

# Stakeholder Connection

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



Volume 10, Number 3, August 2017

## Volunteers Invited! IES Sheridan Quincy Trail to host Xcel Energy Day of Service Saturday, September 9

IES is pleased to partner again with Xcel Energy for the Day of Service, September 9, 2017 from 8 to 11 am. The Day of Service started seven years ago to honor the anniversary of the 2001 attacks in New York on September 11 by working with Colorado non-profit organizations to bring community members together for positive change. IES is honored to work with Xcel Energy employees and the Sheridan community to prepare the Sheridan Quincy Trail for new plants and restoration. This year, volunteers from IES, Xcel Energy, and the Sheridan community will water plants, remove weeds, till the soil, and mulch planting areas. The IES Sheridan Quincy Trail Project will continue the work of the Fort Logan Northgate Leadership Class to provide environmental improvements to the West Quincy Trail. The project combines ecology and leadership education with sustainable ecological planting and community space improvements along the Sheridan Trail. The Day of Service will be filled with hard work, community building, and fun. IES looks forward to spending the morning with Xcel Energy volunteers, students, and Sheridan community members to care for the Sheridan Quincy Trail. Please sign up to join the project and volunteer at: <http://xcelenergydos.ivolunteer.com/>. More information: Sabrina Kleinman, [sabrina@i4es.org](mailto:sabrina@i4es.org).



## Do you support clean water in your community? Of course you do!



The Chemical Footprint Project team is excited to announce our newly named initiative: Communities for Clean Water!

The Chemical Footprint Project (CFP) team is working to prevent contamination of our drinking water and to reduce your exposure to contaminants of emerging concern. The Communities for Clean Water Initiative is underway with development of our pilot community workshop planned for fall 2017 at the First Unitarian Society of Denver. We expect many enthusiastic attendees seeking information on how to reduce water pollution and personal exposure to harmful contaminants in personal care and household products. Participants will learn easy ways to shop smart, use less, and make their own contaminant-free products. The CFP team looks forward to incorporating the advice provided by pilot workshop attendees about the event so that we can improve

and reproduce the workshop for other local communities.

The IES Chemical Footprint Project is looking for opportunities to host workshops and community events. Showing people of all ages how to make homemade products, sharing easy and affordable tips on how to reduce chemical footprints, and protecting our drinking water is always rewarding. Workshop sponsorship and material donations can support an IES Communities for Clean Water workshop in your area. For more information, please go to: [www.i4es.org/community-workshops](http://www.i4es.org/community-workshops) or email [Solutions@i4es.org](mailto:Solutions@i4es.org). More information: Mike Smith, [Mike@i4es.org](mailto:Mike@i4es.org).

### IES Tree Ambassador Program: Wheat Ridge children care for their environment

The IES Tree Ambassador program has just completed its second year, with 30 children from the Wheat Ridge Recreation Center Summer Camp participating in caring for new trees in the Greenbelt throughout the summer. The program was developed in spring 2016 to give children in Wheat Ridge the opportunity to care for their environment. Sun Campers walked to the 2017 Greenbelt Restoration and Environmental Education Network (GREEN) planting site twice a week to care for the newly planted trees under the supervision of IES Tree Stewards and Sun Camp counselors. The program culminated in a Tree Steward Certificate ceremony, where Sun Campers were thanked by IES Associates and Wheat Ridge Parks and Recreation staff members for their hard work through the hot summer months. All campers received a signed certificate to acknowledge the work they accomplished.



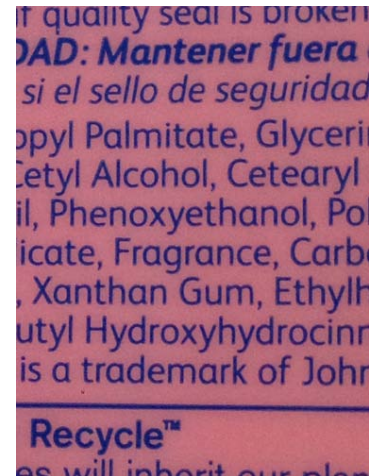
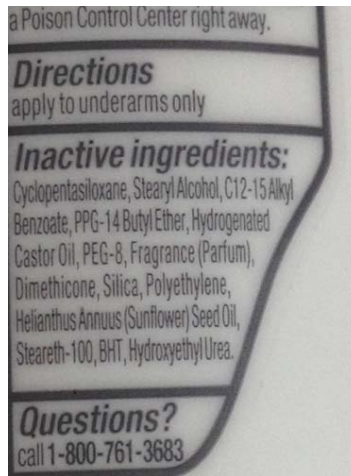
The second year of the program included caring for hundreds of plants at the new Greenbelt planting site and new opportunities for the campers to learn about Colorado's ecology. Sun Campers watered, mulched, set up protective plant cages, and measured the growth of trees on site. The Wheat Ridge Parks and Recreation Department started an initiative with the Tree Ambassadors to teach the campers about Colorado's ecology and the importance of scientific study. Students measured plants once a month during the program. During every visit, Sun Campers watered, mulched, and removed weeds throughout the planting site. Their work resulted in a plant survival rate of over 85%. More information: John Kelly, Tree Project Manager, [john@i4es.org](mailto:john@i4es.org).

### Fragrance: Enhance your smell or harm your health?

Do you know what makes your household and personal care products smell so nice? Spend a few minutes checking the labels and you might be surprised that almost all scented products contain synthetic "fragrance" or "perfume" as an ingredient. These ingredients are found in a variety of products, from cosmetics, lotions, shampoo, body wash, to household products including detergent, air fresheners, laundry products, and even medication. These scents are typically synthetic fragrances that are intentionally added to products to create desired aromas and mask unwanted smells of other ingredients. While "fragrance" is listed on labels as a common ingredient, it is actually a mixture of many different chemicals. Many are dangerous to human health, including aldehydes, benzene derivatives, phthalates, and toluene. These harmful chemicals may cause birth defects, endocrine disruption, allergic reactions, and cancer. Unfortunately, consumers are unable to see on the labels what components exist in their products because manufacturers are not required to provide the individual components. The following strategies can help you avoid synthetic fragrances and protect yourself from exposure to toxic chemicals:

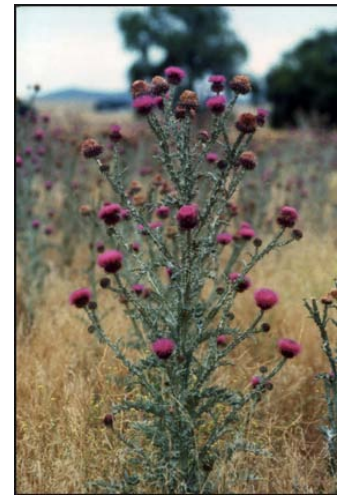
- Choose essential oils or natural fragrances derived from plants such as lavender, chamomile, peppermint, rosemary, spearmint, or tea tree vanilla.
- Carefully read product labels to make sure "fragrance" is not an ingredient, unless it is specified as "plant-based", and choose products advertised as "fragrance-free".
- Make your own contaminant-free perfumes and room fresheners. You can create an air freshener by adding one sliced lemon, some sprigs of rosemary, and 1/2 tsp. of vanilla in a small saucepan filled with 1 cup of water. Simmer on the stove and fill your home with a lovely aroma.

More information: Du Nguyen, [Du@i4es.org](mailto:Du@i4es.org).



### Scotch thistle: Get it before it flowers!

Scotch thistle is an invasive species from Europe that is pervasive over most of the western United States. It can grow up to twelve feet tall, and the base can be as wide as two feet in diameter with a life span of two years. There are spiny tips on the branches and the flowers are reddish to purple in color. It flowers from mid-June to September. During the first year, the plant produces leaves from a large rosette. The second year, the thistle grows taller and produces the flowers that contain the seeds, which are viable for up to 30 years. Colorado has designated Scotch thistle as a List B species in the Colorado Noxious Weed Act, which includes plants whose continued spread should be stopped. Noxious weeds are non-native invasive plants that displace desirable vegetation and degrade natural and agricultural lands. They threaten our drinking water supply, agricultural crops, pasture lands and native habitats.



If you see a Scotch thistle plant in your yard, it is best to remove it before it has a chance to flower. Mechanical removal methods can be effective for control along with cultural control through replanting. When you are digging up the plant, cut it at the root below the soil. You can mow the plant, but you should get it at the pod stage before flowers start to form. Tilling is an effective form of control, but be aware that it can spread seedlings and encourage plant growth. Once plants are removed, all plant parts should be disposed of immediately in a plastic bag to prevent spread. Planting perennial grasses can help reduce growth by outcompeting Scotch thistle seedlings. However, the grass needs to be dense with minimal bare areas. More information: Patti Venneman, [patti@i4es.org](mailto:patti@i4es.org).

### IES Wheat Ridge and Sheridan Tree Project Final Reports and project videos available



The IES Tree Project is wrapping up an action packed year with the completion of final reports on the 2016-2017 Greenbelt Restoration and Environmental Education Network (GREEN) project in Wheat Ridge and the 2016-2017 Sheridan Quincy Trail project. These comprehensive reports documenting every step of each project, with details and photos about planning, teaching, learning, planting and maintenance, are available in hard copy and will be available as a free download at the IES website. Videos illustrating each project will be available at the IES website and the IES YouTube channel. The GREEN project video will be shown on Wheat Ridge's TV 8 cable access station. Each project will have two videos, one detailed 10-minute video and one short summary 3-minute version, produced by Jesse Johnson, IOTK Media. A special documentary video recording of

the Sheridan Quincy Trail banner ceremony at Fort Logan-Northgate 3-8 School in May 2018 is also available, featuring 2016-2017 Leadership students. For copies of reports and videos, please contact IES at [Solutions@i4es.org](mailto:Solutions@i4es.org). More information: Carol Lyons, [Carol@i4es.org](mailto:Carol@i4es.org).

## IES Institute News

The IES Tree Project team welcomes a new Associate, Sabrina Kleinman, Lead Ecologist with EnviroPlan Partners in Lakewood. Sabrina has a Master of Forestry degree from Northern Arizona University and a BS in Biology from University of Redlands.

## 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](mailto: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](mailto:Solutions@i4es.org) for a position description and application.

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