

2023 Partners in Conservation (PIC) Grant Review Committee

1/31/2023

[Jim Carlson \(he/him\)*](#)

EMSWCD Board, At-Large Director

Jim Carlson Jim Carlson received a B.S. in Computer Science from the University of Portland and an M.B.A. in Business Administration from Eastern Oregon University. Jim is co-owner and manages his families's nursery operation, Carlson Nursery, Inc. Jim lives in the original homestead, which dates to 1890 and which his family has owned since 1905. Jim has held positions with the Oregon Association of Nurseries, Johnson Creek Watershed Committee, USDA Farm Service Agency and the Gresham Farmer's Market. Jim is employed at The Home Depot as a Garden Sales Associate.

[Mary Colombo \(she/her\)](#)

Founder and owner, Wild Roots Farm

A full-time farmer since 2009, Mary Columbo has owned Wild Roots Farm since 2015. The farm uses conservation practices including minimal till and organics. Mary loves helping young and beginning farmers learn more about farming and shares her knowledge in formal and informal settings. She has a degree in geology and worked as a field geologist for five years before becoming a farmer. Born and raised in Oregon, Mary grew up in a small rural community outside of Portland. She credits her parents with instilling in her a deep love and appreciation of nature from a young age.

[Shireen Duke \(she/her\)](#) (awaiting Board approval)

Growing Gardens Think Tank Member

Retired from her work at Mt. Hood Community College, Shireen is a fifth generation Oregonian who loves to get outside to grow collard greens and fresh tomatoes. She is also an accomplished dancer (Line Dancing and Chicago Steppin). Shireen has been involved with Growing Gardens since 2013. She started as a Home Gardens Program participant, then a Garden Mentor, and now serves on the Board of Directors

[Mike Guebert, \(he/him\)](#)

EMSWCD Board Vice Chair, Zone 3 Director

Mike Guebert earned his B.A. degree in geology from Humboldt State University. Retired as Metro Program Manager at the former St. Johns Landfill in North Portland, Mike worked with a small staff to monitor and improve environmental quality, operate and maintain a landfill gas extraction and re-use system, and make habitat improvements on the reclaimed grassland covering the landfill. Mike and his wife own and operate a small farm in Corbett, where they raise a variety of pasture-based livestock including dairy cows, goats, chickens, and turkeys. Mike is very active in the small farm community, serving on several committees and panels, often testifying to the state legislature in support of bills to help family farmers, and providing advice and assistance to beginning farmers.

Jeremy Hart (he/him)

Environmental Justice Fellow, Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon (APANO)

With a background in ecology and community development, Jeremy Hart organizes community-oriented programs for APANO around topics of environmental equity, urban greening, sustainable energy production, and youth development. Prior professional roles include habitat restoration for Ash Creek Forest Management LLC, and as a biological surveyor for the National Council for Air and Stream Improvement. While a college student, Jeremy supervised the Methodist Community Garden, organizing volunteer workdays and growing food for community participants and a local food bank. Jeremy is passionate about protecting nature in unison with human environmental rights to clean water, food, and sustainable development.

Roy Iwai* (he/him)

Water Resources Specialist, Multnomah County Transportation

Roy Iwai is a water quality scientist with a passion for collaboration to improve watershed health. He has managed the Water Quality Program at Multnomah County since 2007. He leads several partnerships at the local and state levels, including the Clean Rivers Coalition, a collaborative partnership dedicated to creating the first statewide clean water outreach campaign in Oregon. Roy has a master's degree in Oceanography from Louisiana State University.

Rhesa Ramdeen (she/they)

Botanic Specialist, Community Gardens Program, Portland Parks & Recreation

Rhesa Ramdeen has an academic background in Environmental Studies and Naturopathic Medicine and a personal and professional interest in gardening and food and land justice. She is passionate about equitable access to nature, especially land for urban farming and gardening because of the positive impacts on individual and public health, community resilience, and climate change mitigation. She previously worked within the Urban Lands team at EMSWCD and now works with the Community Gardens Program at Portland Parks and Recreation.

Eric Rosewall (he/him)*

Ecological Landscapes Program Coordinator, Portland Parks & Recreation

Eric Rosewall has a background in landscape architecture and construction and has been involved in the Portland region's open space system through numerous public and nonprofit organizations, including as executive director of Depave. He currently coordinates Portland Parks and Recreation's Ecologically Sustainable Landscapes Initiative - piloting high-impact landscape transformations that fill the urban nature gap.

Jina Sagar (she/her)

Associate Natural Resources Scientist, Metro

Jina Sagar recently moved back to Portland in July from Wellington, New Zealand where she worked as an ecologist for seven years. In New Zealand, she focused on protecting endemic wildlife and restoring native upland and riparian habitats. Prior to New Zealand, Jina lived and worked in Oregon as a Research Scientist managing two monitoring programs for the Estuary Partnership along the lower Columbia River. She has worked across the state as a wildlife biologist and in land conservation for the Oregon Trust for Public Land. Jina earned her B.A. in Environmental Science/Conservation Biology from Middlebury College in Vermont and her M.S. in Wildlife Ecology from Oregon State University. She has a passion for indigenous culture through her time in New Zealand and service in the Peace Corps in Madagascar. Currently, Jina is an Associate Natural Resources Scientist with Metro (since October 2022) where she restores land for wildlife, water quality, biodiversity and human connection to nature. She loves to garden with her two young girls both for food and native habitat.

Jen Shih (she/her)

Grants & Enrollment Specialist, Tualatin Soil and Water Conservation District

Jen Shih grew up in the Portland metro area and, after living in several other places across the country, came back to raise her family. After studying environmental science in college, she gained experience administering and applying for grants while working at a conservation-based non-profit foundation, at a public university, and in local government. Jen has a background in urban planning and has taught nature-play classes for young children.

Nell Tessman (she/her)*

Program Officer, Gray Family Foundation

Nell Tessman serves as the Program Officer for Gray Family Foundation, a Think Tank member for Growing Gardens, and on the Advisory Committee for the Oregon Farm to School and School Garden Network. She has committed her career to increasing access to opportunities that unify youth and communities in their efforts to be strong stewards of their environments, their health, and each other. Over the past decade, she has worked as an educator, program manager, evaluator, and grant manager in schools, youth-serving organizations, local government, and at a national child health nonprofit. Nell earned her Master's in Educational Leadership and Policy from Portland State University, with a focus on food systems sustainability and place-based education. She lives in Northeast Portland with her partner and her young son and loves to grow fruits and vegetables in her garden, play on her basketball team, and explore Oregon outdoors with her family.

Nicolas Townsend (he/him/his)*

Garden Program Supervisor, Serendipity Center, Inc.

Nicolas Townsend is the garden program supervisor at Serendipity Center. He has nearly 15 years of experience in the fields of sustainable urban farming and garden education and holds a Master's degree in Leadership for Sustainability Education from PSU. In 2013 he spearheaded the development of the Growing Minds Garden program at Serendipity and has facilitated its growth over the past 9 years. Nicolas' approach is holistic and interest-based to meet students and volunteers where they are and empower them to grow their own food.

Stacey Triplett (she/her)*

Community Program Manager, Worksystems, Inc.

Stacey Triplett currently serves as the Community Programs Manager at Worksystems, the Workforce Development Board for this region. Worksystems connects federal, state, and local support with a network of community-based employment services providers to address community wealth creation and recognizes shared roles in housing and homelessness systems as well as childcare and child welfare systems all in support of job seekers and employers. Her environmental work consists of prior roles with Nature in Neighborhoods at Metro and the Intertwine Alliance. She serves on Groundwork USA and Proud Ground Boards of Directors. *Ella habla español*. In her youth, Stacey was an exchange student and maintains that language immersion experiences change lives.

*Prior PIC grant review committee member