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Metro
Parks and Nature
2018 Nature Education and Outdoor Experiences Grant
3/6/2018 deadline

Tualatin Riverkeepers Growing Green: Training Leaders for Tomorrows Jobs

\$ 100,000.00 Requested
\$ 100,000 Estimated Match

Submitted: 3/5/2018 3:17:05 PM (Pacific)

Project Contact

[Redacted]

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Tualatin Riverkeepers

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Executive Director

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Application Questions

1. Program summary (one paragraph, 255 characters)

Provide a brief summary that describes your program.

TRK's Green Jobs-Urban Forestry Training Program uses private, public and non-profit partnerships to promote environmental stewardship, increase access to economic opportunities and improve the social conditions of immigrants/refugees in Washington County

2. Fiscal agent

If different than the lead organization. If no fiscal agent, please write "not applicable".

not applicable

3. Program partners

Committed partner organizations.

Community Partners: Centro Cultural and Muslim Educational Trust. We collaborate with the City of Tualatin Parks Department, City of Portland Urban Forestry Department and Friends of Trees to provide student internships focused in Urban Forestry

4. Potential partners

Potential partner organizations.

Portland Bureau of Environmental Services for stormwater management training, the Wildlife Conservation Society for pest detection training, the Clean Water Services Paseos Verdes , and Tualatin Soil and Water Conservation District stream restoration

5. Program length

(Select only one)

- One year
- Two years
- Three years

6. Program narrative (up to one page, 4000 characters)

Provide a narrative that describes the program. Explain why the program is important for your community and organization, such as how it fits your organization's strategic plan or mission.

As of 2018, TRK has provided urban forestry trainings to more than 30 residents in the Portland Metro area and has linked 16 Latinx, Arab, African, and Native American students with internships in and around Washington County. Our efforts to include diversity, equity and inclusion as key tenets to all of our programs led us to consider how our mission to promote clean water, wetland conservation, pollution prevention and green development, could better include the diverse voices and cultural experiences of Washington County's communities of color. The Green Jobs-Urban Forestry program provided a triple bottom line, where private, public and non-profit partnerships cultivate a new generation of environmental stewards that come from communities most impacted by environmental and economic crises. TRK worked with community partners, local environmental agencies and businesses to ensure that immigrants and refugees in Washington County can directly benefit from the Green Jobs-Urban Forestry training program through access to forestry related skills and exposure to careers in the field. We received unanticipated success in the pilot program, such as news that a few students from Centro Cultural's student cohort received paid reimbursement from their landscaping employer while attending the trainings. The employer said this was because they saw it as value to the betterment of their employees' skill sets. One of our students from MET was even offered a position at the City of Tualatin after his internship, but could not accept the offer as he had to return to his home country due to visa complications. TRK, Centro, and MET were thrilled to be invited to speak at the Intertwine WA County Summit, at the Urban Ecology and Conservation Symposium, and OR Community Trees Summit. We are also seeing interest from Portland groups in emulating this training in the coming years. The program was not without challenges. The community need from Centro and MET necessitated training a wide range of students. Many participants already had years of experience in forestry/landscaping and nursery work. While one student from the 2016-2017 cohort had a degree in environmental science, and one from the 2017-2018 cohort has recently completed a degree in environmental science, there were several students from the 2016 cohort that struggled with English as a second language. Though the Urban Forestry Training has been well received by students and community agencies alike, the training remains a basic introduction to the urban forestry/environmental industry. Current and past students have indicated a need for accredited or certified skills that can be valuable beyond their 100 hours as interns. In order to increase the skills gained through the Urban Forestry Program, TRK is building partnerships with local agencies and employers that introduce Urban Forestry participants to natural resource management trainings. This expands student access to stewardship opportunities in the Portland Metro Area and provides students with an understanding of the range of skills needed in natural resource management. The success of this program as highlighted by the feedback from our partners and students demonstrates that green infrastructure has the potential to transform communities. In order to reach that potential, TRK seeks funding to provide training towards specific skills that can offer disadvantaged communities more opportunities in the green sector.

7. Goals (up to one page, 4000 characters)

Describe how the program addresses the Nature in Neighborhood nature education and outdoor experiences grant's purpose and goals.

Strengthening partnerships between our community partners and local agencies gives local communities of color direct access to hands-on stewardship experience that link jobs, life skills and environmental education, creating on-ramps to real career opportunities rather than dead-end, low-quality employment.

Goal 1: Scale up training and increase graduates' technical skills that increase employability

It is imperative to provide an inter-disciplinary curriculum with a multiple-pathways approach to career exposure. Exposing students to the wide array of opportunities in natural resource management ensures that the skills they earn remain relevant to a quickly changing and emerging industry.

In order to increase the skills gained through the Green Jobs Training, TRK is building partnerships with local agencies and employers that introduce participants to natural resource management trainings that are focused on current issues our watershed is facing, including stormwater pollution and riparian erosion. This expands student access to stewardship careers and provides students with an understanding of the range of skills needed in natural resource management.

Goal 2: Tracking sustainability, impact and effectiveness of Urban Forestry Program

In the first two years of the Urban Forestry Training 30 students from immigrant and refugee populations participated in the classroom trainings, with 16 selected to continue as interns. Of the 10 interns in the first year of the program, only 2 completed their internships by September 2017, and in the cohort of 6 in our second year, we have already had 1 student who can no longer complete her internship. There are many legitimate reasons that have created barriers for participants in the program including cultural challenges, language barriers or lack of adequate work at their placements.

With Centro's new Prosperidad Center, there is potential to provide wrap-around support services that address barriers to participation. These community partnerships are valuable in measuring the impact of the Urban Forestry Program.

Prosperidad's staff are trained counselors or social workers who can work with Urban Forestry participants to develop individualized plans based on an assessment of a full range of needs, such as child care, transportation, housing, mental health, physical health, financial stability, and educational achievement. At MET, Urban Forestry Students can be involved in their annual programming, presenting as River Professors, leading tours by Fanno Creek Park and adding to MET's youth education programs. These wraparound services and engagement opportunities can be instrumental for success as students go through the training program. They are equally important for graduates as they find jobs and adjust to the realities and challenges of employment. As graduates begin working, Prosperidad can continue to provide case management and retention support to keep track of graduates' status and MET can provide opportunities for students to build relationships with residents and encourage more engagement with natural spaces. Increasing program funding and building on the current foundation of the program will help us measure how our students thrive in our region's outdoor, environmental, and natural resources

economies. Graduates' continued education, training and job retention are all measurements of success.

Goal 3: Fostering a deeper understanding of the connection between natural systems and urban environments

Feedback from past participants emphasized a need for trainings that better apply classroom curriculum to their internship experiences. Current students apply lessons learned from classes at their internships through tree planting, community outreach and canopy management, among other activities. With more robust trainings students will be able to organize educational workshops for the public, and become active voices in local decisions related to water quality issues.

8. Partnerships (up to one page, 4000 characters)

Show how partnerships and collaboration with other individuals, organizations and groups in your community will be formed, strengthened and extended through this program.

TRK has established professional connections cultivated over decades of work on the Tualatin River and its restoration with the cities of Tigard and Tualatin, the Tualatin River Watershed Council, Clean Water Services, Friends of Trees and the Soil and Water Conservation District. It is the responsibility of TRK and above partners to act as a link between underserved communities and these opportunities, helping to equip residents with the skills to become more employable in the green collar industry. Accessing the wrap around services provided by MET and Centro Cultural increases the green jobs training's capacity to support students as they identify personal goals and prepare for continuing careers or higher education in natural resource management and related fields. Further involvement from our partners at Centro and MET continues culturally relevant trainings that strengthen professional and social connections. New funding for the Urban Forestry Program will provide capacity to expand training days from 2 hours/week for eight weeks to half days/month for six months, expand the internship to 160 hours and compensate students for time spent in training as well as instructor and mentor time from our partnerships.

9. Organizational preparedness (up to one page, 4000 characters)

Explain why your organization and your partners have the experience and capacity to conduct the program, including identification of key personnel, their roles in the program and their qualifications.

Tualatin Riverkeepers has a committed and experienced staff and Board that comes well prepared for leading this program. Kris Balliet, Executive Director, has over twenty years experience leading conservation efforts in marine and freshwater ecosystems from the Pacific Northwest to Alaska. Kris has always kept a specific focus and passion in her work with indigenous communities in the Columbia River Basin in Oregon and throughout coastal Alaska. Recently, Kris has assumed in her daily work plan our collaboration with the Chicas program of Adelante Mujeres, leading field trips and working closely with Adelante's staff to develop the strongest partnership possible. We also have strength on our Board. One example is Harbans Lal, a former USDA staff leader and an immigrant from India who now resides in the Tualatin River watershed. Harbans is passionate about the Tualatin River and is very hands on in sharing his professional expertise with both the staff and Board. Our staff serves as liaisons to the community at large, leading events, community workshops and trainings that empower residents of Washington County as stewards for clean water. Sandra Amolo is TRK's community organizer with a passion for social and environmental justice and a keen interest in creating a multi-cultural environmental movement that is welcoming and inclusive to all ideas and backgrounds. She has worked both internationally and in the Pacific Northwest, introducing youth to natural spaces through outdoor activities and to connect Latino youth to employment opportunities in National Parks. In Central and South America she worked to mobilization and empower communities displaced through conflict. Our advocacy manager, Ruby Buchholtz is a home grown resident of the Pacific Northwest, having been raised in Eugene and currently residing in Portland. Her work has taken her from Lake Oswego, where she created a management plan for an urban wetland facing development pressure, all the way to the Philippines, where as a Peace Corps Volunteer she worked with fisherfolk on alternatives to dynamite fishing in coral reefs. Sandra and Ruby currently lead our community outreach with a stormwater placemaking project in partnership with Centro Cultural and Muslim Educational Trust, in the cities of Tigard and Hillsboro, bringing multicultural art to educate our diverse communities about the impact of stormwater on the Tualatin River. They also assist in managing the Urban Forestry training, facilitating connections between students, partners and internship placements.

10. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (up to one page, 4000 characters)

Describe how your program involves communities of color and the demographics of the community served in identifying the need for, designing, and delivering this programming. How does your organization's vision or mission address diversity and equity?

TRK has been fortunate to receive equity and inclusion training from the Center for Diversity and the Environment and is incorporating equity and justice into all of its programs. Foremost amongst this is our Advocacy Program, which seeks to train residents in watershed activism that promotes clean water, wetland conservation, green development by industry and advocates for pollution prevention through resident 'watchdogs'. Environmentally-friendly or "green" development is important to TRK because restoring degraded lands and putting more trees on the landscape helps improve the water quality of the river we protect. At the same time, enlisting leadership from diverse audiences in implementing green development solutions is key to creating an inclusive environmental movement within the Tualatin River's watershed in WA County, which is also the most culturally diverse county in Oregon.

TRK values the traditions and cultural experience of the County's communities of color as wisdom from which we can learn. Moreover, there is a wealth of highly qualified culturally specific organizations that can help TRK encourage diversity in decision-making and leadership on environmental issues of concern. Most notably are organizations TRK has partnered with in the past, such as Centro Cultural, Muslim Educational Trust, and Unite Oregon. Indeed, past Unite Oregon leadership is currently active on our Board of Directors and is helping to shape our program-by-program equity work as we head towards the third year of the Green Jobs Training.

11. Location and program reach (up to two pages)

On next page, please upload a location/vicinity map that shows where the program and/or participating communities are located within the region, such as on Google Maps, MetroMap, Regional Equity Atlas, or the Regional Conservation Strategy viewer

✓ I uploaded it!

12. Demographic form (two pages)

On next page, please upload the requested the 2018 Nature in Neighborhoods demographic form, which will not be used for the review of your grant application.

✓ I uploaded it!

Document Uploads

Documents Requested *

Provide a location/vicinity map that shows where the program and/or participating communities are located within the region, such as on Google Maps, MetroMap, Regional Equity Atlas, or the Regional Conservation Strategy viewer.

Required? Attached Documents *

✓ [regional map](#)

* ZoomGrants™ is not responsible for the content of uploaded documents.

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REGIONAL CONSERVATION STRATEGY

SELECT AN AREA: Watershed ▼ Tualatin Sub Basin ▼



Area Summary i

Layers & Legend ✕

- Regional - Highest Value i
- Regional - High Value i
- Regional - Full Spectrum i

- RIPARIAN HABITATS

- High Riparian Habitat Values i
- Riparian Habitats Evaluated i
 - Highest Value ▬

- LAND COVER

- Land Cover (5 meters resolution) i
- Agriculture ▬
- Developed ▬
- Low vegetation ▬

terrain ▬ satellite ▬

