

Friends of Cedar River Watershed

Neighbors
are **pitching in**
to protect the
local ecosystem.

Residents along the Cedar River are joining forces to ensure the health and preservation of this vibrant watershed (spanning from North Bend to Renton, Lake Washington, Redmond, all the way up to Lake Forest Park), working to protect the plant and animal life that depends on it. The movement launched with the help of Friends of Cedar River Watershed, which has taken the lead in education and volunteer opportunities.

The key is to get neighbors invested in the effort.

"Caring for the watershed is caring for our home," FCRW's Rebecca Sayre said.

When looking to expand its volunteer base, Friends of Cedar River Watershed went to Flash Volunteer to jump-

start an effort to remove invasive knotweed in Renton and Maple Valley.

"Thus far, FV has helped us establish really local community connections in the regions of the watershed that we work," Sayre said.

Friends of Cedar River Watershed began with a smaller scope: to develop a plan to protect endangered Chinook salmon in the Municipal Watershed near North Bend. Once it was completed, efforts turned to raising money for the Cedar River Watershed education center at Rattlesnake Lake, which was finished in 2001.

These projects were worthwhile and made a difference, but the group soon realized that in order to fulfill its mission, it must take

action on sustainable solutions throughout the watershed. Its members worked to restore the land and educate residents.

Now, FCRW is a locally focused, volunteer-powered organization, committed to being an "honest broker" that can work with landowners and municipalities to find sustainable habitat and lifestyle solutions.

Each year, more than 1,000 volunteers perform local habitat restoration, construct rain gardens, and remove invasives. They also install native plants, such as vine maple, salal, and cedar, at sites throughout the watershed. About 70 volunteer naturalists offer awareness and education programs about salmon life cycles and environmental sustainability.

FLASH PROFILE

- » Founded: 1996
- » Established plan to protect endangered Chinook salmon in the Municipal Watershed near North Bend.
- » Raised funds for Cedar River Watershed education center.
- » Organizes projects to remove invasive plant species and install native plants.
- » Offers Watershed Report program to involve high school students in sustainability and civic activities.

GET INVOLVED!

Visit Friends of Cedar River Watershed at www.CedarRiver.org, and look on www.FlashVolunteer.org for project postings. For more information, email Rebecca Sayre, rebecca@cedarriver.org.

