



= *Life in Balance*

RESTORING ECOSYSTEMS SUSTAINING COMMUNITIES

March 16, 2018

Report to the City of Ashland Economic Development, Cultural, Tourism and Sustainability Grants

For more than twenty years, Lomakatsi has worked to create social justice, economic opportunity and thriving ecosystems in the Rogue Valley and throughout Southern Oregon and Northern California. In that time, Lomakatsi has restored thousands of acres of forests and miles of streams, partnering with local communities, Native American Tribes and government agencies and industry to provide education and workforce training programs, restore vital wildlife habitat and increase the connection between communities and ecosystems. The organization has become a model nationally for building collaborations between governmental agencies, non-profits, Native American Tribes and industry partners to develop an economic model that cares for the region's wildlife habitats and ecosystems, as well as its people.

Since 1997, Lomakatsi's Restoration Ecology Education Program has provided free outdoor science based hands on learning to schools, throughout Ashland, Talent, Phoenix and Medford, leveraging on-going restoration projects to create outdoor classrooms rich in learning opportunities. The summer youth program – The Ashland Watershed Youth Training and Employment Program – has gained national recognition as a model for engaging youth, providing authentic career development training, and transforming young people's lives. Lomakatsi is requesting funding to support both the school-based program in Ashland and the summer youth training and employment program based in the Ashland Watershed.

Lomakatsi's education and employment training programs are unique in their ability to connect school children and youth with real, meaningful, on-the-ground ecological restoration work. The Ashland Watershed Youth Training and Employment Program provides an opportunity for young people to engage with leaders in the field of ecological restoration, wildlife management, soil science, forestry, climate change and more, while at the same time giving them hands-on experience and the opportunity to develop real skills that can provide future employment. The program allows young people, many of whom might otherwise be working in low-paying summer jobs with few career-forwarding opportunities, to earn money while learning. The program functions as a microcosm of Lomakatsi's work in communities throughout Oregon and Northern California – using ecological restoration to provide economic development through paid work and career development, and reaching out to youth across socio-economic boundaries to build social access and equity.

In 2017, Lomakatsi requested \$25,000 from the City of Ashland to support two of our education and training programs, and was awarded \$18,000, of which \$3,000 was allocated to the Restoration Ecology

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Education Program and \$15,000 was allocated to the Ashland Watershed Youth Training and Employment Program.

Program Funding and Expenditures

Category	USFS Diversity & Inclusion Grant	City of Ashland	Oregon Community Foundation	Total Program
Staffing	31,190	4,448	8,260	43,898
Intern wages	26,100	10,300		36,400
Travel	1,185	255	180	1,620
Supplies	1,634	192		1,826
Administration	11,691	2,805	1,560	16,056
Van Rental	3,200			3,200
Total	75,000	18,000	10,000	103,000

Restoration Ecology Education Program – Report

Through Lomakatsi’s long-term partnership with the Ashland School District and Ashland Parks and Recreation Department at two adopted sites—Willow Wind Community Learning Center and Ashland Ponds—we were able to hold 20 outdoor education events for 645 students from four schools (Helman 300 students, Willow Wind 75 students, John Muir 150 students and Ashland High 120 students).

These students engaged in active on the ground ecological restoration while also learning about ecology. Restoration activities included maintaining planted trees (many of which the students themselves had planted in previous years), planting pollinator species that provide feeding and rearing habitat for Monarch butterflies, and trail maintenance. Education included topics related to the restoration activities such as the importance of pollinators, salmon migration, riparian and meadow restoration ecology, hydrology, botany and water quality.



John Muir Students at Willow Wind Community Learning Center Riparian and Meadow Restoration site





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Ashland Watershed Youth Training and Employment Program 2017 Program Report

Project Overview

Lomakatsi launched the Ashland Watershed Youth Training and Employment Program (AWYTEP) in the summer of 2013, as part of the Ashland Forest Resiliency Stewardship Project (AFR). The AFR project is a 10-year stewardship agreement designed to reduce the risk of severe wildfire in the watershed and protect water quality, older forests, wildlife, people, property and quality of life in Ashland. Since 2010, this collaborative partnership between the US Forest Service, the City of Ashland, Lomakatsi Restoration Project, and The Nature Conservancy has implemented forest treatments on approximately 5,000 acres, sustaining 17 full time jobs and providing over 200 seasonal jobs.

Lomakatsi leverages federal funding, as well as raising foundation and individual support for the AWYTEP. In 2016, funders included the Oregon Community Foundation, Lomakatsi private donors, the City of Ashland, as well as Title II and other Federal funds. Annually, Lomakatsi works closely with local school districts to conduct outreach to students about the program. Since 2010, over 275 local youth applied demonstrating the strong interest of youth in this cutting edge program. Each summer, 20 junior and senior high school students ages 15-19 from Medford, Talent, Phoenix and Ashland High Schools are selected through a competitive interview process. Youth were paid \$11 an hour to conduct on-the-ground ecosystem restoration and natural resource related projects in the Ashland Watershed and across the region. With instruction and guidance provided by Lomakatsi's workforce trainers, specialists and environmental educators, youth implement forest and watershed restoration projects and assist in accomplishing important stewardship goals. Some presentations or trainings are provided by specialists from other organizations, like the Klamath Bird Observatory and The Nature Conservancy, or agencies like the US Forest Service or US Fish and Wildlife Service. These guest presenters expand the scope of the curriculum to



The 2017
AWYTE Crew

include very specialized scientific training and lectures, skills sharing and career guidance.

Accomplishments

Restoration Project Implementation

Following a curriculum designed to integrate the art and science of ecological restoration principles, Lomakatsi staff guide youth participants in the study of restoration ecology through hands-on stewardship project activities. Conservation actions implemented by the youth workforce contributed to the overall objectives of AFR and adjoining regional restoration efforts including decreasing forest wildfire severity risk, restoring forest and stream health, and maintaining wildlife habitat, thereby promoting biodiversity.

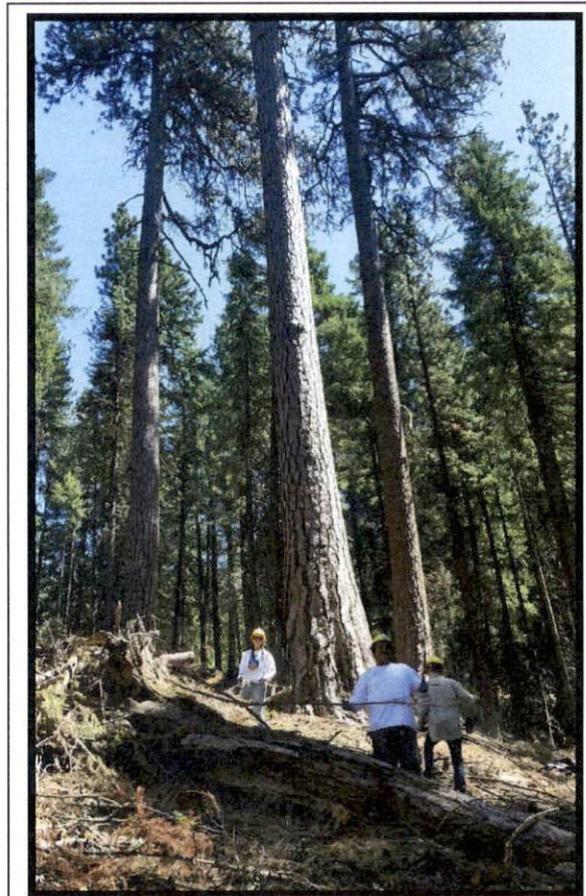
The 2017 AWYTE program accomplished the following:

- 200 acres of tree raking, preparing legacy trees for prescribed burning
- 7 acres of slash piling, prepared for burn
- 31 wildlife piles created on 150 acres
- 21 acres of restoration maintenance
- ½ mile of riparian restoration maintenance
- 100 hours of native plant nursery care and propagation (for future riparian restoration projects)
- ¼ mile of trail rehab
- ⅘ mile new trail installation
- ¼ acre of pollinator habitat maintenance
- 10 acres of native seed collection (for future restoration projects)

Restoration Ecology Study

In addition to engaging youth in valuable hands-on work experience and teamwork development throughout the program, daily activities include presentations by natural resource specialists from partner agencies and non-profit organizations such as the US Forest Service, US Fish and Wildlife Service, City of Ashland, The Nature Conservancy, Klamath Bird Observatory, and Native American tribal cultural professionals from surrounding tribes. In 2017, over 20 presenters were involved in the program from eight organizations. Each day, these presenters provided instruction that complimented project activities and helped further guide youth through hands-on, ecosystem management and natural resource vocational exploration.

As an important component of the AWYTE Program curriculum, Lomakatsi workforce managers and restoration ecologists provide participants with detailed instruction and first-hand experience in the many tools of ecological restoration. During the 2017 Program, students received hands-on training in the use of technical forestry tools.



Youth rake and clear duff from around large, legacy pine trees in the Ashland watershed, to help protect them from prescribed burning.

While learning how to collect forest inventory data using clinometers, densitometers, increment borers, compass and diameter tape, students gained valuable skills applicable in numerous natural resource professions and gained an understanding of the importance of scientific monitoring.

Another dynamic and important dimension to the program in 2017 was a trip to the Hat Creek Restoration Project in Northern California where Lomakatsi is partnered with the Inter-Tribal Ecosystem Restoration Network and California Trout



to implement a similar program with youth from the Ajumawi/Atsugewi Nation (Pit River Tribe). Youth from both programs came together for a three-day intensive of hands-on ecological restoration training and cultural exchanges to learn about riparian habitat restoration, and traditional ecological knowledge skills from Pit River tribal elders and mentors. Under the watchful instruction of Pit River tribal elders, the youth of both programs worked together to build the first traditional canoe constructed by the Pit River Tribe in nearly 100 years. The cross-cultural education connected Rogue Valley youth with the First Nation's people of the area in a real and meaningful way. For many of the youth it was a life-changing experience. In addition to hard work, these young adults gained important life skills and a broader understanding of the world around them.

Evaluation of Program Success

Participant feedback is collected at the conclusion of the program in the form of written evaluations and a group discussion with Lomakatsi personnel, as well as US Forest Service staff and City of Ashland staff. This gives youth the chance to express their experience and provide feedback that is used to further enhance this annual program. Based on their written and verbal responses, it is evident that participants of the AWYTEP were significantly impacted by their experience. Most participants gave positive feedback and expressed how much they appreciated gaining professional experience and learning about careers in natural resource fields. Many stated an appreciation for the opportunity to meet natural resource professionals from different fields, and enjoyed how much they learned from those presentations. With additional funding, Lomakatsi would expand the program to include more youth, or extend the length.

Program Participant Testimonials

- "The most important thing I learned is that everything is connected and you can't change one thing without affecting the entire ecosystem."
- "I made a lot of new friends and learned so much about forestry and our watershed. The program definitely changed my view of the forest."
- "This program affected my future greatly because now I see that there are so many careers in the natural resources. I just have to choose the right one and pursue it."
- "There was trust between the instructors and workers which created an effective team."



- “I liked that a hard working environment was provided, as well as a learning environment. The program was an awesome balance of the two. “
- “I didn’t know until now that I had such a passion for restoration work. I didn’t realize that there were so many different outlets to get into the profession. I can imagine myself finding a way to be further involved. I want to integrate what I’ve learned into my work.”
- “The entire experience was amazing in itself. All the tasks that we as a group accomplished taught myself, as well as all of us, that there’s a lot of priorities in the task of restoring our forests.”
- “I am going to miss getting up in the morning, and coming home knowing that we worked hard and did something to help.”

A Replicable Model

The AWYTEP is serving as a place-based replicable model. Lomakatsi has transported this program to the Freemont-Winema National Forest in partnership with the Klamath Tribes and the Forest Service to provide employment and training for ten Klamath tribal youth. We are also partnered with the Inter-Tribal Ecosystem Restoration Network and California Trout bringing the program to Pit River tribal youth in Northern California. As well, we are in development with the Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest’s Wild Rivers District to bring the program to the rural, economically challenged community of Cave Junction in 2018.

Financial Status

The 2017 AWYTEP cost \$103,000 to operate the full four-week program, employing 20 youth interns. Funding for the program was provided from federal sources through cooperative agreements between Lomakatsi, the U.S Forest Service, and U.S Fish and Wildlife Service. Non-federal funding was provided by the City of Ashland and the Oregon Community Foundation.

Conclusion

The Ashland Watershed Youth Training and Employment program advances Lomakatsi’s continued commitment to investing in youth and supporting the next generation of ecological stewards and decision makers. By engaging in positive hands-on work experience, program participants develop professional skills, life skills - in responsibility and self-sufficiency - and a long-term community service and stewardship ethic. In addition to inspiring further respect and appreciation for the natural environment, the program provides the first professional experience for most participants. Hands-on work experience and daily guidance by professional staff and educators, the Ashland Watershed Youth Program helps set the stage for future study and interest in natural resource careers.



Program Mentors, Trainers, Instructors and Presenters

Lomakatsi Program Trainers and Instructors

Youth Mentors and Workforce Trainers:

Ryan Puckett – Lead Restoration Technician and Workforce Trainer
Gerardo Rodriguez – Youth Crew Leader

Instructors:

Marko Bey – Executive Director
Belinda Brown – Tribal Partnerships Manager, Ecocultural Specialist
Niki Del Pizzo – Riparian Program Manager
Andy Lerch – Lead Forester
Lyndsey Lascheck – Restoration Technician
Sean Prive – Restoration Ecologist
Virginia Mike-Mercado – Tribal Youth Crew Supervisor, Ecocultural Specialist
Joseph Ochoa – Tribal Restoration Crew Manager

Program Support:

Shane Jimerfield – Program Director
Justin Cullumbine – Chief Financial officer/ Co-Director
Jolie Elan – Youth Program Coordinator
Lilia Letsch – Communications Associate
Aaron Nauth – Contracting and Workforce Division Supervisor
Jonathan Paul – Workforce Operations Manager and Safety Coordinator

Planned Guest Presenters:

US Forest Service:

Don Boucher – Stewardship Coordinator, Siskiyou Mountains Ranger District
Joni Brazier – Forest Soil Scientist, Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest
Josh Bronson – Plant Pathologist, Pacific Northwest Region, Forest Health Protection
Clint Emerson – Forest Botanist, Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest
Chamise Kramer – Forest Service Special Affairs Specialist, Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest
Brian Long – Recreation Program Manager, Siskiyou Mountains Ranger District
Robert Marshall – Fire Management Officer, Siskiyou Mountains Ranger District
Rob MacWhorter – Forest Supervisor, Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest
Donna Mickley – District Ranger, Siskiyou Mountains Ranger District
Bill Schaupp – Entomologist, Pacific Northwest Region, Forest Health Protection
Jan Curtis-Tollestrup – Hydrologist, Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest

City of Ashland:

Chris Chambers – Forestry Division Chief, Ashland Fire and Rescue
Jeff McFarland – Open Space & Outer Parks Supervisor, Parks and Recreation Department
Stefani Seffinger – City Councilor
John Stromberg – Mayor

Pit River Tribe

Radley Davis – Illmawi Band, Cultural Specialist
Mickey Gemmill – Madesi Band, Tribal Chairman
Belinda Brown – Kosealekte Band, Ecocultural Specialist/Traditional Ecological Technician
Virginia Mike-Mercado – Ajumawi Band, Ecocultural Specialist/Traditional Ecological Technician

The Nature Conservancy:

Kerry Metlen – Forest Ecologist

Klamath Bird Observatory:

Jaime Stephens – Science Director

US Fish and Wildlife Service:

Dave Johnson – Partners Program, Biologist

Southern Oregon Forest Restoration Collaborative

Blair Moody – Fellow, Society of American Forester and Presidential Field Forester

Ashland Trails Association:

Torsten Heycke – President



Accomplishment Tracking – 2017			
Dates of work	Hours	Per Site Activity Quantification	Project site name, Partners and Location
Throughout Program	1,200	Orientation and Educational Components	Lomakatsi, USFS, USFWS, TNC, NRCS, KBO, City of Ashland, Members of the Pit River Tribe
7/17, 8/2	240	200 acres of tree raking, preparing legacy trees for prescribed burning	AFR C20, AFR 16d
7/11, 7/12	240	7 acres of slash piling, prepared for burn	AFR 522
7/13, 7/27	160	31 wildlife piles created on 150 acres	Bear property (AFAR), LaCoste/Colestin
7/26, 7/27	180	21 acres of restoration maintenance	Siskiyou Mtn. Park/CoA, LaCoste/Colestin
7/31, 8/1, 8/3	180	1.25 mile of trail construction and maintenance	AFR Rickety Trail
7/20	100	Native plant nursery care and propagation (for future riparian restoration projects)	Lomakatsi's Shade House
7/19, 7/20	150	.5 mile of riparian restoration maintenance	Willow Wind School, and Lone Pine Creek
7/20	60	.25 acre of pollinator habitat maintenance	Willow Wind School
7/25	120	10 acres of native seed collection (for future restoration projects)	AFR