

# Stakeholder Connection

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



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**We need your help to continue our work!** We are counting on you - someone who cares about scientific objectivity and respect for diverse perspectives - to support our innovative projects. **Your donation will improve Colorado's environment and communities!**

Please donate to IES so that we can continue implementing effective and affordable environmental solutions. Our mission is cleaner air, purer water, and healthier lives. We are a volunteer-based non-profit that depends on your financial support. **Please contribute to our efforts to create more environmentally sound and healthy communities by donating today.**

- Fifty dollars will bring the Reduce Your Chemical Footprint program to a new classroom.
- A \$250 donation will teach a class of students about ways to improve local water quality.
- A \$500 donation will purchase, plant and maintain two additional native trees to reduce storm water runoff and mitigate global climate disruption.
- A \$1,500 donation will support and train one graduate intern for one academic quarter.

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Please donate to IES now. IES is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization.

- Mail a check to: IES, 761 Newport Street, Denver, CO 80220.
- Become a Tree Steward or Water Steward! Sign up at [www.ColoradoGives.org/i4es](http://www.ColoradoGives.org/i4es) to donate \$10, \$25, or \$50 a month.
- Be a Giving Champion! Schedule your credit card donation at [www.ColoradoGives.org/i4es](http://www.ColoradoGives.org/i4es) for Colorado Gives Day, Tuesday, December 8.

## Responding to the challenges of COVID-19

IES is dedicated to achieving our goals while implementing protective measures to keep our team members and project partners safe during this uncertain time. We learn more every day how to adapt to our circumstances and have found creative ways to keep students and communities engaged. When the state implemented a lockdown mandate in March, we transitioned our weekly team meetings to Zoom and have expanded our Zoom usage to meetings with stakeholders and project partners. When workshops with the Kullerstrand Elementary students were postponed due to school closure, IES worked with staff members to develop four remote-learning activities. This fall, both project teams are conducting virtual workshops with the Fort Logan Northgate School (FLN) Leadership class. Using technology like this to simulate real-life scenarios has become a successful approach and demonstrates how IES continues to be an educational resource for youth in our community.



IES adheres to strict safety measures when hosting in-person events. During planting days, IES team members, students, and staff members wear facemasks, practice social distancing, and eliminate the sharing of tools and equipment. Working outside decreases the risk of spreading COVID-19 while allowing students to safely enjoy the outdoors. Our response to COVID-19 is built on clear communication and would not be possible without our strong collaborative partnerships among team members and stakeholders. More information: Sarah Turner, [SarahTurner@i4es.org](mailto:SarahTurner@i4es.org).

## Environmental stewardship during COVID-19



I have had the wonderful opportunity to be part of several IES workshops that educate and empower people to reduce their chemical footprints, first as an IES graduate intern, and now as the newest project manager for the Chemical Footprint (CFP) Project. This year, IES has had to adjust our workshop plans in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Our workshops, which have always been in person, now need to be conducted virtually for the foreseeable future.

The CFP team worked hard to organize our first virtual workshop ever with the Eiber Neighborhood in the Lakewood Sustainable Neighborhoods program in August. Lakewood Sustainable Neighborhoods enables Lakewood

residents to make their neighborhoods more sustainable through workshops and events. Using Zoom videoconference software, we implemented an interactive virtual workshop for the Sustainable Eiber neighborhood group. I enjoyed seeing how engaged participants were as they learned about contaminants of emerging concern (CECs) and how to avoid them using label reading, apps with product ingredient information, and do-it-yourself (DIY) homemade products. It was rewarding to see our endeavors end in success. Our workshops, virtual or otherwise, always provide easy DIY activities and demonstrations that teach children and adults ways to avoid CECs in household and personal care products. Participants can easily incorporate these practices into their own lives to protect their health and the environment. It is through workshops like these that the Chemical Footprint Project encourages and inspires people to become environmental stewards.

This holiday season, please support future IES workshops, the Chemical Footprint Project, and the Tree Project by donating on or before Colorado Gives Day, December 8. Donations given to IES through ColoradoGives.Org on (or before) Colorado Gives Day will be boosted by the \$1 Million Incentive Fund. Please help us meet our goal of 50 donors and \$8,000. Your donation will contribute to environmental stewardship that improves human and environmental health for all. More information: Caitlin Jacobshagen, [Caitlin@i4es.org](mailto:Caitlin@i4es.org)

### **In the midst of the 2020 Sheridan TERP**

The 2020 Sheridan Trail Enhancement and Restoration Project (TERP) is underway in Sheridan, Colorado as the COVID-19 pandemic continues to push IES's flexibility. On October 29 and 30, nineteen students from the Fort Logan Northgate (FLN) Leadership Class joined IES team members at the Sheridan Quincy Trail to plant native plants. The students successfully planted 70 plants at the western end and a rain garden near the middle of the trail. Students wore masks, practiced social distancing, and sanitized both their hands and tools to minimize risk of exposure. Thanks to the South Suburban Parks and Recreation crew who pre-dug the holes before the planting days to ensure that students had a successful and enjoyable time.



For the first time in IES history, the Chemical Footprint Project and the Tree Project have teamed up to implement two student workshops with the FLN Leadership Class. On November 13, the Chemical Footprint Project implemented an interactive virtual workshop, teaching students how to create their own do-it-yourself contaminant-free hand sanitizer. The Tree Project will provide no-contact and leadership-focused workshop with the students that teaches these 7th and 8th graders how to write a grant application. This 3-week workshop will be implemented in December via weekly Google Slides presentations and worksheets, and will be followed by one in-person Zoom meeting for students to present their grant applications to IES and their peers.

Through the planning and implementation of the 2020 Sheridan TERP, IES team members and stakeholders have collaborated on developing, modifying, and updating the project while navigating local and state COVID-19 regulations. IES thanks all project partners and stakeholders who helped this project happen despite these unprecedented circumstances. More information: Carrie Martin-Haley, [carrie@i4es.org](mailto:carrie@i4es.org).

**IES hosts virtual "Reduce Your Chemical Footprint" workshop for Fort Logan Northgate 7th and 8th grade**

## Leadership Class.



IES's Chemical Footprint Project team hosted a successful virtual workshop on November 13 for the Fort Logan Northgate 7th and 8th grade Leadership Class. Twenty students joined the virtual workshop to learn how to reduce their chemical footprint through new sustainable practices. The workshop included a presentation on the human and environmental health risks of contaminants of emerging concern (CECs) and what strategies students should practice to reduce their exposure to CECs. Students were surprised to learn how prevalent these harmful contaminants are in their household and personal care products. They were eager to learn how to avoid contaminants such as BPA, triclosan, oxybenzone, and synthetic fragrances. IES demonstrated how to reduce one's

water pollution impacts and minimize the exposure to CECs by consuming fewer products that contain CECs, "shopping smart" (reading labels), and making homemade products using safe ingredients. IES provided students with a tutorial on how to make fragrance-free hand sanitizer. Though a remote class, students were all able to make their own hand sanitizer using a kit of ingredients supplied by IES. Students asked questions about how to further reduce their chemical footprint in their daily lives. In the workshop wrap-up, students tackled an action plan to reduce their chemical footprint, and completed a post-event survey and label reading exercise. More information: John Godin, [JohnGodin@i4es.org](mailto:JohnGodin@i4es.org)

## The Wheat Ridge Nature Play Connections Project is complete, as IES shows commitment and adaptability!



The IES 2020 Wheat Ridge Nature Play Connections Project (NPCP), postponed from spring 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, was completed last month. After the last-minute school shutdowns in spring, IES team members and project partners, Wheat Ridge Parks and Recreation Department (WRPRD) and Kullerstrand Elementary School, scrambled to modify the plan for the 2020 NPCP. Two workshops and two planting days had to be postponed. IES and WRPRD Environmental Interpreter Susan Bennett instead created 4 remote-learning activities, a completely new format for IES, to get students outdoors over the summer and to participate in engaging educational activities. These included a pollinator

scavenger hunt, adopt-a-tree journal, leaf pressing, and pollinator data collection.

In August, Jefferson County School District released information about the 2020-2021 school year, allowing IES to move forward with a revised plan. Since the school district would not allow field trips, IES brought the NPCP to Kullerstrand! On September 29, IES conducted a socially distanced outdoor workshop at Kullerstrand with lessons on tool safety, planting techniques, and beekeeping. Planting days on October 2 and 9 included planting 51 plants, shrubs, and pollinating flowers and 4 large trees on school property. IES recruited former Tree Project leader, Sabrina Kleinman, to provide a professional planting design to optimize environmental benefits and fit the constraints of the school property. Ms.



Bennett provided a lesson on pollination where students used pipe cleaners to make their own pollinating animal to explore how pollination works. The outdoor workshop and planting days were successful, thanks to the determination and flexibility of everyone involved. COVID-19 safety guidelines were followed, as the safety of our volunteers and students is a priority. IES is excited to complete the 2020 NPCP and is grateful to everyone who remained flexible and determined through months of uncertainty. IES thanks the six Tree Stewards who participated and helped the TRAILS students to complete the planting. We look forward to another Wheat Ridge project this spring. More information: Laura Prickett, [Laura@i4es.org](mailto:Laura@i4es.org)

## How to Plan a Sustainable Holiday Feast



Many Americans are planning their holiday celebrations and meals. Holiday meals can come with some unsustainable practices, leading to unwanted waste from packaging and leftovers. Planning a sustainable holiday feast can be challenging, but anyone can prepare a delicious eco-friendly meal by following a few simple guidelines: buy in bulk, reduce waste, and purchase fresh and local food.

Buying in bulk can save you money while reducing packaging waste. A 2012 study by the University of Portland found that consumers can save up to 89 percent when purchasing bulk foods instead of packaged items.

According to the EPA, 97 percent of food we throw away enters landfills, amounting to 20 percent of total waste weight. Food waste has several negative impacts. Meat that enters the landfill produces harmful greenhouse gases and is a waste of valuable natural resources, like water. The amount of water needed to produce a hamburger has been compared to taking a two-hour shower. By reducing portion sizes and saving leftovers, you can cut down on the amount of food waste that ends up at the landfill. For plant-based food waste, composting is an effective practice reduces landfill waste and creates valuable compost for a garden.

The packaging of many holiday staples, including gravy, cranberry sauce, green beans, and pumpkin, often contain harmful chemicals like bisphenol-A (BPA). BPA is a chemical used in the epoxy lining of food packaging like cans and hard plastics, and has been linked to cancers, endocrine disruption, and behavioral disorders. A 2011 Harvard School of Public Health study found that test subjects' BPA levels increased by 1000 percent after consuming food stored in cans containing BPA for five consecutive days. You can reduce your exposure to BPA by making dishes fresh with local ingredients. Fresh ingredients are generally better for you and better tasting. Use these easy tips to make your holiday meals more sustainable and healthy. More information: Ben Hoesly, [Ben@i4es.org](mailto:Ben@i4es.org).

## IES Institute News

IES welcomes Andy Arnold-Murray, Sara Haney, Ben Hoesly, and Bronte Murrell to the Chemical Footprint Project Team. Andy has a BA in Political Science from James Madison University and is working on a MPA at American University. Sara has a Master of Urban Planning and Policy and a BS from University of Illinois. Ben has a Bachelor's degree in Environmental Studies from the University of Colorado Boulder. He is working on an MS in Environmental Policy at the University of Denver. Bronte has a Bachelor's degree in anthropology from Northern Kentucky University and is working on a Master of Urban and Regional Planning at the University of Colorado Denver.

Emmalee Benson, Sarah Turner, Hailey Smalley, Alex Modrzecki, and Catherine Trowbridge recently joined the Tree Project Team. Emmalee has a Bachelor's degree in Environmental Studies from Northern Michigan University. Sarah has a BA in History from the University of Colorado Denver. Hailey has a BS in Environmental Studies from the State University of New York, Syracuse. Alex has a BS in Economics from the Pennsylvania State University and is working on a MURP at the University of Colorado Denver. Catherine has an MS in Freshwater Science and Technology and a BS in Biology from the University of Wisconsin.

## IES Opportunities

IES seeks 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](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.

IES participates in 1% for the Planet, Amazon Smile, ColoradoGives, and King Soopers/City Market Community Rewards. IES is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Your contributions are tax-deductible.

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