



# 2014 Year in Review

*Advancing science, protecting ecosystems, building connections to sustain the Columbia for all time.*





**Dear Friends,**

The Estuary Partnership is much more than our 21 staff and our Board of Directors. It is our Science Work Group, Water Trail Committee, hundreds of teachers, thousands of students and community volunteers, businesses, growers, tribes, federal agencies, state agencies, local governments, watershed councils, conservation districts and many, many more partners—there is a long list of people dedicated to protecting and preserving the lower Columbia River.

Each has made a remarkable investment.

Funding to support the Estuary Partnership comes from many sources—public and private, large and small. From a \$5 donation to a \$1,000,000 restoration contract, each leaves an indelible mark.

We receive funding from Congress through US EPA as part of the National Estuary Program. We used some of those funds to leverage millions from competitive grants, contracts, corporations, and individuals.

This past year, we brought \$5,301,602 to the region that generated over 200 jobs. Washington State and Oregon State directly funded riparian plantings. All funds are spent locally, bringing significant economic benefits to local communities. Our overall economic impact to the region was \$10,073,430 for the year.

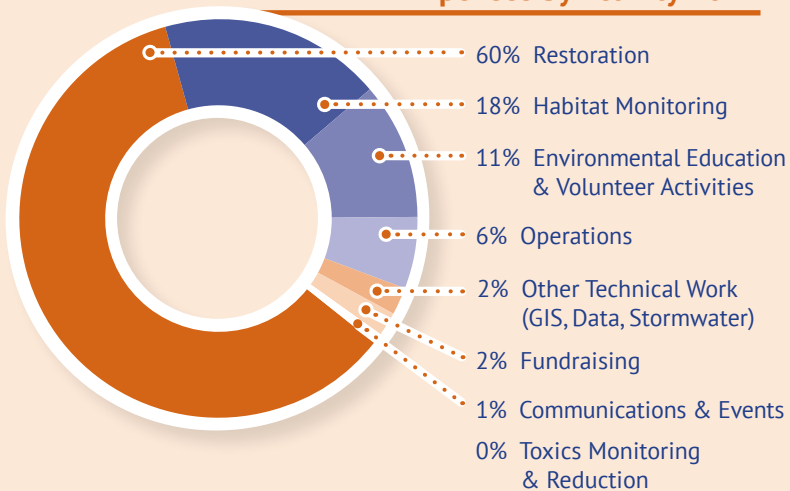
We are honored to have over 60 corporations and foundations and hundreds of individuals invest in our work.

***Our most valued asset is the people who live, work, and recreate along the lower Columbia River.*** Each year, hundreds of people help us protect streams, plant trees, remove invasive species, test water quality, and provide technical expertise to our restoration projects and to our organization. They add far more value than the hours could ever indicate.

This past year, students, teachers, parent volunteers, community members, technical experts, and Board members donated nearly 14,000 hours of their time to our work on the Columbia River, with a value of at least \$750,000.

*There is more to do, of course. With such regional collaboration and community support, we are well positioned to meet the challenges ahead. Thank you for your commitment to a healthy and clean Columbia River.*

**Expenses by Activity 2014**



**In-Kind Service and Value 2014**

	HOURS	VALUE
Citizen Volunteers	1,300.5	\$26,250
Professional	300	\$15,000
Technical	8,497.5	\$433,175
Students, Teachers & Parents	13,667.5	\$250,435
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>23,765.5</b>	<b>\$724,860</b>

Debrah Marriott  
Executive Director



## REDUCING TOXICS

**Toxics are ubiquitous in the Columbia River Basin. Investment in the region to reduce toxics lags far behind other major water bodies.**

Toxics impact human health, plants and animals, and our economy, resulting from the collective impact of many activities over many years.

They are in fish, wildlife, water, sediment, effluent and accumulate up the food chain.

- PCBs harm our immune system and increase cancer risks.
- Mercury affects the developing brains of children and alters behavior and learning capacity.
- Contaminants in flame-retardants and pharmaceuticals cause male fish to morph to females during their life cycle, and affect brain and thyroid function in humans.
- Adult coho placed in stormwater collected from urban runoff in Seattle died within four hours compared with a 100% survival for fish in clean water. The runoff contained over 200 different toxic combinations.

In 2013, Oregon and Washington officials issued health advisories to limit consumption of resident fish in the Mid-Columbia River. Many cultures, including Columbia River tribes, eat significantly more salmon than the general public, increasing their health risks.

There are success stories—we need more.

- Growers in the Wasco watershed reduced use of the pesticide mathalio from eight times above the water quality standard to below it in two years.
- Staples, Inc. assesses the chemical footprint of products from development to disposal before putting them on shelves.
- Oregon and Washington adopted purchasing policies that reduce use of toxics and create a broader market for non-toxic cleaning products.

Yet, there is negligible funding to reduce toxics; minimal monitoring to assess sources and levels; and little data about the impact of these contaminants on humans or other species.

The Estuary Partnership is focused on passage of the Columbia River Basin Restoration Act by Congress to provide funds for voluntary toxics reduction actions by growers, tribes, foresters, soil and water districts, nongovernment entities, and local and state governments.

It is time to reduce toxics in our environment.



## RESTORING HABITAT

**20,419 acres of critical habitat were restored or protected through the collaborative efforts of over 100 regional partners.**



Protecting and restoring habitat improves water quality and increases access to critical habitat for a wide variety of species.

Over 114,000 acres of habitat along the lower Columbia have been converted to agriculture, urban, or other uses since the 1880s. Development, dikes, tidegates, and dams have radically changed the ecosystem and restricted fish and wildlife access to habitats.

### ***This year, regional partners:***

- Completed three projects that restored or protected 202 acres of habitat.

### ***The Estuary Partnership:***

- Provided funding and technical expertise that helped local partners design and implement solid restoration projects.
- Started two construction projects at Thousand Acres and Multnomah - Wahkeena Creek project sites.
- Secured funding for a 32-acre planting project in the La Center Bottoms wetland area to filter runoff from the City of La Center, Washington, and provide stormwater education to 700 La Center students, parents, and community members. Funding is provided by the Washington Department of Ecology.
- Evaluated the effectiveness of habitat restoration projects.

Since 2000, regional partners have restored or protected 20,419 acres across 197 projects. For 83 of those, the Estuary Partnership has funded planning, design, permitting, or construction that restored or protected over 3,523 acres and opened over 79 miles of stream habitat.



## ENGAGING PEOPLE

**11,132 volunteers and students planted 68,925 native trees and shrubs creating habitat and improved stream conditions for fish and wildlife.**



Many streams and parts of the Columbia River have temperatures that are too warm for fish to survive. Contributing to this problem is the loss and modification of critical habitat along river banks.

Many people do not have access to the river. Providing opportunities to experience the Columbia builds connections between people and their surroundings.

***This year, we:***

- Hosted 12 plantings for 314 volunteers who planted 5,745 trees and shrubs—the most we have ever planted in one season—along the banks of streams and rivers to create habitat and reduce water temperature.
- 2,244 youth and adults participated in on-river canoe paddling trips during student field trips, community paddles, and our summer canoe programs.
- Participated in the June 7, 2014 National Trails Day “Big Paddle,” celebrating the Lower Columbia River Water Trail and the Lewis River-Vancouver Lake Water Trail. More than 60 people participated, paddling in Estuary Partnership Big Canoes, a Chinook Indian Nation Canoe, and personal boats.

Volunteers worked at Meldrum Bar Park, Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge, Steigerwald Lake National Wildlife Refuge, Sandy River Delta, and Ross Island.

Since 2000, the Estuary Partnership has mobilized 11,132 volunteers to engage in a variety of activities, including water quality monitoring, tree planting, habitat mapping, and water trail maintenance. Together students and volunteers planted 68,925 native trees and shrubs. Since 2000, we have taken 22,624 students and adults on the water.



## EDUCATING STUDENTS

**58,398 students received 285,693 hours of instruction getting them outdoors to apply science in the field.**



Schools are cutting field based education and students are outdoors less. Teachers often do not have the resources or training to teach in outdoor settings.

Research shows that when we experience something, we retain much more than if we only read or hear about it.

***This year, we:***

- Provided over 22,294 hours of hands-on instruction in environmental sciences to 4,176 students.
- 2,453 students removed 77 truckloads of invasive plants and planted 4,335 native trees and shrubs to improve local natural areas as part of our service learning program.
- Worked with 146 teachers, helping them meet Washington and Oregon state science standards.

We work with students throughout the lower Columbia on service learning projects in Washington and Oregon. This year students worked at Cape Disappointment, Coffenbury Lake, Steigerwald Lake National Wildlife Refuge, Salmon Creek at Pleasant Valley Park, Mirror Lake at Rooster Rock State Park, Meldrum Bar Park, Scappoose Bay, Willow Grove Park, and Whipple Creek.

Since 2000, the Estuary Partnership has worked with 2,405 teachers, and 58,398 students providing 285,693 hours of instruction. We have planted over 37,052 native trees and shrubs with our students.



## BUILDING REGIONAL SUCCESSES

**Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress; working together is success.**  
~ Henry Ford



The Estuary Partnership provides data and information to regional partners, ensuring investments in the river are based on the most current and sound science.

We bring entities together to expand communication, ensuring we are investing our funding efficiently, working in concert, and gaining results.

***This year, we:***

- Hosted the 2014 Science to Policy Summit on Toxics Reduction.
- Hosted discussions for Oregon and Washington natural resource agency directors to talk about activities and identify ways to collaborate and support each other's work.
- Expanded discussions and meetings with our regional partners and members of Congress for the re-introduction of the Columbia River Basin Restoration Act.
- Co-hosted the biennial Columbia River Estuary Workshop, with 200 participants and over 75 presentations, including expanded topics covering plume and nearshore ocean.
- Hosted monthly meetings of our Science Work Group—regional scientists who gather and exchange information on issues affecting the Columbia and provide guidance to the Estuary Partnership science programs.
- Began developing with regional scientists a rigorous set of standards against which to measure progress and trends, including quantitative targets for the gain or loss of habitat.
- Used our habitat restoration prioritization with regional partners to identify and develop multiple new restoration projects focused on recovery of threatened and endangered salmonid species.

# THANK YOU

## Program Funders

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
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State of Washington

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