

2021 Wheat Ridge Restoration Project (WRRP) Prospectus

Project Overview

The Institute for Environmental Solutions' (IES) 2021 Wheat Ridge Restoration Project (WRRP) continues environmental revitalization, stewardship, and education in the Wheat Ridge community through partnerships with Kullerstrand Elementary Teaching Responsibility And Independence with Learning Supports (TRAILS) students, Wheat Ridge Parks and Recreation Department (WRPRD), and Wheat Ridge community members. This is the ninth year that IES will be working in Wheat Ridge. IES plans to host two educational workshops with TRAILS students at Kullerstrand Elementary School in addition to two planting days in spring 2021. Atypical from previous years, this year's planting days will occur at separate locations due to grant requirements and



IES and Kullerstrand's successful planting additions to the school grounds

creative project planning to ensure the safety of all staff and volunteers through the COVID-19 pandemic. One planting day will occur with Kullerstrand TRAILS students on school property and one will occur at the originally planned project location, Creekside Park. At both planting sites, IES plans to strategically plant trees and native plants to increase canopy cover, revitalize soil compromised due to erosion, manage stormwater runoff, and promote pollinator habitat. For both planting events, IES maintains the goal of increasing environmental literacy for both volunteers and students by providing guidance and leadership in improving Colorado's natural ecology across a variety of restoration scales.



A Kullerstrand Elementary student learns how to become an environmental steward through learning proper planting and maintenance techniques

Community Demographics

Wheat Ridge, Colorado is a western suburb of Denver located in Jefferson County. With roughly 31,000 residents, Wheat Ridge offers community members ample outdoor recreational opportunities, fostered in part by WRPRD. One of IES's upcoming project sites, Creekside Park, faces significant ecological challenges including erosion, invasive species, and damage caused by human activity, which has only been heightened since the COVID-19 pandemic began. At the second project site, IES plans to increase ecological stability and growth at Kullerstrand Elementary School, a 240-student, kindergarten through fifth grade school located in Wheat Ridge, Colorado. IES partners with Kullerstrand's TRAILS program, a small subset class, designed for students with severe social and emotional disabilities. This will be the sixth school year that

IES has partnered with the TRAILS program. In 2020, Kullerstrand installed an outdoor classroom, but construction has left unplanned degradation in the area. IES plans to revitalize this area with TRAILS students by planting more trees and native plants.

Project Goals

The 2021 Wheat Ridge Restoration Project's goals are to:

- Improve Colorado's local environment by removing invasive species and planting trees and other native plants to mitigate stormwater runoff and erosion, increasing native habitat and pollinators, and enhancing the outdoor recreational space.
- Provide environmental education opportunities to students and community members through workshops and socially distanced in-person demonstrations focused on promoting lasting environmental stewardship.
- Continue IES's strong collaborative relationships with project stakeholders throughout the planning, implementation, evaluation, and stewardship project phases.
- Create and compile the successes of the 2021 project into a final video and report. IES will keep interested members informed on when the video and report will be made available to the public and post it to IES's social media platforms.

Project Objectives:

The 2021 Wheat Ridge Restoration Project's objectives are to:

- Host one volunteer planting day at Creekside Park, one planting day with TRAILS students at Kullerstrand Elementary School, and two educational workshops at Kullerstrand Elementary this spring.
- At Creekside Park, IES and community members will add 20 to 30 native shrubs and grasses to help manage stormwater runoff and prevent further erosion into the creek, and plant three to five medium-sized native trees to increase canopy cover.
- At Kullerstrand Elementary, TRAILS students and IES will continue efforts begun in 2020 to increase pollinator habitat by planting four additional portable planters with 20-25 native pollinating plants. Two trees will be planted to increase canopy cover in the school's large backfield.



IES utilizes Kullerstrand's outdoor classroom to teach students about the planting process and tool safety



Kullerstrand students wear masks and follow social distancing guidelines during IES planting days to ensure safety during the COVID-19 pandemic

COVID-19 Protocols

As the global COVID-19 pandemic continues indefinitely, IES will continue to closely follow regulations and ensure guidelines are included in project events. Safety of all students, team members, and volunteers is a top priority, so IES will ensure all project participants wear face masks and gloves, maintain social distancing, wash hands, and stay spread out in small groups when possible.

Get Involved

IES always welcomes new volunteers and interested community members throughout all stages of a project. If you enjoy being outside, improving the environment, and making a difference, joining IES as a Tree Steward may be the opportunity for you! The success of Tree Project community planting programs would not be possible without IES Tree Stewards. Tree Stewards help care for newly planted native trees, shrubs, and grasses through weekly watering and maintenance. IES has planting sites



Tree Stewards enjoy the outdoors while learning about their volunteer responsibilities

in the Wheat Ridge Greenbelt and along the Sheridan Quincy Trail in Sheridan, Colorado. For more information, visit IES's website <https://www.i4es.org/get-involved/> or contact us at Solutions@i4es.org.

Funding

Support IES today to directly impact local ecological restoration, support educational programs, and invest in the future of IES! All donations made to IES are 100% tax-deductible and will help grow a community of environmental stewards dedicated to improving human and environmental health. To donate, visit www.coloradogives.org/i4es, or mail donations directly at 761 Newport Street, Denver, CO 80220. Here's how even a small donation can make a difference:

Donation Amount	Environmental Impact	Educational Impact
\$25	Purchase 5 bags of compost to be used during planting days	Purchase supplies for workshops
\$50	Purchase 5 xeriscape shrubs to plant at Creekside Park	Purchase new gloves for students to wear during planting days
\$100	Supply reusable water bottles to Kullerstrand students working at the school	Purchase educational materials for a pollination activity
\$500	Purchase equipment needed to plant native plants at planting sites	Purchase t-shirts for all TRAILS students and volunteers
\$1,000	Plant five trees in Creekside Park	Assist funding toward final project video showcasing project events and interviews with students

Project Partners

The 2021 Wheat Ridge Restoration Project would not be possible without IES's dedicated partners:

- Wheat Ridge Parks and Recreation Department
- Kullerstrand Elementary



Project Funders

IES would like to thank our funders for their continued support and financial contribution:

- Wheat Ridge Outside Agency
- Forever Our Rivers
- National Environmental Education Foundation
- Colorado Tree Coalition



About IES

Founded in 2004, the Institute for Environmental Solutions (IES) is a Denver-based, independent, non-profit organization that delivers scientific solutions to improve our health and environment. The Tree Project's mission at IES is to improve the environmental quality of Colorado cities using tree science. IES works with Denver-area communities to improve air and water quality, manage stormwater runoff and erosion, and increase native plants and trees in the area. Through collaborative partnerships, IES restores natural systems, educates children and adults, and improves community health. For more information on IES, please visit www.i4es.org and follow IES on social media.

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