet state and federal regulatory requirements to reduce pollution and improve the health of waterways. At the same time, the projects engage residents in stewardship, educating them about watershed health and encouraging them to take action on their own to improve water quality.

*Clackamas Water Environment Services produces clean water, protects water quality and recovers renewable resources. We do this by providing wastewater services, stormwater management, and environmental education. It's our job to protect public health and support the vitality of our communities, natural environment and economy.*



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## Riparian Restoration Projects

New acres planted	20
Number of sites	25
Acres of invasives removed	46
Linear feet of streams worked on	10,686
Planted trees	3,948
Planted shrubs	6,057
Planted herbaceous vegetation	2,225
Number of recruited volunteers	372
Volunteer hours	2,952



*Happy Valley HOA Using Goats to Clear Invasive Species*



*Wetlands Conservancy Volunteers*

## Education Projects

Number of lessons, field trips, tours	468
Number of events open to the public	34
Number of adults reached	401
Number of students reached	1,776

## The following organizations received a combined total of \$300,000 in grant funds in FY 2024-25

**Bob's Red Mill Natural Foods: \$29,833** – Restored 4.56 acre Mill's End Wetland located just south of 3-Creeks, by controlling invasive species and planting natives, to improve habitat and water quality. The project mitigates runoff from impervious areas by filtering stormwater for treatment.

**Clackamas River Basin Council: \$30,000** – Stewarded three existing and two new RiverHealth-funded Shade Our Streams project sites totaling 9.25 acres of restoration area and 1,805 feet of river/stream length. This project also supported educational workshops, pub talks, and outreach.



*Shade Our Streams Work*

**Columbia Land Trust/Bird Alliance of Oregon: \$20,000** – The Backyard Habitat Certification Program turns residents into restoration and clean river volunteers by providing in-person and follow-up education, resources, and recognition for them to manage stormwater on their properties, plant native plants, remove invasive weeds, reduce or eliminate use of pesticides, and steward wildlife.

**Friends of Trees: \$30,000** – Hosted two volunteer planting and stewardship events, two education days for students at Oregon Trail Elementary, and supported North Clackamas Watersheds Council with their community workshop series.

**Happy Valley Heights Homeowners Association: \$27,815** – Five homeowner associations and two private landowners partnered to develop a large-scale plan to restore natural areas in Happy Valley and Milwaukie. These HOAs collaborated on riparian treatments in keeping with the Watershed Action Plans for Mt. Scott Creek and the Clackamas River.



*Science in the Park*

**Johnson Creek Watershed Council: \$27,890** – Engaged volunteers and partners in stewardship and educational activities in WES' district, including the Johnson Creek Clean-Up, Watershed Wide planting event at the Luther Road site, and Science in the Park.

**National Wildlife Federation: \$10,695** – Improved watershed health with educational opportunities including engaging youth in outdoor education, preparing educators to integrate environmental education across subjects, and improving youth's ability to problem solve and think critically about environmental issues. National Wildlife Federation partnered with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife on the Fish Eggs to Fry program to achieve these goals.

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## The following organizations received a combined total of \$300,000 in grant funds in FY 2024-25 - continued

**North Clackamas Watersheds Council: \$29,998** – Expanded riparian restoration in the Kellogg-Mt. Scott Watershed at the Parmenter Ponds Target Area, identified based on temperature and salmonid use to be vital cold water refugia, and provides climate resilience that will become even more critical with the removal of Kellogg Dam in 2027-28. Worked to develop new sites on Dean Creek, also a cold-water refugia; expanded resources for landowners to ensure they succeed at maintaining previously restored sites, setting the stage for expanded restoration in the watershed; and continued to engage community members in understanding and acting on their knowledge of watershed function in WES' district.

**Northwest Youth Corps: \$26,295** – Completed four weeks of mulching, daylighting and watering recent native plantings; and hand removal of invasive species at four sites. Through activities with Friends of Trees, youth earned money to restore habitat, increase their understanding of nature through daily environmental lessons, and earned academic credit. Half of the proposed crews consisted of young women and non-binary individuals, including Girls Inc. participants; others were recruited from a more general population, including low-income, BIPOC, and gender queer.



*Northwest Youth Corps Crew*

**The Wetlands Conservancy: \$29,664** – Continued the progress of managing weeds and planting native vegetation in the Hearthwood Wetland for diverse habitat. Hired Native American crews from Mad Bears, Inc. to mow and clear areas for native plant species to be planted by volunteers. Engaged neighbors in Hearthwood Mobile Home Park by inviting them to volunteer and tour the wetlands.

**Tualatin River Watershed Council: \$27,810** – Conducted streamside enhancements with eight riparian landowners on four tributaries: Fields, Wilson, Saum, and Rock Creeks. Added new work in Saum Creek, as well as added a new landowner on Wilson Creek, and worked in new riparian areas with the existing landowners.

**World Salmon Council: \$10,000** – Provided environmental education that combines classroom and online curriculum, field learning, and community service, incorporating innovative learning activities designed to enhance students' critical thinking and problem-solving skills. The program enables students to explore their natural heritage and develop a sense of stewardship and future career exploration through learning about watershed health and the lifecycle and habitat needs of Northwest salmon.



*World Salmon Council Activities*