



WISDOM OF THE ELDERS, INC

LEACH BOTANICAL GARDEN COMMUNITY HABITAT ENHANCEMENT EDUCATION PROJECT

A collaborative partnership



LEACH
BOTANICAL
— GARDEN —

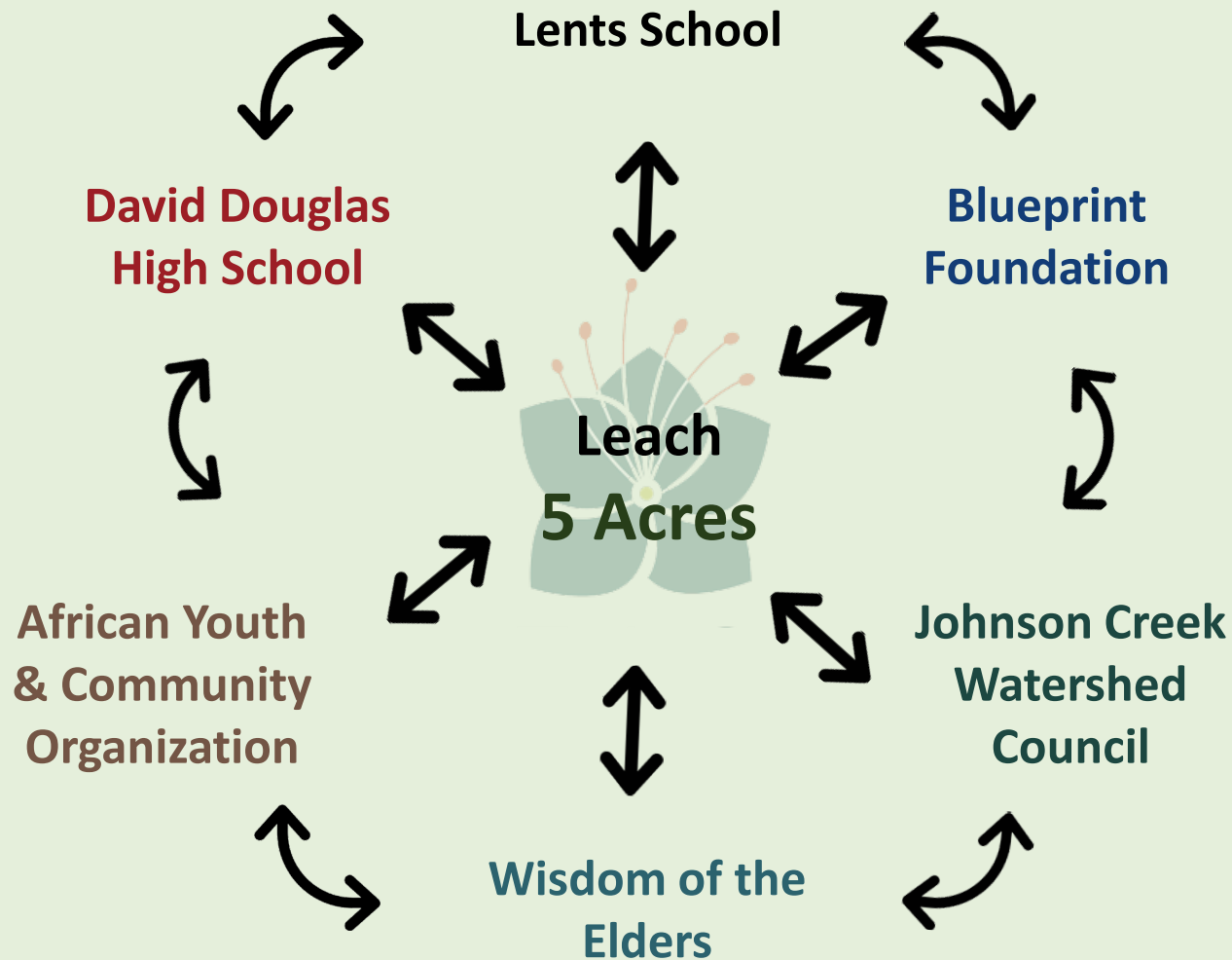


Lent K-8 School

5105 SE 97th • Portland, OR 97266 • Ph (503)

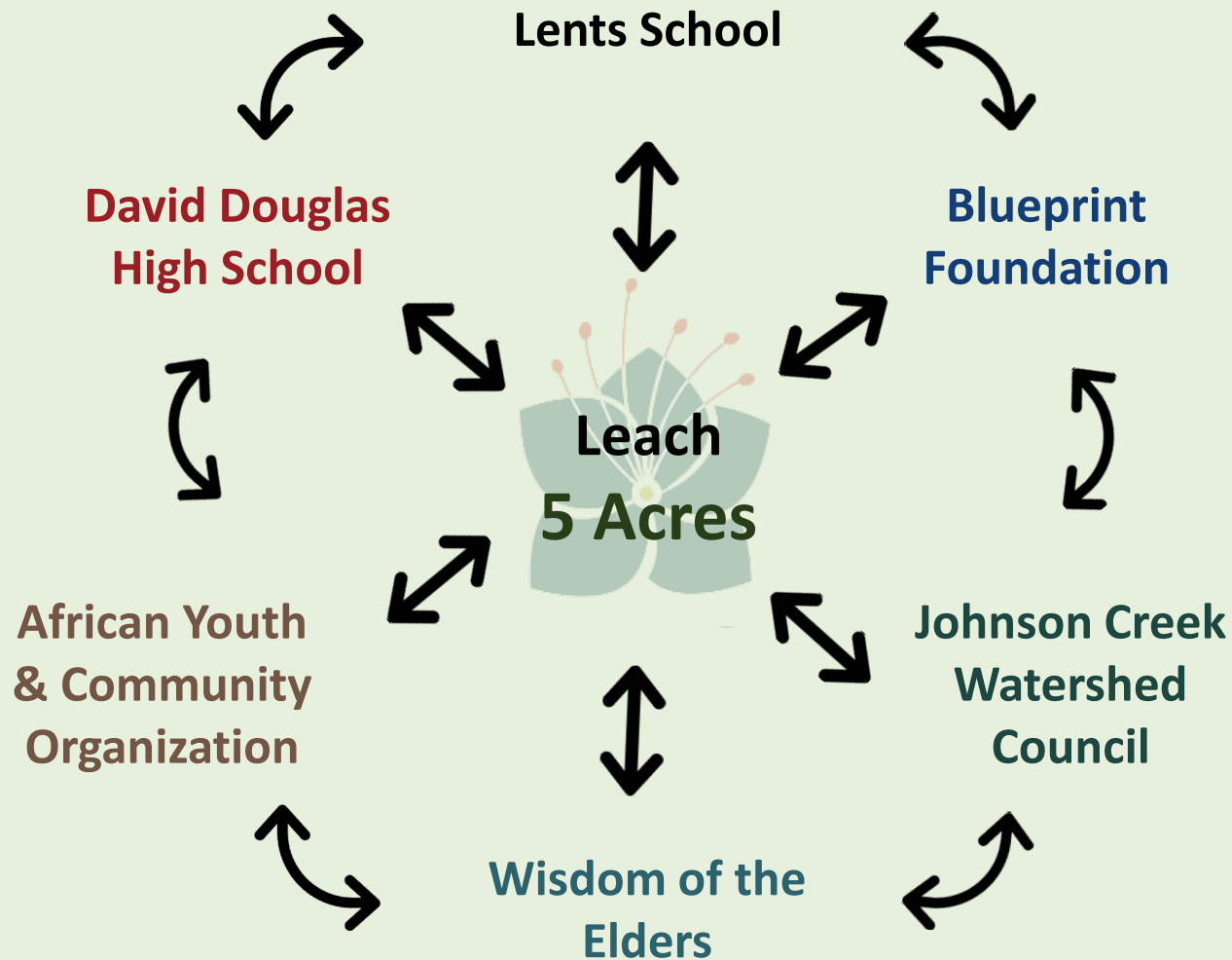


DAVID DOUGLAS
HIGH SCHOOL



GOALS

- **Stewardship opportunity** to restore 5 acres while documenting the shifting biodiversity.
- **Outdoor classroom** for K-12 youth to learn environmental science concepts and do nature-based exploration and mindfulness activities.
- **Training ground** for future green sector professionals.
- **Model for multicultural partnerships** that results in direct impacts to watershed health and environmental justice goals.



ACTIVITIES

- **Environmental monitoring**
- **Plant transects**
- **Workshops:** Macroinvertebrates, amphibians, pollinators, traditional ecological knowledge, mindfulness, iNaturalist training, ornithology, native plants, geology, plant propagation and nature journaling.
- **Pond installation**
- **Planting and maintenance**

Outcomes: May 2019– October 2020

Education

188 students attended

38 educational events

1,946 hours of learning in the field

Data Collection

6 baseline plant transects were completed in the first acre and were repeated in the second year after clearing and planting

2 baseline transects completed in the second acre

Workforce

330 hours of habitat restoration work with interns

Wisdom of the Elders Workforce Development LLC and interns using **Native American traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) and conventional science**

Biodiversity

2 acres of Non-native plants removed

>1360 native plants and bulbs installed

4 macroinvertebrate surveys completed

Amphibian surveys found:

- **Red-legged frogs**
- **Western red backed salamanders**
- **Ensatina & Dunn's salamanders**



The site and the usual cast of characters: ivy, blackberry, bindweed, creeping buttercup, clematis . . .



**The
floodplain
along
Johnson
Creek**





Western
redcedars and
Douglas fir along
Johnson Creek

Overhanging
trees create
places for fish to
hide and cool off

There are good
gravel beds for
spawning
salmon



Wisdom of the
Elders Work Force
LLC

& the 7-foot-high
wall of blackberry

Setting the
corners of the first
acre

Wisdom of the Elders, The Blueprint Foundation, Johnson Creek Watershed Council & Leach Garden establish photo points & discuss Traditional Ecological Knowledge





Leach Garden staff, volunteers & interns and Johnson Creek Watershed Council conducted the first plant transects in 2019





**Wisdom
Workforce LLC
took down the
blackberry wall,
leaving all the
native plants --
about 7 sword
ferns**

**We're using no
herbicides**

**Blueprint
Foundation
students
study and then
survey macro-
invertebrates
in Johnson
Creek, with
help from
Portland
Bureau of
Environmental
Services**



We found signal crawdads, native mussels, caddisfly larvae, a lamprey and other wonders



60+ David Douglas High School Careers in Natural Resources students came for their first visit to the site. They weeded and dug out blackberry root balls.



DDHS came about once a month. In addition to weeding and grubbing, they studied geology, surveyed amphibians & macroinvertebrates, used GPS & compasses to set up plant transects, installed native plants, helped dig the habitat pond and had a machete workshop





**DDHS Students
learning native
plant
propagation in
the greenhouse
with the Leach
Garden Curator**

David Douglas High School Students started digging the pond



This group finished it at one of JCWC's volunteer events



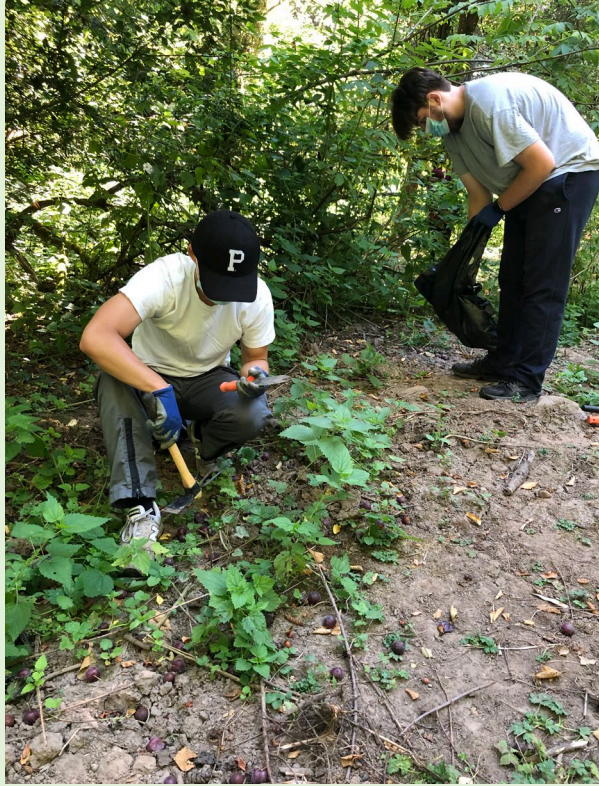
**The pond
this spring**

**It's about
one foot
deep, and is
designed to
dry up in
later summer
to discourage
bullfrogs**



Lent K-8 School
Students learning
about
insectivorous
plants

They also did
nature journaling



The Back 5 Acres Project creates opportunities for many groups. These Lents Youth Initiative Interns, hosted by Leach Garden and Portland Parks & Recreation, weeded, irrigated and helped with plant transects



**JCWC/AmeriCorps
group weeding
and grubbing**

**They were
cheerful--even in
snow flurries**





Leach Garden Horticulture Manager demonstrates native plant propagation techniques for The Blueprint Foundation and African Youth Community Organization. Students are tending the cuttings at home during the Covid 19 pandemic

Leach Garden volunteers work almost every week all year long doing plant transects, weeding, grubbing, planting, transplanting, creating habitat bush piles, setting up boundary lines . . .



They made crooning stations for hopeful male chorus frogs



8 ft jewel weed American Gothic



The Blueprint Foundation, the African Youth Community Organization, Johnson Creek Watershed Council and Leach Garden worked together on year 2 plant transects



**Blueprint
Foundation
students, a
brother and
sister,
conducting
plant
transects on
a rainy day
in May**



**Portland Parks
Ecologist shows
Blueprint Foundation
students what has
shown up in our new
pond**



**Red-
legged
frogs are
regular
visitors**

Catch & release pollinator workshop with African Youth Community Organization, The Blueprint Foundation, Johnson Creek Watershed Council and Leach Garden





African Youth Community Organization playing “ID the tree by touch game” and learning stress reduction techniques



Wisdom of the Elders teaches Traditional Ecological Knowledge to AYCO students including how to make cordage from nettles



Wisdom of the Elders media crew films Blueprint Foundation and African Youth Community Foundation mentors who are teaching other students how to do plant transects



Wisdom of the Elders trains & works with Ecotrust Green Workforce Academy interns



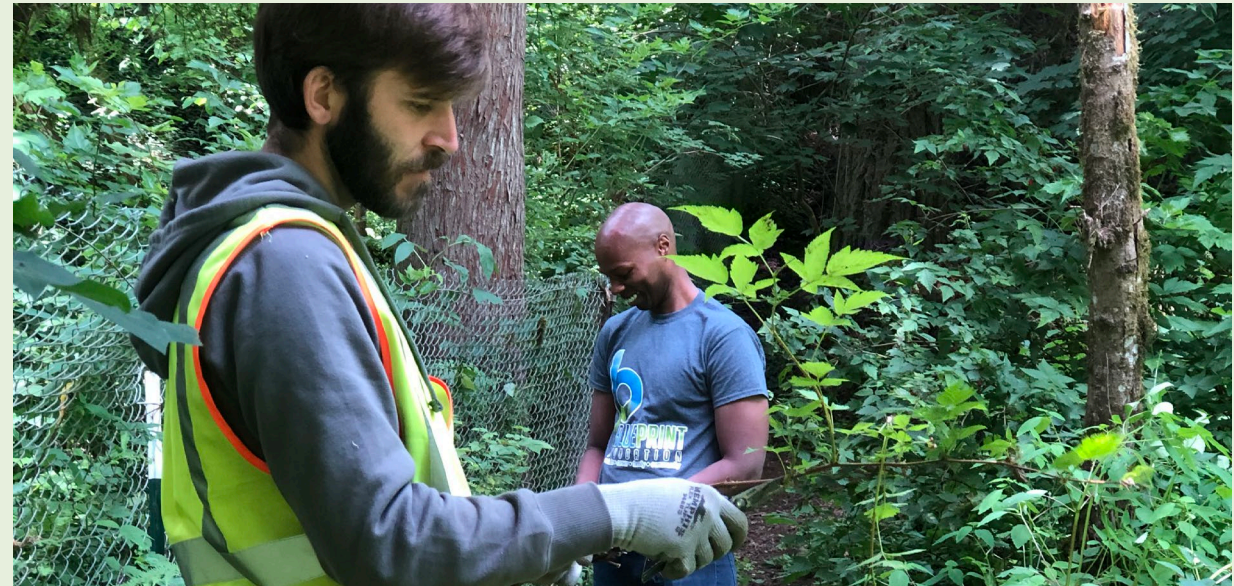
Lessons Learned



- **Broadcast your authentic project goals** to attract a diverse group of partners with intersecting goals.
- **Listen and adjust**
- **Co-create goals** that meet aspects of each organizational mission:
 - **Watershed metric:** acres restored
 - **Environmental justice metric:** # of BIPOC community members retained in training and entry-level work in the green sector.
- **Establish a communication plan that works**
- **Share capacities and connections**

Suggestions for how to show up

- **Don't force things**, step up when appropriate, step back when appropriate
- **Allow yourself to be honest and vulnerable**
- **Don't be ethnocentric**
- **Notice and comment on the good**
- **Support Affinity:** Understand that important conversations and forms of support and understanding can happen when you as a White/BIPOC person are not there.



Thanks to our Funders!



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THE PORTLAND
GARDEN CLUB

Community
Watershed Stewardship Program
Funding for *your* community project