

# Portland Community College – Rock Creek Campus

17705 NW Springville Rd., Portland



## AFTER

*Streambank plantings and fencing improves wetland habitat*

## BEFORE

*Area is highly impacted by cattle grazing*



The Rock Creek Environmental Studies Center comprises 90 acres of the Rock Creek campus of Portland Community College. Approximately 30 acres has second-growth Douglas fir forest and 60 acres of mixed agricultural fields and wetlands. In the 1930s, one of the braided channels of Rock Creek was channelized to provide additional farmland. This action, along with extensive grazing, eliminated a large portion of existing ash bottom wetlands. Invasive plants, especially reed canary grass, became a problem. Livestock was allowed to graze in the stream corridor and was driven across the stream to reach fields on the northern boundary. In 1989 the PCC board of directors set aside this area as a permanent environmental preserve.

The project was to focus on construction that allows farm equipment and animal crossing with minimum impact to the stream. The reconstruction of the overflow channel included meanders and greater pooling in order to increase the amount of open water and emergent wetlands habitat. Strategies were developed to remove and combat reed canary grass, and reintroduce native vegetation to

riparian area. The project site includes 12 acres of wetland area on the channelized portion of Rock Creek.

## Benefits

A large area of wetlands was to be restored to a more viable habitat with increased opportunity for threatened species such as the red-legged frog and sessile trillium. This restoration was to be in the context of a series of educational experiences at public institutions, providing hands-on awareness to a many citizens in the area, from early elementary school age to adult.

The project was to help reconnect a series of riparian corridors along Rock Creek, serving as a model to other agricultural uses in Washington County. It would have demonstrated the protection of wetland areas in conjunction with livestock grazing and farm use. Other benefits were to include improved water quality and increased flood control for Rock Creek.

### Budget

Proposed – \$44,812  
Actual – withdrawn  
Metro/US Fish and Wildlife grant award – \$10,300

### Reason for withdrawal

Too many projects were started at once, resulting in time management problems.

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

- Plan far ahead for needs, labor and time necessary to complete the grant.
- Assess the “headaches” of managing a grant such as reports, bookkeeping and meetings.
- Make sure you have enough time to spend on the project and do not have too many projects going at the same time.

### Partners

Washington County Education Service District  
Portland Community College  
Elementary schools in area

### Contact person

Richard Hollenbeck, 244-6111, ext. 7462 or 7247

### Proposed timeline and tasks

November 1992 .....	Completion of permit authorizations
March 1993 .....	Final planning and design drawings
July 30, 1993 .....	Clearing of ground for culvert/crossing
Aug. 31, 1993 .....	Placement of rock and culvert
Sept. 30, 1993 .....	Excavation and stream channel reworking
October -	
November 1993 .....	Replanting of disturbed areas
April 20, 1994 .....	Completion of planting and final inspection

