

Stakeholder Connection

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



Volume 14, Number 2, June 2021

IES Institute News

When Carol Lyons retired at the end of 2020, Tree Project Manager Carrie Martin-Haley stepped up to the task, becoming Interim Executive Director and passing the role of Tree Project Manager to the Tree Project's Wheat Ridge Project Coordinator/Tree Steward Coordinator, Laura Prickett. In April 2021, Carrie made the decision to step down from the Interim Executive Director role to focus on her own small sustainable-goods business. Laura took on the responsibility of Interim Executive Director as IES continues to move forward with lots of exciting projects and initiatives coming from both project teams. IES would like to thank Carrie Martin-Haley for all of the years and dedication she put into IES, and wishes her the best of luck on her future endeavors!

IES Wraps Up Wheat Ridge Restoration Project, Adding Native Trees and Colorful Pollinators to Creekside Park and Kullerstrand Elementary School!

The IES Tree Project finished its 2021 Wheat Ridge Restoration Project (WRRP) on Saturday, May 22 at Creekside Park in Wheat Ridge, CO. During this event, IES Board members, Tree Project Steering Committee members, Tree Stewards, and current/former IES Tree Project members worked together to plant four hackberry trees, three peach-leaf willows, and over 50 other native plants including wild rose, snowberry, purple coneflower, false sunflower, hummingbird flower, and blue grama grass. These plants and trees are not only colorful pollinators but are great at addressing erosion! These plants will invite native wildlife and pollinators to Creekside Park while stabilizing creekside soil and helping to prevent further erosion between the Clear Creek and the popular 20-mile Clear Creek Trail.



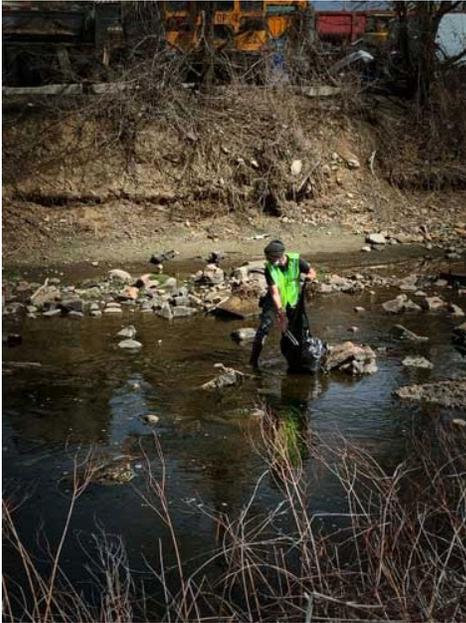
On April 29, IES held the WRRP's first planting day at Kullerstrand Elementary School. IES team members, Tree Stewards, teachers, and students in the Teaching Responsibility And Independence through Learning Supports (TRAILS) program, in addition to Wheat Ridge Mayor Bud Starker, contributed to the planting efforts IES began at Kullerstrand the previous year through the 2020 Nature Play Connections Project. Four additional portable pollinating planters were planted near the outdoor classroom with black-eyed susan, rocky mountain

penstemon, purple coneflower, and blue grama grass. Along the western property fence, six native plants including mountain mahogany and red switchgrass were strategically planted by students and IES to improve soil conditions and reduce stormwater runoff. Two hackberry trees were also planted behind the playground next to four others that IES had planted in the fall of 2020.

Additionally, IES conducted two outdoor workshops with the TRAILS students at Kullerstrand Elementary. IES's activities included a relay race to remind students about the different steps to planting a plant and a habitat-themed scavenger hunt. Susan Bennett from Wheat Ridge Parks and Recreation Department conducted two workshop activities as well, where students learned about beavers and invented a tree dance to help them remember the different parts of a tree.

The IES Tree Project would like to thank Kullerstrand Elementary School, Wheat Ridge Parks and Recreation Department and the Forestry Crew, along with all of IES's volunteers who made this project possible! For inquiries or more information about the 2021 WRRP, contact Laura Prickett at Laura@i4es.org.

IES Celebrates Earth Day Cleaning Up the Clear Creek!



On April 24, IES partnered up with Sustainable Wheat Ridge and LocalWorks to host an Earth Day clean-up event at Creekside Park in Wheat Ridge, CO. The event started at 9:30 am on a bright and beautiful Saturday morning when volunteers from the three organizations met at the park to help clean up the Clear Creek. IES, Sustainable Wheat Ridge, and LocalWorks provided a variety of clean-up supplies, including safety vests, waste pickers, trash bags, and gloves. Volunteers came prepared with sturdy shoes, and wore face masks to limit the spread of COVID-19. From 10:00 am to 1:30 pm, starting on the eastern side of the Clear Creek Trail, volunteers worked their way west of the park to clean up any litter or debris found either in or surrounding Clear Creek. Altogether, over forty volunteers participated in the Earth Day event while fifty 45-gallon trash bags were collected and properly disposed of by the Wheat Ridge Parks and Recreation Department. The collaborative project was considered a huge success as volunteers left their environment cleaner and safer than it had been before. Volunteers even found and removed surprisingly large items floating in the Clear Creek, such as several tires, a mattress, and half a sink.

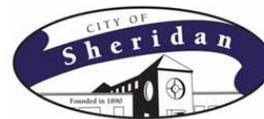
Additionally, IES, Sustainable Wheat Ridge, and LocalWorks set up booths along the Clear Creek Trail where park visitors could chat with the volunteers and pick up flyers, stickers, and pamphlets about each organization. Free t-shirts, hats, and water bottles were available for any pedestrian or volunteer to take home. Sustainable Wheat Ridge even handed out specialty LED light kits from Xcel Energy, containing nine free LED light bulbs and a solar-charging power bank! IES was honored to collaborate with these amazing organizations for Earth Day and looks forward to continuing its local partnerships with stakeholders from the Wheat Ridge community. A big thanks goes to Wheat Ridge Parks and Recreation Department for helping to organize and prepare for the event and collect all trash bags and large items afterwards! For more information, contact Sarah Turner at SarahTurner@i4es.org.

Upcoming Collaboration in the CFP: 2021 Community Workshop Series With Lakewood, Sheridan, and Wheat Ridge

The Chemical Footprint Project team (CFP) is dedicated to improving human and environmental health through education with a goal of reducing water pollution. The CFP team is in the midst of planning an interactive ‘Reduce Your Chemical Footprint’ workshop series with three communities located in the Denver metropolitan area: Lakewood, Wheat Ridge, and Sheridan. The workshops will enable participants from the communities to directly learn about helpful scientific information and skills: what a chemical footprint is, how to reduce their own footprint, what Contaminants of Emerging Concern (CECs) are, what common CECs (e.g. DEET, Oxybenzone, etc.) are and their human and environmental impacts, strategies to avoid the CECs discussed, and how to create their own products at home such as bug repellent and hand sanitizer. With this newfound knowledge, IES hopes that participants will be encouraged to reduce their chemical footprints and empower others in their communities to do the same. The collaborative workshop series aims to engage and educate local stakeholders to encourage them and help them build a path to become robust environmental leaders and stewards in their communities. IES works directly with children and local communities, fostering a love for the environment and the outdoors at any age to create an invaluable environmental educational experience.



Lakewood
Colorado



The CFP is excited for this upcoming initiative and to continue innovating and delivering scientific solutions to ensure the protection of human and environmental health in Colorado. For those interested in learning more about the CFP or collaborating with us for a future workshop, please contact Jordan Truitt at Jordan@i4es.org.

What's in Your Shampoo, and Where Does It Go?



The word “sulfate” has been getting a lot of attention lately. Currently, many shampoo brands offer products advertising “sulfate free” ingredients. But what are sulfates exactly, and why do they matter? Sulfates are a kind of compound known as surfactants. Surfactants have an amazing ability to clean and disinfect. When added to water, they remove and wash away oils. These types of compounds are actually not just used in shampoo, but also dish soap and detergents.

So, what's the danger? Surfactants work very well, and in the case of sulfates, might actually work a little bit too well. Sulfates can take away the color of artificially dyed hair. Some shampoos can also be too strong, taking away too many of the natural oils away from your hair, leaving it dry and leading to breakage. Additionally, after sulfates and other surfactants are washed away, they can end up in waterways and harm aquatic life. Just think about adding soap to a fish tank! After they make their way into water, they can also get into soil and harm surrounding vegetation. Fortunately, there are many alternative ingredients to sulfates which can be used to wash hair without stripping all the natural oils and are safer for the environment. Some alternatives include Sodium Cocoyl Glycinate, Disodium/Sodium Cocoyl Glutamate, Decyl glucoside, and Lauryl glucoside. They are easy to find in stores and come in many different price ranges. Look for these ingredients in your

next shampoo!

For those wanting to take a little more initiative in their home cleaning products, including shampoo and cleaner, the IES Chemical Footprint Project runs workshops teaching communities how to easily make these products at home! Many of these products are safer and more effective than their store bought counterparts and help to reduce your chemical footprint. The best thing is, most of these contain only a small number of ingredients!

If you're interested in learning more about sulfates, chemical-free replacements and alternatives, or hosting an informative Chemical Footprint Project workshop, contact David Lou at David@i4es.org.

Neat Science Facts, and How They Relate to IES

Fact #1

Paper is one of the most commonly used products that serve a temporary purpose. Although its use may be temporary, its value is not! Paper can be recycled up to seven times before the fibers become too short and can no longer stick together. The average American uses about 680 pounds of paper per year, while the average American household throws away around 13,000 pounds of paper every year. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) states that one ton of recycled paper saves 17 trees and 7,000 gallons of water, making recycling paper an easy and effective way to help the environment. Products made with recycled paper include hospital gowns, egg cartons, masking tape, coffee filters, plus many others.



IES distributes newsletters, annual reports, final project reports, and other publications electronically to remain environmentally sustainable and reduce the organization's use of paper. As the Tree Project and Chemical Footprint Project plan and implement workshops and projects, team members remain environmentally conscious and purchase products made with recycled paper when available.

Fact #2

Did you know that sperm whale poop helps fight climate change? Australian biologists discovered that 12,000 sperm whales in the Southern Ocean poop around 50 metric tons of iron each year. That's around the weight of two fire trucks! The iron is food for marine plants known as phytoplankton. Through photosynthesis, the phytoplankton convert carbon dioxide (CO₂) from the atmosphere into oxygen and help reduce atmospheric CO₂. The findings published in a 2010 scientific paper in the *Proceedings of the Royal Society B. - Biological Sciences* state that sperm whales can be attributed to removing about 400,000 metric tons of CO₂ each year, equivalent to the yearly carbon dioxide emissions from 40,000 cars.

Sperm whales and phytoplankton are willing to help fight climate change and so is IES. As a way to help IES continue to reduce its environmental impact, the climate change initiatives cross-collaborative team has been researching ways that IES can contribute to mitigating climate change. This team, made up of team members from both the Tree Project and the Chemical Footprint Project, is finding ways to incorporate climate change research into the objectives and initiatives of IES. For more information, contact Kathryn Steinmann at Kathryn@i4es.org.

IES Needs Your Support!



The IES Tree Project and the IES Chemical Footprint Project are both in planning and preparation phases for a handful of exciting new projects. The Tree Project will begin the fall 2021 Sheridan Play, Adapt, Grow, and Engage Project with students from Fort Logan Northgate shortly, while the Chemical Footprint Project is developing and finalizing several educational workshops for local communities that will start taking place soon, both virtually and in-person.

Donations to IES help us achieve our projects' goals and objectives. Donations allow IES to purchase plants and trees, educational supplies and workshop materials, associated media and outreach materials, and support staff time. IES relies solely on donations and grants to complete projects, so any donation is welcomed and valued! If you are interested in supporting IES's upcoming projects, you can submit your donation at <https://www.coloradogives.org/i4es/>.

IES would like to thank all of its previous supporters for their financial contributions. With your support, IES is able to continue to deliver environmental improvement projects for local communities.

IES looks forward to the second half of our 2021 programs to continue improving the environment and human health in the Denver-metro community! For more information on IES fundraising, contact Gabe at Gabriel@i4es.org.

Opportunities to Join IES

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.

IES thanks supporters for their generous financial contributions in 2020. With your support, IES's Tree Project and Chemical Footprint Project teams completed all proposed 2020 projects, including improving native plant presence, hosting interactive educational workshops with students, and educating Colorado communities on how to reduce their chemical footprints. All of this was achieved while maintaining and improving IES's community presence and publication content.

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.

If this e-mail was forwarded to you and you wish to subscribe, please e-mail Newsletter@i4es.org. IES does not sell, rent, exchange, or give away any contact information. To unsubscribe, please e-mail with 'unsubscribe' in the subject line.





IES is on
[Facebook!](#)



Link to IES on
[LinkedIn!](#)



Follow us on
[Twitter!](#)



Visit us on
[Instagram!](#)

