



Audubon

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Two Projects in Oregon Receive *TogetherGreen* Innovation Grants

Audubon/Toyota Funding will put Firewood to work for Birds in Klamath Falls and Recruit Medford residents to bring Bear Creek back to life

New York, NY, October 19, 2011 – Two Oregon Audubon groups are the recipients of over \$54,000 in *TogetherGreen* Innovation Grants funding, provided through an alliance between National Audubon Society and Toyota. This program provides financial support for projects that use innovative approaches and technologies to engage new and diverse audiences in conservation and tackle pressing conservation problems.

"Never underestimate ingenuity and innovation. The approaches that will help us tackle the enormous environmental challenges confronting us today are going to come from unlikely and unpredictable places," said Audubon President David Yarnold. "Each Innovation Grant project is an opportunity for Audubon to partner with local organizations to test and implement creative approaches to build healthier communities and achieve significant conservation results. And as our alliance with Toyota shows, when organizations work together, we can exponentially magnify our impact."

Brief descriptions of the two winning projects follow:

- [Klamath Basin Audubon Society](#) and its partners will work to "feed many birds with one seed." They'll restore oak woodlands, providing better habitat for birds and other wildlife by removing encroaching junipers. By turning those junipers into firewood instead of burning them in slash piles, they'll reduce overall greenhouse gas emissions. And they'll provide low-income families dependent on firewood to heat their homes with a free source of wood for the winter. Meanwhile, families receiving the firewood will learn about the connection between their firewood supply, habitat, and climate change; local landowners will learn of the value of the native oak woodlands; and the project team will conduct art and science programs focused on the woodland restoration for local teens. Habitat restoration, affordable heat, greenhouse gas reduction, and environmental education.
- [Rogue Valley Audubon Society](#) will partner with Lomakatsi Restoration Project, the City of Medford Tree Committee, Logos Charter School and others to restore the degraded habitat of the Bear Creek watershed, home to over 160 bird species and a dwindling population of wild Coho salmon. Teams of volunteers will improve plant diversity and the riparian forest within Bear Creek Park in Medford, augmenting native vegetation and tree cover to shade the creek. Over time this will help lower the water temperature and provide a more

hospitable aquatic environment—a vital step if salmon are to continue spawning in the stream. Student volunteers will learn how human impact has altered the creek and what they can do to protect it. They'll use social media to communicate their stewardship activities. Volunteers will clear debris, remove invasive plants, plant native flora, monitor water quality, measure plant growth and provide ongoing maintenance. Sixty percent of all Rogue Valley residents live along the creek. By engaging volunteers and especially youth from throughout the community as Trail Blazers, Stream Stewards, Water Rangers and Social Media Mobilizers, the project team hopes a new generation of stewards will also be spawned to bring Bear Creek back to health.

This funding will help us reach a cross section of Klamath Falls residents about the oaks and the source of the firewood they receive as part of the oak habitat improvement,” said Darrel Samuels, Vice President, Klamath Audubon Society. “We'll involve high school students in a study of oak woodlands from both scientific and artistic viewpoints, and we'll reach out to private landowners with information and suggested actions for improving their forest habitats. Habitat benefits, birds benefit, families benefit, and students will learn in the outdoors.”

“Bear Creek is the lifeblood of our valley. The TogetherGreen grant is making it possible for us to address some of the challenges facing this tributary and engage our community in its revitalization,” said Mary Sinclair, Rogue Valley Audubon Society member. “By restoring the riparian forest that once existed and provided shade to the creek, our efforts will benefit the many fish and bird species that depend upon this habitat for their survival. And we'll gain a beautiful haven right in the middle of downtown Medford.”

Since 2008, the *TogetherGreen* Innovation Grants program has awarded over \$4.7 million to more than 160 environmental projects nationwide. The 2011 awardees are receiving grants ranging from \$5,000 - \$50,000. Funds were awarded to partnerships, mostly between Audubon groups (local Chapters or programs of Audubon's large national network) and organizations in their communities. This year's grant projects involve more than 150 partner organizations nationwide. Many of the projects focus on engaging audiences that have traditionally been under-served by the conservation movement, from urban youth to rural ranchers.

For complete details about the 2011 *TogetherGreen* Innovation Grants projects, please visit: www.togethergreen.org/grants.

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About *TogetherGreen*

Audubon and Toyota launched the five-year *TogetherGreen* initiative in 2008 to build the promise of a greener, healthier future through innovation, leadership and volunteerism. For more information, visit www.togethergreen.org.

About Audubon

Now in its second century, Audubon connects people with birds, nature and the environment that supports us all. Our national network of community-based nature centers, chapters, scientific, education, and advocacy programs engages millions of people from all walks of life in conservation action to protect and restore the natural world. Visit Audubon online at www.audubon.org.

About Toyota

Toyota (NYSE: TM) established operations in the United States in 1957 and currently operates 10 manufacturing plants, including one under construction. Toyota directly employs nearly 30,000 people in the U.S. and its investment here is currently valued at more than \$18 billion, including sales and manufacturing operations, research and development, financial services and design.

Toyota is committed to being a good corporate citizen in the communities where it does business and believes in supporting programs with long-term sustainable results. Toyota supports numerous organizations across the country, focusing on education, the environment and safety. Since 1991, Toyota has contributed over half a billion dollars to philanthropic programs in the U.S.

For more information on Toyota's commitment to improving communities nationwide, visit

<http://www.toyota.com/community>.