

Stakeholder Connection

Your news source on the Institute for Environmental Solutions projects and progress



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Sheridan Leadership Students Plant 60 Trees

The Fort Logan Northgate 3-8 School Leadership Class of 25 students successfully planted 60 trees on the southwestern portion of the Sheridan Schools' athletic complex, just north of the Quincy Trail entrance at Irving Street on October 9. The students planted 20 each of common hackberry (*Celtis occidentalis*), bigtoothed maple (*Acer grandidentatum*), and catalpa (*Catalpa speciosa*) in a spiral design we have named the Learning Forest. The Learning Forest will teach students in Fort Logan's Leadership Class about native trees, the importance of water in Colorado and tree planting techniques, and give them the opportunity to plan and lead a tree care and watering program. IES's landscape partner, DesignWorkshop, created the design for the Sheridan Quincy Tree Project. In the classroom workshop in September, IES team members worked with Sharena del Brocco's students to identify what trees need to survive and thrive, and to prepare an agenda for a successful planting program.



IES's Sheridan Quincy Tree Project is sponsored by Xcel Energy, Colorado Garden Foundation, and Patagonia. Local partners who provided critical tree planting materials and staff support include Sheridan School District No. 2, the City of Sheridan, and South Suburban Parks and Recreation District. IES volunteers assisted the students in planting the trees, including Art Hertel, Don Mangus, Judy Ward, and the DesignWorkshop team led by Kathleen King. The project will continue with another workshop in November, where the students will plan to care for their trees. More information: John Kelly, IES Program Coordinator, john@i4es.org.



IES Presents Two Posters at the Sustaining Colorado Watersheds Conference

IES's Tree Project and Chemical Footprint Project presented posters about improving Colorado's watersheds at the annual Sustaining Colorado Watersheds conference in Avon in October. The Chemical Footprint (CFP) poster, designed by Leiloni Shine, featured prevention. It described how IES proposes to address the problem at the source to reduce water contaminants that threaten human and environmental health. The Tree Project poster, designed by John Kelly, presented how IES teaches students and community members to become watershed stewards and make a real difference for Colorado's water.



Flushing Contaminants Out of Our Communities with the Save Our Water Initiative

The IES Chemical Footprint Project team is developing the Save Our Water Initiative, a program based on prevention, rather than treatment, of water contaminants in a local community. IES is looking for community partners, including local cities, community groups, and wastewater treatment facilities, who are interested in reducing contaminants of emerging concern (CECs) through effective community-based prevention strategies. Contaminants include synthetic surfactants (nonylphenol), BPA, triclosan, DEET, synthetic fragrances, and parabens. IES is researching existing, pending, and rejected regulations on CECs at federal, state, and local levels. IES is determining major drivers of change, such as consumer demands, backed by scientific research establishing the presence of CECs and the associated human and environmental health concerns. IES will use community-based social marketing to show the benefits of prevention over treatment. We will improve the health of the local and downstream communities by reducing the use of CECs while demonstrating the cost-effectiveness of prevention.

If you are involved in community water quality, wastewater treatment, or community health, and would be interested in reducing water pollution through prevention, please contact Carol Lyons, Carol@i4es.org.

IES Continues Growing the Greenbelt

IES successfully completed the Growing the Greenbelt Ecological and Environmental Education Project. In April, Wheat Ridge community volunteers planted 140 native trees, shrubs, and grasses in the Greenbelt near Moore Street. Students from Wheat Ridge High School planted fifteen 5-gallon cottonwood trees. Native species planted included cottonwood, peachleaf willow, golden current, red osier dogwood, wild rose, blue gamma, and gallardia.



IES prepared a final report documenting the project in full, available on the IES website. IES's favorite videographer, Jesse Johnson, IOTK Media, produced two project videos: a 3-minute promotional video that gives the highlights of the project and a longer 9-minute video that covers the entire project. The videos can be found at: www.i4es.org/photos-videos/. Printed copies of the final report are available on request (solutions@i4es.org).

IES thanks the Colorado Tree Coalition, InfinitusPie Pizza, Wheat Ridge City Council, and the City of Wheat Ridge for their generous donations. Thank you to all the community volunteers and Wheat Ridge Parks and Recreation Department staff members who made the project successful. Thank you to the Wheat Ridge High School students for their hard work on the planting day. More information: John Kelly, IES Program Coordinator, john@i4es.org.



Xcel Energy Continues Commitment to IES and Environmental Improvement

IES received a new \$10,000 grant from the Xcel Energy Foundation for the 2016 Sheridan Quincy Natural Resource Restoration and Environmental Improvement Project. The new project will build on IES's partnerships with the City of Sheridan, Fort Logan Northgate 3-8 School (FLN), Sheridan School District No. 2, and South Suburban Parks and Recreation District. The Natural Resource Restoration project will provide workshops for the FLN Leadership class to learn horticultural practices and lessons on program management to develop stronger civic engagement in the Sheridan community. Students will use this knowledge to help design a landscaping plan and plant native shrubs, grasses and flowers along the Sheridan Quincy Trail, improving a space that otherwise would not be cultivated due to easement restrictions. This grant will also provide funds for IES to continue to care for the trees that leadership students planted this fall on Sheridan School District No. 2 property near the trail as part of the Xcel Energy-funded Sheridan Quincy Trail Project. IES is grateful for our continued partnership with the Xcel Energy Foundation and looks forward to current and future projects in the City of Sheridan. More information: Olivia Tracy, IES Intern, olivia@i4es.org

Food Companies Respond to Consumer Demands by Removing Artificial Ingredients

States and corporations are taking control of the consumer-driven fight to reduce exposure to toxic chemicals. Over the past year, several U.S.-based multinational companies have pledged to remove certain synthetic substances from their food products. Subway pledged to remove artificial ingredients, including colors, flavors, and preservatives, from its menu by 2017. General Mills is continuing its transition to natural flavors. It will begin converting the remaining 40% of cereals still using synthetic ingredients, such as Trix, to natural colors and flavors over the next few years. Earlier this year, Nestlé committed to eliminating artificial flavors and FDA-certified colors from its chocolate candy, notably Butterfinger, by the end of 2015. Nestlé vows that all new products released by the company including non-chocolate candy will contain neither artificial flavors nor colors.



These companies decided to eliminate synthetic chemicals from their food products in response to customer preference. Through a consumer survey, Nestlé determined that 60% of Americans consider the presence of artificial ingredients when making food purchases. By eliminating the use of synthetic chemicals, these companies hope to improve their competitive stance in the market. While few regulations exist regarding these chemicals, customers have taken a leading role in initiating change at the business level. More information: Carol Lyons, Carol@i4es.org.

IES Tree Stewards: Passionate Community Members Caring for Trees

The IES Tree Stewards are community members who generously volunteer to care for trees planted during IES projects. IES Wheat Ridge Tree Stewards recently completed two training workshops with Margaret Paget, Wheat Ridge Forestry and Open Space Supervisor, and IES team members. Tree Stewards visited project planting sites, reviewed tree care strategies, discussed invasive species concerns, and enjoyed the flourishing Greenbelt open space. The Tree Stewards do a fantastic job. The survival rate of trees planted in the Wheat Ridge Greenbelt has more than tripled to over 80%. If you are interested in volunteering to care for open space trees in Wheat Ridge or Sheridan, please contact IES at solutions@i4es.org. More information: John Kelly, IES Program Coordinator, John@i4es.org.



IES Institute News

IES is pleased to introduce three new graduate interns. Olivia Tracy joined the Tree Project team in July. She has a BA in English and History from Regis University (Denver) summa cum laude and an MA in English from Colorado State University. Kirstin Blanzky and Derek Ager both joined the Chemical Footprint team in August, coincidentally both with Masters in Public Health in Environmental Health. Kirstin has a BS in Animal Science and MPH from the University of Florida (Gainesville). Derek has a BS in Environment and MPH from the

University of Michigan (Ann Arbor).

IES Opportunities

IES is looking for an energetic professional to join the IES Board of Directors who wants to ensure the application of sound scientific solutions to our pressing environmental challenges. Please contact IES at Solutions@i4es.org for a position description and application.

IES is seeking motivated volunteers and graduate interns who are passionate about protecting the environment to join our project teams. We also have openings for Development / Fundraising, Social Media Marketing, and Web Development / Programming Volunteers and Interns. Interested candidates should submit a resume and cover letter to Solutions@i4es.org.

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