

Stakeholder Connection

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



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Support IES when you shop at King Soopers / City Market!

IES has an exciting partnership with King Soopers and City Market through the new Community Rewards program. You can support IES at no cost and no fees with every King Soopers purchase by linking IES with your King Soopers card. Please go to www.kingsooperscommunityrewards.com, then click on “Enroll Now”. Sign in to your existing King Soopers or City Market account. Select “Institute for Environmental Solutions” or organization number **UX585** as the nonprofit you wish to support. Once your card is linked, King Soopers will reward IES with every purchase you make at no cost to you. If you don’t have a King Soopers or City Market loyalty card, they are available at the customer service desk at any store. Once you sign up, IES will begin immediately to be credited with a donation from King Soopers for every purchase (except of course alcohol, tobacco, postage stamps, and fuel). King Soopers will donate more than \$2.5 million every quarter to the community rewards program. IES will receive a proportional share based on all our friends’ (your!) purchases. Your SooperCard may only be linked to one organization at a time. King Soopers does not sell, trade or rent customers’ personal information to outside companies or marketing firms. Please support cleaner air and cleaner water, and sign up at www.kingsooperscommunityrewards.com to support IES!



The Sheridan Quincy Trail keeps getting better

IES is excited to begin work on the 2019 Sheridan Community Trail Improvement Project (CTIP). This fall, IES will continue its partnership with Fort Logan Northgate School’s (FLN’s) Leadership class. Students have been working hard to prepare for two work days along the Quincy Trail. On September 23, IES team members conducted a workshop where students learned how to build touch tables, which will provide a tangible way for classes to explore differences in textures, materials, liquids, and other scientific concepts in the community space. At other workshop stations, students developed art designs for the trail’s chain link fence and learned about proper planting techniques. Students will use what they learned from the workshop to build two touch tables for the community space, decorate the fence, and plant along the trail.

FLN Leadership students have continued their dedicated work this fall to maintain plants that were planted in the last four years. Students meet once a week to water, weed, and care for the plants. The students’ efforts support healthy plants that become well



established in the community space and along the trail.

The Chemical Footprint Project is coming to Fort Logan Northgate!



The IES Chemical Footprint (CFP) project team is beginning collaboration with Fort Logan Northgate School in Sheridan to create a series of workshops in our Blue Crew Water Stewards program. CFP project team members will teach middle school science and engineering students about reducing chemical footprints and preventing water pollution in the workshops. Using hands-on activities, students will learn how pollution from our homes gets into the water cycle. Students will learn about specific contaminants of emerging concern and how to avoid them through product label-reading exercises and a matching game that pairs contaminants with possible solutions to avoid the harmful chemicals. Students will make their own personal care products using safe ingredients. The workshops will be fun, engaging, and align with Colorado's 8th grade life science standards, ensuring what students learn in our workshops supports their success in science classes. We are excited about this opportunity to work with Fort Logan Northgate and to expand our Blue Crew Water

Stewards Program! More Information: Caitlin Jacobshagen, caitlin@ies.org

Xcel Energy Day of Service makes a big difference on the Sheridan Quincy Trail

On September 7, IES was honored to host an Xcel Energy Day of Service project with Xcel Energy employees and family volunteers working together along the Sheridan Quincy Trail (SQT) to plant a rain garden, restore plants along the trail, and remove noxious weeds. Volunteers also included participants from Denver Water, the Colorado Bar Association Environmental Law Section, the local community, IES Board members, IES Tree Stewards, and IES team members.

Throughout the morning, volunteers rebuilt a rain garden that was damaged by strong stormwater runoff earlier in the summer, mulched and watered dozens of new plants, and filled 34 bags of weeds. Volunteers learned about the trail and prepared the site for this fall's Sheridan Community Trail Improvement Project.



In addition to the project organized by IES's Tree Project team, the IES Chemical Footprint Project also participated in the Xcel Energy Day of Service. CFP team members hosted a table where visitors learned about how contaminants in household and personal care products can pollute waterways and harm our environment and health. The event took place on a warm sunny day, and team members spoke about the benefits of using mineral-based sunscreens over those containing endocrine-disrupting and coral-bleaching oxybenzone. Visitors learned about product-scanning phone apps, such as EWG's Healthy Living, to help them shop smarter when buying sunscreen and other personal care products. Volunteers made and used natural bug spray in between digging, mulching, watering, and weeding the trail. Many made hand sanitizer using common and safe ingredients to help clean their hands after a hard day's work. It was great to see so many people interested in preventing pollution and motivated to reduce their chemical footprints!



IES is pleased to partner with Xcel Energy in implementing this Day of Service to honor the victims of the

attacks of September 11, 2001. No surprise that Xcel Energy-Colorado was recently named an honoree of The Civic 50 Colorado by CSR Solutions of Colorado and Points of Light, the world's largest organization dedicated to volunteer service. The award recognizes Xcel Energy-Colorado as one of the 50 most community-minded companies in Colorado. More information: Mike Smith, Mike@i4es.org, and Haylee Grace, <mailto:Haylee@i4es.com>

Tree Ambassadors make the Wheat Ridge Greenbelt flourish!

Once again this summer, approximately 40 kids from Wheat Ridge Parks and Recreation Department's Summer Sun Camp slathered on sunscreen, grabbed their snacks and water bottles, and walked from the Wheat Ridge Recreation Center to the Kipling trailhead at the Greenbelt to help take care of this community open space. From June through August, these Tree Ambassadors trekked over every Tuesday and Friday morning and spent the next hour watering, weeding, and monitoring trees at IES planting sites along the trail.



The kids and counselors put in over 500 volunteer hours, removed approximately 200 pounds of cheat grass, Scotch thistle, Canada thistle, bindweed, and other noxious weeds, and provided almost 2,000 gallons of water to the thirsty plants of the Greenbelt. They also measured tree growth and looked for any health issues with the newly planted trees, making sure that they continued to grow tall and strong. The Tree Ambassadors are an immensely important part of a successful IES restoration project!

To celebrate the Tree Ambassadors' efforts, IES, WRPRD, and the Sun Camp staff held a closing ceremony at the end of camp, where each camper received a certificate of appreciation, a seed bookmark, a tree cookie, and a well-deserved high five!

Fighting fires may jeopardize our water quality



A recent study conducted by the U.S. Air Force Academy found perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in ground water near its air force base in El Paso County. In the 1970s the Department of Defense began using fire-fighting foams during training and emergency responses to suppress fuel fires. Firefighters sprayed the foam on the ground in an unlined training pit. These foams contained PFAS which seeped into the groundwater over time. The study showed groundwater had 1,000 times the level of PFAS considered safe by state and federal regulators. Surrounding communities south of the Academy have been warned about the

possibility of PFAS affecting domestic wells and recommend using bottled water.

High concentrations of PFAS exposure can lead to fertility issues, increased cholesterol levels, liver damage, and changes in the immune system. It also increases the risk of testicular and kidney cancer, thyroid disease, and asthma. PFAS are known as "forever chemicals" because they are persistent and do not break down in the environment. Prevention is key to limiting contamination. You can reduce your exposure to PFAS by avoiding products containing ingredients that include the words "fluoro", "perfluoro", or "polyfluoro". Common products that can contain PFAS include food packaging, makeup, nonstick pans, clothing, and stain-resistant furniture. More information: Ricardo Flores, Ricardo@i4es.org

The battle of summer: Mile High Youth Corps vs. Sheridan Quincy Trail weeds

On multiple occasions this summer the Mile High Youth Corps worked at the Sheridan Quincy Trail to assist in trail maintenance. The Mile High Youth Corps is a nonprofit organization that connects young adults to leadership opportunities and programs serving in their local communities. Their work combatting the weeds near the trail entrance proved to be a difficult task, as the ones that grow by the paved trail are in compact soil, but the group responded with energy, muscles, and hard-hitting equipment like pickaxes.



In one day, the group filled more than nine trash bags! This accomplishment can only be achieved by notable teamwork, especially during one of Colorado's hot summer days. In addition to plant maintenance, the Mile High Youth Corps also removed the trail sign at the entrance, which had been vandalized by spray paint. IES thanks the Mile High Youth Corps for all of the hard work this summer along the Sheridan Quincy Trail.

Toxic algae in Colorado: What you need to know

Blue-green algae, a common bacterium found in water sources, is making local news in Colorado with an increase in blooms. According to an August 2019 article on CPR News, cyanobacteria causes blue-green algae. These bacteria produce toxins strong enough to poison both humans and animals. Blooms result from warm temperatures and still, nutrient-rich waters. Although blue-green algae's bright green, paint-like appearance on the surface of the water is helpful in identification, the only reliable way to confirm its presence is by testing the water. Unfortunately, even with a positive test, there are no reliable solutions to clean the water of the algae. Even with algicides, the bacteria can adapt to the new environment and continue to grow.



Blue-green algae concentrations should dissipate as the end of summer approaches and temperatures decrease. Until then, limiting nutrient pollutants such as nitrogen and phosphorous and keeping yourself and your pets out of contaminated water will help control the blooms. Nutrient pollutants enter the water from sources such as run-off, fertilizers, and pet waste, as well as soaps, and detergents. You can help by using phosphorous or nitrogen-free soaps and detergents or using less of these products. Cleaning up after your pet and limiting fertilizer use will aid in keeping our water clean. More Information: Kaitlin Lesco, kaitlinlesco@gmail.com

IES Denver Area Volunteer Tree Volunteers Wanted!

Tree Stewards are dedicated volunteers who care for the newly planted trees and shrubs at IES project sites in Wheat Ridge and Sheridan. We are looking for volunteers to join our team, and help with watering, weeding, and mulching through the spring, summer, and fall. It's a great opportunity to give back to the community, improve the environment, work with other terrific volunteers, and get some exercise. Families and teenagers are welcome. To join the Tree Stewards Program and start making an impact, please contact Carrie Martin-Haley, carrie@i4es.org.

IES Institute News

IES welcomes four new graduate interns to our project teams. Honor Stoner on the Tree Project team is working on an MS in Environmental Science at UC Denver. She has a BS from Stetson University. Haylee Grace (Tree) holds a BA in Environmental Studies from CU Boulder. Laura Prickett (Tree) has an MS in Global Technology and Development from Arizona State University. She is already serving as the Tree Stewards Coordinator. Kaitlin Lesco (CFP) has a BS degree in Chemistry from St. Francis Xavier University (Nova Scotia).

The IES Board of Directors welcomes Luke Swaney. Luke has Masters in Disruptive Innovation and an MBA from the Hult International Business School.

IES Opportunities

IES is seeking motivated volunteers and graduate interns who are passionate about protecting the environment to join our project teams. We have openings for project, development, social media, 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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