



PRESS RELEASE
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The Pacific Forest and Watershed Lands Stewardship Council Awards more than \$1.1 million to Build Pools, Parks and Open Spaces for Youth

Seven “Infrastructure” Grants given to build or improve recreation areas and make outdoor activities safer and more accessible to youth

San Mateo, CA – An aquatic park for youth with disabilities, a sports field for a low-income urban neighborhood and a community farm to educate and feed a low-income community are just a few of the projects that were awarded large grants announced by the Stewardship Council today. The Stewardship Council, a collaborative land conservation and youth investment foundation, announced more than \$1 million in grants to support efforts to build and enhance outdoor spaces to make them accessible and safe for youth and families.

“For many of these projects, these grants are not only capital investments, but social ones as well.” says Jayne Battey, Executive Director of the Stewardship Council. “The grants were given to California communities in need, where kids and families might otherwise not have access to safe outdoor spaces to swim, play, and explore.”

The Infrastructure Fund, part of the Stewardship Council’s Youth Investment Program, is designed to support park and recreation projects that address physical obstacles to getting youth outdoors. The grants provide funding for projects in all phases of building, from planning to final construction.

"Landmark projects, creating legacies really, require big ideas and big investments. Our goal is to create large and lasting outdoor opportunities for all Californians and for our visitors to enjoy now and for generations to come." said Secretary for Resources Mike Chrisman, President of the Stewardship Council Board of Directors.

This year, the Stewardship Council has allocated over \$2 million in grants for both programming and infrastructure to organizations that address the barriers that prevent kids from discovering and taking advantage of nature and the natural environment. The Stewardship Council has awarded over \$6 million since its inception in 2005 and intends to grant more than \$14 million over the next 7 years.

“One prescription for creating healthier kids is to get them outdoors,” says Steve Hagler, Director of Youth Investment for the Stewardship Council. “To do this, we need to provide viable parks, playgrounds or open spaces where our children can play and be outside. These Infrastructure grants provide local communities with funds that will help them create park infrastructure that will provide returns for many generations.”

The following is a list of awards announced today:

Boys & Girls Club of Fresno County: The Boys and Girls Club in Fresno County was awarded \$130,000 to renovate the 30-year old, neglected East Fresno sports and recreation field. The facility is located in a densely populated, low-income, and underserved neighborhood. The East Fresno Boys and Girls Club is one of only a few places where youth in Southeast Fresno can go to be outdoors in a safe and positive environment.

Burney Water District: The Burney Water District was awarded \$200,000 to refurbish a swimming pool in Burney. The pool is within one mile of 250 low-income children and youth and is the only safe, supervised swimming facility within a 50-mile radius. It is open at no charge to area youth and families and offers the regions only swimming lessons..

Plumas Rural Services: Plumas Rural Services, in collaboration with multiple partners in Plumas County's Indian Valley, was awarded \$160,000 to construct the "Nuksa Te" playground, a centrally-located, family-friendly playground and splash park for the area's youth and families. The Nuksa Te playground (which translated to "Jolly Child" in Maidu) will be co-located with the Indian Valley Community Center in downtown Greenville to provide a safe, easily accessible location for outdoor recreation in all seasons.

Bay Area Outreach and Recreation Program (BORP): BORP, in collaboration with Waterside Workshops, was awarded \$200,000 to renovate a previously abandoned city-owned recreation facility at Berkeley's Aquatic Park into an adaptive recreation facility. The park will provide a home and gateway to outdoor recreation and education programs for low-income and youth with disabilities. BORP believes connecting youth with disabilities to sports and physical activity helps youth build self-confidence and achieve academic success.

City Slicker Farms: City Slicker Farms, with the help of the City of Oakland, was awarded \$70,000 to convert two neighboring City Parks, totaling one acre, into a Community Urban Farm. The farm will provide organic food for low-income residents; serve as an open gathering space for community events; provide school-farm visits and after school programs for Oakland children and youth, and provide much needed open green space for children and local residents. City Slicker Farms helps the West Oakland community grow and distribute locally-grown produce, which will increase the health and self-reliance of the community.

City of San Joaquin: The City of San Joaquin was awarded \$200,000 to complete the city's first sports park and soccer field. The community, which suffers from decades of poverty and unemployment, has no community park where soccer and baseball can be played simultaneously. The park will ensure youth soccer – a cultural mainstay for a community that is 90% Hispanic – can be organized and played on a regular basis without competing for space and playing time with baseball.

Friends of Oakland Parks and Recreation: "Friends" was awarded \$150,000 to help finish Ernie Raimondi Park, a 10.2 acre project that will directly benefit Oakland's diverse ethnic community. The Stewardship Council grant will fund outdoor lighting and the construction of a community garden.

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.