

2006 5 Star Grant Program Recipients

Alabama

Project Name: Magnolia Springs Restoration Project

Five-Star Funds: \$20,000

Grant To: Baldwin County Commission

Project Location: Baldwin County, Alabama

Baldwin County Commission will restore five acres of degraded coastal wetlands, streams and riparian areas within an ecologically and culturally significant county park that contains a rare freshwater pool surrounded by a degraded stream bank. The county will seek public input on the project and involve local civic organizations and schools in the re-vegetation of the site. Project partners will use the hurricane ravaged site as a model demonstration area for stream bank stabilization projects. Project partners include Magnolia Springs Garden Club, Magnolia Springs Community Association, and the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.

Project Name: Fishing Creek Wetlands Enhancement

Five-Star Funds: \$20,000

Grant To: Benjamin Moore & Co.

Project Location: Pell City, St. Clair County, Alabama

Benjamin Moore & Co. will restore approximately ten acres of wetland habitat on the banks of Fishing Creek. The Wetlands Enhancement Project will reduce erosion by restoring a small pond currently being fed from a small stream. The area will then be replenished with natural vegetation increasing the biodiversity. Benjamin Moore & Co. will also continue to sponsor awareness programs for Duran South Junior High School youth to promote the many values of wetlands. Project partners include Alabama Power Company, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Duran South Junior High School, and Alabama Cooperative Extension Systems.

Project Name: Mobile Bay Western Shore Habitat Restoration

Five-Star Funds: \$5,000

Grant To: Murphy High School

Project Location: Mobile, Mobile County, Alabama

Murphy High School will restore a half acre of marsh wetland along the western shore of Mobile Bay in Alabama. The project will work with high school students to plant five plots with native emergent grasses. Students will be involved in the planning, planting, monitoring, and data collection of the sites. Data collection includes water quality, soil quality and fish and invertebrate identification. Project partners include the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Barry Vittor and Associates, Melinda Gray Ardia Environmental Foundation, Mobile Bay National Estuary Program, and a variety of local volunteers including teachers, students, and parents.

Project Name: Seven Springs Watercress Darter Restoration Project

Five-Star Funds: \$20,000

Grant To: Freshwater Land Trust

Project Location: Birmingham, Jefferson County, Alabama

Freshwater Land Trust will restore three acres of riparian buffer along Seven Springs in Birmingham, Alabama to increase the habitat area of the endangered Watercress Darter. Project partners will remove invasive vegetation, and replant the area with native grasses, shrubs, and trees. Additionally, partners will work with the local community to create a nature sanctuary and outdoor classroom near the site to implement environmental education programs. Long-term monitoring by the US Fish and Wildlife Service and local university biologists will ensure the success of the Watercress Darter recovery efforts. Project partners include Faith Apostolic Church, Southern Environment Center, Samford University Department of Biology, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Project Name: Five Mile Creek Restoration Project

Five-Star Funds: \$20,000

Grant To: Freshwater Land Trust

Project Location: Fultondale, Jefferson County, Alabama

The Freshwater Land Trust will restore the riparian habitat and improve the water quality of a section of Five Mile Creek by removing invasive plant species and reintroducing native plant species in the riparian corridor. Project partners will construct a passive wetland to treat acid mine drainage discharge flowing into the creek, and local school students and teachers will provide riparian buffer maintenance and water quality monitoring. The Trust will also promote sustainability throughout their efforts to restore Five Mile Creek. The project's progress and outcomes will be evaluated by maintenance of a healthy, native riparian zone and improved water quality at the site. Project partners include Cawaco Resource Conservation and Development Council, Alabama Power Service Organization (Magic City Chapter), Jefferson County Soil and Water Conservation Service, City of Fultondale, Fultondale Elementary School, Five Mile Creek Partnership, and United Land Corporation.

Alaska

Project Name: Tanana Lakes Restoration and Education Project

Five-Star Funds: \$10,000

Grant To: Fairbanks North Star Borough

Project Location: Fairbanks, Alaska

Fairbanks North Star Borough will remove illegally dumped waste from wetlands and riparian zones, restore damaged riparian habitat, and transform "Goose Island" and

the nearby Tanana River into a valuable portion of the public recreation area and wildlife preserve known as Tanana Lakes Recreation Area. The general public and local school children will be involved in field trips to the site, a public awareness campaign, and a clean up day. Project partners include Alaska Bird Observatory, Artic Audubon Society, Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, Alaska Department of Natural Resources, and Fairbanks North Star Borough School District.

Arkansas

Project Name: Swaggerty Creek Restoration Project
Five-Star Funds: \$20,000
Grant To: Ecological Conservation Organization
Project Location: Little Rock, Pulaski County, Arkansas

Ecological Conservation Organization (ECO) will continue efforts to reform a 30-foot wide concrete drainage ditch into an attractive, ecologically sound, urban creek by providing 2.3 acres of in-stream aquatic habitat enhancement to Swaggerty Creek. This project will act as a socio-economic catalyst for the underprivileged neighborhoods in the area, and work closely with the local Boys and Girls Club located only yards from the creek. ECO will plant large native trees and create in-stream habitat placements for fish such as black bass, sunfish, darters, catfish, and other native aquatic species. Native grass and wildflower seeds will be planted and maintained along the riparian zone, and native wetland plants will be planted along the stream. Project partners include City of Little Rock, Native Restorationist, Arkansas Game and Fish Commission, Thrasher Boys and Girls Club, and Martin Luther King Jr. Neighborhood Association.

California

Project Name: Urban Stream Restoration
Five-Star Funds: \$20,000
Grant To: 32nd Street Canyon Task Force
Project Location: San Diego, Southern California

The 32nd Street Canyon Task Force will reconstitute the natural setting and revitalize biological features at the southernmost entrance to the 32nd Street canyon in the city of San Diego. The City will conduct field surveys, and following permitting, contractors will use mechanical measures to remove fill from the canyon. Restoration crews will install erosion prevention measures and 500 native plants with the assistance of students and community members. Maintenance and monitoring will be reinforced by student and community member participation through cleanups, weeding, survivability data of native plantings, wildlife tracking, and water quality monitoring. Project partners include California Department of Water Resources, the San Diego Foundation, University of San Diego, and San Diego Unified School District.

Project Name: Upper Pit River Watershed Enhancement and Protection
Five-Star Funds: \$17,065
Grant To: The River Center
Project Location: Alturas, Modoc County, Northern California

The River Center will provide restoration along 1.9 miles of the Pit River in Alturas, California, influencing approximately 250 acres of wetland, meadow and riparian habitats. The project will provide an opportunity for economically disadvantaged high school and elementary school students from neighboring communities to work together in a mentorship capacity. Students will have the opportunity to collect, record and present scientific data, including sending samples to professional labs and then statistically analyzing the data collected from the project site. The project aims to improve habitat for endangered and species of special concern in California, as well as demonstrate that riparian and wetland restoration techniques can be achieved in working agricultural landscapes. Project partners include the Central Modoc Resource Conservation District, Modoc County Office of Education, Modoc National Forest, Likely Land and Livestock, Regional Water Quality Control Board, Bureau of Land Management, Department of Conservation, University of California Cooperative Extension Farm Advisor, Pit River Watershed Alliance, and the Pit River Native Fishes Stewardship Program.

Project Name: Mission Valley Preserve Restoration and Education Project
Five-Star Funds: \$10,000
Grant To: The San Diego River Park Foundation
Project Location: San Diego, Southern California

The San Diego River Park Foundation will promote the stewardship of wetlands through enhancing and rehabilitation 0.4 acres of wetlands. Outreach programs and hands-on learning experiences will help raise environmental awareness of among participants completing lessons included in the interpretive program. The restoration activities will be accomplished with five community events, during which non-native plants will be removed and native plants established to attract pollinators. High Tec Middle School students will also collect seeds and cultivate plants in their classroom while monitoring the plant's growth through regular surveys. Project partners include Kinder Morgan, Friends of Mission Valley Preserve, High Tec Middle School, The University of San Diego, and the City of San Diego.

Project Name: Ma-le'l Dunes Community-Based Restoration
Five-Star Funds: \$5,408
Grant To: Friends of the Dunes
Project Location: Arcata, Humboldt County, Northern California

Friends of the Dunes will provide community-based restoration and education programs at the newly established Ma-le'l Dunes Cooperative Management Area in Humboldt County, California. The project will increase the natural diversity of coastal dunes by restoring 3 acres of dune habitat. Friends of the Dunes will build a corps of community restoration volunteers through outreach, training, continuing education, and a volunteer recognition program. Partners will collaborate with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to monitor the success of restoration efforts and photo-document the results, Friends of the Dunes will also develop continuing sources of funding to support and sustain long-term involvement of volunteers in the restoration and monitoring of the Ma-le'l Dunes. Project partners include U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management, California Native Plant Society, Pierson Building Supply, Humboldt County, Humboldt National Wildlife Refuge, and Humboldt State University.

Colorado

Project Name: The Florence River Park and Pathfinder Park Projects

Five-Star Funds: \$15,000

Grant To: City of Florence

Project Location: Florence, Fremont County, Colorado

The City of Florence will integrate several control strategies to reduce the infestation of two invasive species: tamarisk and Russian olive. Education and outreach opportunities will provide the RE-2 Fremont-Penrose School District, local 4-H clubs, and other citizen groups with an interactive experience on the importance of invasive plant management and riparian improvement. The objectives will be accomplished through creating interpretive trails and scheduling several site visits as part of Fremont County's and the Upper Arkansas Regional Weed Management Cooperative's annual meeting. Sites for invasive species removal will be mapped, inventoried and then included into habitat management zones. Based on the potential for invasive species eradication versus long-term invasive species management, each zone will be addressed accordingly. RE-2 Fremont-Penrose School students and 4-H members will monitor and inventory the site to complete classroom and club projects. Project partners include Fremont Sanitation District, Fremont RE-2 School District, Fremont County, Upper Arkansas Weed Management Cooperative, Colorado State University Cooperative, and the Canon City Metropolitan Recreation Park District.

Project Name: Partners for Colorado Native Plants

Five-Star Funds: \$15,000

Grant To: Denver Botanical Gardens

Project Location: Denver, Aurora, Commerce City, Colorado

Denver Botanic Gardens (DBG) will connect organizations across Colorado to identify gaps in plant and habitat management, and to prioritize projects to address these issues. DBG will build a community of highly trained and motivated volunteers to address native plant and habitat threats otherwise neglected due to lack of funds, time, or expertise. Project partners will restore 60 acres of riparian and wetland habitat in an urban nature reserve along Sand Creek in Denver. Trained volunteers will conduct weed removal, seed collection and propagation of local, native species, and restoration using propagated materials. Results of these restoration efforts will be incorporated into a current best management practices handbook and DBG expects to have core groups of volunteers dedicated to restoring 240 acres of riparian and wetland habitat. Project partners include Bluff Lake Nature Center, Colorado Outdoor Training Initiative, Cherry Creek Stewardship Partners, Denver Park People, Johnson and Wales University, Denver University, Sand Creek Regional Greenway, Denver Natural Areas, and City of Aurora Open Space and Natural Resources.

Connecticut

Project Name: City Point Wetland Restoration and Management Project

Five-Star Funds: \$10,000

Grant To: Elm City Parks Conservancy

Project Location: New Haven, Connecticut

Elm City Parks Conservancy will restore, manage, and protect two acres of remnant coastal wetland habitat along the harbors of New Haven, Connecticut. Project partners will select a design for the rehabilitation and re-establishment of the wetlands, and coordinate a volunteer force to remove invasive species and plant native wetland vegetation. In addition, the project will expand public access to the area, and engage the community through cleanup events and workshops to educate the public on native wetland species and the local history of the area. Local schools will be involved with the long-term monitoring and maintenance of the site. Project partners include the City Point Historic District Neighborhood Association, Urban Resources Initiative-Greenspace, New Haven Land Trust, Sound School Aquaculture High School, and the City of New Haven.

Florida

Project Name: Christmas Creek Restoration Workshops

Five-Star Funds: \$10,065

Grant To: Orange County Environmental Protection Division

Project Location: Orange County, Florida

Orange County Environmental Protection Division will restore two freshwater marsh sites within five acres of the Christmas Creek Preserve. The site is at the headwaters of Christmas Creek and will serve as a model restoration site which will be replicated on wetlands and marshes on other properties within the county. Two workshops will involve environmental professionals, citizens, and boy scouts in classroom education and hands-on restoration training. Project partners include University of Central Florida Biology Department, Central Florida Association of Environmental Professionals, the Florida Lake Management Society, Boy Scouts-Central Florida Council, Sierra Club, St. John's Water Management District, Orange County Watershed Action Volunteers and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection.

Project Name: FEC Quarry Wetland Reclamation

Five-Star Funds: \$15,000

Grant To: Rinker Materials Corporation

Project Location: Miami, Florida

Rinker Materials Corporation will enhance an area of approximately two acres by creating a natural vegetated shoreline along the Rinker Wildlife & Conservation Lake at the FEC Quarry. This restoration project will provide habitat for numerous plant and animal species native to the area. Students from Eugena B. Thomas Elementary and Paul Bell Middle School will also participate in the planting and monitoring of the wildlife, and Florida International University, Landscape Architecture Program students will study and develop project plans for the site. Project partners include Wildlife Habitat Council, Miami-Dade Limestone Product Association, Florida International University, MacVicar, Federico & Lamb, Kelly Tractor Company and Dade County Public Schools.

Georgia

Project Name: Jekyll Island Oyster Reef Restoration

Five-Star Funds: \$20,000

Grant To: CDR Environmental Specialist, Inc.

Project Location: Jekyll Island, Glynn County, Georgia

CDR Environmental Specialists, Inc. will restore a half a mile of oyster habitat along Clam Creek, near Jekyll Island, Georgia. The project will promote community awareness of the importance of oyster shell recycling and of the critical function that oysters serve as a keystone species in this region's ecosystem. An oyster shell collection will be established and the local community will be encouraged to participate in shell recycling. Cured oyster shells will be bagged to be used in construction of an oyster reef in Clam Creek. From the project start date until the oyster reef is constructed, a monthly water quality assessment program will be conducted to establish the baseline water quality of Clam Creek. The riparian and coastal areas associated with the reef will benefit through increased water quality, habitat production, and abundance and diversity of benthic biota. Project partners include Atlantic Richfield Company, Honeywell, Jekyll Island-State Park Authority, University of Georgia's Marine Extension Service, and Georgia Power.

Project Name: Medlock Park Riparian Corridor Restoration

Five-Star Funds: \$10,175

Grant To: Dekalb County

Project Location: Dekalb County, Georgia

Dekalb County will restore 70 feet of an urban tributary to South Peachtree Creek within Medlock Park. The project will improve the habitat quality of the tributary system, stabilize the stream banks, and provide a buffer vegetated with native plant species. In addition, an adjacent wetland will be restored and workshops will be implemented with neighborhood associations and Medlock Elementary School to promote environmental education and public awareness of water quality objectives. Project partners include Dekalb County Parks and Recreation Department, Medlock Elementary School, Dekalb County Parks Bond and Greenspace Office, Medlock Area Neighborhood Association, Clyde Shepherd Nature Preserve and EcoWatch Americorps.

Project Name: Varnell Springs Restoration

Five-Star Funds: \$10,950

Grant To: Conasauga River Alliance

Project Location: Varnell, Whitfield County, Georgia

Conasauga River Alliance will restore three acres of wetlands within Varnell Springs, a tributary of the Conasauga River in Varnell, Georgia. Project partners will remove invasive Chinese privet, trash, and old fencing around one spring to allow the natural re-emergence of native vegetation including dwarf iris, cardinal flower, and blue phlox. Additionally, interpretive signs will be placed in the area to educate the public about the springs, and elementary school field days will bring over 500 students to the area. Project partners include the City of Varnell, Whitfield County, Limestone Valley Resource Conservation and Development Council, and Sleepy Hollow Farms Inc.

Project Name: Butternut Creek Project

Five-Star Funds: \$12,400

Grant To: Union County

Project Location: Union County, Georgia

The Union County Recreation Department will join forces with community volunteers, environmental organizations, along with state and federal agencies to restore 275 feet along Butternut Creek that has suffered heavy erosion from torrential rains and stormwater run-off. Project partners will also implement a maintenance/environmental education program, which will include a workshop, field trips, and a training area to plant and maintain low maintenance plants and vegetation along a 3,000 foot section of Butternut Creek. This site will be used as a model to show developers and homeowners the importance of maintaining stream banks to ensure water quality and habitat for fish and other wildlife. Project partners include Blue Ridge Mountain Soil and Water Conservation District, University of Georgia Extension Services, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Tennessee Valley Authority, U.S. Forest Service and Georgia Department of Natural Resources.

Idaho

Project Name: Palouse-Clearwater Wetland Enhancement

Five-Star Funds: \$8,700

Grant To: Palouse-Clearwater Environmental Institute

Project Location: Moscow, Latah County, Idaho

Palouse-Clearwater Environmental Institute (PCEI) will convert 0.35 acres of wet meadow and agricultural land to wetland, which will serve as an outdoor classroom for PCEI's environmental education programs. A human-made pond supporting many wildlife species on this land will be enhanced and restored by reducing the slopes allowing overflow to inundate approximately 15,000 square feet. PCEI will expand its watershed restoration program to include a native plant nursery, develop a wood-chip trail system to help visitors and school groups explore native wetland habitat, and build an educational kiosk. This project will actively engage numerous K - 12 and university students, teachers, and citizens in wetland restoration and monitoring. Project partners include Idaho Fish and Game, City of Moscow Parks and Recreation, Moscow High School Environmental Group, University of Idaho School of Landscape Architecture, Washington State University Service Learning, and Moscow City Youth Services.

Illinois

Project Name: Restoring and Creating an Upland Wetland Complex

Five-Star Funds: \$9,700

Grant To: Champaign County Forest Preserve District

Project Location: Homer, Will County, Illinois

The Champaign County Forest Preserve District will construct a 1.5 acre wetland complex within the Homer Lake Forest Preserve. The project will increase biodiversity and water quality within the area and will improve education and recreation activities at the protected site. Volunteers will be trained and involved in planning, seeding, and monitoring and hundreds of county residents will be reached through workshops and other wetland related programs that will utilize the restored site. Project partners include Champaign County Natural Resource Conservation Service, Grand Prairie Friends, Prairie Grove Volunteers and East Central Illinois Master Naturalists.

Indiana

Project Name: Deep River Wetland and Upland Habitat Restoration
Five-Star Funds: \$10,000
Grant To: Gary Community School Corporation
Project Location: Gary, Lake County, Indiana

The Deep River Outdoor Education Center will enhance the native biodiversity of 73.4 acres of floodplain forests, wet prairie, wetlands, and upland forests around Gary, Indiana. The Center will survey and inventory wetland and upland habitats, maintain and improve habitat biodiversity, and develop long-term sustainability and linkages to the Gary Community and Northwest Indiana conservation efforts. The number of K - 12 students participating at Deep River Outdoor Education Center is close to 10,000, and the center continues to be a resource where teachers and students can experience local habitats and their wildlife. Project partners include Groundwork Gary, City of Gary Department of Environmental Affairs, Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore, Northwest Indian Regional Planning Commission, Wildlife Habitat Council, and the Shirley Heinz Trust.

Kansas

Project Name: Prairie Wetland Conservation Area
Five-Star Funds: \$10,000
Grant To: Basic Chemical Company, LLC
Project Location: Wichita, Sedgwick County, Kansas

Basic Chemicals Company, LLC will provide diverse educational opportunities for on-site learning at the Prairie Wetland Conservation Area. New equipment such as spotting scopes, microscopes, nets, soil coring tools and tree coring tools help ensure participants observe their surrounding using different methods. In addition, volunteers will plant trees and selectively place rocks at targeted locations on three wetland areas to enrich aquatic and terrestrial flora and fauna. Basic Chemicals Company will implement a minimum of eight outdoor classroom sessions including students from the Wichita Public School System. Project partners include Vulcan Chemicals, Glenn Springs Holdings, Inc., City of Wichita Department of Environmental Health, Natural Resource Conservation Service, Wichita Public School System, Friends University, Great Plains Nature Center, Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks, Wichita State University, and the local chapter of the Audubon Society.

Project Name: Loder Point Wetland Restoration
Five-Star Funds: \$15,400
Grant To: Ellsworth County Conservation District
Project Location: Marquette, Ellsworth County, Kansas

Ellsworth County Conservation District will restore the size and diversity of a 12 acre wetland at Loder Point within Venango Park at Kanapolis Lake. Educational signage will be installed to reach the park's 75,000 annual visitors and a World Wide Monitoring Day event will occur annually with the help of student volunteers from a local Junior High School. Project partners include E.A.R.T.H. Students from Quivira Heights Junior High School, Kansas State Research and Extension, Ellsworth Natural Resources Conservation Services, Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks, Stumps Trust, Dakota Hills Chapter of Kansas Alliance for Wetlands and Streams and U.S. Army Corp of Engineers.

Massachusetts

Project Name: Tierra de Oportunidades Project
Five-Star Funds: \$18,595
Grant To: Nuestras Raíces, Inc.
Project Location: Holyoke, Hampden County, Massachusetts

Nuestras Raices, Inc. will work with inner-city youth to restore eight acres of upland forest riparian buffer zone and wetlands on the banks of the Connecticut River in Holyoke, Massachusetts. The project will engage over 15 inner-city Latino teens as project leaders and involve over 250 inner-city youth, community members, and college students as volunteers and education program participants. Project partners will remove invasive species using hand tools and light equipment, and expand 100 feet of forest buffer along a half mile of the river. Project partners include Mt. Holyoke College, Holyoke Conservation Commission, Youthbuild Holyoke, USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service, Connecticut River Watershed Council, Massachusetts Department of Environmental Management and several other local organizations.

Michigan

Project Name: Ter Haar Restored Wetland Demonstration Site
Five-Star Funds: \$10,000
Grant To: Macatawa Area Coordinating Council
Project Location: Zeeland Township, Ottawa County, Michigan

The Macatawa Area Coordinating Council will restore a local wetland in order to reduce phosphorus and sediment loading into the watershed systems. The restored wetland will also control flooding, enhance recreation and wildlife habitat, and provide education and monitoring opportunities. When completed, the project site will include 2 acres of protected wetlands, 10 acres of restored wetland, 25 acres of enhanced wetland, and 2,500 linear feet of restored riparian area. Signage that describes the partners and an explanation of the project's benefits and function will be created and posted to increase community awareness and for general educational purposes. Zeeland Public Schools plans to implement a biodiversity-focused lab on the restored wetland site, and Hope College student volunteers will lead alternative education and outreach activities surrounding site monitoring. Project partners include the Michigan Wildlife Conservancy, JF New Company, Pheasants Forever, Macatawa Watershed Project, Zeeland Public Schools, Macatawa Bay Waterfowl Association, and Think Again Communications.

Mississippi

Project Name: Bennett Bayou Restoration and Education Initiative

Five-Star Funds: \$19,997

Grant To: Land Trust for the Mississippi Coastal Plain

Project Location: Moss Point, Jackson County, Mississippi

Land Trust for the Mississippi Coastal Plain (LTMCP) will restore 2.5 acres of wetlands within the Bennett Bayou, in Southern Mississippi. Project partners will remove boardwalk, riprap and invasive vegetation along a channel to reduce erosion and replace the area with native plants. Over 35 volunteers, including 20 local high school students, will assist with the native plantings. LTMCP will work with partners to conduct education field trips to the site, educating the community on the importance of native plants and wetlands in the region. Project partners include Audubon Mississippi, Mississippi Department of Marine Resources, Mississippi Power, Pascagoula River Basin Alliance and the City of Moss Point.

Montana

Project Name: Tri-State Water Quality Council

Five-Star Funds: \$15,000

Grant To: Tri-State Water Quality Council

Project Location: Stevensville, Ravalli County, Montana

The Tri-State Water Quality Council will stabilize 500 feet of eroding stream banks, thereby reducing sediment supply and improving downstream water quality to Upper Wheelbarrow Creek in Stevensville, Montana. Aquatic habitat will be enhanced by the installation of four low grade control/fish habitat structures that will form pools and provide cover for native westslope cutthroat trout, a Montana species of special concern. This project will involve 40 middle-school students from Lone Rock School to work on this riparian wetland restoration. Project partners include Lone Rock School, Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, Wheelbarrow Creek Ranch, and Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks.

New Jersey

Project Name: Elizabeth River Trail Restoration and Education Project

Five-Star Funds: \$10,020

Grant To: Groundwork Elizabeth, Inc.

Project Location: Elizabeth, New Jersey

Groundwork Elizabeth will restore approximately one mile of river bank along the Elizabeth River Trail. Project partners will restore the bank by removing non-native, invasive vegetation, and re-introducing native species to enhance habitat and restore ecological function. The project will also launch the Green Team, an intergenerational education program, teaming seniors with youth to spend 15 hours per month on research and classroom learning, project based objectives, field trips and outreach to the community at large about the Five Star project site. Union County is contributing \$500,000 for the design and construction of Phase I of the Elizabeth River Trail and will work with the City of Elizabeth to ensure long-term monitoring. Project partners include the City of Elizabeth, Union County, Master Gardeners of Union County, National Park Service, Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, and the Architectural firms HACMB and Zen M.

New Mexico

Project Name: Rio Puerco Restoration Project

Five-Star Funds: \$15,000

Grant To: McKinley County

Project Location: Gallup, McKinley County, New Mexico

McKinley County will restore 10,560 linear feet of riparian area along the Rio Puerco River that is being debilitated by tamarisk, an exotic riparian tree, which uses inordinate amounts of water, concentrates salts, and also has extremely negative effects on biodiversity. The tamarisk will be removed and native plants will be installed in order to increase the health of the river. The restoration activities will incorporate volunteers from Youth Conservation Corps, students, general public, and business leaders. Project partners include McKinley County, McKinley County Soil and Water Conservation District, City of Gallup, Adventure Gallup & Beyond, Youth Conservation Corps, Plateau Science Society, Fort Wingate Boarding School and U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Project Name: Santa Fe River Restoration

Five-Star Funds: \$9,600

Grant To: GrassWorks, Inc.

Project Location: La Cieneguilla, Santa Fe County, New Mexico

GrassWorks, Inc. will remove all non-native trees from 8.78 acres of riparian land along the Santa Fe River, enhance riparian functioning along 508 feet of stream reach, and protect half an acre of wetland. Project partners will plant new cottonwood and willow poles to restore and maintain historic cottonwood bosque habitat, mulch all of the cut woody material, and implement techniques in the use and composting of Russian olive mulch for riparian restoration. GrassWorks, Inc. will develop a workable and transferable river ecology and restoration curriculum which will emphasize student engagement in decision-making and implementation. Project partners include New Mexico Association of Conservation Districts, Bureau of Land Management, New Mexico Recycling Coalition, Center for Service Learning Opportunities in Education, Santa Fe Girls School, County of Santa Fe, and United Way of Santa Fe County.

Ohio

Project Name: Puritas Wetland Collaborative

Five-Star Funds: \$10,000

Grant To: Bellaire-Puritas Development Corporation

Project Location: Cleveland, Cuyahoga County, Ohio

The Bellaire-Puritas Development Corporation will enhance an 80-acre detention basin on the Puritas Wetland Collaborative. Project goals include enhancing and preserving existing conditions within the basin for migratory birds and other native wildlife. In addition, project leaders will offer passive learning and recreation opportunities to primarily benefit nearly 1,500 industrial park workers, local birders and visitors. Invasive plants will be removed and buffer zones located between the upland area and adjacent residences will be planted with native shrubs and trees. Project partners will provide educational training opportunities for local organizations, such as the Big Creek Watershed Group. These education opportunities will empower local volunteers to take ownership of future restoration activities in the watershed. Project partners include Oatey Corporation, Cleveland Museum, City of Cleveland Brownfields Assistance, City of Cleveland, Wildlife Habitat Council, and the Big Creek Watershed Group.

Project Name: Rush Run Riparian Restoration Project
Five-Star Funds: \$10,000
Grant To: Friends of the Lower Olentangy Watershed
Project Location: Worthington, Franklin County, Ohio

Friends of the Lower Olentangy Watershed (FLOW) will restore a 200-foot section of Rush Run, a tributary of the Olentangy River in Franklin County, Ohio. Fifty to a hundred volunteers will plant native vegetation along the riparian buffers of Rush Run. Project partners will create electronic maps and gather geographic data of the watershed to share with the public. Local high school students will be involved in educating local residents about the project through local media sources, FLOW's website, newsletter, and other mailings. Project partners include the Northpointe Distribution, Friends of Rush Run, Boy Scouts of America, Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District, Ohio State University, and Worthington High School.

Oregon

Project Name: The Owens Farm Project
Five-Star Funds: \$9,750
Grant To: Institute for Applied Ecology
Project Location: Corvallis, Benton County, Oregon

The Institute for Applied Ecology (IAE) will restore 15 acres of rare wetland prairie and increase the population of the federally and state listed Nelson's checkermallow at the Owens Farm by engaging 35-40 Corvallis high school students in a service learning restoration project. Students will introduce 200 individuals of Nelson's checkermallow grown at the Corvallis High School greenhouse, establishing a stable population within one mile of the adjacent population at Jackson-Frazier wetland. IAE will work with over 30 students at the high school for a minimum of 750 service learning hours to perform restoration and monitoring activities, bringing citizen science and stewardship to the school, and creating prairie stewards to advocate for restoration through the County. Project partners include Greenbelt Land Trust, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Benton County Soil and Water Conservation District, Benton County Natural Area and Parks Department, City of Corvallis, and Corvallis High School.

Pennsylvania

Project Name: Neshannock Creek Riparian Restoration Initiative
Five-Star Funds: \$19,224
Grant To: Western Pennsylvania Conservancy
Project Location: Lawrence and Mercer Counties, Pennsylvania

Western Pennsylvania Conservancy will enhance five acres of wetland within the Shenango River Watershed in western Pennsylvania. Project partners will construct four miles of streambank fencing and four agricultural crossings in order to improve the water quality in the region. The project will additionally involve landowner outreach through water quality education, and education signs will be posted along the fencing. Project partners include Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, Shenango Conservancy, USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service, California Universities' Partners for Fish and Wildlife, Pheasants Forever, Pennsylvania Game Commission, Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission, and numerous local nonprofits and local conservation districts.

Utah

Project Name: San Pitch River Stream Restoration
Five-Star Funds: \$6,000
Grant To: Sanpete County Soil Conservation District
Project Location: Fairview, Sanpete County, Utah

The Sanpete County Soil Conservation District will restore two miles of the San Pitch River and initiate an extensive educational monitoring program. Project benefits will include water quality improvement, native re-vegetation and increased habitat. A two day training session will engage high school students and community members in the "Stream Side Science" curriculum and will result in long-term monitoring of this important river corridor. Project partners include San Pitch River Watershed Stewardship Group, Utah State University Extension and Utah Division of Water.

Virginia

Project Name: Daniels Run Riparian and Wetland Education Project
Five-Star Funds: \$13,180
Grant To: Lands and Waters
Project Location: Fairfax County, Virginia

Lands and Waters will create a new wetland education site which will become a part of an established environmental curriculum for area schools and construct a half acre stormwater wetland to capture stormwater runoff from a 32,000 square foot drainage area. The wetland will improve water quality in a nearby stream and reduce stream bank erosion. The new wetland will also serve as a demonstration center for students, teachers, and volunteers from Daniels Run School with at least 330 students involved in the construction of the wetland. Project partners include Daniels Run Elementary School, Earth Sangha, Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District, Fairfax County, and the City of Fairfax.

Washington

Project Name: Nikka Creek Tidal Reconnection for Fish Passage

Five-Star Funds: \$12,347

Grant To: Grays River Habitat Enhancement District

Project Location: Grays River, Wahkiakum County, Washington

Grays River Habitat Enhancement District (GRHED) will replace an existing tide-gate on Nikka Creek with an innovative fish friendly tide-gate, install livestock exclusion fencing, remove invasive species, and re-establish a portion of the riparian corridor with native vegetation. The primary target species expected to once again utilize this reach for spawning and rearing are Chum, however the project will also benefit Coho, Winter Steelhead, and Sea-run cutthroat. The local Naselle High School will utilize the project site to provide learning opportunities to complete community service hour requirements. The project will educate local landowners, managers, citizens, and school groups about the importance of Nikka Creek in relationship to the Grays River watershed through a final workshop, interpretive signage, and long-term monitoring. Project partners include Naselle Grays River Valley School District, Grays Valley Home School Community, Grays River Grange, Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife, Lee-Pace Engineering and Stream Fix, and local landowners.
