

Oregon Environmental Literacy Task Force

Friday, September 30th, 2011– 1:00pm to 4:00pm

Department of Forestry - State Forester's Office

2600 State St., Salem, Oregon 97310

Present:

Carolyn Devine, Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board

Traci Price, Task Force Chair

John Sheehan, Metro

Jon Yoder, Salem-Keizer School District

Lori Stole, Sustainable Oregon Schools Initiative

Jim Quiring, Tillamook Forest Center & Department of Forestry

Bora Simmons, National Project for Excellence in Environmental Education

Brent Searle, Oregon Department of Agriculture

Jeri Chase, Public Affairs Representative for the Oregon Department of Forestry

On the phone:

Pat Willis, 4H

Susan Cross, Jefferson Nature Center

Greg Smith, Lewis & Clark College

Nancee Hunter, Oregon Sea Grant at Hatfield Marine Science Center

Lara Christensen, Gray Family Fund of Oregon Community Foundation

Update on NCLI:

*Summary – the federal legislation (S. 1372/H.R. 2547) is still plodding along. You can track which Oregon representatives are co-sponsors at www.thomas.gov. (*There are currently NO Oregon co-sponsors signed on). Best way to help is to continue to share programs with your representatives and encourage them to co-sponsor – don't underestimate the impact this has in D.C.! Stay connected by joining monthly action network phone calls organized by the North American Association of Environmental Education (<http://www.naaee.net/advocacy>) - email advocacy@naaee.org to be added to the call notice list.*

Lori – what is the connection of NCLI to the Green Ribbon Schools Award program (<http://www2.ed.gov/programs/green-ribbon-schools/index.html>)?

Bora – there is some connection to environmental literacy – includes support for “Environmental & Sustainability Education” including STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math)

Lori – the program will be administered through state departments of education – but there is no indication of who at the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) will support it

Integration of OELP in Southern Oregon

Summary – the Southern Oregon Regional Environmental Educator Leadership network (SOREEL) has prioritized integration of the Oregon Environmental Literacy Plan (OELP) in programs and teacher professional development.

Susan - SOREEL (with support from Linda Hilligoss at SOU) submitted and received a Gray Family grant to support a teacher professional development Institute held last month. The institute was designed to introduce teachers to the OELP and to regional providers – who conducted field trips to local sites to increase teacher familiarity with local resources – Crater Lake, Farm to School sites, North Mountain Park. SOREEL partners are continually trying to bring the OELP into planning in programs – a goal that SOREEL set-up to align partners for future. The local newspaper released an article last week about the OELP and the funding challenges of local providers (<http://www.mailtribune.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20110916/NEWS/109160336>).

John S – can you give us a case study of how providers link to the OELP?

Susan – people are looking at the strands. The OELP is pretty vague in terms of specifics, so people are looking for places to use the strands like they use the state standards. A group of people are exploring ways to link the OELP to Parks & Recreation and the Farm to School initiative more directly through the “healthy living” component. Linda Hilligoss is also working with pre-service teachers and using the OELP in their learning spectrum.

Greg – be sure to connect with Ryan King, a pre-service teacher who formally taught at Al Kennedy High School in Cottage Grove.

Governor’s Office Update

Summary – Ben Cannon was recently appointed to serve as Governor Kitzhaber’s Education Advisor. Ben is a former co-sponsor of the NOCLI Act. A small committee of former NOCLI task force members (and others) are in the process of scheduling a meeting with Ben to seek an Executive Order from the Governor to establish the Environmental Literacy Council to formally oversee implementation of the OELP.

John S – Ben Cannon, former legislator for southern Portland, is Kitzhaber’s new education advisor. He just started Sept. 6th. We are hoping to schedule a meeting by the end of October. Spoke with his new assistant this morning on her third day on the job. Things are still coming together but we’re optimistic that we can get on his schedule.

Greg – He [Ben] taught at the Arbor School and should be on board with this.

Traci – We'll follow up with the small committee to determine who will participate in the meeting.

John S – wondered about waivers for No Child Left Behind (NCLB) in Oregon and how this will impact the department
(<http://www2.ed.gov/nclb/freedom/local/flexibility/index.html>)

Susan – Southern Oregon representative said it would destroy his district

Greg – the waivers are shifting attention away from schools and test scores to teachers and test scores – creating more emphasis on testing

Lori – the Oregon Education Association (OEA) supports it

Jon – hasn't seen the proposal for exactly what the waiver would entail

Greg – FairTest (<http://www.fairtest.org/>) website offers a response to the administration's proposal

Jon – saw something about the inclusion of science

Greg – much stronger emphasis on STEM

Jon - emphasis on STEM has good and bad side of the coin

Greg – question on creative service learning – Ed Armstrong and Pete Ready's work – attempt to connect the OELP with service learning?

Lori – understands that Learn & Serve funding has stopped for ODE. Has been working to organize a meeting with ODE. The meeting is next week with Bora, Lori, Jon and Traci meeting with Theresa Richards (Director of Teaching & Learning/Systems Management & Coordination). We can bring up service learning with Theresa.

Education Standards Report

Summary – a small committee of dedicated professionals met over the summer to align the OELP strands with Oregon educational standards. The result shows support for the OELP strands across subjects, common core curriculum and graduation requirements. This work further refined and modified the proposed OELP strands. Follow-up will be required to avoid confusion between the original OELP strands and the recently revised strands. Original task force members should expect to see a modified Chapter 3 from the OELP. Their approval on the revised strands will be sought.

Bora – we have been working for the last 8-9 months on alignment between the OELP strands and state standards, creating a draft "crosswalk". Started with

science standards and worked across all subjects including essential skills. A committee of eleven professionals reviewed the draft crosswalk during a summit over the summer – they critiqued and fixed the draft. I refined and drafted a 150-page document of our alignment work. The alignment was crossed between OELP strands (and elements or the subcategories of the strands) and science (K-12), social studies (3,5,8,12) educational technology, physical education, essential skills, work sample assessment rubrics, literacy, and mathematics – it's a huge report. We also created an "At-a-Glance" document that just shows the standard #s – for curriculum developers, teachers, teams of teachers to use as a reference tool. Shows that environmental literacy is everywhere – there's something everywhere in the standards; strong connections with science, social studies, ed technology & essential skills. Thinner support in other areas. Not talking about something that's extra-curricular but something that you can integrate. The committee identified 2 issues: how do we share this with people? How do we accommodate for the OELP as a living document – revising chapters, editing strands – without confusing people?

Greg – how does this interface with the Common Core Standards?
(<http://www.corestandards.org/>)

Bora – alignment with literacy & mathematics – those crosswalks are included in the big alignment document. Just as the document was finished the board of ODE approved new social studies standards for K-12 which are substantially different than existing ones. There will need to be alignment between the OELP and the new standards. With Core Science – they probably won't be out for another year and it will depend whether Oregon signs on but we've tried to anticipate where the alignment will be.

Brent – how do we keep the emphasis on getting kids outside, in hands-on, place-based education? Are we reinforcing book learning?

Bora – we get there in professional development (PD) and resources for teachers. It's baby steps...you have to start by connecting to the standards. NCLB won't go away, the crosswalks make it possible for teachers to do it. How they implement the standards will determine how they are taking kids outside. The alignment doc doesn't speak to getting kids outside. It's narrow but shows how they can create those experiences. PD is the crux.

Greg – the standards become so specific it's restrictive in taking teachers away from book learning. On each 5th day of the week some teachers are trying to create community investigations – only way was to carve out the one-day to do the work they really want to.

Jon – part of PD is showing teachers how to work with the standards in an authentic way – they have to see examples and how it plays out – would suggest

an introductory piece to the alignment doc to describe the importance of getting the kids outside.

Greg – these teachers are feeling incredibly constrained

Jon – it's difficult but we have to find the examples – even where the exemplars are struggling

Bora – you can use environmental literacy as the over-arching theme – if you are a teacher who has the skills to develop the instructional practice, you can cover more than one standard at a time and do it successfully. It goes back to traditional PD where teachers often feel like they need to address one standard at a time.

Jon – GLAD units (<http://www.projectglad.com/>) in Elementary Schools are using materials that help them cross subjects

Bora – willingness of teachers and administrators can add up to something big and bold

John S – the alignment work can come with a warning: “Not to be administered indoors”

Bora – any suggestions for where to share the alignment work?

Brent – where would teachers look for this?

Bora – maybe we table inclusion on ODE's website until after we've met with ODE to determine potential for posting it. It will need to be broken down by grade/subject to make it searchable so that people can find the pieces that they need.

Traci – will email Stephanie Parks to see about posting it on the task force's page of ODE's site (<http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/page/?id=2886>)

Jeri – using pdfs and links might help teachers get directly to the piece they want

John S – wouldn't it be great to have a searchable database?

Traci – mentioned the Environmental Education Association of Oregon's (EEAO) Resource Directory (<http://directory.eeao.org/>). Will connect Bora with Rick Reynolds (Resource Directory contractor) to post info on Resource Directory and explore potential for searchable options.

Bora – The committee found redundancy and confusion in the original OELP strands – re-organizing made more sense. In the alignment process, the strands

were edited to make them more understandable – worked with Lori and other folks to refine the strands. The strands are now different from the original OELP – interested in a “formal blessing” from original task force members for the changes. It’s shorter and far less convoluted. After a bit more tinkering – the document will be sent out to original task force members to take a look to become official new strands.

Brent – doesn’t see the economic connect; looking for economics, jobs connection

Bora – still part of strand 2 – social, cultural, economic – that strand didn’t change – part of the human systems strand

Lori – can be inserted in “()” to describe the systems as including economy and jobs

Carolyn – it would be important from a state agency perspective to include jobs and economy – very vivid, and important to stress

Jon – we’ll need to change the original OELP in addition to the alignment docs

Bora – we can further describe economy & jobs in the gray shaded space in the At-a-Glance document

Greg – maybe more plausible place to insert economy and jobs under At-a-Glance strand 3

John S – could be confusing for people to use the OELP and the crosswalks if the strands are different

Bora – the concepts are not changed – the ordering and organizing has changed – will pull “(economic, political, social)” piece into the At-a-Glance doc

Carolyn – logistics moving forward with 2 different pieces?

Bora – the PD chapter of the OELP will also change over time

Lori – maybe the plan can be posted by chapter so that it’s easier to update?

Bora – it’s a living document that will evolve over time

Jon – important that it doesn’t change weekly

Bora – practical perspective – we want the strands to be as stable as possible – changing a single word means the crosswalk has to change. As Core Science standards come out we’ll want to review the strands again.

John S – when the council comes into play one of their tasks will have to be determining how the edits and versions happen

All – recommendation would be for an official annual review of the plan

Bora – can include explanation about the changes from the original OELP in introduction to the alignment work in addition to the emphasis on getting kids outside

Carolyn – we can create a new Chapter 3 and refer people to that in addition to the original OELP

Bora – we can insert a new Chapter 3 once it's agreed upon with the new date; in the meantime, we can share the At-a-Glance doc on ODE's site

Brent – back to the introduction – include the essential underpinnings of environmental literacy (pg 14, OELP) in the intro to the alignment work

Bora – will integrate the bigger philosophical piece from the OELP into the introduction

Teacher Professional Development

Summary – a contract with Susan Sahnaw, OSU's Oregon Natural Resources Education Program, has been initiated. Susan has proposed a set of exploratory questions for convening a small and large working group. Meeting participants encouraged cross-referencing with Wolfree, Jon Yoder's work with the Great Lakes Stewardship Initiative (<http://www.glstewardship.org/>), and ensuring that PD reflects a broad lens for environmental literacy.

Traci – provided an overview on Susan's planned work and contract

Greg – how about Wolfree's work?

Traci – may attend an upcoming Wolfree meeting – will make sure to connect with Rick and Dale

Lori – identify groups providing PD in the formal world

Brent – in the spirit of broad interests – the make-up of the group is important; ensure that the group is diverse

Greg – one of the things to look at is PD that is sustained and deep; being aware that there's not a very good track record, look for a process that is likely to achieve its goals

Jon – include site visits, collaborative cohort groups, etc

Carolyn – expensive to do sustained/deep PD – identify some funders to find out what might they be interested in – if they're not involved from the beginning there's not as much hope for funding

Brent – part of the challenge: people who fund things have a perspective. They generally want what they fund to include their perspective – farm funder wants teachers to visit and understand farms. If it's an environmental group they might have a different perspective. Not sure how we balance that out. Encourage folks to appreciate the broad sense and not get stuck in one track.

Jon – can Susan provide more info as things move forward – agendas, plans, etc.?

Greg – asked Jon about Great Lakes Stewardship Initiative

Jon – they have ongoing “hub” [regional] professional development

Greg – is that a model that we could apply here?

Jon – hubs have been able to adapt what they do through a regional lens – money through utilities

Oregon Community Foundation: Community Field of Interest Fund/Program

Summary – while there are many moving parts within the proposals to establish a Community Field of Interest (CFOI) fund at the Oregon Community Foundation (OCF), the ultimate goal for this work would be to demonstrate united community support for cultivating an environmentally literate citizenry. OCF responds to community needs – this may be a first for the extended environmental literacy sector (non-profits, K-12, higher ed, agency providers, etc) to express a unified voice for supporting the necessary and coordinated structure (regional networks) and local implementation of activities (programs, assessment, teacher PD, etc) aligned with the OELP. Two main barriers implementing the OELP include coordination and funding. The CFOI has the potential to resolve both of these challenges and to ensure the long-term sustainability and integration of the OELP. The Early Childhood Program at OCF began as a CFOI and is now a priority program with staff. The Environmental Literacy Program Proposal is intended to project what may follow if we successfully launch the CFOI. The only way that the CFOI will come to fruition is through collective investment from our sector. The time to act is now – talk to your networks to find out what they want the CFOI to support and inspire them to participate in creating a mechanism that will enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of our broad sector.

Traci – as a reminder, a CFOI is unaffiliated with any one organization and anyone can contribute (individuals, foundations, agencies, etc). The

Environmental Literacy CFOI proposal has passed its first hurdle with OCF. Next steps require pulling in partners who can help move this idea into action.

Lara – having the CFOI at OCF can help to leverage funds for the sector. Housed at OCF, the fund would benefit from a wide spectrum of political support. CFOI's are not OCF's favorite funds, they're difficult but they do good things for the community that creates it. CFOI's are established by a group of people and require OCF to be accountable to that community – makes it higher maintenance. Anybody can donate. CFOIs are established with advisory boards of 5-15 people. CFOI boards typically meet and review grants from their community – committee makes 4.5% payout on capital to grantees. If community isn't well organized or successful in bringing in enough funding for a reasonable payout the CFOI just sits there. Draft proposal passed first hoop because of the community of support (task force, partners, etc), and partnership with the Governor. Lara has testified that the "Council" (us) is committed to this work with a timeline for implementation – plan for moving the pieces forward. Next steps – what kind of originating payout rate do we want to walk away with each year? Start with \$500K-1 million.

John S – interested in the 4.5% payout - can OCF guarantee this?

Lara – it's based on 10% of investments – yes.

Greg – do we need a minimum amount to start?

Lara - \$50,000

Greg - sounds like this could make OCF a different foundation – more like Kellogg – with a particular interest – would this make OCF different than it currently is or wants to be?

Lara – OCF has priorities including "livability" – environment usually falls in this category. Environmental education [including environmental literacy] has bridged all 4 of OCF's goals. Lara's position exists because of donor interest, the Gray Family and other funders. The Early Childhood Program is similar – a response to a push in our state for stronger early childhood. It started as a CFOI and became a program. The Gray family would like to see support for environmental education as a larger part of discretionary funds. One of the goals of the Gray family is to steer OCF as a whole in this direction. Our work would help make environmental ed more of a main goal for OCF.

Greg – is OCF receptive to this push?

Lara – many donors have demonstrated support – as a whole, we're in a good time to move forward with this. OCF board has supporters like Duncan Wyse. We have the ability to steer where it goes. The Grays are demonstrating how the

community can leverage funds for particular interests. Not a bad time to try. The Grays could use support from our sector to convince OCF to include environmental education as a formal goal.

Carolyn – how big is the discretionary fund? What is the process for allocation?

Lara – 2 grant cycles with about 250 applications per cycle. Over 1600 volunteers around the state reviewing and prioritizing - \$6 million for the state. CFOI's don't go to discretionary – they are decided on by committee. One reason OCF partners with the state (\$) to effect change.

Brent – does the “environmental education” of the Gray family align with the OELP in its science, broad based application?

Lara – felt challenged by calling it “environmental education” – partly because of the perception of other funders coming on board. Encouraged them to use “ecological education”. Yes, the Grays “environmental education” supports education that is science, place-based, gets kids out and into their community, uses the environment as context, community (natural living). Also supports the traditional Outdoor School model.

Traci – Who should lead development and implementation of the CFOI?

Jon - John Miller, was on SOLV board

Greg – Ernie Levine & Stephanie Fowler

**Lara* – Ernie & Stephanie have a fund that was established at OCF in 2000

John S – good question for Ben Cannon

Carolyn – can talk to some members at large; Dan Thorndike

Brent – it is a dilemma b/c the people I know are the same people that we're soliciting for funds

Traci – we have to figure out a way around that conundrum. It's a matter of rising the tide to float all boats and demonstrate high-level organization and interest from our broad sector.

Carolyn – maybe it's a challenge grant

Jon – maybe it's a percentage that goes to the fund – maybe it's 10% of grants go to the CFOI

Lara – would like to inspire people to what Traci's talking about – individuals/groups may come forward with 1%, birthday gifts, \$1000...that's what

we need. When we can demonstrate that kind of support from the community we can leverage other funders at OCF. It's a framework that helps support bigger picture – shouldn't get in the way with relationships with personal donors.

Pat – Don Smith (Salem) might be able to advise

Brent – Ed Armstrong

Jon – ED's of other non-profits like Audubon

Traci – Advisory Board member recommendations for the CFOI? What sectors should be represented?

Jon – task force members

Pat – Metro started a Conservation Education Leadership Council – maybe someone from that

Jon – geographical representation – maybe regional reps

Lara – you can have rotating positions

Brent – do you have to meet IRS codes?

Lara – yes but not to include specific organizational names

Jon – any issues with agencies serving on it?

Bora – on a board with # of ed (K-12, higher ed, non-formal), # of agency, industry – certain people represented from different sectors

John – formal education, business, corporate

Jon – large industries like Nike, Columbia

Lara – that's where OCF can help – to recruit knowledgeable folks – encouragement to include public sector

Traci – if we can get the executive order from the governor to create an Environmental Literacy Council would the Council and CFOI board be the same? How would they differ?

Bora – maybe there's a huge amount of overlap

Brent – Ag & Timber industry (Weyerhaeuser, Cattlemans Assoc)

Lara – OBA [Oregon Business Association]

Traci - \$ to start the fund? Consider 4.5% of what \$10 million could pay for – imagine the cost of a coordinator (FT~\$50K) + regional coordinators (PT~\$10K/region/8 regions) + regional grant (~\$50K for the region to decide priority activities) = \$450K. If we wanted the fund to support the structure.

Bora – is the fund to disperse a grant program? Or to support the structure and maybe a little in grants?

Lori – sounds like more of the former

John S – does it need a discretionary fund?

Traci – the CFOI could work with the Environmental Education Program at OCF if it wanted to support a more traditional type grant.

Carolyn – maybe we need to see a flow-chart of how the fund would be spent – can it pay for staff?

Brent – should we wait until meeting with the governor? Laid good ground work – it's there structurally in concept – putting how and when to that is next.

Traci – agreed that having the governor on board would help encourage others to participate. But we don't need to wait to start the conversation and mobilize the sector. Looking to initiate a conference call with folks around the state to get the ball rolling.

John – is it programmatic? Is it structure? Following the pending establishment of the Environmental Literacy Council the role becomes clearer. Can we have talking points about the CFOI?

Traci – can put some talking points together to start exploratory conversations

Greg – could you imagine asking for a challenge match grant for \$1 million from the Gray Family?

Lara – yes, this is a unique group who has done unique work – you have a great foundation from which to move forward.

Traci – again, the point to stress is that this is an unprecedented opportunity for our sector to demonstrate unity around the OELP and its greater goals. The more organized we can be the more we can demonstrate our common interests. We've talked about needing \$ to implement the OELP and this is an opportunity for us to make it happen.

Other News

Brent – Oregon is participating in FoodCorps - <http://foodcorps.org/> (spin off of AmeriCorps) and has placed members around the state – working with Salem-Keizer, Lane County, Food Roots, Growing Gardens – Farm to School, school garden component. It's a coup for Oregon to get these placements, only 4-5 states were selected.

Brent - Upcoming Ag in the Classroom Fall Harvest Dinner & Auction – Saturday, October 22nd (aitc.oregonstate.edu/whats/harvest.htm)

Greg – Victor Nolet (Western Washington University) – WA, ID – convened an initial gathering of higher ed folks interested in sustainability education. Hopefully something more will happen next summer with a larger institute in summer 2013. Portland based group is forming a biomimicry network.

Jon – Oregon Science Teachers Association (OSTA) is October 14th

Bora – National Wildlife Federation received funding from the Forest Service to develop natural playground guidelines – Robin Moore (landscape architect, North Carolina State University) will be working to develop the guidelines

Traci - **SAVE THE DATE: Important Environmental Literacy Event -- In-person and Online --**

Save Dec. 1 for the roll-out of "A Framework for Assessing Environmental Literacy" at the National Press Club, Washington, DC, and live via the Internet. □□Mark your calendars for Thursday, December 1, 2011, 1:00 – 2:00 p.m. Eastern Time □□ This new framework for assessing environmental literacy was developed with experts from the fields of environmental education, social studies education, and science education, plus related policy and social science fields. The development team will be joined by leaders from large-scale national and international assessments to discuss how to define and assess environmentally literacy. The NAAEE spearheaded this project with support from the National Science Foundation (NSF), and is partnering with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation (NMSF) to release the framework.

Details about pre-registration and directions for joining us for this important event will be posted on www.naaee.net in early November.