Little Wood Rose Nature Park

by Shelley Matthews

YEAR 6

in Tualatin, OR., at 21000 S.E. Boones Ferry Road, just north of Arapaho Road

BEFORE

Disease was causing tree mortality; large trees that could spread the disease were selectively removed, leaving large open areas in need of restoration

AFTER

Native trees, shrubs, and bird boxes were put in to restore habitat structure and diversity for wildlife

Little Wood Rose Nature Park is a 6.5-acre forested area, designated in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan as a passive recreational park. The rectangular park is surrounded by single-family housing and a church, and serves as a refuge from the urban environment for both wildlife and humans. From 1993 to 1996, over 225 trees at Little Wood Rose Nature Park had fallen or been removed due to Laminated Root Rot and/or Red Ring Rot disease. This had changed the park dramatically, leaving large exposed areas where once there had been deep shade and cover.

In October 1996, a comprehensive restoration plan was approved by the Tualatin City Council. The goal of the plan was to re-establish a sustainable, western Oregon native woodland ecosystem, which requires low maintenance and provides good wildlife habitat, public access, and educational opportunities. As such, disease resistant trees (western red cedar, bigleaf maple, red alder, Oregon white oak, Oregon ash, etc.) and shrubs (snowberry, salal, Nootka rose, ederberry, sword fern, etc.) were planted to recreate the forest environment. In addition, non-native vegetation (English ivy, Himalayan blackberry, herb robert, bedstraw, etc.) was removed to allow room for the newly planted trees to grow, as well as to enhance plant diversity and to improve the appearance of the park. Snags, root wads, brush piles, and logs were left to preserve habitat structure, cover and nesting opportunities. Bird and bat houses were also built and installed to enhance wildlife habitat.

Benefits

- Reforested the park.
- Improved the general appearance and health of the park.
- Reduced soil erosion.
- Enhanced wildlife habitat and wildlife viewing opportunities for community members.
- Increased citizen education, involvement, and stewardship.

Budget

Total Proposed – $25,945
Total Actual – $18,047
Metro/US Fish and Wildlife grant award – $7,135
Grant Dollars Spent - $7,135

Helpful Hints – what worked, what didn't

- Make frequent visits to the site and readjust your restoration plans accordingly.
- Educate yourself on the pros and cons of using volunteers, paid service groups, and staff to accomplish the goals of the restoration project. We used a combination of each of these groups and it worked out very well.
- Volunteer workdays should be well organized. Contact reliable groups and organizations well beforehand to ensure an adequate number of people will be present; you can't rely on Joe Citizen to show up. Make sure there is more than enough to do. Keep it short, two to three hours is about all people can handle. Have a couple of staff members or trained volunteers to oversee the planting.
- Provide restrooms for work crews who are on-site for more than 2-3 hours.

- Consider removing invasive English ivy in February. This was an ideal time. In April, trillium bloomed where the ivy once was.
- The plant mortality rate was very low.

Partners

Boy Scouts
Brownies
Cub Scouts
Friends of Trees
Horizon Community Church
Northwest Service Academy
Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
Oregon Department of Forestry
People for the Planet
Tualatin High School's Rotary and Horticulture Clubs
Tualatin Parks and Recreation Department
Tualatin Rotary Club

Contact

Virginia Dodson, Program Coordinator, Tualatin Parks and Recreation Department, (503) 692-2000

Timeline and Tasks

November 1996	Volunteers planted trees and removed ivy
January 1997	Completed general restoration plans, coordinated activities, and purchased plant materials
February 1997	Sent informational mailings to neighbors and volunteers. Continued work begun in November: removed non-native plants and planted new trees and shrubs
March – April 1997	Removed additional non-native plants and planted more trees; installed bird and bat houses and an irrigation system
June – September 1997	Maintained restoration site: removed invasive weeds, planted native vegetation, and watered plants