

# Smith and Bybee Lakes

in North Portland off Marine Drive



**AFTER**

*Enhanced access to the vicinity (both photos)*



The restoration project targeted removing noxious plants and planting native vegetation in specific areas of Smith and Bybee lakes. The proposal was a product of the Smith and Bybee Lakes Youth Roundtable, a collaboration of representatives from public, private, and non-profit agencies. Roosevelt High School, which has a natural resource education tract, was invited to join the group. The lakes had been substantially impacted by urban development, controlled conditions on the Columbia River system, and invasive plants.

Invasive plants crowd out native plants and establish large uniform colonies with dramatically reduced habitat value as measured in terms of diversity of food source and vegetative structure. In wetland and shallow water situations, their biomass production can accelerate the eutrophication process. Smartweed, a native aquatic plant, was considered invasive, particularly at Smith Lake. Due to changes in the water level regime at Smith Lake, smartweed spread rapidly in recent years. While smartweed does offer shelter and food for waterfowl, its spread across Smith Lake and into Bybee Lake must be monitored. Himalayan blackberry (in upland areas), purple loosestrife (in emergent wetland areas) and smartweed (in shallow water areas), pose a threat in the lakes and can be managed.

Areas on the perimeter, which were recently filled for development, lacked vegetation and needed to be planted with native tree and shrub species that survive in sandy fill areas. Students and youth crews manually removed invasive species and planted in the fill area.

## Benefits

The project moved forward the mission of the Smith and Bybee Roundtable to actively involve youth in implementation projects at Smith and Bybee lakes. The removal of invasive plants and revegetating with native plantings has increased diversity for wildlife. Students learned about the Smith and Bybee lakes program and the associated civic, social and scientific educational experiences associated with it.

## Proposed timeline and tasks

December 1993 - March 1994 .....	Blackberry removal
December 1993 .....	Select and obtain plant cuttings
January - March 1994 .....	Plant cuttings
February 1994 .....	Cottonwood planting
April 1994 .....	“Trip into Nature” led by high school and middle school students
May - June 1994 .....	Purple loosestrife removal
September-October 1994 .....	Smartweed removal
November 1994 - March 1995 .....	Blackberry removal
March 1995 .....	Monitor smartweed removal impact

Another benefit was the expansion of public awareness and involvement of the Smith and Bybee lakes restoration project through student and community participation.

- Timing of tasks around the school year is essential. Summer vacation, spring breaks and finals are all dates to make sure you know ahead of time.

## Budget

Proposed – \$20,089

Actual – withdrawn

Metro/US Fish and Wildlife grant award – \$8,480

## Reason for withdrawal

The grant was not needed because a Metro education grant served both purposes and was cost effective in getting the work done. Project manager turnover caused lack of continuity and momentum.

## Helpful hints – what worked, what didn't

- A Metro environmental education grant was teamed with this grant. Because of the efficiency of that particular grant, the restoration grant wasn't needed.
- Students can get a lot done if they believe in themselves and the project premise.
- Coordination of schedules with schools can be difficult. Take this into account when outlining your work plan and timeline.

## Partners

Portland Parks and Recreation  
City of Portland Bureau of Environmental Services  
North Portland Youth Services  
The Wetlands Conservancy  
Friends of Smith and Bybee Lakes  
Friends and Advocates of Urban Natural Areas  
Portland State University  
Portland Educational Network  
Roosevelt High School  
US Forest Service  
Green City Data Project  
Northwest Environmental Advocates  
Rivergate Business Association

## Contact

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