

# Stakeholder Connection

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



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## Wheat Ridge Tree Ambassadors care for their open spaces

IES's new summer tree watering program gave Wheat Ridge kids the opportunity to care for their open spaces. During the hot summer months, children from Wheat Ridge Sun Camp at the Recreation Center watered newly planted trees, shrubs, and grasses at the IES Greenbelt Restoration and Environmental Education Network (GREEN) planting site. The campers participated in the first IES Tree Ambassador Program, where they watered and weeded twice a week. They were excited to take care of the new trees and plants planted by Kullerstrand Elementary students in spring 2016. IES Tree Steward Betty Jo Page coordinated the watering project with the help of Tree Steward Coordinator Don Mangus and the IES Tree Project Team. The children and counselors hand watered all 120 new plants and removed scotch thistle and wild lettuce weeds.



The summer camp watering project was a new partnership between IES and Wheat Ridge Parks and Recreation Department (WRPRD). Thanks to the campers' efforts, the GREEN site is flourishing with a survival rate over 75%. Without the help of the new young Tree Ambassadors, the site would have struggled during the hot summer and would be overrun by invasive weed species. IES thanks all the sun campers, counselors, Beth June (WRPRD), and IES volunteers for a successful partnership this summer! More information: John Kelly, Tree Project Manager, [john@i4es.org](mailto:john@i4es.org).

## IES to host CREEC meeting: Experts to discuss strategies to prevent emerging contaminants



**CREEC**  
CONSORTIUM FOR RESEARCH  
AND EDUCATION ON  
EMERGING CONTAMINANTS

IES is delighted to host the quarterly Consortium for Research and Education on Emerging Contaminants (CREEC) meeting on September 29 from 1:30 to 4 pm at the Daniels Fund, 101 Monroe Street in Denver. The conference will feature experts from the fields of environmental microbiology and water science, and cover research and strategies to prevent and reduce contaminants of emerging concern (CECs) in wastewater. We will provide attendees with an introduction to community-oriented preventive strategies informed by the natural and social sciences. Krystal Herrmann, Program Coordinator for the Nebraska Watershed Network, will speak on promoting behavior change by monitoring surface water quality through citizen science campaigns. Dr. Erica Hartmann, assistant professor at Northwestern University, will speak about synthetic antimicrobial chemicals (triclosan) in building materials and natural alternatives or omission of these chemicals. The IES Chemical Footprint (CFP) Project Team will present our Save Our Water Initiative (SOWI), fostering sustainable behavior using community-based social marketing to engage citizens to reduce and prevent CECs. Attendees will gain an enhanced awareness of crucial social, scientific, and policy concerns related to CECs and pathways to generating well-informed solutions. Everyone is welcome. More information: Kevin Gallagher, [kevin@i4es.org](mailto:kevin@i4es.org).

## Fort Logan Northgate Leadership students tackle challenging trail planting

Fort Logan Northgate (FLN) 3-8 School Leadership students and IES are embarking on a new and challenging planting and education program in

the City of Sheridan. The project will build on the 2015 Sheridan Quincy Tree project onto the Quincy Trail, a vital community trail in need of green infrastructure improvements. We will plant native shrubs, perennials, and grasses making the trail area more stable against erosion and more pleasant to travel. Project partners include the City of Sheridan, South Suburban Parks and Recreation and DesignWorkshop.



In September, IES will hold a workshop with FLN leadership students to develop and plan the planting program, giving students hands-on science and leadership opportunities. In October, the students will implement the planting plan provided by Marcus Pulsipher at DesignWorkshop. The students will water and maintain the plants through the school year.

The Sheridan Quincy Trail stretches from Quincy and Irving east to Federal Boulevard. If you are in the area and see one of us on the trail or with the trees in the Learning Forest, please stop and talk. Volunteers to help with watering, mulching, and weed removal are welcome. More information: Patti Venneman, [patti@i4es.org](mailto:patti@i4es.org).

### Introducing IES's native and drought tolerant plant selection for the 2016 Sheridan Quincy Trail Project

With the planting plan from landscape expert, Marcus Pulsipher at DesignWorkshop, IES will team with leadership students at Fort Logan Northgate (FLN) 3-8 School to select plants for the 2016 Sheridan Quincy Trail Project. The 2016 IES Sheridan Quincy Trail Project will focus on planting native shrubs, flowers, and grasses to improve the Quincy trail between Irving Street and Federal Boulevard. DesignWorkshop's planting strategy is to use the 2015 Sheridan Quincy Tree Project's Learning Forest as the focal point and plant flowers and shrubs expanding to the Quincy trail. This will create bands of flowering native perennials and bands of larger shrubs for a natural landscape around the existing Learning Forest. Flowering plants will include purple poppy mallow, dakota vervain, and gallardia. Shrubs are shrubby cinquefoil, rubber rabbit brush, wood's rose, three-leaf sumac, and mountain mahogany - all native to Colorado's Front Range, drought tolerant, and sources of food or shelter for small mammals and birds. Hopi Indians used rubber rabbit brush branches for basket weaving. Three-leaf sumac was traditionally used for medicinal purposes. Rubber rabbit brush is unique because it is one of the few species in the intermountain west that provides essential habitat for pollinators. The Sheridan planting project will attract pollinators, improve aesthetics for trail users, and comply with utility easements. Utility pipeline easements restrict the planting of any deep rooting plants. IES and FLN students will start planting on the Sheridan Quincy Trail in October. More information: Elizabeth Morgan, IES Graduate Intern, [Elizabeth@i4es.org](mailto:Elizabeth@i4es.org).



### Revamped Toxic Substances Control Act opens door to stronger EPA action on harmful chemicals



A recent bipartisan bill passed by the U.S. Congress to reform the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) of 1976 may breathe new life into an environmental statute that has fallen short of expectations and hampered EPA action on harmful chemicals for 40 years. On June 22, 2016, the Frank R. Lautenberg Chemical Safety for the 21st Century Act was signed into law to address numerous deficiencies in the existing TSCA legal apparatus. Demands for reform had steadily mounted as the old TSCA system did not compel safety reviews for tens of thousands of chemicals on the market and often restrained EPA action even in cases where health hazards were known. The 2016 reform bill gives EPA greater leverage in controlling harmful chemicals found in consumer and commercial products, including those leaving harmful chemical traces in water systems. It has been heralded as a major milestone to protect the public from toxic substances.

The bill grants EPA new powers that were surprisingly absent in the original legislation. EPA now has the authority and responsibility to evaluate a new chemical's safety before it enters the marketplace. The bill allows EPA to begin evaluating and regulating chemicals already known to pose risks to human health. It establishes a risk-based priority ranking system to guide the order of the agency's safety evaluations. It explicitly requires the protection of vulnerable populations, such as children and pregnant women. Uncertainties remain as to how these reforms will pan out, how much the existing regulatory system will be transformed, how great the benefits will be, and when benefits will be seen. A key issue is implementation. EPA review of thousands of chemicals will take considerable time and resources. Sweeping changes will not occur overnight. More information: Lee Brann, [Lee@i4es.org](mailto:Lee@i4es.org).

### GLEE: A behavior-change success story



Adopting sustainable behaviors, particularly those that are new, can be challenging. The Girls Learning Energy and the Environment (GLEE) program, a collaborative effort between Stanford University and the Girl Scouts of Northern California, is a successful example of how to foster sustainable behavior in individuals and families. The GLEE program strategies are similar to those planned for the IES Chemical Footprint (CFP) Project Save Our Water Initiative (SOWI) that, given the knowledge and opportunity, people will change their behavior to benefit the environment.

The GLEE program aims to reduce household energy use by emphasizing behavior change in girls participating in the program. The girls then promote the newly adopted behavior to their family and friends. According to a scientific study (Nature Energy, July 11, 2016), researchers found that seven months after completing the program, the girls increased energy-saving behavior by 27% compared to their behavior before completing the program. Parents and siblings followed the girls' example, with parents adopting 6% more energy-saving behavior seven months after their child completed the program.

The GLEE study highlights the foundation of SOWI that adopting sustainable behaviors is possible and that individual and household actions do make a difference. The CFP team is excited to see these success stories and extend their application to reducing water pollution. The SOWI is developing the Reduce Your Chemical Footprint Family Plan. Similar to GLEE, it focuses on facilitating behavior change in families and children to benefit the environment. The goal of SOWI is to reduce or prevent water pollution and exposure to toxics by eliminating household use of products containing contaminants of emerging concern (CECs). More information: Shannon Herstein, SOWI Project Coordinator, [Shannon@i4es.org](mailto:Shannon@i4es.org).

### IES partners with Xcel Energy on Day of Service

Six years ago, Xcel Energy created the Day of Service to honor those who died on September 11, 2001. Employees and community members give back to their communities through volunteer projects. The 6th annual Xcel Energy Day of Service will be September 10, 2016. IES is pleased to participate in the Day of Service on the 2016 Sheridan Quincy Trail project. IES project team members, and volunteers from Xcel Energy and the Sheridan community will prepare the Quincy Trail for the 2016 IES Sheridan Quincy Trail project. Day of Service activities include weeding, trash pickup, and tilling and grading along the trail. Thanks to Xcel Energy for its volunteers and support to prepare the 2016 Sheridan Quincy Trail planting site. More information: Patti Venneman, [patti@i4es.org](mailto:patti@i4es.org).



### Clean air leads to clean water

A recent study conducted by the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science (Atmospheric Environment, July 2016) suggests that improved water quality in the Chesapeake Bay is linked to improved air quality upstream in the Potomac watershed. One



would think that water quality control efforts are the driving force behind improved water quality. This study suggests that there are other important factors to consider including reducing air pollution.

The study found that recent enforcement of the EPA Clean Air Act reduced emissions of nitrogen dioxide in the Upper Potomac River Basin, which contributed to better water quality in the Chesapeake Bay. Nitrogen in the atmosphere makes its way into water systems, causing disruption of local ecology and resulting in mass algae blooms. Algal blooms can deplete oxygen and block sunlight in water systems which kills aquatic plants and animals. The research team emphasized that many current water quality control efforts focus on small areas, whereas improved air quality affects the entire watershed.

According to the study, reducing harmful air pollution emissions and improving air quality is essential for healthy water systems. This is especially true for water source regions like Colorado, where many important tributaries and major stream networks originate. More information: Sean Mangus, IES Associate, [sean@i4es.org](mailto:sean@i4es.org).

### **IES Institute news**

The 2015 IES Annual Report is available. If you would like a copy, please email [Solutions@i4es.org](mailto:Solutions@i4es.org). We will be glad to mail or email a copy to you.

The Tree Project is pleased to welcome Lindsay Nerad and Elizabeth Morgan to the team. Lindsay has an MS in Conservation Leadership from Colorado State University (CSU), Fort Collins and a BA in Political Science from Metro State University in Denver. Elizabeth is working on an MPA in Nonprofit Management at the University of Colorado Denver and holds a BS in Wildlife Management and Conservation from Humboldt State University, Arcata, CA.

The Chemical Footprint Project welcomes Kevin Gallagher, Assistant Brewer at Odd 13 Brewing Company in Lafayette, CO. Kevin is working on a Master of Natural Resources Stewardship at CSU and has a BS in Horticulture.

The IES Board of Directors welcomes Lisa Cavanaugh, Vice President, Magna Energy Services (Broomfield, CO). She recently completed a Master of Applied Industrial/Organizational Psychology at CSU.

### **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](mailto: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 Project, Development, and Fundraising Volunteers and Interns. Interested candidates should submit a resume and cover letter to [Solutions@i4es.org](mailto:Solutions@i4es.org).

### **Shop to protect the environment! IES beneficiary of Denver's Buffalo Exchange Tokens for Bags Program**

IES is honored to be one of three charities to receive donations from Denver's two Buffalo Exchange stores through December 31, 2016. Buffalo Exchange sells vintage and gently used clothes. The company is committed to environmental awareness. Stores reduce waste by not providing plastic bags for in-store



purchases. In place of a bag, shoppers can ask for a 5-cent wooden token, which can be donated to local organizations. When shopping at Buffalo Exchange's Denver locations (51 Broadway and 226 East 13th Avenue), be sure to ask for a token, which you can then drop in the IES box! For more information, please contact Carol Lyons at [carol@i4es.org](mailto:carol@i4es.org).

Shop at Smile.Amazon.com and benefit IES!



Support IES by starting your shopping at [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com). Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of your purchases to IES! AmazonSmile is the same Amazon you know: same products, same prices, same service, no cost and no fees. Go to [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com). Sign in to your regular Amazon account (or set one up). Designate your donations to go to The Institute for Environmental Solutions. Always start at "[smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com)." Please SHARE this information at Facebook and Linked In, and tell your friends.

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