

41

PRE-APPLICATION FORM**Nadaka 2020 Conservation Education & Stewardship Programming**

Date of application	January 14, 2014
Organization names	Fiscal Agent: Columbia Slough Watershed Council Collaborating Organizations: Columbia Slough Watershed Council, Audubon Society of Portland, Human Solutions, St. Aiden's Church, Outgrowing Hunger, Friends of Nadaka, and the City of Gresham
Organization address and website	7040 NE 47th Ave, Portland, OR 97218 [REDACTED]
Program contact Name, title, phone, email	[REDACTED]
Program title	Nadaka 2020 Conservation Education and Stewardship Programming
Program summary Provide a 20-45-word summary that describes your program.	Provide multicultural conservation education and stewardship programming including a natural history ambassador/foot patrol program as part of a collaborative, 5-year operations, maintenance and programming plan at Nadaka Nature Park. Programming will serve youth, low-income residents, and people of color in Rockwood and throughout West Gresham.
Category Under which program category does your program best fit? (Select all that apply).	Community Partnerships Environmental Literacy Develop Conservation leaders (all-ages)
Estimated funding	Estimated amount requested: \$99,440 Estimated match funds: \$77,500 Estimated in-kind match: \$50,400 Estimated total program budget: \$227,340

Organizational Preparedness and Core Collaborators

Seven organizations will collaborate in delivering Nadaka 2020 education and stewardship programming. The relevant managing directors of all collaborating organizations have reviewed this letter of interest and agree to develop a final grant proposal. This section outlines the organizational preparedness of each collaborating organization and details their specific role in Nadaka 2020 programming.

Columbia Slough Watershed Council (CSWC): CSWC is a diverse group of neighbors, property owners, businesses, environmental groups, recreation advocates, and government agencies who work to restore and enhance the 60 miles of waterways known as the Columbia Slough. CSWC is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization with a 20-year record ([http://columbiaslough.org/files/uploads/CSWC Annual Report 12-13.pdf](http://columbiaslough.org/files/uploads/CSWC%20Annual%20Report%2012-13.pdf)) of accomplishments. As part of Nadaka 2020, CSWC will be the fiscal agent, will employ the half-time Nadaka Park Coordinator, and play a lead role in hiring and managing this position. The Nadaka Park Coordinator will play a central role in coordinating, scheduling, supporting, and in some cases hosting and managing education and stewardship programs in collaboration with partnering organizations. CSWC will also provide educational programming at Nadaka related to water and watersheds and contract with Audubon and Outgrowing Hunger in providing other educational programming.

Human Solutions (HS): Human Solutions has provided services to homeless and low-income families and individuals in East Portland and East Multnomah County since 1988. HS services assist over 55,000 people each year to overcome homelessness and/or poverty to become self-sufficient. These services include overcoming and preventing homelessness, anti-poverty services, energy assistance, employment training, and affordable housing. HS owns and operates affordable housing including 702 apartment units in East Portland and East Multnomah County. As part of Nadaka 2020, HS will be a primary liaison to HS residents in the Rockwood Town Center. The HS Residential Coordinators Committee will be a vital link for strategically engaging the community in education and stewardship programming. HS will also assist in recruiting and hiring the Nadaka Park Coordinator.

Audubon Society of Portland (ASoFP): ASoFP is a non-profit organization that has provided conservation education and advocacy in Oregon for over 100 years. ASoFP has done some educational programming at Nadaka since 2008; programming has increased since opening up its eastside branch office at Leach Botanical Garden in 2010. As part of Nadaka 2020, ASoFP will provide natural history and wildlife-related education programming including bird walks, bird releases, and educational bird presentations, and other conservation related awareness-building. This will include providing natural history training for Foot Patrol/Natural History Ambassadors.

Outgrowing Hunger (OH): OH is a non-profit organization that seeks to transform unused private, public, and institutional land into neighborhood gardens, where healthy food, resilient community, and economic opportunity spring up together. OH manages community gardens in East Portland and Gresham where they have developed relationships with immigrant and refugee communities. As part of Nadaka 2020, OH will provide classes on farm ecology, gardening, cooking, and food preservation. OH will also be managing the Nadaka Community Garden and thereby provide additional community connections to reach immigrant communities in West Gresham.

St. Aidan's Church (SAC): St. Aidan's Church was founded in 1959 and is located adjacent to Nadaka Nature Park and Garden. SAC has been a very active partner in the Nadaka Nature Park and Garden Project most significantly by providing a space for project and community meetings since 2007. As part of Nadaka 2020, SAC will provide 3 years of office space for the Nadaka Park Coordinator. SAC will provide indoor meeting space and kitchen facilities for the full range of conservation educational programming including cooking and food preservation instruction.

City of Gresham: As part of Nadaka 2020, the City of Gresham will remain the park owner. They will also have a partial role in maintaining the facilities and assist with public outreach for educational programming. City natural resource staff may assist with some educational trainings.

Friends of Nadaka: Friends of Nadaka has organized Nadaka neighbors in environmental stewardship, advocacy and community building since 2007. They will continue in this capacity as part of Nadaka 2020.

Program Description

Background/Context

Nadaka Nature Park and Garden is a unique, community-driven, nature-based neighborhood park project in West Gresham that began in 2007. Over the past 6 years the project has included over two dozen project partners and raised over \$1.5 million in funding to buy land and design and develop a nature-based neighborhood park and garden. The project is also developing a 5-year operations, maintenance, and programming plan for the entire 12-acre Nadaka Nature Park and Garden that will be implemented once major park and natural area improvements are completed by the end of 2014. The plan is called Nadaka 2020 and builds on the vision of the Nadaka Project Declaration of Cooperation.

The Challenge and Opportunity of Nadaka 2020

A major challenge of Nadaka 2020 will be to continue to transform the social environment at Nadaka by establishing a safe and secure atmosphere for the full diversity of local residents to enjoy and benefit from the new nature-based park improvements. The park's service area is home to an exceptionally diverse population of largely low-income residents (See project location and program reach). This community faces chronic social and public health challenges related to high poverty and crime, vandalism, homelessness, and limited access to food and educational opportunities. Operation and maintenance of the new neighborhood park facilities cannot ignore these challenges.

A viable and cost-effective approach to O&M at Nadaka must incorporate a triple-bottom line strategy of improving social, economic, and environmental outcomes and expanding ownership and buy-in of local residents. Nadaka 2020 will detail how and who will maintain and operate the new community garden and nature-based play area, pathway, restrooms, covered picnic area, ecolawn, landscaped areas, environmental interpretation and signage, and natural area. However with NIN grant funding, Nadaka 2020 promises to be more than an O&M plan. It will also engage culturally diverse residents of West Gresham in environmental learning and stewardship opportunities focused on watersheds, wildlife and urban agriculture/food access. By integrating operation and maintenance with local employment and conservation education programming, Nadaka 2020 can help address urgent community needs while providing a variety of positive activities in the park, and- thereby- build community ownership and reduce the costs from crime and vandalism. In a broader context of East Multnomah County, Nadaka 2020 will strive to make Nadaka Nature Park and Garden an example of a fully-resourced park and recreational facility that advances urgent community development needs and thereby demonstrate, inspire, and build a constituency for similar investments in East Multnomah County and the region.

Multicultural Conservation Education and Stewardship Programming

NIN Conservation Education funding would provide the organizational capacity and resources to support three conservation education and stewardship programs in and around Nadaka Nature Park and Garden. The organizational capacity primarily consists of a three-year, half-time Nadaka Park Coordinator position administered by the Columbia Slough Watershed Council but office space would be provided at St. Aidan's Church. The Nadaka Park Coordinator will work across all collaborating organizations to coordinate, support, and- in some cases- manage- the conservation education and stewardship programs detailed below. In this way funding will advance NIN grant program goals to expand, build, and increase diverse "Community Partnerships." The Coordinator will require training in environmental education and the knowledge and cultural competency to work in ethnically diverse communities. Special effort will be made to hire a qualified individual knowledgeable of the communities in West Gresham. In addition to and separate from the Nadaka Park Coordinator's educational and stewardship coordination responsibilities, the individual may also be hired to manage select O&M tasks and responsibilities. Therefore the Park Coordinator position will also advance the grant program goals to "Develop Conservation Leaders."

The NIN Conservation Education grant would provide resources for the following conservation education and stewardship programs at or near Nadaka Nature Park and Garden:

1. *Multicultural Conservation Education Programming* will the following broad categories:

- *Wildlife and habitat*: Wildlife natural history programming led by ASofP will emphasize birds, habitat enhancement, and biodiversity conservation at Nadaka.
- *Water and watershed stewardship*: hydrology, geology, and ecology of the Columbia Slough Watershed led by the CSWC.
- *Farm ecology, urban agriculture and food access*: OH will provide classes or workshops on farm ecology, pollinators, soil biology; growing and harvesting of vegetables; and preparing vegetables for preservation and consumption.

Programs will focus on engaging and serving youth, low-income residents, and people of color in the Rockwood Town Center, specifically HS residents living in nearby multi-family housing. The Nadaka Park Coordinator would handle all event scheduling, promotion, registration, liability release, and organize necessary event support such as transportation, childcare, translation, food, drink, etc. Classes and events would mostly occur at Nadaka but might also happen at St. Aidan's Church or at Human Solution's Rockwood Building. The frequency and duration of conservation education programming will aim to establish- with the foot patrol/ambassador program- a regular and perceivable community presence at Nadaka. These multicultural conservation education programs advance goal NIN grant program goals for "Environmental Literacy" and expanding, building, increasing diverse "Community Partnerships."

2. *Natural History Ambassador/Foot Patrol Program*. Grant funds will support development and 3-year implementation a natural history ambassador/foot patrol program modeled after successful, 10-year old Friends of Mt. Tabor Foot Patrol program.¹ The program will integrate functions of park monitoring and reporting and natural history interpretation in order provide routine, daily presence in the nature park. All participants will be provided some level of training in cultural competency, natural history, and crime reporting/prevention. Participants will be recruited from the community, serve as volunteers, or- potentially- paid a small stipend to ensure diverse local participation. This program component would advance the grant program goals to "Develop Conservation Leaders."
3. *Natural Resource Stewardship Programming*: Grant funds will support continued planning and implementation of periodic volunteer work days for trash clean up, invasive species removal and native re-vegetation. A small amount of funds will also support development of a long-term desired future condition and revised vegetation management plan for Nadaka that incorporates habitat restoration, laminated root-rot management, climate change, and human use and recreation. This project would be implemented as a service learning project with Mt. Hood Community College, Portland State University, or another educational institution. Finally matching in-kind support will provide naturescaping training (by EMSWCD) or Backyard Habitat Certification (by ASofP) to nearby residents. This program component advances the grant program goals to "Develop Conservation Leaders" and for "Environmental Literacy."

Outcomes & Evaluation

We anticipate evaluating program outcomes in terms of the size and diversity of our volunteer base, participation in the ambassador program, and in the resulting classes. We anticipate asking participants to self-identify their ethnicity or racial identity. We will explore a mechanism for tracking cases of vandalism in the park or local crime statistics. Finally we anticipate tracking natural area stewardship in terms of trash and invasive species removed and native vegetation planted.

¹ http://www.oregonlive.com/news/index.ssf/2010/11/mount_tabor_foot_patrol_celebr.html

Location and Program Reach

Nadaka Park is located in northwest Gresham at 175th and Glisan Street at the edge of Wilkes East and Rockwood Neighborhoods and within the 2040 Plan Rockwood Town Center. The 12-acre neighborhood park contains a 9-acre Douglas fir wooded natural area with a .5 mile developed trail, a 1-acre meadow, and a two-acre undeveloped site with scattered fir trees. The latter was purchased in 2009 and is where the majority of the new neighborhood park facilities will be constructed in summer 2014. The regional Conservation Strategy identifies Nadaka Nature Park as mostly high value habitat at the 1-inch = ¼ mile scale.

Nadaka Park serves historically underserved populations that are younger, more diverse, less affluent and less served by parks and nature than the region as a whole. Indeed, the Rockwood 2040 Town Center is one of the poorest, youngest, and densest town centers in the region.² Large increases in poverty during the 1990s have continued since 2000. A recent study of Gresham's park system noted "Gresham has grown more racially and ethnically diverse since 1990, as people of color increased from 8% of the population to more than 25% in 2005."³ This increasing diversity is concentrated in West Gresham and the Rockwood Neighborhood in particular which is over 40% people of color. A 2011 analysis conducted by Audubon Society of Portland found that new access to the Nadaka Park from the south more than doubled the number of residents (mostly children) served within a half mile and tripled the number of people of color with access within ¼ mile (Table I). Nadaka Park serves roughly 17,500 individuals within one mile. In addition, the Rockwood 2040 Town Center is slated for considerable increases in new development and population under local and regional land-use plans. Additionally, the park is within easy access of public transportation, served directly by public bus and by light rail with ½ mile.

Table I. Population served by Nadaka Nature Park, Gresham, Oregon: Select 2010 Census Demographics by Network Walking Distance-based Service Areas.*

Network Distance Service Area	Service Area In Acres	Total Population Served	% Children Age 0-17	% People of Color
¼ mile	115	1,281	327 (26%)	525 (41%)
½ mile	366	4,645	1,229 (26%)	2,159 (46%)
¾ mile	807	9,997	2,807 (28%)	4,977 (50%)
1 mile	1,416	17,502	5,058 (29%)	8,800 (50%)

* From Table I of a "Demographic access study for Nadaka Nature Park" completed by Ken Radin for Audubon Society of Portland, July 15, 2011.

Many families in Rockwood live in high-density public housing and do not have space to grow their own food. Human Solutions' Rockwood Building (completed 2011) provides 47 new units of affordable rental housing at 181st and East Burnside. Human Solutions also provides residential services at Housing Authority of Portland's Madrona Place (47 units) located at 179th and East Burnside. Both facilities provide permanent affordability for families or individuals earning 60% or below the area median income within ¼ mile walking distance from Nadaka. Local surveys indicate the planned community garden is highly valued by families interested in growing affordable healthy food. The provision of a group picnic shelter at the park was in direct response to a desire of the Latino community to provide a place where large families can gather.

² State of the Centers Report, Metro, 2011; www.equityatlas.org

³ *Our Parks Our Future Feasibility Study*, City of Gresham, Trust for Public Land, September 2010.

Nadaka Maps

