



THE WEST EUGENE WETLANDS WETLAND WORD

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PUBLIC PLANNING PROCESS FOR THE WEST EUGENE WETLANDS EDUCATION CENTER WILL REFINE VISIONS, IDEAS, AND DESIGNS

Planners of the West Eugene Wetlands Education Center entered 2007 with a new architecture firm, ready to move into a comprehensive public planning process. The West Eugene Wetlands Partnership (through contracts with Eugene School District 4j, City of Eugene, and WREN) selected the Eugene firm Rowell-Brokaw Architects, to guide the design and construction of the center. The firm earned unanimous support after the review of several outstanding proposals.

Rowell-Brokaw Architects is headed by Principals John Rowell and Greg Brokaw. Associates Elaine Lawson and Mark Young, who were involved with original 2001 conceptual designs of the education center in their previous employment at Pivot (formerly WBS) Architecture, will continue their work on the project. Rowell Brokaw, located in their recently renovated building, at One East Broadway, in the heart of downtown Eugene, is currently working on several projects including: Crescent Village Town Center, Gateway Transit Station, Oregon Paleo Lands Institute, early childhood education centers, elementary schools, elder housing projects, and a new private residential college.

Rowell-Brokaw is collaborating with nationally acclaimed Seattle firm, The Miller | Hull Partnership. Miller | Hull has impressive experience and expertise designing environmental education centers, including the Tillamook Forest Center and Yaquina Head Interpretive Center of Oregon. Miller | Hull received the AIA National Firm Award in 2003 and has received four top ten Earth Day awards for its innovative projects.

The team is complemented by Greenworks Landscape Architects; SOLARC, Inc; Ang Engineering Group, KPFF, and Construction Focus, Inc. Together, this impressive project team will design Eugene's Education Center in the heart of the West Eugene Wetlands to serve the community. The team embraces the vision of building a facility that meets the highest standard for sustainability in a location where commercial industry coexists with Eugene's largest open

space. Rowell Brokaw's sensitivity to the local environment and diverse community, in addition to their dedication to the long term vision of environmental responsibility and education is a powerful combination for this project.

PUBLIC MEETINGS AND DESIGN BEGINS THIS SPRING

Six years ago, the vision of the West Eugene Wetlands Education Center took shape in conceptual designs. Since then, much has changed: development has continued on nearby land, sustainability has risen to the forefront as a community value, wetlands ecology is better understood, and the educational vision has matured. Now, as the final planning process begins this spring, the West Eugene Wetland Education Center Partners will be at the table with the design team. The process will begin with five focus groups: ecology of the site; the education program; interpretation and visitor services; transportation; and sustainability. The intent of the focus groups is to assemble community individuals and groups with expertise in these areas that would affect how we look at and design the education center to meet the community's needs while remaining true the vision and values of the education center.

Equipped with the latest information about sustainability, interpretation, transportation, community education, and about the site itself, the Design Team will begin the update to the master plan. This will include cycles of public meetings and events, planning committee review and design work. Finally, the project will go through a review for a conditional use permit. WREN will announce public meeting dates and information at www.wewetlands.org and through local media.



New designs for the center may appear very different from initial designs as project planners incorporate new information on ecology and sustainability. Illustration: Rowell-Brokaw Architects



INVITROGEN PROVES COMMITMENT TO ENVIRONMENTAL, COMMUNITY RESPONSIBILITY

Invitrogen Corporation, a global provider of essential life science technologies for disease research and drug discovery, became the first corporate donor in building the West Eugene Wetlands Education Center when they pledged \$150,000 to the project. Invitrogen's dedication to environmental responsibility and community involvement is one of the many reasons they are a perfect partner in this project. Their commitment to community extends from Eugene all the way to Auckland, New Zealand, as the company dedicates financial resources, products and employee time and talent to its global communities.

Invitrogen-Molecular Probes in west Eugene employs approximately 300 people at the company's site on Willow Creek Road. As an active corporate citizen and neighbor, the company is involved with local schools, educational programs, environmental restoration and health and human service organizations. Invitrogen-Molecular Probes also holds several blood drives a year, and donates excess equipment as well as hundreds of hours of volunteer time.

Each year Invitrogen hosts Global Volunteer Day, where employees worldwide receive a half day of paid time off work to participate in one or more company-organized volunteer activities. In Eugene, Invitrogen employees have contributed more than 200 volunteer hours to The Nature Conservancy to collect seed and restore native habitat at Willow Creek Preserve. This year, Invitrogen's Global Volunteer Day will be on Thursday, May 24.

"It's been great having one of our corporate neighbors involved in The Nature Conservancy's work at Willow Creek Preserve," said Matt Benotsch who has worked with Invitrogen volunteers as Willamette Valley Stewardship Coordinator for TNC. "Invitrogen's commitment to the West Eugene Wetlands partnership is inspiring and a great example of public/private cooperation making a difference for our environment."

Invitrogen also participates in the Earth Share Network, which has been part of their annual workplace giving campaign since 1997. Earth Share makes it easy for employees to donate to a variety of national non-profit organizations through payroll deduction. Eugene's Global Citizenship Team has even encouraged other sites' to add the Earth Share program to their annual campaign.

"From Earth Share's perspective, Invitrogen's commitment establishes a model for other businesses in how to conduct themselves with a sense of environmental stewardship," said Lucy Vinis, Eugene Representative for Earth Share of Oregon. "We are grateful to them not just for their financial support but for helping to create that kind of paradigm shift."

Invitrogen provided \$30,000 upfront for WREN to contribute to Public Process/Master Planning activities and permit use processes, and pledged \$100,000 toward building costs. WREN and Invitrogen are also considering a partnership in current restoration efforts in the West Eugene Wetlands, which could bring an additional in-kind donation of up to \$20,000. The company has secured the first naming opportunity in the center: the Invitrogen Field Science Laboratory Room within the Field Science Laboratory Building.

Invitrogen-Molecular Probes employees at Willow Creek. Photo: Invitrogen



The *Wetland Word* is published quarterly by the Willamette Resources and Educational Network. Its purpose is to inform the community of events and restoration projects, and to increase understanding and appreciation of the West Eugene Wetlands. If you would like to be removed from the mailing list, please contact WREN. Editor: Windy Hovey. Comments? Questions? Email: windy@wewetlands.org

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WREN is a private,
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Photo: WREN

Creating and supporting an education program and center that celebrates and encourages stewardship of the West Eugene Wetlands using resources and support from our community...



WREN VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

TWO NEW VOLUNTEERS SHARE YEARS OF TEACHING EXPERIENCE & ENTHUSIASM FOR WETLAND WILDLIFE

In 2006, WREN was thrilled to welcome two new dedicated volunteers to lead programs in the wetlands: Richard Hand and Larry Von Seeger. Both have a long history of teaching experience and are excited about sharing the wonder of the wetlands.

Richard recently moved to Eugene after he spent 19 years at an American school in Japan, teaching high school chemistry and physics, and then 6th grade science. Prior to his time over seas, he taught in Wisconsin. Richard and his spouse live very close to the wetlands in west Eugene, which enables them to enjoy the biking and hiking opportunities available. When he saw an announcement in the *Register-Guard* that WREN was seeking volunteers, he knew it would be a good match.

"The people at WREN are very knowledgeable and dedicated. They have taught me much about the wetlands," Richard says.

In return he works with students who come to the wetlands for field trips, encouraging them to make observations and draw their own conclusions.

Larry is a long time local resident who started his teaching career with 5th and 6th grade students at Awbrey Park Elementary in Eugene. He also taught 7th and 8th grades at a private school in England with his wife during their sabbatical from 1984 to 1986. Upon return to Eugene, he taught math to 6th graders and science to 7th and 8th graders at Spencer Butte Middle School. In 2000, he retired after 26 years of teaching!

Active in retirement, Larry has worked with Food for Lane County, continues to help students with their study skills in the Homework Club run by St. Vincent de Paul, and enjoys the opportunity to work with kids while learning about the wetlands with WREN. He also finds some time to fit in an occasional game of golf. "What I like most about working with WREN is being outdoors, and learning new information about the wetlands with the kids," Larry says. "I enjoy pointing out the history of the wetlands and the wildlife that lives in this habitat." Currently, he is working to create a field guide for WREN volunteers who lead groups into the wetlands.



WREN Volunteer Richard Hand displays an element of the wetlands to his students during a fall field trip. Photo: WREN



WREN Volunteer Larry Von Seeger.
Photo: WREN



2006 WREN ANNUAL REPORT & ACCOMPLISHMENTS



- WREN reached more than **4,000** students and community members through field trips, classroom outreach programs, community events, and booths at local festivals in 2006: **95** school groups visited the wetlands and/or received classroom presentations. The total number of contacts included **2,751** students and teachers/chaperones. **1,334** people attended **48** community education programs about wetland wildlife and habitat. on weekends and weekday nights.
- The WREN booth was born! WREN participated in the EWEB Earth Day Celebration, Eugene Celebration, the Wings and Wine Festival and the Wildflower and Mushroom Festivals at Mt. Pisgah Arboretum.
- The Cow Creek Umpqua Indian Foundation (CCUIF) awarded WREN with a **\$10,350** grant to support the education program in 2007. WREN will develop two completely new outreach programs for elementary and middle school students.
- WREN welcomed Mike Shippey to the board in June. Mike is a Landscape Ecologist and owner of Coyote Creek Environmental Services, Inc. in Eugene. He is a member of the IGA Committee and served on the education center architect selection committee.
- WREN hired Windy Hovey as a part time Administrative Assistant in September, bringing the total number of WREN staff members to four.
- WREN coordinated with the Bureau of Land Management, Eugene Stream Team, Sierra Club Many Rivers Group, and the Rachel Carson Natural Resource Program for another successful Public Lands Day Volunteer Clean-up in September. More than **50** community members participated in removing noxious weeds and clean up along Amazon Creek and the Tsanchiifin Trail.
- WREN coordinated with the Environmental Leadership Program through the University of Oregon Environmental Studies Department. Beginning in spring 2007, five UO students will be helping with WREN's education program as a part of their coursework.
- Work continued at the University of Oregon's Center for Advanced Technology and Education program to refine and submit grant proposals, as well as evaluate current education programs.
- WREN partnered with the Eugene Stream Team to adopt the section of Amazon Creek between Beltline and Danebo.



- WREN sold more than **700** copies of "Dragonflies and Damselflies of the Willamette Valley, Oregon: A Beginner's Guide". All proceeds support the WREN education program.
- WREN Board and volunteers dedicated more than **2500** hours in 2006 to further the education program!
- WREN Environmental Education Coordinator Holly McRae and Environmental Education Specialist Liz Myers were once again nominated by the Bureau of Land Management for National Take Pride in America Awards. (See photo, left) Eugene BLM District Manager Virginia Grilley presented Holly and Liz with nomination awards at the Wetland Project Office.



WEST EUGENE WETLANDS EDUCATION CENTER

- In November, city residents voted yes to Eugene Parks and Open Space Bond Measure 20-110. This provides \$1.75 million for site development and building the education center.
- Representatives from the City of Eugene, WREN and Eugene School District 4J selected Rowell-Brokaw Architects as the project architect team.
- WREN received its first corporate donation toward building a field science education center in the West Eugene Wetlands. Invitrogen Corporation, a \$1.2 billion biotechnology company, pledged a total of \$150,000, securing the first naming opportunity in the complex: the Invitrogen Field Science Laboratory Room within the Field Science Laboratory Building.
- With the support of the Oregon Congressional Delegation, the Eugene Land Conveyance Act was passed, transferring the 12 acre proposed site for the education center from BLM to the City of Eugene.

2006 Education Center Supporters

Businesses

Invitrogen Corporation
Coyote Creek Environmental Services, Inc. (Eugene)
Cameron McCarthy Gilbert & Scheibe Landscape Architects, LLP (Eugene)

Individuals

Bill & Teresa Mason
Layne Mason
Josephine & Peter Von Hippel
Judy & David Berg
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Herb Wisner
Tom & Victoria Schneider
Dulcy Lee through The Rockwood Trust
Alan Zelenka
Mike Shippey

2006 Education Program Supporters

Businesses, Agencies and Organizations

Invitrogen Corporation (in-kind pledge)
Collins Foundation (grant)
Nearby Nature
Jaeger Real Estate (Eugene)
Coyote Creek Environmental Services, Inc.
Bureau of Land Management
Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board
Eugene REI
Elmira Automotive (Eugene)
QSL Print Communications (Eugene)
Raven Frame Works (Eugene)

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Mike Shippey
Amy Gremmel
Gigi & Steve Gremmel
Dean & Maxine Myers
Tim Whitley
Tom & Victoria Schneider
Charles J. Johnston
Dulcy Lee through the Rockwood Trust



AMERICAN WETLANDS MONTH 2006

More than 400 people attended wetlands month events or dropped by the WREN booth at local festivals throughout May. WREN celebrated with a variety of events including butterfly, wildflower and general nature walks in the wetlands, presentations on river otters and dragonflies, and a photo exhibit and reception in the downtown library.

2006 sponsors were Eugene REI, Raven Frame Works of Eugene, BLM and the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board.



EVENTS

Saturday, February 24, 9-10:30 a.m.- “Where is Everybody?”

Families are invited to investigate the wetlands in the winter and learn about what plants and animals do when the weather turns cold. Meet at the yurt. Free! Call 683-6494 to register.

Saturday, March 17, 9 a.m.-1 p.m.-Amazon Creek Restoration Project

Join volunteers in planting native trees and shrubs along Amazon Creek between Beltline and Danebo. Bring sturdy footwear and appropriate clothing. This is a great opportunity to work with other volunteers who share an interest in improving the banks and habitat value of Amazon Creek!

Saturday, March 31, 9-10:30 a.m.- “Eggs & Nests”

Discover the beauty and wonder of wetland bird nests and eggs. Participants will also have the opportunity to paint an egg to take home. Meet at the yurt. This program is free! Call 683-6494 for more information and registration.

Saturday, April 21-Earth Day Celebration

Celebrate Earth Day at EWEB’s River Edge Plaza! Visit WREN’s education booth to learn more about the West Eugene Wetlands. We’ll see you out there!

Saturday, April 28, 9 a.m.-1 p.m.-Amazon Creek Clean-up Day

Join Stream Team volunteers to clean up Amazon Creek and tributaries between Danebo Ave. and Royal Ave. We will be picking up litter and debris deposited along both sides of the creek. There will be prizes for the most interesting finds! The City of Eugene Stream Team will provide tools, garbage bags, direction, snacks, and drinks. Come prepared with sturdy footwear. Volunteers will be walking 1-mile or 3-mile loops during this effort. For more information call 683-6494.

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