

Fowler Middle School

in Tigard, 1085 SW Walnut St.; Summer Creek runs through the campus and just north of the school building



BEFORE

Lack of riparian vegetation

AFTER

Native shrubs provide food and cover for animals

The riparian area of Summer Creek on the Fowler Middle School property was cleared of Himalayan blackberries. Native shrubs were planted to provide food and cover for animals. Bird houses were built and installed for song birds and waterfowl.

Summer Creek is a tributary of Fanno Creek. Fowler Middle School hopes that eventually this area will become an environmental learning center and arboretum for the school and community. A possible future fitness path, challenge course and park for diverse people may safeguard the area from vandalism and misuse.

More than 2,200 native forbs and shrubs were ordered in November, delivered in February and planted March through May. That winter was very mild, so many plants were blooming and leafing out. A mild, dry winter and hot, dry summer caused a less than 50 percent survival rate. Small children pulled out a lot of the stakes and damaged many plants.

A six-month extension was needed to complete the project. This extension enabled the group to spray blackberries, seal and install birdhouses, reorder and replace dead plants and set permanent photo points.

Benefits

The project created a better visual observation of the area and easier physical access to a greater portion of Summer Creek. Students at risk gained a sense of ownership and community service through the cooperative effort of clearing and planting. They were able to work on interpersonal skills. The outdoors was incorporated into the science curriculum for the duration of the project and for future lessons. This project also brought people in the community together with students, providing a more people-friendly and safe environment around the creek and school.

Helpful hints – what worked, what didn’t

- ♦ Machete and long-handled lopping shears were effective with blackberries. The herbicide Crossbow killed foliage without affecting roots and the blackberries came back.
- ♦ Completely remove blackberry roots before planting; it is very hard to do this after plants are in the ground.

Timelines and tasks

November 1991	Order plants
February 1991	Plants delivered
March - May 1992	Plant
Late September - October 1992	Spray invasive with Rodeo 21/0/0 fertilizer mix
September 1992	Order replacement plants
October - December 1992	Plant
January - February 1993	Plant
Fall 1992 or spring 1993	Install bird nest platforms and boxes
Spring 1993	Mark out, develop an interpretative trail

- Use 3-foot minimum stakes.
- Wapato, wild rice and cattails will not grow in shade.
- Stake and color code all plants and use a uniform planting strategy (e.g., creek side of the stake).
- Set photo points first, record compass bearings. Have both slides and prints made and keep video journal if possible.
- Project director should delegate photo and video tasks.
- Meet with grounds people and familiarize them with the site. Explain the project, showing them stakes and plantings, so they will not mow plants down.

Contact

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Budget

Proposed - \$21,852

Actual - \$22,725

Metro/US Fish and Wildlife grant award - \$10,000

Partners

Fowler Middle School teachers

Fishman Environmental Services

The Wetlands Conservancy

Fans of Fanno Creek

US Fish and Wildlife Service

