

April Hill Park Spring

in Southwest Portland off Southwest 54th Avenue and Logan Court



BEFORE

Spring is piped directly into stream for maintenance purposes

The project called for the daylighting of a spring outlet and stream, and the restoration of a stream channel and associated riparian vegetation. The primary purpose for the project was to restore the site to its condition prior to being channeled by using native plants with habitat resource value. The restored stream surface flows into an existing wetlands immediately south of the project site. Other objectives were to provide an opportunity for community involvement in environmental restoration, to reduce long-term maintenance requirements by removing the existing concrete drainage structures and turf, and to demonstrate environmentally friendly ways to deal with water and drainage problems in parks as well as residential settings.

Major problems at the site were poor drainage and excessively wet soils in the existing turf areas and the displacement of high-value riparian vegetation with less value, but more aggressive exotic species. To remedy these problems, the project called for removal of turf within the project area and its replacement with native riparian ground cover, shrubs and trees. It also called for the removal of the marginal drainage system. The site was slightly regraded to allow water to move across the surface as necessary to join the existing wetlands. Exotics were



AFTER

Daylighted natural spring creates wetland plant habitat

removed by volunteers using mechanical methods and replaced with native plants.

Neighbors helped plant and provided water after the project was installed. They served as a watch group for damage and participated in an annual work day for clean up and exotic control. Neighbors were asked to participate in planning and decision-making about different aspects of the project. Neighbors said they felt uncomfortable about building trails, even informal ones, around the ecotone between creek and wetlands. Their concern was about inappropriate use such as parties and other illegal activities. Neighbors also dissuaded parks from putting up interpretative signs because they feared that such signs might draw too much attention to their park and it would lose its neighborhood feel.

Benefits

Wildlife habitat was enhanced by replacing aggressive, low resource value plants with selected plants with high resource and better aesthetic values. Maintenance requirements for the park were reduced by removing poorly working or difficult to maintain features and replacing with low-maintenance features. Educational opportunities exist for those who participated in the project and for those who will use the site after the changes are in place.

One of the major benefits was working and building support with the neighborhood. Many of the volunteers who worked on exotic removal, planting and maintaining the project came from the surrounding homes. Neighbors were also very active in supplying input on how they felt the park should look with trails and signs.

Budget

Proposed – \$13,300

Actual – withdrawn

Metro/US Fish and Wildlife grant award – \$5,900

Reason for withdrawal

There was insufficient staff to manage the grant administration requirements. The project was accomplished without Metro money.

Helpful hints – what worked, what didn't

- You can do many things with free labor, left over plants and good partnerships without applying for a grant.
- Make sure the trade off for documenting and managing a grant is worth the money for which you are applying.
- Permit processes, especially around water, require much more coordination between agencies than you would expect.
- Volunteers are good for short-term bulk work, but you need long-term commitment from a few highly dedicated volunteers.

Timeline and tasks

July 1992	Develop detailed site plan, other information needed by permitting agencies
August 1992	Prepare design; submit necessary permit applications; develop a project work plan and monitoring plan incorporating staff and volunteers
September 1992	Start site clean up; receive Metro grant
November 1992	Complete site clean up
May - June 1993	Stream daylighting and stream bed restoration
September 1993	Start revegetation of site
March - May 1994	Complete revegetation of site
May 1994	Implement monitoring and maintenance plan

- A project such as April Hill allows you to network and build good partnerships and relations with other agencies, companies and groups that are interested in performing the same service for the environment.

Partners

Portland Parks and Recreation
City of Portland Planning Bureau
Eagle Scouts
Boy Scouts
Ash Creek Neighborhood Association
Alternative Community Service Work Crews
Oregon Youth Conservation Corps
Ash Creek Elementary School
Fans of Fanno Creek
Neighbors

Contact

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