

WHO WE ARE

Wolftree, Inc. is a 501(c) 3 charitable non-profit corporation that was established in 1994. Our mission is to serve people and their communities through innovative science education, ecosystem restoration, and ecological research. Wolftree's administrative offices are located in Portland and Sisters, Oregon from which we serve many communities across Oregon and SW Washington. These offices support ten field sites, including our acclaimed Cascade Streamwatch education facility located on the Salmon River near the base of Mt. Hood.

Since 1994, Wolftree has served over 125,000 students in the Pacific Northwest. Dozens of professionals from more than 65 organizations have been trained to guide young people on outdoor scientific studies. With Wolftree's numerous long-standing and strong partnerships in the region, we have the capacity and resources to empower local citizens to make permanent relationships between diverse sectors of the community. At a time when funds for education are being drastically reduced, Wolftree fulfills a need for additional opportunities. Wolftree's well-established connections with Latino and female student populations can help to prepare these groups for the rising demand for scientists, engineers, and computer specialists. From these connections, an educated core of caring residents will be better able to make complex decisions concerning our natural resources.

Wolftree is a private education organization. We are advocates for fostering invaluable connections among citizens and their public and private lands around them. We present information in a non-value laden, unbiased, objective forum. Participants are then better prepared to make their own choices about how they interact with the environment and society.

We provide the common ground for community stewardship, attracting partners from a wide spectrum of political and economic interests. All of our programs are "hands-on" and provide a unique opportunity for participants to hone their problem-solving skills through authentic studies of forest and aquatic ecosystems. Our graduates will make decisions that are based on knowledge rather than emotion. We believe that getting people excited about science may be the single most enduring contribution Wolftree provides. Educated, aware, and informed citizens will help our public and private resource managers make wise decisions about the future of our natural resources. Wolftree is a proud sponsor of Cascade Streamwatch, Science the Forest, Kokanee Karnival Youth Education Program, Project-based science education, and the Landmark Project.

Community Support:

"Portland Public Schools shares Wolftree's premise that the prosperity of our communities will depend on well-developed, active minds, imagination, ingenuity, and innovation. We believe that a diversity of learning opportunities enhances school performance, reduces social assistance costs, expands economic activity, supports diversity, and improves family/work life."

— Vicki L. Phillips, former Superintendent, Portland Public School

"I worked with kids this year who had chronic attendance problems, but they never missed a science class ... it was very frustrating, but it said a lot about Wolftree ... they were willing to go to that class because they really enjoyed being there, it gave them something they didn't get in the other classes ... we are really trying to model this approach in the rest of our school."

— Stevie Newcomer, Principal Pauling Academy of Integrated Science, Marshall H.S.

"Wolftree sparks the interest of our youth. A lot of these children had never been to a river or forest. You have planted lasting memories. Thank you!"

— Colleen Swihert, Teacher, Aloha High School

“ When I attended mentor training in March (2005), I was immediately impressed with the strong science-focused curriculum, the field-based teaching methods that encourage student questioning, and the value-neutral approach to explaining complex and often controversial forestry issues. The whole package was a-breath of fresh air in contrast to the frequently agenda-driven, polarized atmosphere in which forestry topics are often presented. After my mentoring experience, I became excited at the thought of the students I met carrying these acquired skills into adulthood and becoming positive forces in society. I also found my own passion for forestry and environmental education rekindled. I hope I can continue to serve as a Wolfree mentor in the future and encourage my colleagues at the Department of Forestry to join me.”

— David Morman, Oregon Department of Forestry, Director of Forest Resources Planning

RECOGNITION

- 2001, National Rise to the Future Award for science education;
- 2002 & 2004, Grosvenor Awards for Inner-City Experiential Learning Project from the National Geographic Society;
- 2003, Excellence in Education Award of Merit from the Oregon Chapter of the American Fisheries Society;
- 2005, Excellence in Partnerships for Student Learning Award from Portland State University/City of Portland;
- 2005, One of the Top 40 Non-Profits in Oregon from the Oregon Community Foundation/Portland Magazine;
- 2006, Outstanding Leadership and Stewardship Award from the White House Conference on Cooperative Conservation.
- 2007, Mary Rellegert Award for Forestry Education from Oregon Department of Forestry and Oregon State University to Dale Baer, Wolfree staff member and student mentor extraordinaire.

A BRIEF HISTORY

Wolfree was founded in 1993 by Dr. Lauri Shainsky and Dale R. Waddell. The company received a 501 (C)(3) designation in 1994. In the early 1990s, Fish biologists from the US Forest Service and education consultants (under contract with the agency) developed a curriculum in aquatic ecology called Cascade Streamwatch (CSW). The Forest Service asked Wolfree to help them implement CSW at the BLM's Wildwood Recreation Site in Welches, Oregon. In the fall of 1994, Wolfree hired a full time Project Coordinator to help deliver the new project. About 600 students from Portland Public Schools attended the one-day program in the fall of 1994. Soon after, a five-year challenge cost share agreement was signed with the Forest Service for \$30,000 per year and was matched by several private organizations by the end of the first quarter of 1995. About 1,000 students from Portland Public Schools attended spring sessions of CSW in 1995. Wolfree received several local and national awards for CSW and the project won national exposure via a presentation during a session in the US Senate. CSW became a model for successful private/public partnerships. In the summer of 1995, Wolfree created residential programs for youth called the Science Expeditions. In 1996, seasonal staff positions (instructors) were added to help the Executive Director and the Project Coordinator. In early 1997, over a million dollars were designated by Congress to develop the CSW education facility at Wildwood. The Wetland Boardwalk Trail was completed in 1998 followed by the CSW Trial and Education building in 1999. From 1997 to 2001, The Highland Ecology Project (Terrestrial Ecology) was developed and pilot tested. Several restoration projects in Oregon and Washington were conducted, as well as education and research projects in California and Mexico. Wolfree expanded operations to 13 sites on private and public lands in NW Oregon and SW Washington.

The staff grew to seven employees by 2000, coordinating over 250 volunteers, serving nearly 3,500 students annually. A \$100,000 grant from the Loral and Martin Kelley Family Foundation Trust and a \$75,000 Targeted Community grant from the Oregon Community Foundation helped launch the **under-served community campaign** in 1999. The campaign won national recognition and was awarded the National Rise to the Future Award in 2001. In 2002, Wolfree launched the Science Enrichment Project in the Lents Community of Portland and in the Jefferson County School District in Central Oregon. Foundations (National Geographic Society, Weyerhaeuser Company Foundation) and private businesses (Portland General Electric) made significant contributions to this project in the first half of 2003. In early 2003, Wolfree signed a contract with the Vancouver School District to provide educational programming for science education programs in SW Washington.