

Stakeholder Connection

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



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Fort Logan-Northgate Leadership students celebrate Sheridan Quincy Trail Project accomplishments with community banner

On May 18, IES presented the Fort Logan Northgate (FLN) 3-8 School's Leadership Class with a project banner and project t-shirts to recognize the Sheridan Quincy Trail (SQT) Project. Students worked with IES, the City of Sheridan, South Suburban Parks and Recreation, and community members to improve the Quincy Trail. During 2016-2017 project students planted new shrub bands along the trail in the fall of 2016 and cared for the shrubs and trees through the winter and spring. IES thanked the Leadership students for their hard work and recognized their commitment to improving their community.



FLN Leadership students, Leadership teacher Sharena Del Brocco, City of Sheridan Planner Jennifer Henninger, and City of Sheridan Manager Devin Granbery spoke about the success of the SQT Project. The Leadership Class President and Vice-President spoke about learning the importance of hard work and cooperation during community improvement projects, and the significance of the project to them as students that have worked on it for three years. IES and City of Sheridan thanked the students for their dedication and hard work.

Students were excited to see the completed banner which they designed, and to receive t-shirts for FLN Environmental Leaders. In addition to South Suburban Parks and Recreation and the City of Sheridan, this project is supported by Sheridan School District No. 2, DesignWorkshop, Colorado Garden Foundation, and Xcel Energy. IES looks forward to continuing this project next fall to continue to improve the Quincy Trail. More information: John Kelly, john@ies.org.

Chemical Footprint Project receives First Unitarian Society of Denver Giving in Action grant

IES was selected for a Giving in Action grant from First Unitarian Society of Denver (FUSD) in April to support development of the Reduce Your Chemical Footprint pilot workshop. The April 2 FUSD service theme of embracing creativity provided a good foundation to inspire IES to promote easy, safe, and affordable ways to be creative in reducing chemical footprints.

The Chemical Footprint Project will host the pilot workshop for First Unitarian congregation members and interested community residents in the fall. The workshop is an opportunity to teach concerned individuals about the toxic chemicals that pollute our water and jeopardize the health of our families and environment. IES will provide strategies to easily avoid these contaminants and



reduce chemical footprints, along with demonstrations on how to make safe and effective personal care and cleaning products. The pilot workshop will be used to evaluate and refine our community engagement strategies to prevent future contamination of our water. IES looks forward to continuing our collaboration with FUSD. More information: Mike Smith, Mike@i4es.org.

Kullerstrand students restore Wheat Ridge Greenbelt Trail and enjoy ecology games



Students from Kullerstrand Elementary School joined IES and the Wheat Ridge Parks and Recreation Department (WRPRD) to plant trees, shrubs, and grasses to restore the Greenbelt on two sunny mornings in May. In addition to planting hundreds of new native plants, students, teachers, and parents cared for young plants along the trail with water and mulch, removed weeds and trash, took a nature walk, and had a scavenger hunt. During the nature walk, students discovered what their newly planted trees might look like as they grow and explored the riparian habitat that animals and plants of the Greenbelt call home. On the second planting day, Kullerstrand students participated in a scavenger hunt where they explored the trail with a buddy to document the natural world through drawing and writing.

The 2017 program is the second year of IES's Greenbelt Restoration and Environmental Education Network (GREEN) project in collaboration with WRPRD and the Kullerstrand TRAILS program. This spring's project is supported by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, the Colorado Tree Coalition, and Patagonia. The combination of challenging outdoor projects, such as digging, planting, mulching, watering, and weeding, with on-site ecology education through nature walks and scavenger hunts helps to build lifelong environmental stewards among the energetic Kullerstrand students. More information: Patti Venneman, Patti@i4es.org.

DEET-free summer

This summer, protect yourself against bug bites without using products containing DEET. DEET is toxic to fish and the environment and may be harmful to humans. Biting insects such as mosquitoes and ticks can carry diseases, so it is important to prevent bug bites. Instead of harmful chemical methods, try these non-toxic alternative strategies for preventing bug bites:

- Wear long sleeves and pants when outside
- Avoid standing water in areas where you play or work outdoors
- Light citronella candles when outdoors
- Avoid being outdoors at dusk when mosquitoes are most active.



If you prefer a repellent, try this DEET-free bug repellent recipe. The oil of lemon eucalyptus is recommended as a substitute to DEET by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Lavender and peppermint essential oils repel mosquitoes and ticks as well.

DEET-free Bug Repellent

Ingredients:

½ cup witch hazel

½ cup distilled water

20 drops oil of lemon eucalyptus

10 drops lavender oil

10 drops peppermint oil

Directions: Mix witch hazel and distilled water together in large bowl. Add essential oils and stir. Pour into spray bottle. More information, Shannon Herstein, Shannon@i4es.org.

IES loves our Tree Steward Volunteers!



The IES Tree Steward volunteer program started with humble beginnings in 2013. Eight hardworking stewards cared for seven IES Revive the Greenbelt! tree planting sites along Clear Creek, near Prospect Park in the Wheat Ridge Greenbelt. Since 2013 IES projects have planted hundreds more trees at several Greenbelt sites. The Tree Steward program has expanded along with the number of sites being planted. In 2016, 18 dedicated community volunteer Tree Stewards and 25 students from the Wheat Ridge Recreation Center Summer Sun Camp visited the sites twice a week all summer. The 2017 spring and summer work has begun. The adults and children enjoy the opportunity to work outside and help their community be healthier and more beautiful. IES Tree Stewards perform a valuable and critical service. They take care of newly planted trees and plants by regularly monitoring, watering, weeding, and mulching. Without this care in the first few years after planting, most of the trees would not survive. With the care of the Tree Stewards and Sun Camp Tree Ambassadors, most of the baby plants survive and thrive, restoring the Wheat Ridge Greenbelt for everyone who enjoys it. If you are interested in volunteering as a Tree Steward, please contact Don Mangus, don@i4es.org. We provide training and support for the stewards, and the work and schedule are flexible.

Is nail polish harmful to your health?



With summer approaching, it's time to take a look into our cosmetic bins and check out those nail polishes. Nail polishes may contain contaminants of emerging concern (CECs) that can damage health and the environment. Nail polish ingredients are largely unregulated, but you can minimize exposure to harmful chemicals by looking for polishes that are 3-free, 5-free, or 9-free. Nine-free polishes are free of nine common contaminants, including formaldehyde, parabens, and phthalates. These CECs can cause harmful health effects like organ toxicity, cancer, endocrine disruption, and toxicity to wildlife. In a 2012 study in the *Journal of Exposure Science and Environmental Epidemiology*, respondents who applied nail polish within two days had elevated levels of phthalates in their urine. Environmental Working Group (EWG) noted that triphenyl phosphate, an endocrine disruptor and additive in nail polish to help it adhere to the nail, is absorbed in the body and can be detected in blood and breast milk. The chemical-free designations are self-reported, so purchase with caution. A 2012 independent review of nail polish ingredients by the California EPA revealed that

10 out of 12 polishes that claimed to be free of toluene, for example, did in fact contain toluene. Nail polishes are not required to be tested for safety, so if you can do without it, skip it. You can also check the EWG website to explore lower-toxin water-based options for your summer pedicure! More information: Kate Brayton, Kate@i4es.org.

IES celebrates Earth Day 2017 with Wild Animal Sanctuary and KGNU Radio outreach

The Chemical Footprint Project and Tree Project team members teamed up to get the word out about reducing toxic chemical footprints and improving our communities through youth-driven urban forestry.

John Kelly and Mike Smith were interviewed on KGNU stations 88.5 FM in Boulder and 1390 AM in Denver. KGNU's weekly Dot Org program is a great show that informs listeners about the efforts of local nonprofits. The conversation was broadcast on February 27. Mike and John told listeners about the work IES is doing to protect the environment, and how they can support IES. You can listen to the interview at: www.i4es.org/ies-news/ies-in-the-press.



IES celebrated Earth Day at the Wild Animal Sanctuary in Keenesburg. Tree Project and Chemical Footprint Project team members met hundreds of curious visitors with genuine interest on how we can improve our communities, protect our families, and allow wildlife to thrive. Our do-it-yourself radish terrarium and homemade samples of toxic-free bug repellent, hand sanitizer, and cleaning solution were big hits with Sanctuary guests.

IES thanks KGNU Radio and the Wild Animal Sanctuary for their support. More information: Mike Smith, Mike@i4es.org.

IES Institute News

The IES Tree Project team welcomes Kate Brayton, who is completing an MS in environmental science at the University of Illinois. Kate has a BS from James Madison University and a Teaching Certificate from Old Dominion University. Kate is currently a STEM instructor at Skate City.

The Chemical Footprint Project welcomes Du Nguyen, who just graduated with a master's degree in environmental policy and management from University College, University of Denver. Du has a master's in environmental engineering from the University of the Philippines, and bachelor's of environmental engineering from Hanoi University of Science and Technology.

The IES Board of Directors welcomes Frank Kvietok, Michael Verdone, and Jacob Schlesinger. Frank holds a Ph. D. in inorganic chemistry from the University of Colorado, Boulder. He has worked with Tersus Solutions, American Recreation Products, and Launch Pad LLC. Michael holds a Ph.D. in natural resource and environmental economics from Colorado State University. He is an Associate at BBC Research and Consulting, working with former IES Board member, Doug Jeavons. Jake Schlesinger holds a J.D. from the University of Denver Sturm College of Law. He is a partner at Keyes & Fox, LLP.

IES Opportunities

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 project, development, and fundraising volunteers and interns. Interested candidates should submit a resume and cover letter to Solutions@i4es.org.

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

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