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**The Pacific Forest and Watershed Lands Stewardship Council
Awards \$61,000 of Grant Funds to Seven Organizations Dedicated to Getting
Youth to the Outdoors**

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

San Mateo, Calif., Aug. 12, 2010 – A program where underserved youth work together to learn about watershed, food/farming, and socio-environmental issues through wilderness excursions, and a traveling semester (16 weeks) for high school students to practice and promote sustainability in the areas of shelter, transportation, energy, food, culture, and environmental conservation are just a few of the projects that were awarded Catalyst Fund grants recently announced by the Stewardship Council.

Seven organizations have been awarded \$61,000 in grants through the Catalyst Fund 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, 27 organizations requested more than \$362,306 in funds.

The Stewardship Council is in its sixth year of grant funding. In this time the Council has awarded more than \$8,451,000 to 191 organizations, allowing Stewardship Council funds to help connect more than 224,646 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:

Escuela Popular Outdoor Program Natural High was awarded \$8,000 to support Escuela Popular's educational programs to affect a large number of different types of youth, to develop an awareness of the importance of our natural world by using the outdoors as a laboratory for academic and career studies, improve physical and mental health, reduce substance abuse, increase self confidence, promote wilderness programs as a viable alternative to youth, introduce the concept of a natural high, and introduce outdoor activities that may become a lifetime interest.

www.escuelapopular.org

Growing Up Wild was awarded \$9,000 to support hands-on outdoor educational experiences in the wilderness to two small groups of underserved Hispanic teenage boys, to promote lasting positive youth development in areas of personal growth, social skills, and environmental stewardship.

www.growingupwild.org

Movimiento was awarded \$10,000 to support Rural-Urban Youth Environmental Leadership (RUYEL), in which underserved youth from the Bay Area and Nevada County work together to learn about watershed, food/farming, and socio-environmental issues through wilderness excursions, indigenous youth initiatives, land & crafts workshops, and conferences. Urban and rural youth spend time in each other's home communities, to exchange experiences and strategies for environmental and social change.

www.movimagine.org

North Roseville Recreational Center was awarded \$9,000 to enrich lives, develop physical, mental and social capabilities of youth by connecting them to the outdoors, encouraging physical exercise, healthy eating and prevent childhood obesity in the Sacramento region.

www.northrosevillereccenter.org

Pogo Park, a program of Play and Learning in Adaptable Environments, was awarded \$12,000 to support a grassroots, community-based organization to create a sustainable and replicable model that impacts how parks and playgrounds are designed, built, and operated in inner-city neighborhoods.

www.pogopark.org

Synergia was awarded \$10,000 to support the Finding the Good traveling semester (16 weeks) for high school students to practice and promote sustainability in the areas of shelter, transportation, energy, food, culture, and environmental conservation. While traveling throughout California, students study and document working models of sustainability. Following their semester students become the educators, bringing their knowledge back to their schools and communities by giving peer-to-peer presentations and leading sustainability initiatives.

www.synergia.us

Wilderness Arts and Literacy Collaborative (WALC) was awarded \$12,000 to support a field-based study program that teaches core environmental education concepts while integrating WALC's rigorous academic curriculum. This curriculum is composed of seven camping trips, four hiking trips, and weekly habitat restoration for the Balboa High School chapter and four camping trips, 24 hiking trips, and a weekly habitat restoration for the Downtown High School chapter.

www.walcsf.net

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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