

Ashland Forest Resiliency Stewardship Project

Ashland Forest Resiliency Educational Opportunities — Winter/Spring 2011



Lomakatsi Restoration Project is currently facilitating educational opportunities with classroom sessions and field trips related to the Ashland Forest Resiliency Stewardship Project (AFR). The AFR project is a collaboration between the U.S. Forest Service, the City of Ashland, Lomakatsi Restoration Project, and The Nature Conservancy. Under this agreement, workers will thin trees and brush, and conduct controlled burns. These treatments are intended to help restore forest resiliency and protect Ashland's community and its domestic water supply from the effects of high severity wildland fire. Monitoring and evaluation are also key components of this project. By tracking ongoing project implementation, monitoring helps ensure plans are followed, and measures success in meeting goals and objectives.

The following outline describes the AFR educational opportunities that are available for Ashland School District classes.

I. Introduction to the AFR Project

- A. In-Class Power Point presentation: Overview of forest and fire ecology, forest restoration, fuel hazard reduction and the objectives of the AFR project and project partners.
- B. Field Activity: Guided hike in the AFR project area
 - 1) Native tree and shrub identification
 - 2) Discussion of forest developmental stages and plant associations
 - 3) Assessment of current forest conditions & discussion of future desired conditions

II. Introduction to Technical Forestry and Restoration Silviculture

- A. Field Activity: Students adopt an AFR sub-unit
 - 1) Sample Plot Survey Activity – students become more familiar with tools of the forestry trade as they collect project-related forestry data. Tools include a compass, diameter tape, GPS, tree borer, and a clinometer for measuring slopes.
 - 2) Tree Designation Activity – using a basic understanding of forestry principles, students learn how to use colored ribbon to mark trees of ecological importance that should not be removed by forest thinning operations.
 - 3) Thinning Activity – with hand saws and loppers, students cut and pile small diameter trees and brush.



III. Water Quality, Soils & Wildlife Habitat

A. In-Class Presentations

- 1) Studying & Protecting Wildlife in the AFR project:
 - a) Guest speakers Cindy Donegan, Wildlife Biologist with U.S. Fish & Wildlife and Dave Clayton, Wildlife Biologist with U.S. Forest Service, will share their experience working on the AFR project, as well as their years of studying owls, pacific fishers and other wildlife of this bioregion.
- 2) Water & Soil:
 - a) Overview of soil composition, soil types & related forest vegetation, soil conservation & land management effects on soil.
 - b) Discussion on why water quality is important, what we look for when testing water samples and what is being done to protect our water supply.

B. Field Activity: Three rotating stations:

- 1) Water quality testing - Staff from North Mountain Park and Bear Creek Watershed Education Partners will assist in collecting data including temperature, dissolved oxygen, pH, macroinvertebrate surveys and sedimentation rates.
- 2) Soil testing – With the assistance of Forest Service soils scientist Joni Brazier, students will look at different soil profiles in treated and untreated areas, conduct surveys of “effective ground cover”, and assess landslide hazard zones.
- 3) Wildlife habitat – Wildlife biologists, Cindy Donegan and Dave Clayton will lead a guided walk, looking at the effects of forest structure and health on local wildlife.

IV. Wildland Fire, Fire Ecology and Restoration Forestry

- A. In-Class Power Point presentation; Guest speakers: Gary Smith, Forest Service Fire Management Officer; Chris Chambers, City of Ashland; Marko Bey, Lomakatsi Restoration Project.
- B. Field Activity: Visit burn units before and after. Observe burn operations. Meet workforce members.

An AFR education steering committee is meeting regularly to continue development of this hands-on, place-based education program. For more information on the project please visit our website at www.ashlandwatershed.org.

