



**Sierra Watershed
Education Partnerships**

*Promoting science literacy
through hands-on community
projects*

Projects and Events

Native Grass Restoration

Students Grow Natives in Classroom

This winter TTUSD teachers who attended the Winter Workshop 'Erosion and Native Grasses', hosted by SWEP and presented by Michael Hogan of Integrated Environmental Restoration Services, are now gearing up for spring projects.

Through this workshop, several teachers were able to link with community partners such as, the Resort at Squaw Creek, CA State Parks, and local PUD,s to grow the native grass, Squirrel Tail, in their classrooms for restora-

tion and erosion control projects.

Michael Hogan donated the seed and the Tahoe Tree Co. donated the peat pots for starting the seeds indoors. By early June, the grass will be ready to plant on unstable slopes throughout the community. Some schools will be re-vegetating areas on their own campuses as well.

"This is a great project for exposing kids to real issues within the community. It builds their awareness", said Jan Ellis, SWEP project director.

Earth Day Festival

A River of Words Flows with Poetry

In honor of Earth Day and National Poetry Month, teachers from all over the TTUSD submitted their students' art and poetry for distribution and display during the month of April.

River of Words (ROW) is an international art and poetry program that uses the local watershed as the context for creating poetry and art. In Fall 2002, SWEP

hosted a ROW training for teachers. With a tremendous amount of support from **Arts for the Schools** artists and poets, students have been creating thoughtful and heartwarming pieces.

At this year's Earth Day Festival at Northstar Village, student created art and poetry quilts were displayed, bookmarks given away and most impres-

Spring Happenings April 2003



"I merely took the energy it takes to pout, and wrote some blues"

**—Duke Ellington
(1899 - 1974)**



Leadership

Institute is Seeking Participants!

The Tahoe Adopt-a-Watershed Leadership Team is seeking new participants for the summer 2003 institute. This is an intensive, eight day leadership training involving teachers and resource professionals. The team takes a leadership role in watershed education within the community. Interested participants can contact Jill Sarick at: 775-832-4167.

sive, the backdrop tapestry for the stage was made by the students of Tahoe Lake School!

Poetry and art allow students to observe and reflect on their natural surroundings in a unique way. Having students get out and into their environment gives them experiences and images to draw upon when back in the classroom.

1st Annual
Run for the
Rivers!
10k fun run

Sunday May 18,
2003

At
The River Ranch
Lodge

10am—Registration

10:30am—Race and fun walk begin. Begin and end at the River Ranch Lodge.

12:00noon—Lunch for participants

Live Music by

No Bad Barley
bluegrass band

Awards 10K: Run to Tahoe City and back to the River Ranch. Awards for first, second and third place men and women in the different age groups.

3K fun walk: Walk toward Squaw Valley and back to the River Ranch. Awards for oldest participant, youngest baby, silliest hat, best costume, most creative team and largest team.



Dates To Remember

MAY AND JUNE ARE

TIME FOR SPRING PROJECTS!

May 18: SWEP fundraiser, Run for the Rivers, 10am, River Ranch Lodge

May 18: Kids Day, 12-3pm, NTCC

July 17-26: Adopt-a-Watershed Leadership Institute, Bass Lake, CA

WATER

Water is the magical liquid.

It is the source of life.

If there was no water,
there would be no life.

If there was no life, the earth
would be nothing but a barren
ball floating around in space.

So, if you want to save the
earth,

Start by saving our water.

By Sal, 4th grade

Tahoe-Truckee Service Learning

A Partnership of Many Possibilities

The Tahoe-Truckee Service Learning Partnership (TTSLP) is comprised of schools within the TTUSD, community organizations, such as SWEP and the Boys and Girls club, and state and local agencies. The purpose of the partnership is to foster student learning and civic responsibility among our youth by having them be actively involved in fulfilling community needs.

Students have a tremendous amount to learn by being involved in community-based projects. Youth can be active participants in all stages of project planning and implementation. When our youth are given the opportunity to apply their learning to 'real-life' situations, their participation and interest level increases.

This school year students have been active in the community. There have been projects with the USFS, State Parks, the

Senior Center, the Humane Society and many cross-age mentoring projects are currently on-going at school sites. Projects have ranged from cleaning the senior center to field data collection to wildlife monitoring.

The TTSLP keeps its members informed through regular meetings, school site-advocates (teachers), and trainings. It takes a lot of commitment and hard work from the entire partnership to get the word out about community needs, linking schools with projects and partners, and to garner support from school and agency administrators.

This year has seen tremendous growth in the number of school and community partners participating in high-quality service learning projects.

Great Job TTSLP!!

Partnership Highlight:

Michael Hogan of Integrated Environmental



Michael Hogan began working on erosion control projects in 1984, as a member of the summer crew at Squaw Valley, operating heavy equipment and following up grading work with 'revegetation' treatments. In 1988 when he started the Erosion Control Department, he could see that many of the treatments didn't produce the results that were hoped for. Part of the problem seemed to be that there wasn't much real site-specific, science-based information and the other part was the lack of education in general about what really needed to be done.

While finishing his masters, Michael started a contracting and consulting business, Integrated Environmental Restoration Services (IERS). One of the foundations of his business practices is education.

"Applying the science is rela-

tively easy compared to the challenge of educating people as to what the real issues are", reports Michael.

As a result of his commitment to education of the 'next generation', Hogan has put together a presentation for K-8 students that demonstrates graphically the concepts of erosion, nutrient cycling, the water cycle and plants role in the terrestrial ecosystem.

"Donny Dirt and Connie Clay just came to me on the way to a presentation a few years ago. It's almost as if I picked them up hitchhiking and just shared them with the kids" Michael reflects.

His simple story about the erosion process was an instant hit with the kids. He is currently working with local teachers and students to produce a book about Donny Dirt and Connie Clay in order to spread the word about the erosion process.



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