

Urban Wildlife Conservation Program



Conserving the future with communities and partners in the
Portland-Vancouver Metro area

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**GORGE REFUGE
STEWARDS**



Competencies

 PARTNERING	 COMMUNITY COLLABORATION	 STRATEGIC THINKING	 PARTNERSHIP MANAGEMENT	 ACCOUNTABILITY
Partner Culture Awareness	Collaborative Leadership	Vision	Developing and Managing Agency Agreements for Partnership	Consensus Building
Team Building	Conflict Management	Entrepreneurship	Donation and Fundraising Activities in Partnerships	Financial Management
Teamwork	Facilitation	External Awareness	Influencing/ Negotiating	Planning and Evaluation
Leveraging Partnerships			Political Savvy	

What we'll cover

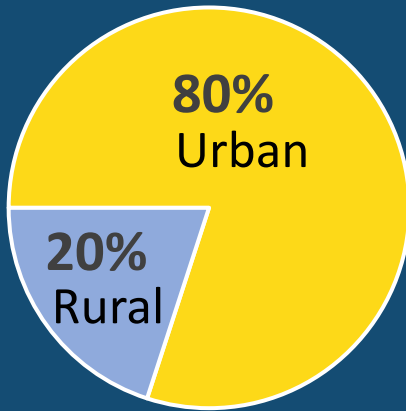
- High level overview of Urban Wildlife Conservation Program
- What is the Urban Wildlife Refuge Program?
- Examples of “transformational partnerships” in the local Portland-Vancouver area
- Partner perspective on working with the Federal government



Who has heard of the Urban Wildlife Conservation Program?



Connecting Urban Audiences to Conservation



Barriers

- Feelings of otherness and lack of representation for BIPOC community
- Fear for safety, health, and discomfort in the outdoors
- Negative cultural stigmas about working outdoors

Opportunities

- Do more than say “come visit”
- Partner with trusted community organizations
- Promote access to urban protected areas to build awareness and comfort
- Enhance youth and career programs

What opportunities do you see to better engage with urban communities?

Share in the chat

URBAN WILDLIFE CONSERVATION PROGRAM POLICY

SCOPE

All USFWS Programs

ULTIMATE GOALS

- Conserve wildlife for the continuing benefit of the American People
- Create a connected conservation constituency



The Standards of Excellence - The “what”

- Know and relate to the community
- Connect people via stepping-stones of engagement
- Build Partnerships
- Be a community asset
- Ensure long-term resources
- Provide equitable access
- Ensure visitors feel safe and welcome
- Model Sustainability



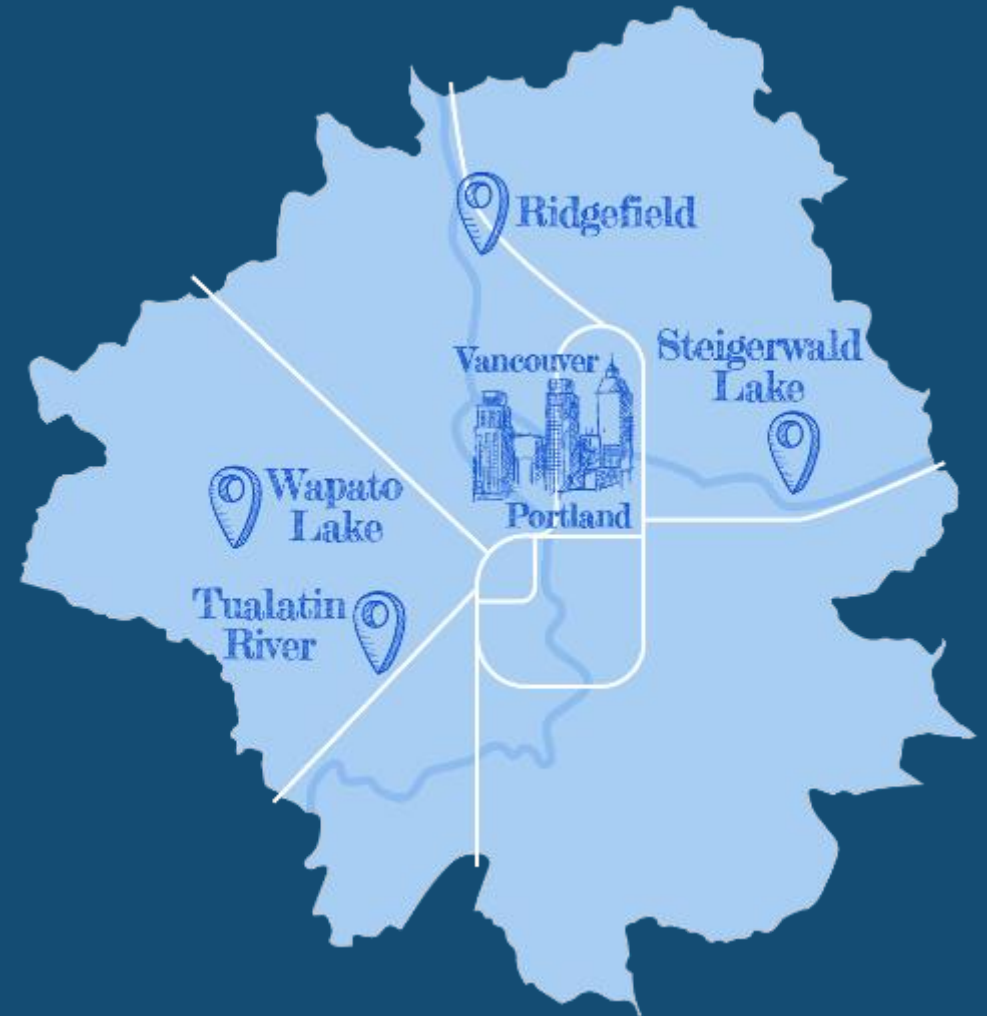
Critical Elements- The “How”

- Community Focused
- Intentional
- Inclusive
- Collaborative



Urban National Wildlife Refuges

- Within a 25 mile radius of a population center of 250,000 or more
- Work on these refuges is guided by our national “Standards of Excellence”
- High level of community collaboration and partnering



Holistic Community Engagement

Welcome all to
Refuges



Serve people in
neighborhoods



Collaborate with
coalitions





Know and Relate to the Community

- Be flexible, not prescriptive
- ASK!
- Be intentional in your relationship building
- Knowing ourselves and improving is key to this
- Stay a community member if possible



Be a Community Asset

- Provide space-both natural spaces and community meeting spaces
- Provide jobs for the community
- Provide knowledge and expertise to other organizations
- Provide funding

Transformational vs Transactional

- Shared Power
- Focused on Consensus
- Can involve one way exchange of resources (or none)
- Involves deep personal relationships
- Partners are advocates for each other

- Usually more one-sided
- Focused on getting to an end result
- Often involves two-way exchange of resources
- Surface level relationships
- Partners are advocates for the work/project

I'm Hooked Inc.

To be an asset to the community by supporting positive family and youth engagement in nature through community-based recreational and educational events with diverse communities within Washington County, Oregon and Clark County, WA primarily through fishing activities.



Access Recreation

- Access Recreation is a Portland, Oregon ad hoc committee that has developed guidelines for minimum information that should be provided about hiking trails and outdoor facilities, that would benefit hikers with disabilities, and which can be applied to websites, printed materials and at trail sites.



Your examples of transformational partnership?



Raise your hand or post in chat, to share an example

Gorge Refuge Stewards Background



- Formed in 2006 to support Steigerwald Lake, Franz Lake, and Pierce National Wildlife Refuges
- 2015 - reinvigorated with Urban Program Funding



Partnership Agreement and Evolution

- Original funding
 - Volunteer Coordinator
 - Deliverable: provide in-kind match of 2000 volunteer hours per year
 - EE Supplies
 - Rebranding
 - Strategic Planning
 - Board Development
- Scope of work was broad



Urban Program Support

- Presentations to Board (Change Management/Transparency)
- Lunch and learns aka “Snack-n-Skills” (Trust/Transparency)
- Digestible Learning Documents (Change Management/Transparency)
- Community Asset Committee (Power Sharing)





BRAIN FOOD

Building our community engagement powers, one bite at a time

MAY 2021



It's been a long time since in-person engagement has been a possibility, but light is emerging at the end of the tunnel and conversations are starting, including with PVURP partner, I'm Hooked. Learn more on page 2.

S-n-S Phase 3: The Snacking Continues

Welcome to the inaugural edition of "Brain Food," a monthly publication to support ongoing shared learning about our community and the Urban Wildlife Conservation Program. Brain Food is part of a Phase 3 plan for Snack-n-Skillz, in response to valuable input you provided in a recent survey.

In Brain Food, you will find snacks of all shapes and sizes, including a Pot Luck of ideas and opportunities, Movie Treat videos, recommended Popcorn Reading, as well as partner and project spotlights. You'll also find easy access to some of our tried-and-true guidance and tools in Comfort Food.

Brain Food will come your way on the last Monday of every month, to rejuvenate your mind, body, and spirit for the month ahead. As for the rest of the plan, here's what else is in store, based on your input:

- **June 2021: Lunch Chats**—A casual one-hour monthly meet-up about specific topics. Saw a story in the news? Heard a phrase you want to explore? Learned about a new opportunity for the PVURP? These are all great Lunch Chat inspirations.
- **July 2021: Big Bites**—These are deeper dives, like our Snack-n-Skillz sessions, that will take place every other month and cover a topic of interest per the survey results.
- **January 2022: Snack-n-Skillz 2**—A dedicated, multi-session program like Snack-n-Skillz 1, but even more snacktacular.

POT LUCK

"Humans are programmed to think we're right at all costs. Fighting that instinct will set you free."

From "Changing Your Mind Will Make You Less Anxious"

MOVIE TREAT



Improve your communication skills for conflict management with the *Ladder of Inference* from Susan Goodwin.

New communities, in new ways, for long-term relationships

PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

NW FAMILY DAYCATION

A collaborative community engagement project between the USFWS, The Intertwine Alliance, and Valadrian Creative & Consulting, NW Family Daycation has been busy this year making new connections in neighborhoods with high equity needs.

Some of the most recent work includes the creation of bilingual Wander Walks with *Like It Baby*, supporting Summer Steps curriculum for NW Family Services, integrating into the climate awareness curriculum for Familias en Acción, and collaboration with Hacienda CDC's Expreaciones Program.

The Daycation app sees hundreds of monthly users, while Daycation social media reach has grown exponentially, with the most popular content focused on DEI engagement efforts.



To learn more about Daycation and I'm Hooked, connect with patrick_stark@fws.

POPCORN READING

Along the Columbia River, Making a Monument of the Land

In the Pacific Northwest, Maya Lin's 'art landscapes' celebrate the river's partnership with Native American tribes.

How Oregon's Second Largest City Vanished in a Day

The story of Vanport. A 1948 flood washed away the WWII housing project—but its history still informs Portland's diversity.

PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

I'M HOOKED



Wil Warren, Founder and Executive Director of I'm Hooked, Inc., has been busy this past year, crafting new ways to provide positive youth development through connecting with nature. And like a good fish story, the ideas are BIG.

I'm Hooked has developed a new strategic plan based on the Recruit, Retain, Reactivate model and inspired by the collaboration with the USFWS. The centerpiece of the plan is the development of a Learning Center in the west suburbs of Portland that would offer underserved youth opportunities to engage in outdoor activities, as well as learn vocational skills.

In June, I'm Hooked is organizing a panel discussion for its partners centered on racism and serving youth who experience the trauma of racism. This is the precursor for a special outdoor event in July for youth who face incarceration and other personal and family challenges.

COMFORT FOOD

PVURP/UWCP GUIDANCE

- Standards of Excellence
- UWCP Critical Elements
- PVURP Evaluation Framework

DATA AND TOOLS

- Demographic Data
- Work Planning Rubric
- Logic Model Template

CONNECT

- [Snack-n-Skillz Roster](#)
- [PVURP Microsoft Team](#)
- [UWCP SharePoint](#)



THE SEVEN BIG OUTCOMES

Internal and External Outcomes			External Target Audience Outcomes			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Improve Excellence	Reduce Barriers	Increase Diversity	Increase Reach	Increase Awareness	Inspire Issue Action	Increase Trust

DEFINITIONS

1: Improve Excellence

Increase adoption of the Urban Standards of Excellence, with a focus Standard 1 (Know and Relate) and 4 (Community Asset). Increase use of monitoring and evaluation with key activities and adapt activities based on results.

2: Reduce Barriers

Identify, prioritize, and reduce barriers to outdoor recreation for both on-refuge and off-refuge activities, programs, and investments by PVURP. (Barriers can be cultural, physical, transportation, proximity, economic, etc). This process of identify, prioritize, and reduce barriers applies to internal barriers, as well.

3: Increase Diversity

Increase our reflection of community demographics among visitors, volunteers, and staff. Focus efforts on increasing participation among those we have not previously systematically considered, nor routinely engaged; particularly looking at race, culture, ability, and socio-economics.

4: Increase Reach

Increase the breadth and depth of our engagement with target audiences in the communities surrounding the PVURP Refuges, such that a larger portion of the community exhibit indicators that our key messages are reaching them.

5: Increase Awareness

Increase awareness among target audiences of the core identity of the USFWS and the benefits the PVURP brings to the Portland Metro Area. Increase benefit-centric program design and messaging ("why" over "what").

6: Inspire Issue Action

Increase among target audiences actions indicating they view solving conservation issues as part of their self-identity. This can include on-the-ground action in their community or on-refuge, as well as ideas and information they share among their social network.

7: Increase Trust

Increase among target audiences and partners expressions of trust with the USFWS through actions and communication.





EVALUATION LEVELS

TIME it takes to see results

COMPLEXITY of evaluation

North Star
guiding purpose



30k Feet
Big Outcomes



10k Feet
Big Indicators



10 Feet
UWCP Core Values



Ground Level
What & Where

New communities, in new ways, for long-term relationships

Big Evaluation Question: *Are the efforts of the PVURP worth the investment?*

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Big Evaluation Question: *How is the PVURP benefiting from programmatic outcomes?*

Changes we monitor that indicate progress toward the Big Outcomes

Big Evaluation Question: *Are target audiences exhibiting desired behavioral changes?*

Community Intentionality Partnership Inclusion


Big Evaluation Question: *Do the activities we've chosen for evaluation reflect the fundamental characteristics of the Urban Wildlife Conservation Program work?*

Activities at Refuges, in Neighborhoods, and with Coalitions

Big Evaluation Question: *Are participants reacting and learning as expected to specific activities, lessons, events, an incentives?*



Community Asset Committee

- Urban Program funding allocated to this committee made of members of each of the Refuge's Friends organizations
- Balance of Power
 - Empower the Friends' groups to decide best ways to engage new partners
- Partners (the Friends) helping other partners and community
- Applying the "Urban refuge lens"
 - Decision Tool 

	Low	Medium	High
"Community Coordination" Level of design and delivery involvement by non-traditional community partner organizations and/or representatives from target audiences	Minimal community involvement in program design and delivery outside of traditional partner agencies, Friends, and volunteers	Actively seeking community feedback on program design; program based on demonstrated community interest	Community actively involved in program design and delivery; program based on community-defined need
Retention	Isolated program; unlikely to be repeated	Program encourages repeat participation (eg: Each iteration has unique themes)	Program intentionally builds upon the previous experience to increase identified program outcomes.
Intentionality and Evaluation	Program lacks stated goals and objectives; audience outcomes cannot be measured; audience best described as "general public"	Aligns with a priority outcome of the PVURP (i.e. Big 7 Outcomes); program seeks a recognizable and measurable change	Program aligns with multiple priority outcomes of the PVURP (i.e. Big 7 Outcomes); Results Chain/Logic Model developed; has been identified for formal evaluation
Standard 1: Know and Relate to the Community	Minimal effort has been made to understand the priorities, concerns, needs and interests of the community/target audience; barriers unknown	Some demographic research has been done. Some barriers have been defined based on community sources/input	Priorities, concerns, needs and interests of the community/target audience have been actively sought and included in program design
Relationships/Partnerships	Programs involves only traditional, conservation-based partnerships (eg: Friends, land management agencies, ecological NGOs); relationships are transactional (i.e. exchange of service for service, or money for service)	Program includes at least one non-traditional partner that is involved in a transformational way (i.e. is part of a process for aligning organizational/program goals, helping to design and implement the program, truly cooperative relationship)	Program includes multiple non-traditional partners working in a transformational way (a.k.a. Coalition); partners help the FWS access communities we would be unlikely to reach on our own
Inclusion	Program audience best described as "general public;" program lacks accommodations for different abilities or other barriers (i.e. learning needs, cultural differences, socio-economics)	Program design and delivery demonstrates some effort has been made to address participation barriers; direct invitations have been extended to culturally and ethnically diverse audiences	Program has been designed and delivered to intentionally welcome and be relevant to culturally and ethnically diverse audiences; reducing barriers is a demonstrated priority

Successes of Gorge Stewards

- 5 Year Update
- Updated PD and scope of work to align with the Standards of excellence and 7 Big Outcomes
- Guiding new ways of doing things that will support engaging new communities
 - Partner Mapping
 - DEI & Trauma Informed Practice Training
- Quantitative successes: volunteer program



Partner Perspective

- Moving toward Transformational: infusing the Standards of Excellence into the Stewards work
- More flexibility offers more opportunities for community engagement
- Refuge Staff participation validates work



Challenges

- ↓ Transparency = ↑ Assumptions
- Unknown roles
- Slow buy in
- Loss of motivation
- Deficit mindset



Looking to the future



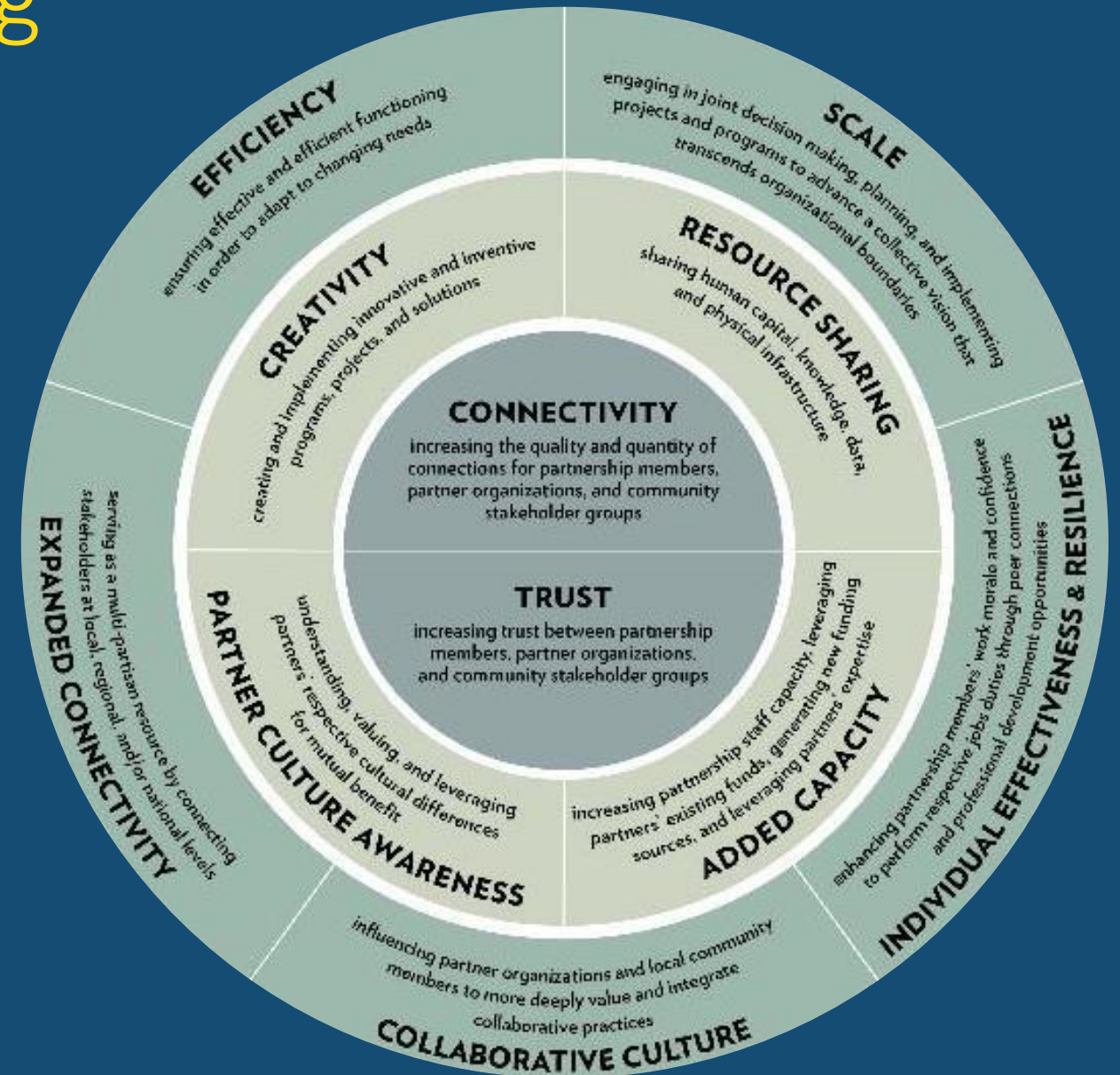
Photo by Quan Ho, 1st place in Gorge Refuge Stewards Youth Photo Contest 2018

- Practice what we preach
- Increased Communication
- Defining roles
- Staff involvement on Friends committees
- Intentional engagement with lapsed partners and future partners
- Moving from the dance floor to the balcony
 - Bright spots and story spotters

Building and Sustaining the Partnership

Partnership Impact Model

- **Foundational: connectivity and trust**
- **Operational: creativity, resource sharing, added capacity, partnership cultural awareness**
- **Outcomes: efficiency, scale, individual effectiveness & resilience, collaborative culture, expanded connectivity**



Questions?

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