

Wildlife Demonstration Gardens

Center for Agricultural, Science and Environmental Education, 1104 NE 149th St.,
Salmon Creek watershed



AFTER

Demonstration plots show combination of native plants



The project was proposed and carried out by the city of Vancouver Parks and Recreation Department in partnership with NatureScaping, an all-volunteer group whose mission it is to teach landscaping for wildlife. The purpose of the project involved the creation of a two-acre demonstration area displaying plants attractive to wildlife and landscaping concepts that attract wildlife. This project was almost wholly completed by volunteers, including planning, budgeting, on the ground work and fundraising with supervision by Vancouver Parks and Recreation Department.

This project experienced significant delays. First, due to unforeseen contractual problems with Vancouver School District, the original grant approved by Metro could not proceed for some months. Once work began, it became evident through experiences with adjacent restoration projects that extensive vandalism would preclude a successful project. Volunteers spent four months looking for a more appropriate site. A change of venue was requested and granted. The demonstration garden was created at the Center for Agricultural, Science and Environmental Education. The planning process had to be

started over and further delayed the project implementation – especially when the planting season was missed.

During the summer, the volunteer committee did site preparation and further planning. This planning identified several areas that were under budgeted for – especially the irrigation budget. A great deal of time was spent trying to locate a contractor to do the job pro bono. Finally, the original contractor agreed to do the job for a quarter of the price. The project was still several thousand dollars over budget. The fall months were spent soliciting nurseries for donations. Winter and spring were spent planting. More than 200 volunteers donated in excess of 7,800 hours to the project.

Benefits

The primary long-term goal of the project was to increase public awareness of wildlife habitat loss and how people could provide habitat by creating their own backyard wildlife habitat sanctuary. The focus was creation of a demonstration area to show firsthand how to landscape for wildlife and the plants that attract wildlife.

Budget

Proposed – \$117,085

Actual – \$104,291

Metro/US Fish and Wildlife grant award – \$10,071

Helpful hints – what worked, what didn't

- Engaging area businesses and nurseries was by far the most successful part of the project. They felt this project would pay dividends far into the future.
- Partnerships with other volunteer groups were also instrumental in getting the work done.
- Allow for significant delays – especially if you are relying on donations from businesses. When vendors donate, you cannot hold them accountable for timelines.

Partners

NatureScaping

Master Gardeners

Sierra Club

Audubon

Boy Scouts

Numerous local nurseries

Contact

Dan George, Vancouver Parks and Recreation,
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Jeff Wittler, volunteer project manager,
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Timeline and tasks

January 1994..... Grant approved

September 1994 -

February 1995 New site selection; change of venue submitted and approved at Center for Agricultural, Science and Environmental Education

Summer 1995 Site preparation and planning

Fall 1995 Soliciting for nursery donations

Winter 1995 -

spring 1996 Planting

