Homewaters Project
discovery • linking • community

The Source

www.homewatersproject.org

Autumn / Winter 2003

Our Mission

"To develop an engaged and informed citizenry by connecting people to nature and each other in the context of their home communities."

New Drops in the Watershed

Homewaters Project gained a new Executive Director in August, when **Sharon London** joined the Homewaters team. Sharon's strong geography and forestry background, non-profit management experience with the World Wide Fund for Nature in Laos, and teaching experience with students ranging from elementary school to college, give her the required skills and experiences for leading Homewaters Project. Sharon and her family live in the Thornton Creek Watershed.

Homewaters Project Staff (l-r): Sharon London, Todd Burley, Bob Lapsley and Linda Versage.

This November, the Homewaters team grew again, when **Todd Burley** was hired as the new Communications and Outreach Coordinator. Todd is currently a graduate student at The Evergreen State College, where he is finishing his Master of Environmental Studies. He comes with a solid environmental education and interpretation background and is excited to get his feet wet in a new watershed.

In addition, **Linda Versage** returns as Homewaters Project Schools Coordinator, a first for this position, which formerly rotated on a yearly basis. We'd also like to welcome **Meredith Lohr**, former Executive Director, as the new Vice-Chair of our Board.

Director's Stream of Thought

Change and renewed focus describe the start of the 2003-4 school year for Homewaters Project. With two new staff members and an office move across campus due to remodeling, the appearance of Homewaters Project seems much different. However, the strong foundation built by the previous staff, volunteers, board members, stewards, and donors over the past ten years has proven that Homewaters Project can not only weather change well, but excel in many new ways.

I feel extremely lucky to be working with such enthusiastic and dedicated people. Our commitment to Homewaters' mission provides daily inspiration. People need a connection to their local community to find value in it. That is why our work of integrating place-based, inquiry-focused programs into schools is so important. I hope you, too, share my enthusiasm for the great work that Homewaters Project is doing to connect people to place. I thank everyone who has committed time, money and effort to Homewaters Project and encourage you to continue your connections with us as we learn about our community together.

Inside The Source

We Want Your Feedback!

- **Please send us your e-mail for future e-newsletters.**
- **We'd love your comments or ideas about our programs.**
- **How do you like the newsletter's new look?**

Community Mapping

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The Neighborhood Green Map Initiative

With support from Seattle Public Utilities, Homewaters Project is currently working with an ecology class at Nathan Hale High School to create a "Green Map" of the neighborhood around the school. The Green Map System (www.greenmap.org) is a global collaboration that enables local communities to identifiy the important ecological and cultural features of a neighborhood as well as assess areas that could be improved. In addition to collecting neighborhood data, junior and senior ecology students are learning how to use ArcView GIS software. According to ecology teacher Jessica Torvik, "Green mapping gives students the opportunity to make an ecological impact and improve the community in a novel way. Instead of the tried-and-true restoration projects, students are mapping the 'green' resources in their own neighborhood and thinking about how we are affected by their presence or absence. They are also gaining valuable computer skills with the ArcView GIS program. It's been a very enjoyable, educational experience!" Homewaters Intern Genie Hayes, a Geography student at UW, is not only sharing her enthusiasm about the Green Map project, but learning along side the Nathan Hale students as well. "It feels good to be able to teach others what I am learning and show them how it applies under real circumstances."

Homewaters GIS intern, Genie Hayes, helps Mahmoud Farah navigate his watershed with GIS at Nathan Hale High School.

Graffiti Mapping

Three University of Washington Geography students have joined Homewaters Project as interns to further efforts started last year to track graffiti in the Lake City Corridor. Working with the Lake City Task Force, students will soon be tracking graffiti along Lake City Way, handing out fliers to business owners explaining what to do if they find graffiti on their property, analyzing relevant census data, and making recommendations to the task force. The final step will be to train high school students to continue their work. The students will use GIS technology for the data tracking and analysis.

Water and Community GIS Module

A generous grant from the Russell Family Foundation has enabled Homewaters Project to take on the creation of a GIS mapping module for middle school students. With collaboration from Homewaters' Technology Team (composed of teachers, professors and GIS professionals), and Dr. Tim Nyerges and his students at UW School of Geography, the module will help middle school students understand how human land use affects water resources. We are currently recruiting six middle school teachers to pilot our module in Spring 2004. For more information contact Sharon London at our office (slondon@sccd.ctc.edu).

Sharon London uses her extensive GIS knowledge to connect these Nathan Hale students to their homes.

WWU Teachers-in-Training Get Their Feet Wet in Thornton Creek

"I love it!" says Derek Mullin, a Western Washington University (WWU) Seattle Urban Center teacher prep student. "Students take what they learn in class and see it in real life."

Brock Roberts, Homewaters volunteer, explores Meadowbrook Pond with Land and Water students.

What has this pre-service teacher so excited? It's Homewaters Project's Land and Water Field Program for fifth graders! Homewaters works with Seattle Public Schools, Seattle Public Utilities and Seattle Parks to help students make real world connections to concepts in Seattle Schools' Land and Water inquiry science unit. In these field trips, fifth graders from in or near the Thornton Creek Watershed learn about watershed ecology and salmon as part of a city-wide program.

Linda Versage, Homewaters Schools Coordinator, recruits and trains community volunteers and WWU students in the Elementary Teacher Prep Program to teach these programs. Last year, Linda and Marylou Dantonio, WWU Urban Center's Elementary Education Director, collaborated to develop a win-win pilot program. This year the partnership continues.

WWU students earn credit towards teacher certification by participating in Homewaters' Land and Water programs. The pre-service teachers, along with other community volunteers, guide elementary students through outdoor investigations. This gives WWU students a chance to get their feet wet (literally!) by teaching right away, sometimes in their first quarter.

"It's a great opportunity to teach groups of kids and apply the constructivist teaching methods we've learned in class," said Cheryl Gauron, a WWU student that had her very first teaching experience with Homewaters Project.

Having these students lead field programs builds the capacity of new teachers by giving them the confidence to teach inquiry-based science in the incredibly rich classroom of the outdoors. The dedication and enthusiasm of the WWU students also improves the quality of the learning experience for the fifth graders.

Homewaters Project and WWU are both very pleased with our partnership. We are looking at ways that we can extend the experiential opportunities for WWU's pre-service teachers, continue to provide quality field-based community education for Seattle school children *and* help train great teachers at the same time.

A fifth-grade student takes a moment to observe Thornton Creek.

Teacher Opportunities

Tiny Neighbors Teacher Workshop

If you are a Seattle 5th grade teacher using the Microworlds Science Unit and would like to extend your students' learning to the real world, consider attending a Tiny Neighbors workshop.

In partnership with Seattle Schools, Tiny Neighbors supports teachers and students in completing investigations of local ponds and lakes.

Next Workshop:
Tuesday February 10th

For more information:
Linda Versage
(206) 526-0187
lversage@sccd.ctc.edu

Kathryn Show
(206) 252-0185
kshow@seattleschools.org

Washington State History Teachers!

Homewaters is recruiting three teachers to collaborate on curriculum, and receive four hours of paid training, to use local history resources in meeting Washington State History EALR's.

For more information:
Bob Lapsley
(206) 440-2979
bob.lapsley@lakesideschool.org

www.homewaterspoject.org

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Every Drop Counts!

At Homewaters Project, every drop of support helps us fulfill our mission. If you would like to join members of your community in connecting people to their local watersheds, please consider a donation to Homewaters.

Homewaters Project is a 501 (c) 3 non-profit organization under the umbrella of the North Seattle Community College Foundation. Please make checks payable to NSCC Foundation with Homewaters Project in the memo line. All donations are tax-deductible.

We wish to thank our supporters for the 2003-4 school year, including our major contributors:

The Russell Family Foundation
King County Splash Grant
Seattle Public Utilities
North Seattle Community College
Education Legacy Fund

Thornton Creek near Nathan Hale High School.

North Fork Long Walk

Join your neighbors for a six-mile urban hike along the length of Thornton Creek. We'll start at Thornton Creek's north fork headwaters and end at Matthews Beach, where the creek joins Lake Washington. Experience the history and ecology of Seattle's largest watershed with local experts and Homewaters Project staff.

An RSVP is required, as space is limited.

Saturday January 31st
9:00am—2:00pm

To RSVP:
call 206-526-0187
or e-mail tcptech@sccd.ctc.edu

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