



PRESS RELEASE
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Contacts:
Bronwyn Hogan (650) 401-2155

The Pacific Forest and Watershed Lands Stewardship Council Awards \$400,000 in Grants to
Youth-Serving Organizations With Significant Regional Impact
'Collaboration Fund' designed to support innovative field-wide initiatives and partnerships

SAN MATEO, CA – The development of an urban “foodshed” to increase the local food supply in a low-income urban area, a “Farm to School” program to connect rural youth with their local farms, and an outdoors adventure program to help disadvantaged youth discover California State Parks are just a few of the projects awarded large grants announced by the Stewardship Council today. The Stewardship Council, a land conservation and youth investment program, awarded five diverse Collaboration grants ranging from \$55,000 to \$90,000 as a part of the Stewardship Council’s Youth Investment Program. The Collaboration Fund supports field-wide initiatives and partnerships among youth-serving organizations working to overcome obstacles that discourage youth from engaging with their natural environment.

“These are big projects that can only be accomplished by collaboration among cities, community organizations and schools,” said Jayne Battey, Executive Director of the Stewardship Council. “Our goal is to help connect young Californians to the outdoors, but we know some of the most creative and effective efforts come out of collaborative efforts. By working together, we hope to see organizations build sustainable programs that get kids outdoors, fit, healthy, and aware of the world around them.”

The Stewardship Council’s Youth Investment Program supports organizations that make the outdoors more accessible to underserved youth through innovative programs. This year, the Stewardship Council has allocated \$2.5 million in grants for both programming and infrastructure to organizations that provide kids with exposure to nature and the natural environment. The Stewardship Council has granted \$4.6 million since its inception in 2005 and intends to grant more than \$20 million over the next 7 years.

A Public Policy Institute of California March study found that fewer than half of parents are very satisfied with their children’s outdoors opportunities even though most parents consider participation in outdoor activities very important. A similar survey conducted by the PPIC last summer found that more than half (53%) of California teenagers participated in outdoor activities only once or not at all during the summer.

"When we promote the involvement of our children in the outdoors, we're making an investment in their health, their education and in their future." said Secretary for Resources Mike Chrisman, President of the Stewardship Council Board of Directors. "These programs are critical for this generation of Californians and for those generations that will follow in our footsteps."

The following is a list of Collaboration Fund awards announced today:

Collaboration Fund Grant Awards

The Community Alliance with Family Farmers (CAFF) in the Rural Central Coast:

The Community Alliance with Family Farmers (CAFF) in the Rural Central Coast received \$55,000 for a collaboration that brings together schools, non-profits, agencies and the farming community to provide hands-on food and farming education that emphasizes farming conservation practices, healthy farm-fresh foods and agricultural job opportunities for youth of the farm labor community. The collaboration is creating a strong coalition of partners that offer local youth education, experience and knowledge about farming and farm careers. The goal of the coalition is to present youth with an alternative to the “pick and pack” experience of many of the youths’ parents and explore alternative ways to make a living in the farming community. This is the second year of this project, funded by the Stewardship Council, and CAFF intends to strengthen Watsonville community and youth participation.

The Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) of Tulare County:

The Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) of Tulare County is received an \$80,000 grant to coordinate a collaboration of foster youth providers and allies to develop a Youth Environmental Leadership Project and environmental justice leadership course. The course will provide foster care youth the opportunity to take part in a series of experiential activities that will build personal skills and provide a learning atmosphere. The groups will learn about environmental advocacy and their outdoor environment which will help build the essential personal and academic skill sets often lacking in this population. The goal of the project is to create, measure and report on the impact in the social and academic growth of these youth through their exposure to a quality outdoor and experiential education program.

The City of Richmond, Parks and Landscaping Division:

The City of Richmond, Parks and Landscaping Division received \$85,000 for their program “The Richmond Foodshed Collaborative” which will bring together children and youth providers, advocates and educators to help teens to connect to local efforts to create a “foodshed” on public lands throughout Richmond. Richmond has set a goal of raising and consuming 5% of their food supply for city residents. The collaborative will create a cross-sector model that will help plan, organize, plant and grow the community’s food supply in municipal orchards, berry patches, and school and community gardens and will involve children and youth in all aspects of the project.

The California State Parks Foundation:

The California State Parks Foundation and the Pacific Leadership Institute received \$90,000 to partner with local non-profits on a project called the “Outdoor Youth Connection (OYC). OYC will provide a foundation that will help make parks and open space more relevant to our state’s most disconnected populations by providing highly structured introductions to outdoor experiences for California’s most disadvantaged youth. The collaborations and experiences are designed to create a pipeline of trained youth that will help build a bridge between local communities, youth providers and a network of Non Governmental Organizations (NGO) to the outdoors. The program will present these experiences in a more relevant and engaging way that will encourage more non-traditional populations to explore their parks.

Big City Mountaineers in Alameda County:

Big City Mountaineers in Alameda County received \$90,000 for the “Urban Families Gateway Program” to help create a partnership with local communities that will help families and their children explore nearby parks. The collaboration will focus its work on underserved neighborhoods in Alameda County. The program will attempt to get increased participation in outdoor programs by non-traditional family groups by creating a coalition of providers, non-profits and agencies to address the barriers that keep families in underserved communities from using local parks. The goal of the program is to increase the level of use of parks by the families, raise awareness of healthy lifestyles and the environment, increase the knowledge of public lands, and improve family communication via shared outdoor experiences. Ultimately, the goal is to create long-term interest in and support for, outdoor recreation for the children in these communities.

ABOUT THE STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL

The Stewardship Council is a collaborative land conservation and youth investment foundation. Its mandate includes evaluating and providing recommendations for the conservation of over 140,000 acres of watershed lands (currently owned by PG&E) spread across 22 counties, as well as developing and implementing community-based park and environmental education opportunities for underserved youth. For more information on the Stewardship Council, please visit: www.stewardshipcouncil.org. For more information about the grantees and programs, please see grant summaries below.

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