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**The Pacific Forest and Watershed Lands Stewardship Council
Awards \$227,000 of Grant Funds to Ten Organizations Dedicated to Getting
Youth to the Outdoors**

Ten Impact grants given to promote outdoor accessibility to youth and offer leadership opportunities to economically disadvantaged and underserved youth

San Mateo, Calif., Sept. 29, 2010 – An organization that will teach young people of color environmental awareness, an 8-week immersion program in Yosemite, and a summer internship program to improve public lands, learn about natural resource careers, and gain valuable work experience in the forestry field are just a few of the projects awarded Impact Fund grants recently announced by the Stewardship Council.

Ten organizations have been awarded \$227,000 through the Impact Fund to support efforts to make outdoor spaces accessible and safe for youth and families.

The Impact Fund is designed to support more established organizations with the resources they need to get underserved youth connected to the outdoors. In this grant round 56 organizations requested \$2,214,583 in funds.

The Stewardship Council is in its sixth year of grant funding. In this time period, the Council has awarded more than \$8,665,000 to 138 organizations, allowing Stewardship Council funds to help connect more than 224,000 youth to the outdoors. By providing funds to youth development organizations and programs, the Council is committed to connecting youth to the outdoors, and hopes to positively transform young people academically, personally and socially.

The following is a list of **Impact Fund** awards:

Bay Area

Bay Area Wilderness Training (BAWT) was awarded \$35,000 to support new opportunities for at-risk and underprivileged youth to experience the transformative power of wilderness first hand. Through BAWT's Front Country Leadership Training Program (FLT), youth providers and teachers receive wilderness skills training, access to a free outdoor equipment library and program support. These leaders in turn engage the youth they work with in powerful outdoor educational experiences through day hikes and overnight camping excursions.

www.bawt.org

East Oakland Boxing Association (EOBA) was awarded \$30,000 for their "I am HECKA Strong" project to support the development and expansion of EOBA's on-site garden and outdoor program.

By integrating outdoor experiential learning, arts, academics, healthy lifestyle education, employment and community awareness, East Oakland youth develop a vision of the long-term connections between themselves, their families and community, and the natural world around them.

<http://www.eoba.org/>

Global Exchange was awarded \$20,000 towards the Earthseed Outdoor Environmental Education program that promotes leadership and commitment to environmental stewardship among San Francisco's underserved youth through outdoor environmental education experiences. Participating youth will also be supported in bringing their learning from outdoor day and overnight trips back to their families and communities.

<http://www.globalexchange.org/>

Native American Health Center Inc was awarded \$30,000 towards the Chae-Mal Wilderness program to provide outdoor educational activities, including kayaking, white water rafting, hiking, teepee building, camping, snowshoeing and skiing, to urban Native American youth and underserved youth who reside in Oakland and the surrounding San Francisco Bay Area. The program will use these activities to demonstrate and practice tribal roles to ultimately revive and nurture youth's cultural connection with the land and encourage a holistic development into adulthood.

www.nativehealth.org

WildLink, a program of NatureBridge was awarded \$20,000 towards the WildLink program to serve underserved youth through a series of wilderness and community-based outdoor programs. Using a robust partnership network, WildLink educates, inspires, and empowers youth to become long-term environmental stewards with strong connections to the natural world in both the wilderness and their local communities.

<http://wildlink.wilderness.net/>

Central Valley

Central California Consortium, a program of the US Forest Service was awarded \$35,000 towards the Generation Green Youth Stewardship Program. This program selects diverse youth from urban and rural areas to complete a summer internship program to improve public lands, learn about natural resource careers, and gain valuable work experience in the forestry field.

www.fs.fed.us/r5/ccc/

Dolores C. Huerta Foundation was awarded \$30,000 towards the Youth Advocates Forging Unity on the Environment, Recreation, and Accountability (Youth AFUERA) program to engage young people of color in Southern Kern County in opportunities to participate in a series of outdoor recreation experiences designed to teach environmental awareness and develop leadership skills.

www.doloreshuerta.org

The Yosemite Conservancy was awarded \$25,000 for the Youth in Yosemite program, where 40 youth will engage in an 8-week immersion and internship experience in Yosemite. Students will work closely with park managers on projects that offer unique opportunities to learn more about natural and cultural sciences, geology, habitat restoration and trail engineering.

www.yosemiteconservancy.org

Tuolumne River Preservation Trust was awarded \$20,000 for its Stanislaus County Youth Ambassador Program to engage 80 youth in exploring outdoor opportunities in their own county, from hiking and camping to canoeing, fishing and geocaching. Through different lessons, day trips, and overnights, youth will be immersed in the natural, cultural, and historic richness of their county, instilling community pride and the capacity to take advantage of local resources to make the outdoors a more integral part of their lives.

www.tuolumne.org

South Coast

Watsonville Wetlands Watch was awarded \$30,000 towards the Pajaro Valley High School Project-based Outdoor Learning program that empowers Watsonville teens to collect and analyze environmental data as a way to develop a personal connection to the unique wetlands in their community. Working side by side with scientists, docents, and peer mentors, teens explore the great outdoors, develop their own wetland projects, and learn about green careers. They also become empowered to assume leadership roles to mentor other youth in outdoor wetland activities.

www.watsonvillewetlandswatch.org

The Pacific Forest and Watershed Lands Stewardship Council (Stewardship Council) is a private, nonprofit foundation. Established in 2004, its mission is to protect and enhance more than 140,000 acres of watershed lands, and invest in efforts to improve the lives of young Californians through connections with the outdoors. The Stewardship Council brings together the expertise of leading conservation, natural resource management, business, and public officials to undertake this historic conservation effort for California. A unique and collaborative endeavor, the Stewardship Council's Board of Directors unites a broad range of interests to guide the development and execution of a Land Conservation Program and a Youth Investment Program to benefit current and future generations of Californians. Our core values are collaboration, stewardship, discovery, sustainability and leadership. For more information about the Stewardship Council please visit the web site: www.stewardshipcouncil.org.

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