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**The Pacific Forest and Watershed Lands Stewardship Council
Awards \$297,000 of Grant Funds to 15 Organizations Dedicated to Getting
Youth to the Outdoors**

Seven Catalyst grants and eight Impact grants given to promote outdoor accessibility to youth and offer leadership opportunities to economically disadvantaged and underserved youth

San Mateo, Calif., June 2, 2010 – An organization that will provide green jobs, an indigenous environmental education project on a historic Nisenan Maidu site in Auburn, a student-operated California native plant nursery at a local high school that will connect with campus restoration efforts, and a program that links wilderness to academics, adventure to leadership, environmental science to literacy and confidence to activism, are just a few of the projects that were awarded Catalyst and Impact Fund grants recently announced by the Stewardship Council.

Seven organizations have been awarded \$70,000 in grants through the Catalyst Fund and eight organizations have been awarded \$227,000 to support efforts to make outdoor spaces accessible and safe for youth and families.

The Catalyst Fund is open to grassroots organizations whose annual operating budgets are under \$250,000. In this grant round, 33 organizations requested more than \$450,000 in funds.

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 81 organizations requested \$2,945,972 in funds.

The Stewardship Council is in its sixth year of grant funding. In this time the Council has awarded more than \$8,390,000 to 184 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 **Catalyst Fund** awards:

Bay Area

CommunityGrows was awarded \$10,000 to support the BEETS (Band of Environmentally Educated and Employed Teens-formerly the BEET Rangers) program that inspires and educates teens to be environmentally engaged and to develop practical and personal skills to become environmental leaders and future green collar workers.

www.koshlandgarden.blogspot.com

Bay Area

Downtown High School Get Out and Learn was awarded \$10,000 to support Get Out and Learn's (GOAL) cornerstone ten-day wilderness expedition. GOAL is a year-round self-contained classroom, providing consistent teacher involvement coupled with greater student accountability, both academically and personally.

www.getoutandlearn.org

Sierra Foothills

Sierra Native Alliance (SNA) was awarded \$12,000 to support the Youth Conservation Internship program that engages low-income youth in Placer and Nevada counties to restore an abandoned environmental education center on a historic Nisenan Maidu site in Auburn. Youth will learn environmental preservation skills from an indigenous perspective, and take the lead in developing a peer environmental education curriculum for ongoing use at the SNA Cultural Education Center.

www.sierranativealliance.org

Central Coast

One Cool Earth was awarded \$8,000 to establish a student-operated California native plant nursery at Liberty High School that will connect with campus restoration efforts, provide green jobs training, and offer a gateway of experience and knowledge through which youth can better understand the natural environment and enter into environmentally-related professions.

www.onecoolearth.org

Bay Area

Phat Beets Produce was awarded \$10,000 to support the Healthy Hearts Market Garden (HHMG) which will educate teens affected by diet-related diseases about environmental stewardship, nutrition education, and healthy lifestyles choices through the use of organic gardening and green space creation. The HHMG program will engage over 150 teens in garden-based workshops and provide weekly trainings in garden creation, land stewardship, and nutrition education for teen stewards and peer educators from the Healthy Hearts Clinic.

www.phatbeetsproduce.org

Bay Area

Valley of the Moon Teen Center was awarded \$10,000 to help VOMTC, in collaboration with the Sonoma Ecology Center, combat the 'nature deficit disorder' by providing youth with opportunities for learning and growth through the exploration of their local environment. "Outdoors to Excellence" will include four field experiences in Sonoma County, one overnight trip to the coast, a kayaking trip, and 12 mountain bike trips with up to 15 teens on each trip.

www.vomteencenter.org

Central Valley

WildPlaces was awarded \$10,000 to support its program which teams underserved youth with talented outdoor educators, activists, biologists, teachers, U.S. Forest Service personnel, archeologists, peer counselors, and artists for trips in the Sequoia National Forest and Giant Sequoia National Monument. Youth from Lamont, Bakersfield, and Sacramento will experience hands-on habitat restoration, camping, backpacking, rock-climbing, site protection, restoration, community building, environmental stewardship and activism.

www.wildplaces.net

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

Central Valley

Adventure Risk Challenge received \$30,000 to provide challenging wilderness retreats in Yosemite National Park, in-school academic support, and community-wide civic engagement for English Language Learners and their families. ARC builds achievement, connection, and potential for the underserved rural youth of Dos Palos in Merced County. The program links wilderness to academics, adventure to leadership, environmental science to literacy and confidence to activism.

www.arcprogram.org

Bay Area

ACRJ was awarded \$22,000 toward the SAFIRE program, which combines outdoor experiences, ecological awareness, and practices relevant to the ancestral cultures of participants to ignite environmental stewardship and activism of young Asian women from low-income immigrant and refugee families in the Bay Area.

www.reproductivejustice.org

Bay Area

Aim High for High School received \$25,000 to support the Headlands Environmental Home program, which provides urban youth with a deep understanding of environmental stewardship and responsibility through experiencing the interconnectedness of native species and the impact of human activities in the Marin Headlands.

www.aimhigh.org

Central Valley

Boys & Girls Clubs of Fresno County was awarded \$25,000 to support the Youth SOAR (Stewardship with Outdoor Adventures and Responsibility) program. Youth leaders will develop life skills and confidence, lead after-school programs for younger children, and guide stewardship projects in urban and wilderness sites. The project will empower youth, enhancing their strengths in goal-setting, appreciation for the nearby river and national parks, and commitment to community service.

www.bgclubfc.org

Bay Area

Environmental Traveling Companions was awarded \$30,000 toward the Youth LEAD Program, which provides intensive outdoor leadership opportunities for economically disadvantaged and disabled youth. Participants will engage in summer outdoor leadership courses that follow a watershed from the sea to the mountains. Youth experience sea kayaking, whitewater rafting, backpacking, an organic farm stay, and the opportunity to participate in an eight-month Fellowship Program to further develop their leadership, outdoor, and job-readiness skills.

www.etctrips.org

Bay Area

Seven Tepees Youth Program was awarded \$45,000 to support the “Get in the Water!” program, which will connect 100 disadvantaged youth to the outdoors through year-round environmental classes, 12 overnight trips, and student-led park beautification projects including explorations of California coasts and watersheds. Participants will also undertake a unique eight-week community service program that teaches job skills and environmental justice principles.

www.7tepees.org

Central Valley

Soil Born Farms Urban Agriculture Project received \$30,000 to support the Youth Corps program, which provides youth with a direct understanding of the connection between their personal health, healthy food, and the environment. Utilizing Soil Born Farms' property along the American River, the program provides hands-on experiences that focus on environmental stewardship, organic farming, habitat restoration, exploration of the natural environment, outdoor trips, healthy cooking, and community service projects.

www.soilborn.org

Bay Area

Youth Enrichment Strategies was awarded \$20,000 toward the Camp to Community program, which utilizes positive youth development practices to empower teens towards developing leadership skills to help their community. YES addresses community conflict, resource disparity in accessing positive youth development activities, and the need for community connection in Richmond. Supported by YES staff, Camp to Community youth will lead overnight Summer Camps, Family Camps and Day Outings.

www.yesfamilies.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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