2014 METRO NATURE IN NEIGHBORHOODS

CONSERVATION EDUCATION GRANT PRE-APPLICATION FORM

Date of application	January 10, 2013 DRAFT
Organization name	**Urban Greenspaces Institute**
Organization address and website	[redacted] www.urbangreenspaces.org
Program contact Name, title, phone, email	Mike Houck, Director [redacted]
Program title	**Oakquest: collaborative mapping and stewardship of Oregon white oak**
Program summary Provide a 20-45-word summary that describes your program.	Oakquest will enable 50+ citizen scientists to become active stewards in the mapping and conservation of imperiled Oregon white oak ecosystems. This effort will fill a critical information gap identified in the Regional Conservation Strategy and support career training in natural resources for two Native American college students.
Category Under which program category does your program best fit? (Select all that apply).	Community Partnerships Environmental Literacy Develop Conservation Leaders
Estimated funding	Estimated amount requested: $25,000 Estimated match funds: $40,000 in pending grant requests to National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and Oregon Wildlife Heritage Foundation Estimated in-kind match: $28,000 from volunteer hours, and donated staff time from West Multnomah and Tualatin SWCDs, City of Portland Parks & BES, Tualatin Hills and North Clackamas PRDs, and Kingfisher Ecological Services. Estimated total program budget: $93,000

Organizational preparedness	Oakquest builds on momentum of the successful The Intertwine Alliance Oak Mapping Work Group (OMWG), which includes 16 active partners and over $30,000 in committed match to date. Over the past two years, the OMWG has developed a preliminary assessment, set goals, and identified methods, partners, and resources to support Oakquest. By March 2014 the OMWG will adopt a declaration of cooperation specifying shared resources and personnel to support Oakquest, share data, and develop oak distribution maps for the region. Key partners in the Oakquest effort include Urban Greenspaces Institute (UGI), Kingfisher Ecological Services (KES), Native American Youth and Family Center (NAYA), and Metro. UGI will serve as fiscal sponsor, Metro is developing draft oak distribution maps, and KES will oversee and direct the volunteer effort with assistance from Native Youth team leaders and NAYA. Other OMWG partners will assist with recruitment, training, and orientation of citizen scientist volunteers within their respective service areas. Key Oakquest individuals who will manage Oakquest include Ted Labbe (KES), Mike Houck (UGI), and Kimberlee Chambers (NAYA). Under contract to UGI, Ted Labbe will coordinate the volunteer mapping effort, lead trainings, mentor team leaders, and summarize collected data for UGI, Metro, and OMWG partners. With 20 years of experience in natural resources, Ted has organized and led previous citizen science ventures on behalf of Tribes, WDFW, and his consulting firm Kingfisher Ecological Services LLC. Kimberlee Chambers (NAYA) will recruit, hire, and mentor two college-age Native youth to serve as Oakquest team leaders, who will assist with training and leading volunteers in the field. Kimberlee is a teacher and youth mentor at NAYA, focused on sustainability and indigenous food systems. Lori Hennings (Metro) will assist with convening OMWG partners for check-ins on project progress and guide development of draft oak maps. Lori is a senior natural resources scientist with 20 years experience in wildlife and habitat conservation, project management, large-scale biological research, and multi-partner natural resources planning and management. In 2011, Ted and Lori convened the OMWG and began planning and outreach to partners. In 2013, Ted and Lori developed a preliminary assessment pairing field and remote sensing data to map Oregon white oak. Both Lori and Ted have already contributed hundreds of hours to this effort with assistance and input from the OMWG.

Program description

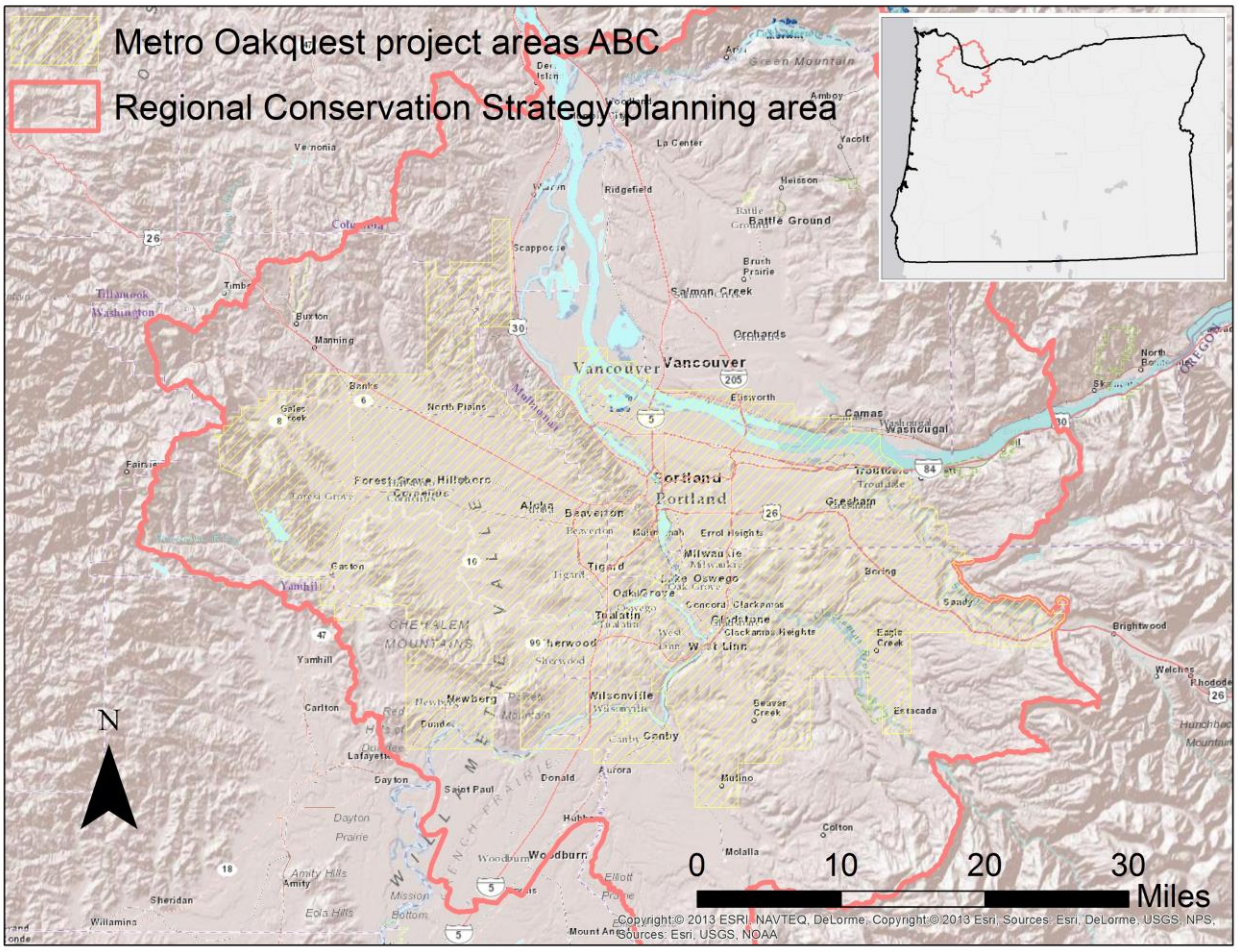
Program narrative	Oakquest will engage 50+ citizen scientist volunteers to raise the community profile of and help map imperiled Oregon white oak habitat across the Portland, Oregon metropolitan region. Oakquest addresses a critical information gap identified by the Regional Conservation Strategy: accurate, detailed maps of

	threatened oak ecosystems. Oakquest addresses this need through active public engagement, community mapping, and environmental education to improve oak conservation outcomes, consistent with the environmental education goals of UGI, Metro, park districts, and other OMWG partners. Currently, KES is developing a custom Oakquest smartphone application based on open-source collaborative mapping software, while Metro is refining a draft oak distribution map from remote sensing and preliminary OMWG data. By April 2014 we will have these tools completed and paired together, ready for a summer 2014 Oakquest community mapping effort. Beginning late spring 2014 project partners will promote Oakquest, encouraging those interested to RSVP for a June training event. In May, we will hire and train two college-age Native American youth pursuing natural resource management careers through NAYA's networks. NAYA "team leaders" will work with KES to train, organize, and lead volunteers during the July-August mapping effort. Through trainings and networking, KES and team leaders will organize teams of 3-5 volunteers, each with access to at least one smartphone or GPS unit. During the two month-long effort KES and NAYA team leaders will support and problem-solve with volunteers, monitor progress, and direct teams to neighborhoods with undocumented oak. At the conclusion of Oakquest, KES and team leaders will summarize and deliver data to UGI, Metro, and other OMWG partners. In October, OMWG partners will host a volunteer appreciation celebration where preliminary oak maps and results are unveiled. Oakquest's 50+ volunteers, each contributing at least 3 field days of 4 hours duration will log a minimum total of 600 volunteer hours. Volunteer trainees will learn about Oregon white oak ecology and conservation, to better serve as "oak ambassadors" during the field mapping phase when encountering property owners with oak. Native American team leaders will receive on-the-job training in GPS/GIS/databases, volunteer management, and natural resources conservation. Native team leaders will be housed in an OMWG partner field office to facilitate cross-training and career networking opportunities. Through collaborative oak mapping, participants will build community support for conservation of this natural legacy and enable informed conservation management decision-making by OMWG partners and landowners.
Goals	The projects goals are to: • Connect citizens to natural resources in their neighborhood through education, technical training, and direct engagement in the mapping project. • Provide employment and intensive conservation, technical, and leadership training for two young adults from local Native American communities. • Increase public-private conservation partnerships. • Refine draft oak maps for future conservation efforts. Oakquest map products will be used to define conservation corridors, plan future land acquisitions, and guide habitat management/restoration, thereby strengthening the capacity of the region's natural resource agencies to conserve

	threatened Oregon white oak ecosystems. Oakquest achieves multiple Metro NIN program objectives: building community partnerships, supporting environmental literacy, and developing conservation leaders. Training two college-age Native American youth in natural resources will develop future conservation leaders and form partnerships with an underserved community closely connected to the cultural and ecological legacy of Oregon white oak. The 50+ citizen science participants will gain firsthand experience and literacy in oak habitat conservation, management, and mapping. Pairing mobile mapping technology, community engagement, and a strong conservation mission, Oakquest serves as a model for future collaborative conservation in the region. Oakquest is founded on firm partnerships, evident in the number of active OMWG partners and their significant contributions. Oakquest will be successful because we will: • Draw on the collective expertise and resources of OMWG members • Harness community interest in icons of an imperiled ecosystem • Offer volunteers training, feedback, and active oversight • Show participants and partners how their efforts improve oak conservation opportunities over the long-term Oakquest effectiveness will be measured by the number of active citizen scientist volunteers, the number and distribution of mapped remnant oak patches, and by education and career outcomes for our two Native American youth team leaders. Ultimately, Oakquest will be deemed a success when citizen-generated oak maps are adopted and used to improve natural resources management capacity of Metro region agencies and landowners.
Partnerships	This request builds on past OMWG partnership success and will support: outreach to additional community partners, employment for two Native American college-age team leaders, training and oversight for 50+ citizen scientists, and completion of a project summary/lessons learned report. Funding for a contract biologist and two Native American youth team leaders is critical to our success – we cannot leverage or manage our volunteer resources without it. Project partners are seeking additional grant funds to extend Oakquest into 2015, and to support a start date prior to July 1, 2014. However, the project is still viable without these supplemental funds. <u>Existing OMWG partners</u>: Confederated Tribes of the Grande Ronde; Native American Youth and Family Center; Tualatin Hills and North Clackamas Park and Recreation Districts; City of Portland Parks and BES; West Multnomah, East Multnomah, Clackamas, and Tualatin Soil and Water Conservation Districts; Metro; ODFW; Portland Audubon Society; PSU Institute for Natural Resources; Urban Greenspaces Institute; and Kingfisher Ecological Services LLC. <u>Additional Oakquest partners/networks</u>: watershed councils, Urban Ecosystem Research Consortium, and neighborhood oak groups (~5-6 across the region)

Location and program reach

Oakquest will direct citizen scientists to map oak in urban, suburban, and fringing rural areas within the boundary of the Metro regional service district area. In these settings, remnant Oregon white oak has a fragmented distribution, is difficult to identify using remote sensing alone, and is frequently visible from public right-of-ways.

We will recruit citizen scientists through our existing OMWG partners, and through additional targeted Oakquest partner networks (see lists above). Oakquest will draw volunteers from across the Metro service region to map oaks in their respective neighborhoods. We will use the trainings to identify and organize teams of volunteers to work within a defined geography (ideally their neighborhood). Each team will include at least two adults of college-age or older, but could also include mature youth with a supervising parent in attendance.

To recruit college-age Native American students interested in natural resources to serve as team leaders, we will work with the Native American Youth and Family Center (NAYA). This targeted recruitment process will enable us to tap into their existing student networks, identify suitable individuals, and draw on their expertise on how to successfully mentor Tribal young people for future careers in natural resources.