



East Multnomah Soil and Water Conservation District

2021 Partners in Conservation Grants

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East Multnomah Soil and Water Conservation District Announces 2021 Partners in Conservation Grants

The East Multnomah Soil and Water Conservation District announces \$561,538 in new funding through its 2021 *Partners in Conservation (PIC) Grant Program*, awarded to 19 conservation and environmental education projects in the EMSWCD service area (all of Multnomah County east of the Willamette River). PIC funding for 2021 will also leverage more than \$2 million in additional support through matching in-kind and cash contributions.

Over the past year, many of our grantee organizations have been deeply affected by the work constraints and uncertainty created by the COVID pandemic and racial unrest across the country. The EMSWCD Grants Program wanted to offer ways to support our communities and partners. These extraordinary times also presented a rare opportunity to consider how EMSWCD may want to do things differently and take advantage of a “slowing down” to reflect on our Grants Program.

Last fall, **EMSWCD decided to take a “strategic pause” for the 2021 Partners in Conservation (PIC) Grant cycle – suspending the competitive grant opportunity for one year.** This involved forgoing the normal application process for PIC 2021, but with a commitment to supporting our grantees and partners through this challenging time. This was done by offering funding support to EMSWCD’s regular grantees for the fiscal year 2021-22.

The 19 organizations funded represent projects in each of EMSWCD’s five primary grant program areas: restoration and monitoring, stormwater management and naturescaping, urban



food gardening and sustainable agriculture, environmental education, and urban forestry. Please see the list of the PIC 2021 grantees below.

The PIC program was created in 2007 to support organizations that help fulfill the EMSWCD's mission to help people care for land and water. Over the past 14 years, nearly \$10 million has been distributed through more than 300 grants to over 120 organizations. EMSWCD's Executive Director, Nancy Hamilton, says "We are honored and excited to support our 2021 PIC Grant recipients after this long and difficult year. They've shown an incredible resilience under the circumstances. We very much appreciate their ongoing commitment to restoring our natural environment, providing conservation education for youth, and working hard to include the most vulnerable populations and communities in their projects."



2021 EMSWCD Partners in Conservation Grants

Audubon Society of Portland/Columbia Land Trust

Backyard Habitat Certification Program - East Multnomah County Engagement and Equity \$35,000

The BHCP provides technical assistance, incentives, resources, and recognition to urban and sub-urban residents as they create backyard habitats and manage stormwater. The program is recognized as an integral component of conservation education and habitat enhancement across the region. The grant will support BHCP investment in East County services areas, continue to implement the programmatic DEI Plan, and begin implementing a comprehensive review process to gain a deeper understanding of community members' barriers to engaging with the program.

Camp E.L.S.O. Inc.

Wayfinders Program Expansion \$30,000

This project expands and improves the Wayfinders Summer Program. It will create opportunities for more children of color to receive science-based environmental education. The project will also deliver trauma informed, age-appropriate experiential learning opportunities, increase evaluation capacity, provide professional development opportunities for young environmental leaders of color, and improve cultural responsiveness of other environmental education programs.

City of Gresham

Urban Forestry Program Assistance \$25,000

This project will build on the first-year results with the goal to enhance and expand Gresham's urban forestry program: 1) update Urban Forestry Management Plan (UFMP) with climate resilience and heat action planning metrics, 2) hire a municipal urban forestry expert to assist with developing regulatory and non-regulatory tools to implement action items identified in the UFMP, and 3) collect citywide, neighborhood scale and parcel level data for a Tree Canopy and Inventory Initiative.

Columbia Riverkeeper

Columbia River Monitoring and Outreach Project \$25,000

The project will: 1) engage diverse communities who fish near Bradford Island, one of the most contaminated sites on the Columbia; 2) encourage safe swimming by collecting E. coli water quality data at ten popular beaches; and 3) improve service to communities of color by supporting diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) training for staff and board.

Depave

Depave 2021/22 \$40,000

Depave will develop, plan, and implement four depave and re-greening projects at Centennial and Portland Public School District elementary schools and one healing garden in Gresham, removing 13,600 square feet of pavement, creating outdoor nature elements, installing native plants, and incorporating sustainable stormwater features. Depave will also cultivate and develop future projects and provide stewardship at past sites needing weeding/maintenance.

Ecology in Classrooms and Outdoors

Ecology Enrichment in Elementary Schools \$25,000

This project will reach students at Lent, Kelly, and Marysville elementary schools with ECO's hands-on lessons in classrooms, schoolyards, and natural areas (or remotely depending on COVID status).



Integrated into curriculum is the opportunity for students to practice what they learn through habitat restoration under the mentorship of Native American interns. The goal is for students to increase their knowledge of local ecology, enhance their affinity for nature, and view themselves as advocates for a healthy environment.

Friends of Nadaka Nature Park (Outgrowing Hunger -fiscal agent)

Nadaka Restoration Stewardship & Education \$25,000

This project will continue previous stewardship and environmental education programming at Nadaka Park including removal of invasives and restoration in the 10-acre forest, the Nadaka Ambassador program, internships to provide income and workforce readiness to low-income BIPOC youth, and stewardship events and seasonal volunteers. Partners include: Play, Grow Learn, the City of Gresham, the Blueprint Foundation, Tivnu, and Voz.

Friends of Zenger Farm

Reducing Barriers: Developing Future Farmers and Relevant Youth Programming \$50,000

This project aims to reduce barriers and increase interest among a diverse range of potential farmers through its farmer training program. It also will provide support to students in the David Douglas School District, and their families, through weekly activities at schools, distributions at IRCO SUN food pantries, and family visits during Open Farm Days.

Growing Gardens

School Gardens: A Continuum of Programming for Youth Development \$35,000

The project goal is to develop a continuum of school garden education, starting with young children and their families, and extending into adulthood. Continued programming in 21/22 will support: high School and middle school clubs, Community Food Systems internships, lessons delivered to Early Childhood Education programs, new partnerships with Early Childhood Education Centers, and youth-oriented lessons at Home Gardens workshops.

Grow Portland

Sustaining School Garden Programming at Title 1 Schools \$40,000

This project provides school-based outdoor learning for children who lack an equitable level of access to experiential education: students of color, students who live at or below the poverty line, and students with disabilities. Programming is integrated into the school day in primarily Title I schools, engaging thousands of students each month. Utilizing Learning Gardens, staff teach lessons using standards-based environmental education curriculum and engage all students in caring for the earth.

Multnomah County

Green Gresham / Healthy Gresham \$50,000

This project focuses on increasing environmental justice in Rockwood, Wilkes East, and North Gresham by increasing the tree canopy and its related benefits. Activities include planting trees in areas of East County with low tree canopy cover and no established tree planting program, providing meaningful youth employment opportunities for young people from the service area, introduce those young people to the field of urban ecology and forestry, and finally to seed the notion in Gresham government that ongoing investments in urban forestry are vital to healthy thriving communities.



Northwest Youth Corps

East Multnomah Inclusion Stewardship Crews \$23,411

Funds will support a four-week summer session of tree care activity and education including watering, daylighting, mulching, and weeding several sites where trees and native plants have been installed or stewarded by Friends of Trees in recent years. After each work day, the crews return to their meeting site, where they engage in environmental education lessons. The program also enables students to earn money and academic credit.

Our Village Gardens (Janus Youth Programs fiscal agent)

Growing Deeper: Intergenerational Community Organizing Through Food and Farming \$25,000

This project will allow Village Gardens to deepen current strategies that ensure access to free urban gardens space, provide ongoing garden education and skill-sharing, expand sustainable seed to harvest practices, and magnify food equity in Oregon's largest affordable housing neighborhood. The program is building an on-site greenhouse to facilitate and promote sustainable seed to harvest practices and develop seasonal extension techniques. They will also launch an Ambassador program and recruit new gardener families.

Outgrowing Hunger

Gardens for Health \$25,000

This project will increase the health of the environment and the community by enhancing access to sustainable, watershed-friendly urban agriculture and gardening, and provide support for highly successful natural gardening to marginalized and under-served communities throughout East Multnomah County. One new community garden will be built. It will also build capacity toward a vision of being an ongoing resource for disadvantaged gardeners across the District, including connecting underserved populations with other EMSWCD programs.

Portland Opportunities Industrialization Center Inc.

Student Crew Leadership Training Program \$25,000

Through partnerships with Friends of Trees and Portland Parks & Recreation, this project will engage low-income youth and youth of color in project-based education and career-track natural resource mentorship. Students develop an appreciation for local urban forests and watersheds through site-based experiences, including leading native restoration projects and building a conservation culture in the community through volunteer recruitment and training.

Sauvie Island Center

Growing Environmental Literacy Inclusively through Farming & Gardening \$19,627

SIC moved to a new location at Topaz Farm last year. This move has allowed them to build on their success in youth programming. This project will continue efforts to: 1) expand reach and impact by enhancing and growing current programming to include learners of all ages; and 2) expand partnerships with BIPOC organizations and other environmental educators to lead and host community-centered learning workshops that will continue the SIC tradition of hands-on, place-based garden and environmental education.



Verde

Community Rain Garden and Naturescapes \$20,000

Funds will be used for the Community Rain Garden and Naturescape Program, which provides resources and education material for low-income residents and residents of color to plan, develop, install, and maintain a rain garden/naturescape on their private properties. Verde will also provide education about naturescaping and the Backyard Habitat Certification Program, conducting site visits with homeowners and providing them with a site report for their property that they can use towards achieving certification. Verde staff have deepened their partnership with Backyard Habitat and are now trained as backyard habitat technicians.

Wisdom of the Elders, Inc.

Wisdom Workforce Development Capacity Project \$25,000

This project will expand WWD's capacity to perform restoration in the Portland Metro area, which in turn, will provide a more secure conservation work path for Native adults. Activities include conducting non-chemical invasive plant removal in natural areas and expanding professional development for assistant crew leaders. Partnerships include participation in the Green Workforce Collaborative and a renewed relationship with the Native Gathering Garden at Thomas Cully Park.

World Salmon Council

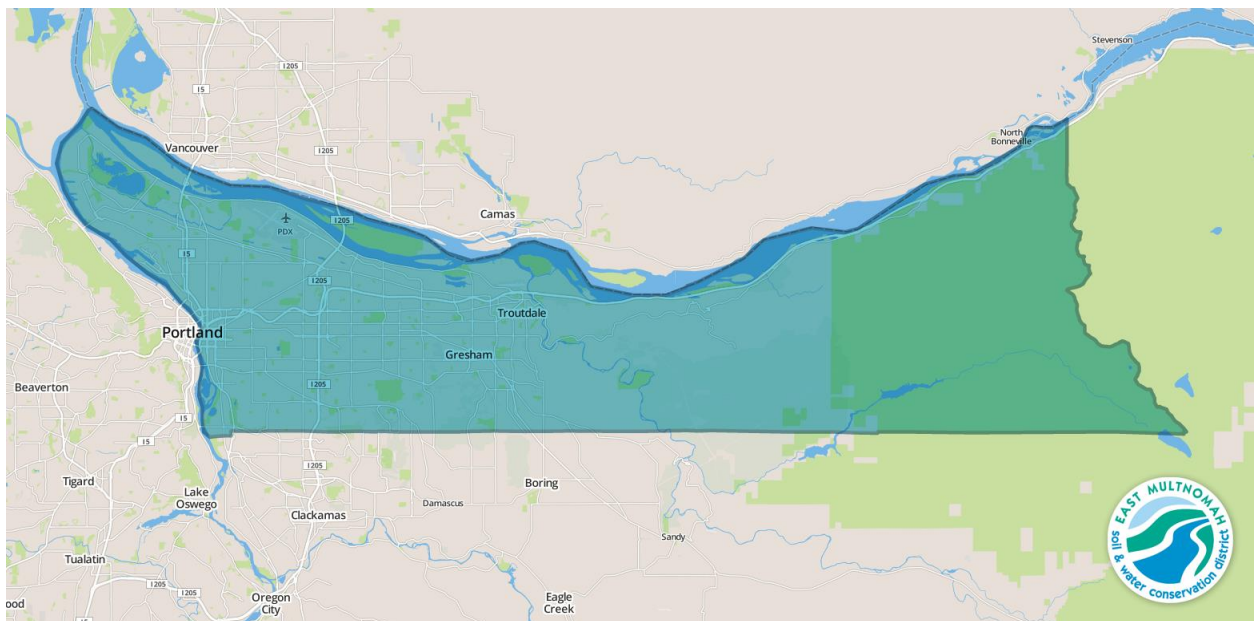
Salmon Watch \$18,500

Salmon Watch is an outdoor environmental education program that reaches over 1,000 middle and high school students in the Portland Metro and Columbia Gorge regions per year through field trips, service-learning projects, and classroom curriculum. Focusing on salmon as a keystone species of Northwest ecosystems, the program provides students with a unique opportunity to learn about ecosystem and watershed health through hands-on, multidisciplinary education in the classroom and in the field.



The East Multnomah Soil and Water Conservation District (EMSWCD) is a unit of local government whose mission is to help people care for land and water. The EMSWCD is led by an elected board of five directors and works entirely on a voluntary, non-regulatory basis with landowners, land managers, and other residents east of the Willamette River centerline in Multnomah County. All of the EMSWCD's work is geared toward keeping water clean, conserving water and keeping soil healthy.

Contact Suzanne Easton, our Grants Program Manager, with any questions about our grant programs at Suzanne@emswcd.org or (503) 935-5370. Learn more about us at <https://emswcd.org>



Map of EMSWCD service area, which is all Multnomah County East of the Willamette River.

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