

Grant Application

Noah Dolinajec



Email : necanicumwatershed@gmail.com

Application ID : A22DN59

Custom Ref. -

Application Start Date: 2021-12-27 21:53:40

Application Completed Date: 2022-02-10 14:56:57

1 Have you ever applied for an OWF grant before?

yes

1.1 What was the name of the project?

Mitigating Policeman's Helmet Weed in the Necanicum Watershed

2 Have you ever been denied for an OWF grant before?

no

3 Project Title

Gearhart Ridge Pollinator Path

4 Name of my Organization

Necanicum Watershed Council

5 If your organization is not a tax-exempt nonprofit, please list the name of your fiscal sponsor

-

If this does not apply to you, write N/A

N/A

6 Project Manager Full Name

Noah Dolinajec

7 Project Manager Mailing Address

-

Please enter full address with city, state & zip

PO Box 747, Seaside, Oregon, 97138

8	Project Manager Phone Number
	503-717-1458
9	Project Manager Email Address
	necanicumwatershed@gmail.com
10	Please provide a brief biographical statement about yourself
	Noah Dolinajec is an Oregonian born and raised. Having been nurtured by the beauty that Northwestern Oregon possesses, it is no wonder that Noah finds himself as the Executive Director of the Necanicum Watershed Council. After completing a BS in mathematics and physics and a Graduate Certificate in Wildlife Management, Noah was an integral part of the design, development and launching of an Oregon coast community science initiative called Birds with Fish. In addition, Noah has contributed to the OSU Geospatial Ecology of Marine Megafauna lab's gray whale tracking project. When Noah isn't geeking out on birds, fish or other wildlife, you can find him enjoying a cold beer at one of Oregon's many craft breweries and always making friends with stranger's dogs.
11	Provide any social media handles you use - Enter social handles or URLs such as instagram, facebook, twitter, youtube, etc. so that we can use to cross promote on our channels - if you do not have any, please place N/A
	Instagram: necanicumwatershed, Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/necanicumwatershedcouncil
12	Please indicate if you are currently following Oregon Wildlife Foundation on our social media channels
	- Instagram - Facebook - YouTube
13	Total estimated project cost
	16000
14	Funding that you are requesting from OWF - If you're request is for more than \$5,000, please contact Tim Greseth - tim@myowf.org before submitting your application.
	5000
15	What type of project are your proposing?
	Wildlife
16	Will your project address an Oregon Conservation Strategy habitat or species?
	yes

16.1	What habitat or species is addressed?	Coastal pollinator habitat (i.e. Western Bumble Bee, Oregon Silverspot Butterfly, Monarch Butterfly, etc.)
17	Start date of project- Day/Month/Year	21-03-2022
18	End date of project	31-08-2022
19	Location of project	Ridge Path, Gearhart, OR, USA
20	Has a local, state or federal biologist reviewed this project?	no
20.1	What is your plan for an external review of the project?	The Necanicum Watershed Council will consult with the Tillamook Estuaries Partnership's Northwest Oregon Restoration Partnership to design planting diversity, density and timing.
21	Have you already or will you obtain necessary permits from all requisite agencies as applicable to proposed project?	yes
22	What will the requested funds be used for?	Funds requested from OWF will support the purchase of seedlings and plants for the project.

The north coast of Oregon provides a unique coastal habitat for Pacific pollinator species like the western bumble bee, Oregon silverspot butterfly, monarch butterfly and rufous hummingbird. In Gearhart, a town in the Necanicum Watershed on the north coast of Oregon, a unique confluence of the Neocoxie, Neawanna and Necanicum river systems present a high quality coastal ecosystem that should support pollinator diversity and abundance. Increasing development, a shifting climate and favorable conditions for invasive plant species have all placed undue pressures on the health of the north coast pollinator community. To remedy this, the removal of patches of dense invasive species and subsequent replanting of high-density pollinator plants can be a powerful tool to improve pollinator habitat connectivity. Urban or semi-urban hiking or walking trails are a powerful vehicle with which to combat invasive species and improve pollinator habitats. The Gearhart Ridge Path is a cherished community trail running through the center of town. The trail holds historical value for both the indigenous community of the Necanicum basin and the non-indigenous inhabitants of Gearhart. The trail is a prime location for pollinator habitat improvement due to its close proximity to the Neocoxie Creek and the shoreline and its relative vegetative insulation from the housing around it. However, the trail currently has patches of English Holly (*Ilex aquafolium*) and English Ivy (*Hedera helix*) that dominate an already limited space for plants. The Necanicum Watershed Council, in collaboration with the City of Gearhart, will be designing a two-part restoration project aimed at improving the Gearhart Ridge Trail's pollinator habitats. First, a wide-ranging invasive species removal will take place on prioritized portions of the 1.4-mile trail. Under the direction of the Necanicum Watershed Council and City of Gearhart, and with consultation from the Northwest Oregon Restoration Partnership, volunteers will remove large patches of English Ivy and English Holly. Second, the Council will oversee the planting of ~1500 native pollinator-friendly plants (such as Lupine, Oregon Gumweed, Lavenders, Ocean Spray, Milkweed, etc.) - depending on what is available from local growers. At the conclusion of the project, portions of the Gearhart Ridge Path should be greatly improved year-round pollinator habitats supporting not only pollinating insects (bees, butterflies, etc.) but also pollinating avian species like the Rufous and Anna's hummingbirds as well. Due to the importance of this trail to the community of Gearhart, there has been substantial support for the community to undertake pollinator habitat improvement projects along the trail as it not only provides ecological benefit but also community benefit through the improvement of the aesthetic appeal of the trail.

24 Upload pre-project pictures or a video -

By submitting these photos or video I warrant that I am the legal owner of this media and grant the Foundation permission to reproduce, exhibit, or publish them for all general purposes in relation to Oregon Wildlife Foundation's work. If you have questions about photo or video submissions please refer to myowf.org/grants for guidance.



28 I understand that I am required to submit a Project Completion Report, copies of any publications or social media posts crediting the Foundation's support, and post-project pictures at the completion of my project

yes

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Organization Background:

The Necanicum Watershed Council was officially founded as a 501(c)(3) in 1997 under the support of the Oregon Plan for Salmon and Watersheds, although the organization has been serving the Necanicum basin for longer as a leader in habitat restoration and wildlife conservation. Today, the Necanicum Watershed Council is dedicated to supporting and driving conservation through hands-on restoration, education and community collaboration. The Council has developed functional working relationships with cross-demographic and economic groups, frequently partnering with the likes of both preservation first organizations like land trusts and organizations inspired to mitigate damages like timber interests. In the world of Watershed management, breaching the traditional divides between these groups to collaborate on high-impact habitat improvement projects is vital.

The City of Gearhart was established in 1908, although its presence is much older. The town's unique geographical placement on the Neocoxie Creek confluence with the Necanicum Estuary and right on the beach has given it ecologically important niche communities such as the Gearhart dunes, the Neawanna Estuary and more. The City has dedicated itself to being a steward of the lands on which it stands. Over the years there have been numerous trail improvements, volunteer cleanups and explorations into conservation strategies for the town's beach dune system.

We acknowledge that the lands and waters in which we steward are not ours. They are the hereditary birthrights of the indigenous community of the north coast. We strive to create inclusive opportunities that assist in building awareness about the atrocities that have occurred for hundreds of years on Oregon land and empower the inclusion of indigenous voices and perspectives in a more meaningful way in the conservation conversation.



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Project Background:

The north coast of Oregon remains one of the contiguous United States' most unique ecoregions, supporting a variety of ecosystems and wildlife communities. One of these is pollinator habitats. Pollinator habitats in the Pacific Northwest provide sustenance for some of the region's most agriculturally and ecologically important species (i.e. western bumble bee, rufous hummingbird, Oregon silverspot butterfly, monarch butterflies etc.). However, climate change, housing and commercial development and timber (among other things) have placed significant pressure on the pollinator community of northwest Oregon as the quantity and connectivity of quality habitat declines. On the north coast of Oregon there remains a unique ecoregion in which many pollinating species are present year-round or are certain annual visitors. Unfortunately, much like many other places in Oregon, invasive vegetation has taken control of habitats in which pollinator plants would be the native species, reducing the number of quality pollinator friendly patches and thus reducing the number of pollinators present.

Oregon has approximately 500 bee species alone (Oregon Bee Project). This is complimented by the various hummingbird, butterfly, moth and other avian species that act as pollinators. The vast impact that pollinators have on ecosystem health is well established (Hung et al. 2018). These species provide vital agricultural and ecological services to Oregon communities and on the north coast where timber harvest is prevalent, pollinators opportunistically take advantage of the ecological aftermath of harvests. This phenomenon has been observed in timber harvest elsewhere as well (Mathis et al. 2021). Thus, it is clear that even in modified landscapes, pollinators can thrive. However, in order for these species to play a long-term role in vegetation management (and regeneration of native species), high quality pollinator habitats must be present in near proximity to harvest sites.

Gearhart's unique location on the north coast, within 10-miles of major timber harvest sites, and placed along a relatively healthy riparian zone, make it a prime location for the restoration of pollinator patches. In addition, the Gearhart Ridge Path Trail's semi-urban setting makes a particularly useful site to raise awareness about the importance of pollinator presence and invasive species control.



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Project Goals:

Part I:

The 1.4-mile length of the Gearhart Ridge Path Trail has varied habitat conditions. Parts of the trail are insulated from private property and heavily vegetated by native species while others lay right on the line of private property and are inundated by aggressive invasive species like English Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*) and English Ivy (*Hedera helix*). The majority of the trail lacks any presence of strong pollinator plants. The Necanicum Watershed Council will utilize the City of Gearhart's already developed network of trail volunteers, along with city donated time, to identify patches along the trail with a significant presence of Holly and Ivy. The invasive plants will be removed from those areas with the goal of defining 'removal and replanting zones'. Portions of the trail in which Ivy and Holly are beginning to make an impact but will not be removed, will be observed and recorded so that monitoring can take place to inform when removal and replanting might be necessary for other portions of the trail.

Part II:

The Necanicum Watershed Council will plant approximately 1,500 pollinator-friendly plants within the invasive species removal sites that were created in Part I. The final planting plan will be designed in consultation with the Northwest Oregon Restoration Partnership and a local botanist. Plants likely to be included are lupine (*Lupinus* spp.), Milkweed, Douglas Aster, etc. but will depend on the availability of native coast range plants from local nurseries. The Council will consult with the Tillamook Estuaries Partnership's Northwest Oregon Restoration Partnership to design a planting list, density and work plan. Due to the trail's relatively frequent public use, plants that are aesthetically pleasing as well as pollinator-friendly will be prioritized to help both 1) improve pollinator habitat along the trail corridor and 2) encourage use and awareness of pollinator plants and ecological roles.

Part III:

Along the restoration sites on the trail, small signage will be placed to provide trail users with accessible information about why invasive species removal, pollinator planting and continued management to support pollinator habitat is important for the health of the ecosystem as a whole.



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Proposed Outcomes:

The complete extirpation of invasive plant species like English Ivy and English Holly is incredibly challenging and seldom a successful endeavor. That is why this project focuses on creating invasive-free pockets within the trail system and replacing them with high-quality pollinator habitats. At the completion of this project the 1.4-mile stretch of the Gearhart Ridge Path Trail will possess pockets where it has been alleviated from the pressures caused by English Ivy and Holly. Those pockets will subsequently be turned into pollinator-friendly blocks creating a more connective pollinator corridor. Restoring pockets of high quality pollinator habitat on the north coast of Oregon will be an important tool in the mitigation of impacts due to continued timber harvest and climate shifts.

Support from the Oregon Wildlife Foundation will allow the Council to purchase locally nursed coast range pollinator plants that have the highest chance of success after replanting. In addition, the project is supported by funds from the City of Gearhart for trail management and by North Coast Land Conservancy who has offered volunteer support. It is our intent that this project will lay the foundation for continued invasive species management, pollinator planting (seasonally) and community engagement on building a pollinator-friendly corridor in Gearhart.

Hung, Keng-Lou James et al. "The worldwide importance of honey bees as pollinators in natural habitats." *Proceedings. Biological sciences* vol. 285,1870 (2018): 20172140. doi:10.1098/rspb.2017.2140

Mathis, Codey L., et al. "Pollinator communities vary with vegetation structure and time since management within regenerating timber harvests of the Central Appalachian Mountains." *Forest Ecology and Management* 496 (2021): 119373.



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Gearhart Ridge Path Trail Pollinator Project

Project Manager: Necanicum Watershed Council

Collaborator: City of Gearhart

Region: North coast, Necanicum basin

Project keys: Invasive vegetation removal and native pollinator-friendly replanting



A western bumble bee makes a stop at a lupine plant in the Necanicum Basin.



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Gearhart Ridge Path



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February 9, 2022

To whom it may concern:

The City of Gearhart prides itself on the Ridge Path, a walking trail that runs through the heart of town.

This last year, the City was excited to announce the completion of a walkway bridge to connect a portion of the trail that runs through wetlands. The project began at the suggestion of late Councilman John Duncan. When he passed away unexpectedly, the "Duncan's Crossing" project was born. Now, the community can continue to walk the path through the winter months when before, winter rains would prevent passage.

Numerous volunteer groups worked to keep the vegetation on the trail cut back and the crossing area ready for development. The City budgeted funds for ACE and DSL permitting, engineer designs, an archeological site study, building materials including, wood, concrete, gravel, site excavation and backfill, and a memorial plaque in honor of Councilor Duncan. Additionally, the community raised over \$7,000 to contribute to the City's project budget.

What does this have to do with bee pollinators?

As you can see, both the City and community hold the Ridge Path Trail as an important part of the community. When the NWSC approached the City of Gearhart for a list of potential project ideas in late 2020, the City Council publicly declared during their December 2020 Council meeting that they were in full support of bee pollinator projects being placed at the top of the list. When a change in leadership at the NWSC brought about the idea of pollinators being planted along the ridge path, the City was excited to report not only another enhancement to the trail, but to make forward progress with helping to sustain ecosystems and produce natural resources by helping plants reproduce.

The City of Gearhart is fully supportive of this proposed Gearhart Ridge Path pollinator project in collaboration with the Necanicum Watershed Council. The City is prepared to make contributions to the project in the same manner the Crossing was supported. Additionally, \$7,000 remains in the Crossing fund for improvements to the trail and area.

Respectfully submitted,

Chad Sweet
City Administrator, City of Gearhart