

**Connecting People with Nature (CPWN) Post-Project Report  
Crater Renaissance Academy (Academy) Project 2017 (CPWN #16)  
USFWS Roseburg Field Office (Service)**

Photo credits: Crater Renaissance Academy with releases kept on file at the school.



Crater Renaissance Academy (Academy), a small school within Crater High School (School District 6), located in Central Point, Oregon, provides two blocks of environmental science study with a total of 100 students in grades 10 and 11. These students receive Environmental Science instruction from two master teachers with additional instruction from local entities such as the Bear Creek Watershed Education Partners, Rogue River Watershed Council, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW), Oregon State Extension Service, the Natural Resource Department of the Rogue Valley Council of Governments and the Service.

These classes are held at the Academy's "Land Laboratory" which uses nearby Bear Creek and a constructed wetland complex for student exercises as well as field trips to nearby locales such as the site of the Gold Ray Dam removal on the Rogue River, vernal pools and oak woodlands in ODFW's Denman Wildlife Preserve, Oregon Department of Transportation's vernal pool mitigation/conservation bank and the Nature Conservancies' Whetstone Savanna. These environmental science blocks also host guest classes from Central Point Elementary and Scenic Middle School in joint fieldwork studies, which provide hands-on science to an additional 60+ students.



In June 2017, the Academy was awarded a CPWN grant which provided for the purchase of hand tools the students can use to maintain the pollinator gardens and riparian areas. During the fall of 2017, these students will use the tools to remove invasive Himalayan blackberries from areas near Bear Creek as part of a larger stream restoration project funded by the Blue-Sky Habitat Fund, administered by the Freshwater Trust for PacifiCorp. This opportunity of field work and environmental studies may be the first for many of these students who are located in a rural area and limited socioeconomic backgrounds. The CPWN funds help match partnering opportunities with outside entities and for students to be involved in citizen-based watershed restoration efforts

aimed at improving the community in which they live. Since many of the students will probably remain in the area in adult life, the projects provide places they can revisit in the future with their families.