



Annual Report

Fiscal Year 2011-12



**Volunteer
Involvement**



**Outreach &
Education**



**Technical
Assistance**

**...for healthy watersheds
and healthy people!**

About the Watershed Center



The mission of the Southwest Watershed Resource Center (WRC) is **to inspire awareness and action on behalf of watershed health in southwest Portland neighborhoods**. This is accomplished through outreach, education, technical assistance for on-the-ground projects, and support for watershed volunteer groups.

The Southwest Watershed Resource Center was established in 1999 by the City of Portland Bureau of Environmental Services through an agreement with Portland Parks and Recreation. Housed inside the lobby of the Southwest Community Center at Gabriel Park, the WRC serves drop-in visitors, landowners, volunteers, neighborhood groups, congregations, and other organizations.

Though some drop-in visitors come expressly seeking WRC assistance, many are incidental visits that take place in the course of recreation at the Southwest Community Center, which is one of the busier public buildings in southwest Portland with over 700 visitors per day.

Through the past 15 years, the community landscape has shifted from a need for greater watershed education to a resulting need for technical support in project development and implementation.

The WRC provides the following services to individuals and groups doing watershed restoration in southwest Portland:

- *Watershed information and referrals*
- *Best management practices for invasive plant removal, native plants, and stormwater management*
- *Site visits for technical and project development assistance*
- *Tool loan for restoration projects (tool shed, right)*
- *Grant writing assistance*
- *Work party & event organizing*
- *Neighborhood event tabling*
- *Meeting facilitation*
- *Public speaking and presentations*
- *Youth education programs*
- *Support and training for youth educators*
- *Watershed e-newsletter, online resources, and social networking*



This report provides details about WRC work, and highlights outcomes and accomplishments from the 2011-12 fiscal year.

For healthy people and watersheds,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jen Slaman".

Watershed Center Manager

Volunteers and Friends Groups

The ultimate goal of watershed awareness is action -- through pollution reduction, watershed restoration and long-term stewardship. One of the key reasons that the WRC is a powerful and effective partnership toward this goal is that it bridges grassroots, neighbor-to-neighbor action with city and regional resources.

A major way that this happens in southwest Portland is through the work of thirteen watershed "Friends" groups. These volunteer-led groups organize work parties in partnership with Portland Parks & Recreation, neighborhood associations, and other partners. Volunteers contributed 2,037 volunteer hours to parks in Fanno and Tryon Creek in 2011-12.

Friends groups do a variety of work, from neighborhood outreach to grants and on-the-ground projects. The WRC provides flexible support depending on group needs, including meeting facilitation, tool loan, periodic check-ins, grant writing or event publicity. The WRC also facilitates large outreach event opportunities such as Multnomah Days. With financial assistance from West Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District, the WRC supported the participation of 12 watershed organizations in FY 2011-12.

Watershed groups in southwest Portland include:

- Bridlemile Creek Stewards
- Dickinson Park Stewards
- Friends of April Hill Park

- Friends of Marshall and Maricara Parks
- Friends of Marquam Nature Park
- Friends of Terwilliger
- Friends of Tryon Creek
- Friends of Vermont Creek
- Friends of Woods Park
- Multnomah Village Gateway Project
- PCC Habitat Team at Sylvania Natural Area
- Shomrei Teva at Neveh Shalom
- South Portland Riverbank Partners
- Stephens Creek Stewards
- Tryon Creek Watershed Council

The WRC also continues to collaborate with other organizations active in and beyond SW Portland:

- Tualatin River Watershed Council
- Fans of Fanno Creek
- Tualatin Riverkeepers
- Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon

In order to provide best information on restoration practices, and increase connections in and beyond the southwest Portland community, the WRC participates in regional events. Jen Seamans was invited to speak on watershed stewardship among faith communities at the 2012 Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon Earth Care Summit.



Tryon Creek Watershed Council Watershed Wide Event

For the third year in a row, TCWC held a Watershed Wide Event in late April, with funding from the Southwest Neighborhoods, Inc. Small Grants program. During this event as many as 200 volunteers participate in on-the-ground activities at sites throughout the watershed, engaging in invasive removal and native plantings on public and private land, in cooperation with many partner organizations. Each year the WRC has helped Arnold Creek neighbors organize garlic mustard removal efforts as part of the Watershed Wide Event.



Community Outreach & Programs

Along with general outreach and on-the-ground restoration, the WRC engages the whole community in learning about our watersheds. Education research has demonstrated the importance of learning outdoors. It's good for our health -- **and** it's also necessary toward understanding, and ultimately taking action in support of, natural systems.

The WRC supports watershed-based education by offering science learning and interpretive programs in the community, providing training for professional staff and volunteers, speaking engagements with community organizations, and hosting experts to teach in-depth workshops. In 2011-12, these included:

Nature Based Education & Trainings:

- Friends of Spring Garden Park hands-on nature awareness activities (*right*) with additional activity training and providing of materials
- PP&R Sprout Academy vermicomposting programs for preschool classes (3)
- Friends of Marshall Park - interpretive hike for June park social
- Maplewood School Wild Wood planting
- Summer Intern Outreach Training
- Rieke Elementary School EcoThink parent training

Science Learning:

- Math & Science Night watershed model activity station, Maplewood Elementary
- Partner with/support Tryon Creek Watershed Council's development of a citizen science based monitoring program

Community Presentations:

- Collins View Neighborhood Association
- Hillsdale Community Church
- Ashcreek Neighborhood Association

- Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon - Earth Care Summit invited speaker
- Vermont Hills United Methodist Church Lenten Lunch speaker
- Congregations Caring for Watersheds & Wildlife workshop (at Hillsdale UCC)

Hosted Workshops:

- Introduction to Rainwater Harvesting (with Clackamas Soil & Water Conservation District and Portland Purple Water)
- OSU Extension & Metro Advanced Vegetable Gardening (chemical reduction)
- Living with Urban Coyotes (with Audubon Society of Portland)
- SW Portland Weed Watcher workshop (with West Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District)



Living with Coyote Workshops

In November 2011, increased reports of coyote interactions among neighbors came in at the Watershed Center. In response, Bob Sallinger, Conservation Director at Audubon Society of Portland gave a slideshow presentation on Living with Urban Coyotes in January to a standing room only crowd at the SW Community Center. Watershed Center staff



provided follow-up materials and discussion on coyotes at a Bridlemile neighborhood meeting as well as disseminating information online, via email and Riffles e-newsletter.

Landowner Assistance and Restoration Projects

Fanno Creek Watershed

In 2011-12, the Watershed Resource Center received \$6,864 in Partner Funding from West Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District for upper Fanno Creek. This funding allowed interns to assist with outreach and the WRC manager to support the following projects beyond the WRC contract:

- Initial development of Pendleton Creek project phase II and continuing technical assistance and project management for the first phase (contractor invasive removal and two neighborhood planting work parties.)



- Site visit, grant writing and design assistance for a demonstration rain garden on private property in the Woods Creek watershed
- Neighborhood organizing support for work parties on BES property in South Ash Creek
- Site visit and grant writing assistance for a demonstration rain garden at St. Luke's Lutheran Church in the Vermont Creek watershed
- Invasive removal and native replanting in unimproved right of way maintained by neighbors in the Maplewood neighborhood

Tryon Creek Watershed

Landowner project support requests are directed to Tryon Creek Watershed Council.

Willamette Subwatersheds

Projects included:

- Texas Street wetland work party to remove purple loosestrife and other invasive plants
- Continuing consultation with Greater Portland Bible Church in the headwaters of Stephens Creek (*below*) regarding stormwater management options. In FY 2011-12, additional partners Depave and Portland Parks & Recreation Community Gardens joined discussions on downspout disconnection, parking lot depaving and retrofitting, and installation of a community garden. This site also has interesting outreach possibilities as site host of the Lunchtime Disc Golf Course.



- Hillsdale Community Church (United Church of Christ) continuing project assistance with outreach and recruitment, invasive plant removal and native plant installation, in conjunction with the Backyard Habitat Certification Program.
- Grantwriting feedback and support for Friends of Marquam Nature Park grant to expand invasive plant removal in Marquam Gulch through hiring of contractor crew.

Funding and Partnerships

Core Funding

The City of Portland Bureau of Environmental Services (BES) provides core funding for the WRC with \$52,000 in funding from a \$73,000 grant agreement to Southwest Neighborhoods, Inc. Funds support one 0.9 FTE staff position, taxes and liabilities, benefits, contract administration, program supplies, equipment and mileage. The WRC leverages this investment to mobilize in-kind volunteer time and additional monetary resources for SW Portland watershed stewardship efforts.

Many residents report that they value the WRC grantwriting and project development assistance offered to community groups and landowners planning watershed restoration activities. 2011-12 community grant proposals assisted by the WRC that were successful in receiving funding included:

- St. Luke's Rain Garden (\$6,205)
- Garden Home Rain Garden (\$995)
- Pendleton Creek (\$4,374)
- Maplewood Triangle (\$1,550)
- Marquam Ravine (\$8,140)
- Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon (\$7,110)

Upper Fanno Technical Assistance: West Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District (WMSWCD) Partner Funding (\$6,864)

The WRC partnered with Tualatin River Watershed Council on a proposal for landowner technical assistance in the Fanno Creek watershed, where TRWC does not have organizational capacity to provide services. Two summer interns were hired, which resulted in expanded outreach and identification of landowners who needed assistance. See additional info, previous page.

Pendleton Creek Habitat Enhancement Grant (\$4,374, WMSWCD)

In 2011-12, initial invasive removal, site preparation and tree/shrub planting was completed at this

Safe Route to School site in the Hayhurst neighborhood. Approval was secured for phase II of the project which includes a more heavily-infested adjacent stretch of the creek (*right*).



Partnerships

Backyard Habitat Certification Program (BHCP)

BHCP is a partnership of Columbia Land Trust and Audubon Society of Portland. A site visit helps landowners identify and plan for removing invasive species, as well as opportunities to put in native plants, other wildlife habitat enhancements and stormwater management options. The BHCP is a strong complement with other WRC outreach.



Urban Watershed Mentors and Oregon Adult Conservation Educators (ACE)

In fall 2011, the WRC and four other SW Portland organizations partnered to submit a \$13,824 OWEB grant request to support watershed professional development program for volunteers and site leaders. Though the grant was not awarded, two successful collaborations emerged from this experience. First, WMSWCD began addressing this gap by piloting the Urban Watershed Mentors program in partnership with other local organizations. Second, project collaborators and other regional groups formed the Oregon Adult Conservation Educators forum to share outreach challenges and opportunities and develop consistent messaging between groups. In the future, the Oregon ACE group hopes to conduct collaborative research on best practices that motivate citizens to adopt environmentally responsible behavior.



Watershed Center Drop-In Visits:

Open Hours	Adult Visitors	Youth Visitors	TOTAL Visitors
813	301	202	503

Event Volunteers:

	Fanno	Tryon	Willamette	Multiple WS	TOTAL
Events	8	8	11	9	36
Attendees	99	118	70	54	341

Education Program Participants:

	Fanno	Tryon	Willamette	Multiple WS	TOTAL
Events	4	2	4	8	18
Attendees	119	31	98	240	488
Other*	0	50	26	0	76

* participants reached in programs offered by others who gave programs using WRC equipment or training materials.

Outreach Contacts:

	Fanno	Tryon	Willamette	Multiple WS	TOTAL
Events	5	1	5	9	19
Attendees	117	52	237	639	1045

Landowner Assistance:

	Fanno	Tryon	Willamette	Multiple WS	TOTAL
Technical Assistance Inquiries	25	6	9	5	45
Site Visits & Projects	10	1 [†]	5	0	16

[†] note: landowners in the Tryon Creek watershed are referred to the Tryon Creek Watershed Council for assistance.

Resources Leveraged

Contract funding for WRC staff and materials (BES): \$52,000
 Grants assisted & awarded to SW Portland community groups: \$35,238
 Estimated in-kind donation value of volunteer time: \$13,000+

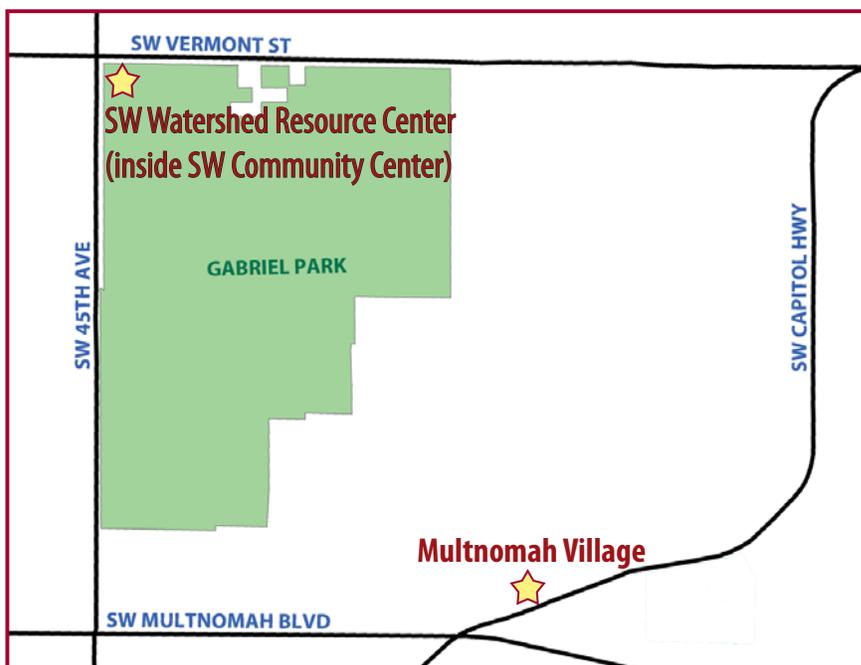
Acknowledgments and Collaborators



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Watershed Center Logo
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*Collaborators include
SW Portland residents,
neighborhood associations,
watershed volunteer groups,
faith communities, and:*

