

Camas Educational Network



The Camas Educational Network

Is a non-profit organization that supports and encourages interests in field based approaches to learning. As a network the CEN collaborates with educators (specifically kindergarten through twelve grades) in project and curriculum development. As an organization the CEN is working to enhance habitat values on the campuses of partner school districts as a means to broaden opportunities for implementation of alternative curriculums.

Our mission...

“To promote inquiry based, hands on education at the primary and secondary school levels through the restoration and long term management of native wetland ecotypes located in the Willamette River sub-basin.”

Why Wetland Ecosystems???

Throughout the network's service area, school campuses have traditionally been developed upon historic wetlands. These lands were less expensive and/or donated to respective school districts. Campuses are commonly oriented along natural drainage ways and still retain remnants of those wetlands. The remnant wetland, regardless of size, is a microcosm of a functioning ecosystem where the web of life and its associated biological and chemical cycles are intact. A short walk out the door from the classroom opens up endless opportunities for students to participate in hands-on field study on a myriad of subjects that would otherwise be learned from a book or recreated in a laboratory

Our objectives for students include:

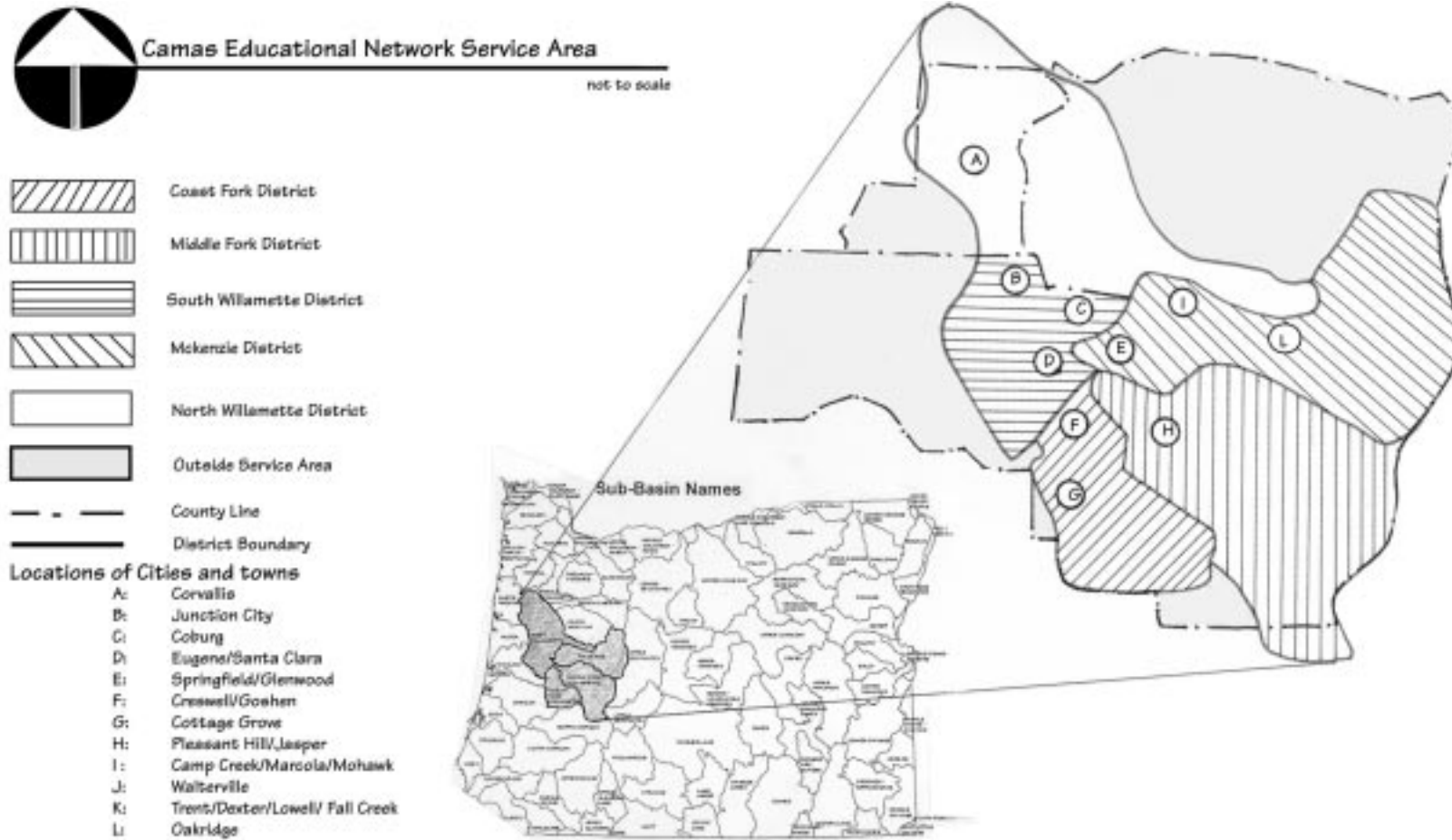
- 1) understanding native ecosystems,
- 2) using hands on methods for understanding scientific method,
- 3) develop projects that support farming and habitat restoration practices and
- 4) learn about constructive land use practices that benefit the entire community.

Our objectives for the community include:

- 1) build a sense of community pride for our unique natural resources,
- 2) establish collaborative networks interested in agriculture, industry and conservation of native ecosystems, and
- 3) create new levels of student citizenship and pride in their communities.



From the Cascade Crest...to the Valley's Floor

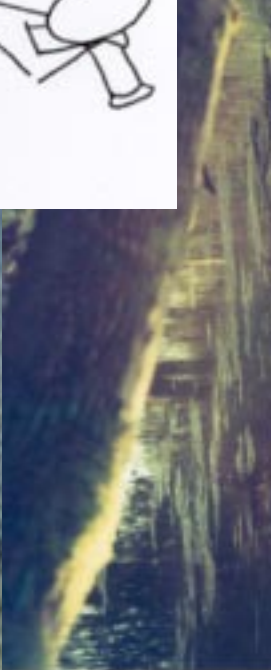
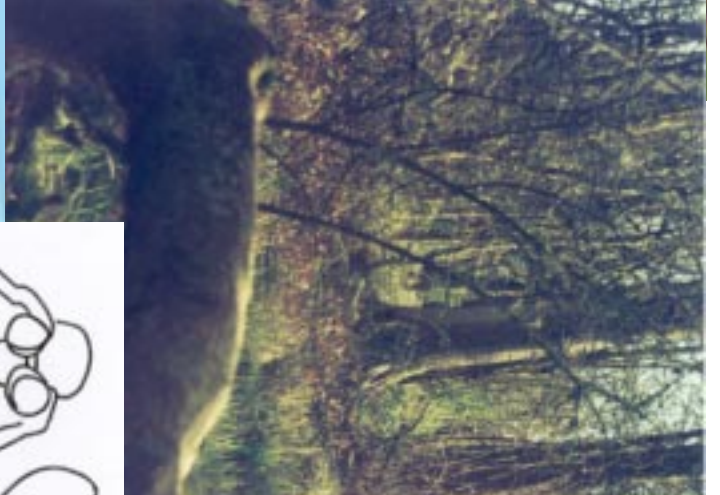
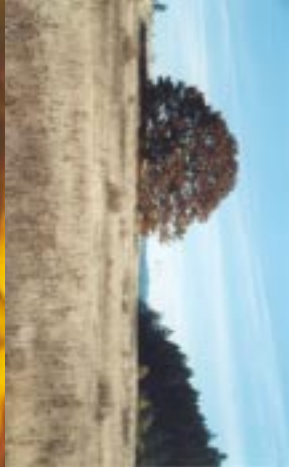
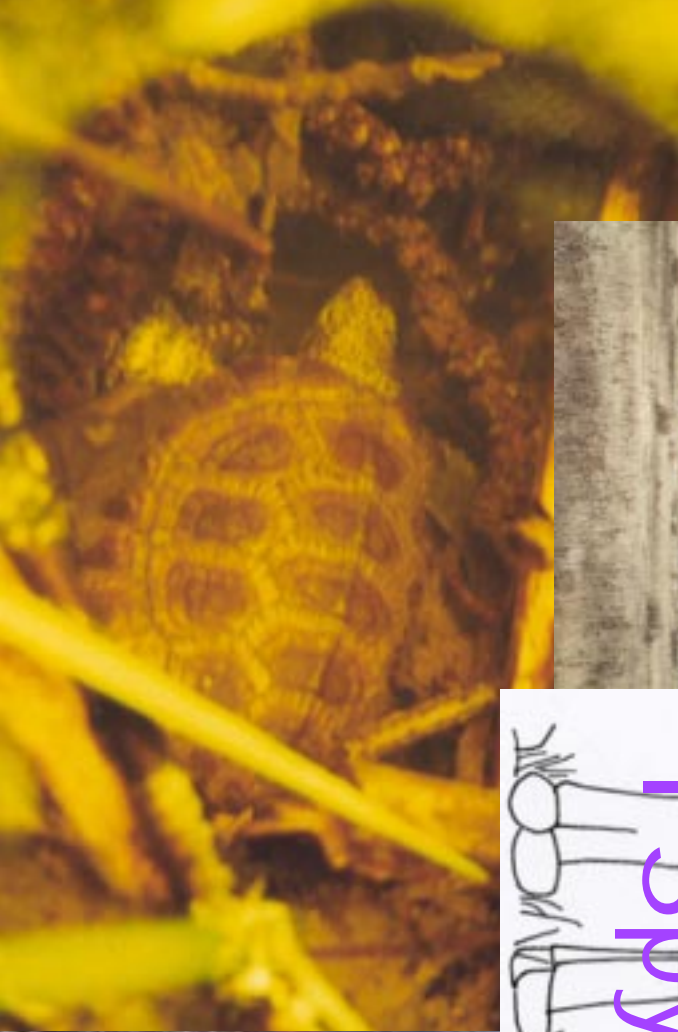


Our Service Area

the organization's service area is divided by sub-basins to enhance the sense of place achieved through field based education.



Discovery In Education



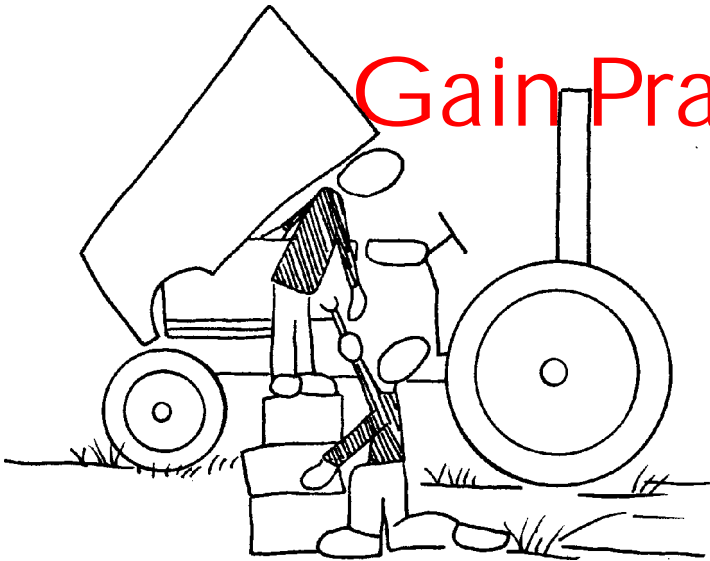
Measure Ecological Functions

Students apply mathematics, general science, chemistry, biology to measure water quality, soils development, hydrology, and habitat interactions.



Gain Practical Skills

Older students apply their educational experience supported with a foundation of biology, physics, botany... to develop, adapt, maintain, and prescribe tools for stewardship activities.



Develop Critical Thinking Abilities

The campus functions as an outdoor classroom within which students develop technical writing skills, explore creative writing, discover subject matter for art and photography projects, and find inspiration to write and play music.



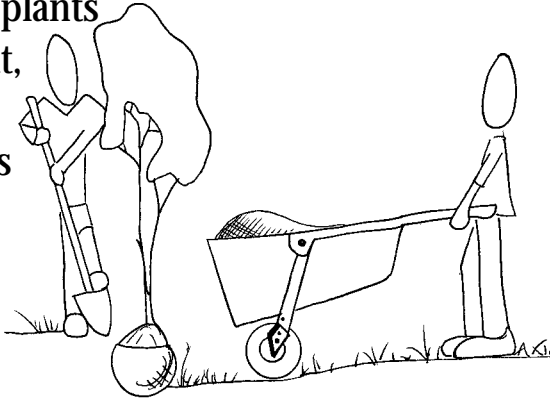
Field Based
Learning



Restoration of Habitat

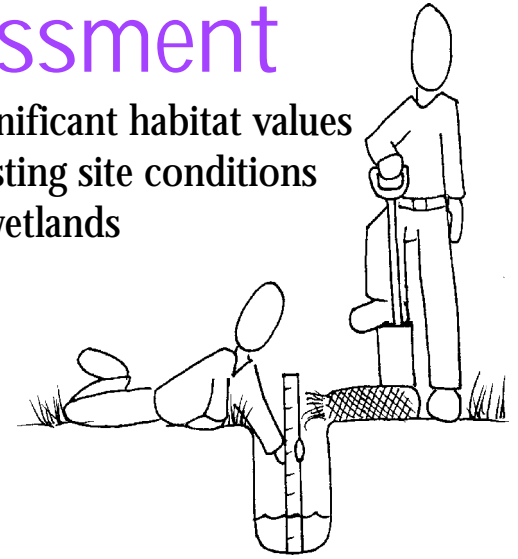
Procurement of Plant Materials

- * Wild collect seed & cuttings from native plants
- * Propagate plants
- * Care for young plants
- * Discover habitat, medicinal, & ornamental values of native plants



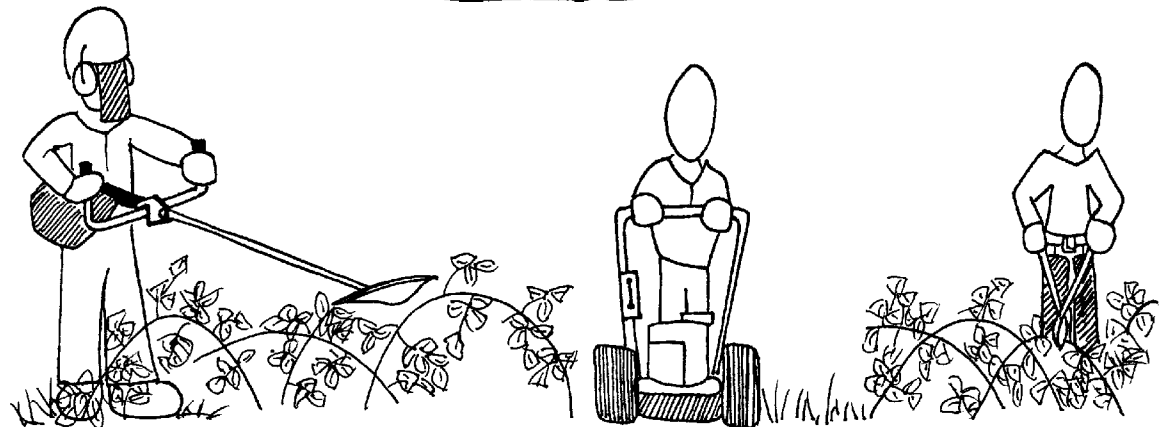
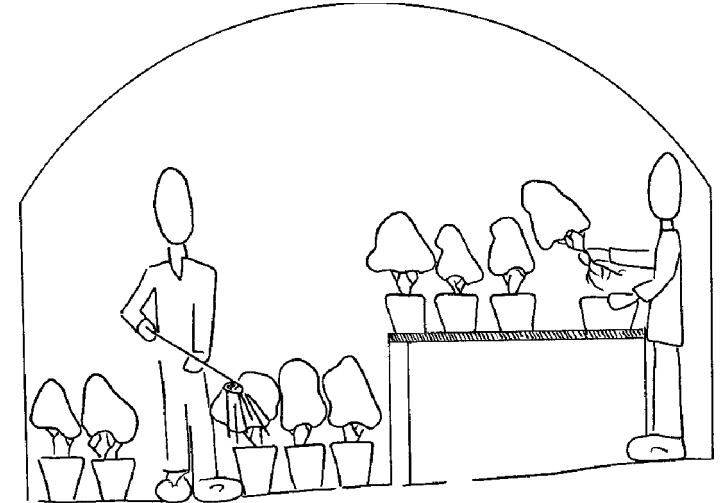
Assessment

- * Identify significant habitat values
- * Qualify existing site conditions
- * Delineate wetlands



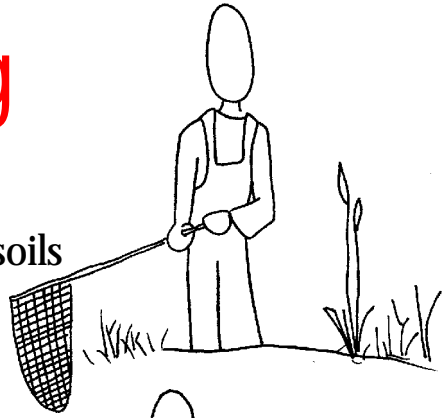
Field Operations

- * Remove fill material & contour microtopography
- * Adjust water control structures
- * Enhance soil structure
- * Control brush



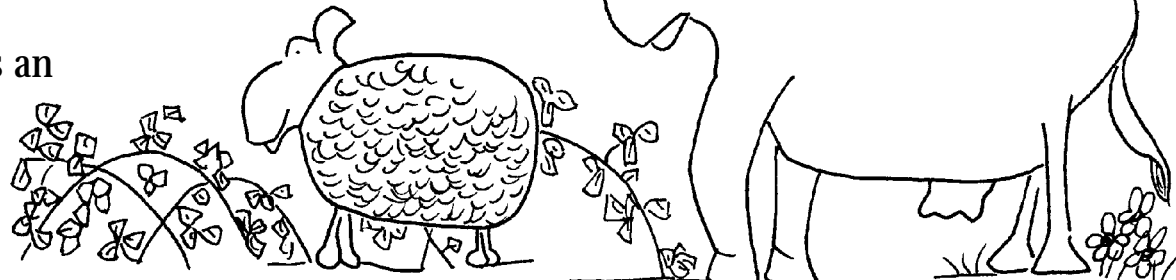
Monitoring

- * Monitor the presence & characteristics of water
- * Monitor development of soils
- * Monitor changes in plant communities
- * Monitor wildlife activity



Weeding

- * Learn the importance of controlling noxious weed species
- * Incorporate herbalism in the practice of weed eradication
- * Utilize integrated pest management practices as an alternative to application of herbicides.



Construction

- * Collaborate with students, teachers, & community partners in the design & construction of trail, fencing, benches, bridges, habitat structures, green-houses...



Range Management

- * Manage livestock to conserve grassland habitat values
- * Utilize manure for compost

Stewardship
of Habitat



Mitigation

Mitigation, Its Purpose:

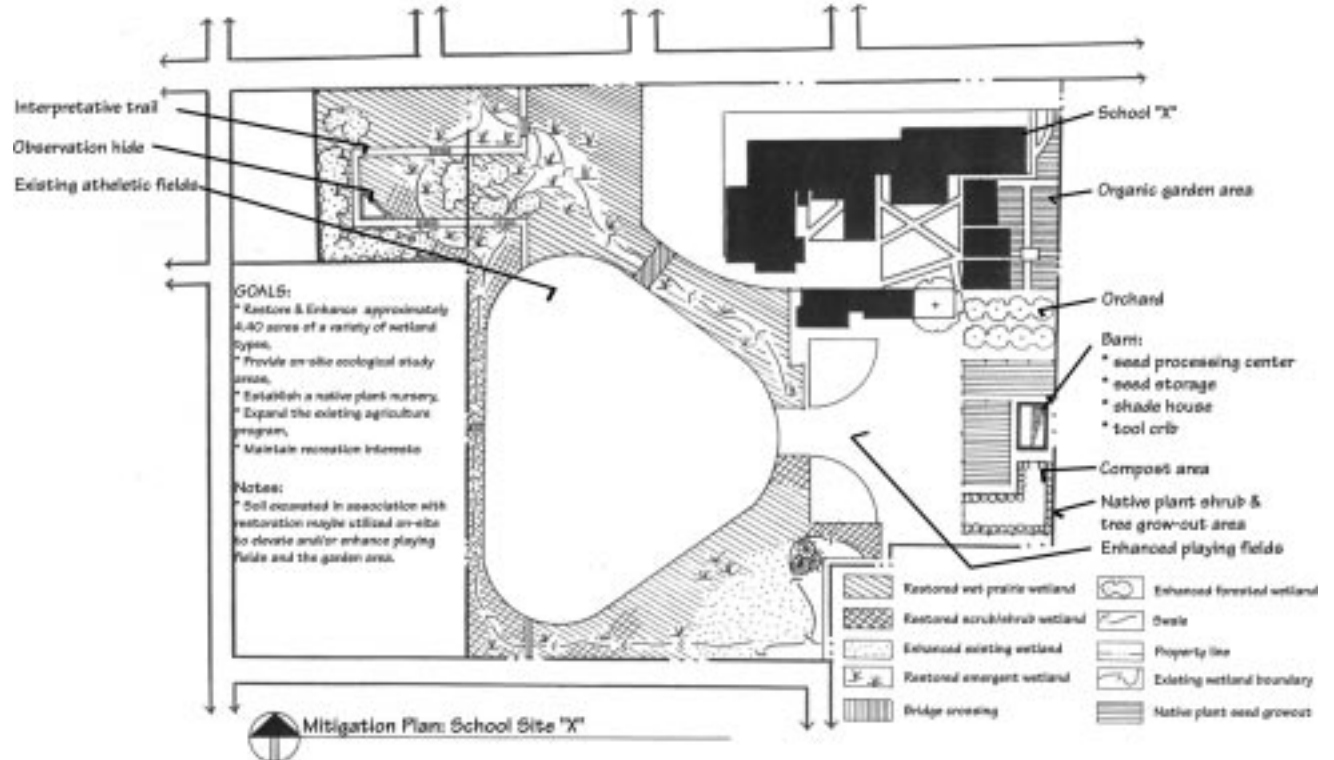
The Federal Clean Water Act and State of Oregon Removal-Fill Law requires that most in-water activities that affect the resource through the deposition or extraction of material to obtain a permit from the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and Oregon Division of State Lands (DSL). Resource agents representing the DSL and USACE review proposed impacts to jurisdictional resources associated with land use projects that require permit to authorize project activity. Agents confirm the resource value as presented by the project applicant. They determine if proposed impacts can be avoided; for those impacts determined permissible – the agents ensure that impacts have been minimized to the greatest extent possible and determine the amount of compensatory mitigation required to be provided by the applicant as a condition of permit. The applicant implements the permitted mitigation strategy to compensate in-kind for wetlands lost during development.

Its Value:

Associating actions of habitat restoration and enhancement with mitigation provides a funding mechanism to support field based approaches learning. In addition, at a time when school budgets are being cut... realizing multiple values for the grounds of school campuses, such as mitigation, provides a subsidy for the maintenance of the school grounds freeing funds to be appropriated for higher priority expenses.

Its Role:

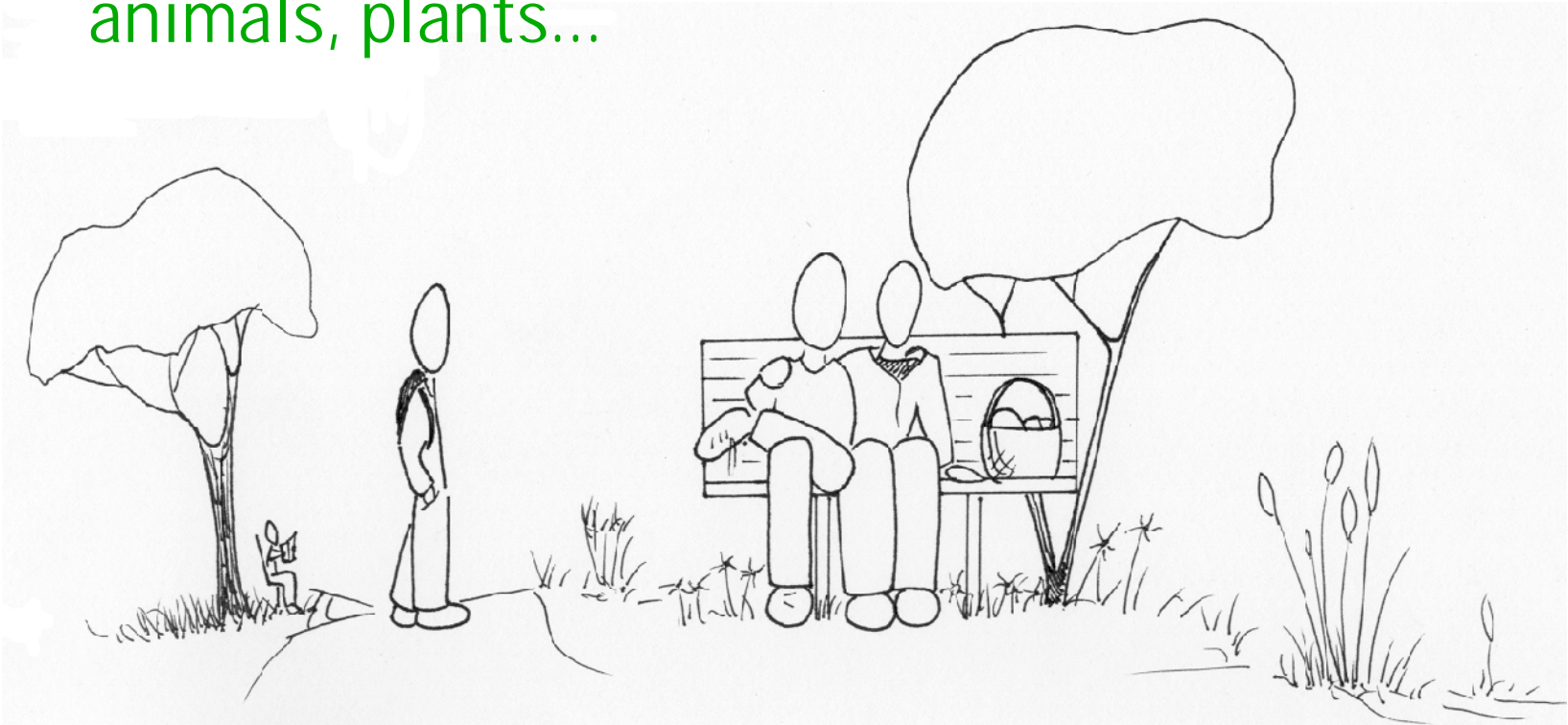
Providing mitigation on-site allows for development of a curriculum associated with wise land-use practice, policy, and regulation that is embedded in the fabric of the campus itself.





Urban Landscapes are developed landscapes. It is our responsibility to steward these areas for maximum benefit to all inhabitants; people, animals, plants...

Open Space



Accomplishments to Date

Forming the Network

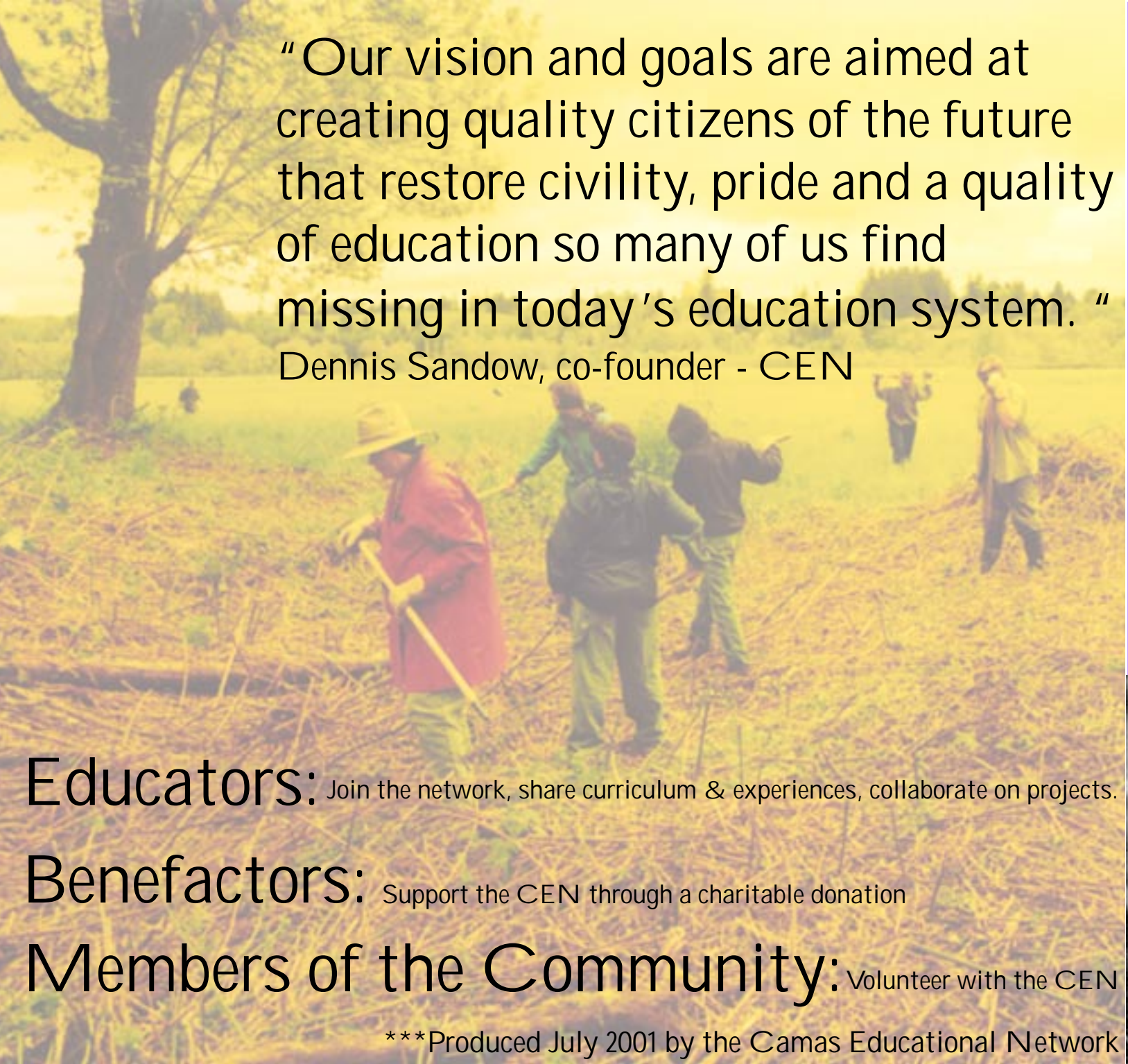
In the late 1990's teachers in the Creswell School District initiated field based education. This innovation in education has many exciting features; (1) students discover a joy in learning through a hands on approach to education, (2) teachers work in teams and teach students work and life skills critical to becoming productive adults and (3) students learn social responsibility as the importance of quality of relationships is embedded in the Discovery design. Upon reflection, Creswell educators and community leaders decided to support field based science education by creating a not for profit organization.... The Camas Educational Network.

Discovery Projects

- * Outreach & Education: The CEN leads tours to local natural areas to explain ecological values to school groups.
- * Service Learning: In partnership with the Friends of Buford Park and Mt. Pisgah - The CEN coordinated service learning projects with students from Creswell Middle School, Jefferson Middle School, Sheldon High School, Churchill High School, Springfield High School, Oregon Youth Conservation Corps, and girl/boy scout groups between April 2000 and May 2001, over 2000 hours were contributed to habitat stewardship.
- * Design & Procurement: The CEN is working with students of the Rachel Carson Center for the Environment (Churchill High School) on habitat design considerations and the propagation of native plants
- * Oregon White Oak Acorn Survey: Beginning in the fall of 2001 the CEN will begin a (10) year survey and assessment of Oregon white oak acorn production in Corvallis, Creswell, and Eugene. This project is a part of an on-going study coordinated by the US Forest Service - Olympia forestry sciences lab.

Mitigation Bank

- * Purpose: To provide a funding mechanism to reimburse financial expenses associated with the stewardship of habitat values on primary and secondary school campuses.
- * Prospectus: Is a document that outlines operations of the bank for review by State and Federal Regulatory agents, completed Fall 2000. Negotiations to authorize operation of the bank are underway.
- * Project: Creswell High School, the first phase of site construction associated with the restoration and enhancement of approximately one acre of wetland and upland will begin in August 2001 & be complete in October 2001.



“Our vision and goals are aimed at creating quality citizens of the future that restore civility, pride and a quality of education so many of us find missing in today’s education system. “
Dennis Sandow, co-founder - CEN

Get Involved

Educators: Join the network, share curriculum & experiences, collaborate on projects.

Benefactors: Support the CEN through a charitable donation

Members of the Community: Volunteer with the CEN

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