

Teacher Community Partner Interview

SAGEHEN Student Fire Project

Teacher: Nancy Kerr – Alder Creek Middle School 7th grade science teacher for 25 years

Community partner: Jan Ellis (Sierra Watershed Education Partnerships (SWEP) Project Director.

1. What are your main reasons for getting involved in this service-learning project?

Teacher: I've always done field trips and this was right up my alley. I've always had kids involved in outdoor activities and the more I have them involved in community projects the more meaningful it is.

2. What specific outcomes do you hope this service-learning project will help your organization achieve:

- a. For your students (teacher) describe the learning you hope will take place.

Teacher: I'm hoping the kids will feel they can make a difference in their world and improve their math, science and LA skills while doing this. I also hope they will take what they learn and be able to take it home and apply what they learn in their own backyards.

- b. For your community/ organization (partners) describe the impacts you hope will be accomplished.

Partner: I'm hoping a lot of the same things. I'd like students to feel empowered to make a difference. I want them to understand the issues in their community and understand the problems associated with unhealthy forest and the potential for catastrophic fire. I'd like students to be able to use a tape measure and apply scientific methods in the field. I want them to be able to turn around and educate their parents and community to what we can do to minimize the risk of catastrophic fire in our backyard.

3. If you were to isolate the outcomes you feel are most relevant to this project – the ones that will be reinforced throughout participation for students – what would they be?

Teacher: I think the importance of forest management and truly what a huge undertaking it is.

4. If you were to isolate the community impacts that are most likely to get accomplished within the timeframe, with the current plan of activities, and the capacities of the students, what would they be?

Community Partner: Hopefully, that students will go home and look around their own backyard and talk with parents about forest health and defensible space.

5. How do you define civic engagement or civic responsibility?

Teacher: I think they're one in the same. Acknowledging that being part of this world we live in requires a certain amount of stewardship. There's intrinsic value from participation in community projects.

Community Partner: I think it starts with be informed and knowing what the issues are in a community. From there...I think it's understanding how you can

get involved and influence decisions being made. It's knowing the process and making your voice heard. It comes down to being the change you want to see happen.

6. How will you know if participants in this project have truly been engaged as citizens and are developing the skill, attitudes and knowledge necessary to stay engaged as citizens? What will you look for?

Teacher: I'm hoping students will follow up with the project by going home and evaluating their own defensible space plan. They'll have the skills to know what needs to be done and have the attitude to want to do something in their own neighborhood.

7. In reviewing the academic standards, can you identify one or two that reflect the outcomes you feel are central to this project?

Teacher: L/A Evaluation and Revision

- Standard 5: Application

Write summaries of reading materials that paraphrase the main idea and significant details.

- Science Standard

Investigation and experimentation

- Civic Standard – Enlightenment, particularly the rise of democratic ideas, and they learn about the continuing influence of these ideas in the world today.

8. How will you adjust or plan your activities to maximize both the student learning and community changes you have both expressed as important to this service-learning project?

Teacher: We will do pre activities that include reading about forest health, watching the "Living with Fire" video and have a guest speaker presentation to prepare students. Students will make Science Journals and make observations prior to the field days. The science teachers will make a simulation of the study site activity at school site and students will practice collecting and recording data. After the field days students will be asked to go home and share what they have learned and come up with a fire save plan for their homes and backyards.

Community Partner: I will provide resource materials for teachers to use to prepare students for the field days. I'm also going to make 8 classroom presentations to review the data sheets and explain the purpose for the project. After the data is collected, I'll compile the student data and make it available to the USFS and SAGEHEN forest research scientist.