Envision a world in which every child is inspired by nature to become a healthy individual and create a sustainable future.
The Deschutes Children’s Forest provides a network of outdoor places and programs dedicated to moving all children along a continuum of learning, exploration, and healthy living through engagement with nature.

deschuteschildrensforest.org

Deschutes Children’s Forest Advisory Board

The USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.
THE DESCHUTES CHILDREN’S FOREST

The first nationally recognized Children’s Forest in the Pacific Northwest, the Deschutes Children’s Forest is led by a powerful coalition of diverse partners in Central Oregon. The health care industry has joined with educators, natural resource and recreation professionals, and conservationists as the Deschutes Children’s Forest Advisory Board. This coalition works together to realize the Deschutes Children’s Forest for the benefit of healthy minds, healthy bodies, and healthy forests.

The Deschutes Children’s Forest Advisory Board is committed to providing outdoor opportunities that help reverse and prevent childhood obesity by ensuring that young people have healthy options to learn and explore in the natural world. We believe all children and families have a right to learn and play outdoors. We provide places and programs for young people to develop a connection with nature while they develop a healthy sense of self.
CONTENTS

1.0 Executive Summary .................................................. 7
2.0 Mission Statement .................................................. 11
3.0 Vision Statement .................................................. 11
4.0 Core Principles and Values. .................................... 11
5.0 SWOT Analysis .................................................. 12
6.0 Goals, Objectives and Strategies ............................. 14
7.0 Outputs and Milestones ........................................ 17
8.0 Action Plan .................................................. 18
9.0 Budget .................................................. 23
10.0 Monitoring and Evaluation .................................... 25
11.0 Communications .................................................. 26
12.0 Appendix .................................................. 27
1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As the first nationally recognized Children’s Forest in the Pacific Northwest, the Deschutes Children’s Forest (DCF) is emerging out of a dynamic coalition of committed and diverse partners. In a unique twist, the health care industry has joined together with educators, natural resource and recreation professionals, and conservationists to develop the Deschutes Children’s Forest for the benefit of healthy minds, healthy bodies, and healthy forests.

Our Central Oregon region boasts an impressive array of natural areas that provide opportunities for high-quality outdoor experiences. Using these natural areas as a context for teaching can enrich student learning and extend it beyond the classroom walls. Studies have found that direct experiences in nature – with students actively involved in their own learning – can improve student’s overall academic performance, self-esteem, community involvement and personal health. Yet, local and national trends indicate that time spent outdoors is in steep decline while at the same time environmental literacy is dropping. This cultural shift toward the indoors, and an increasingly sedentary population, is associated with a host of physical and mental health problems in our youth including rising obesity rates, asthma, type 2 diabetes, as well as anxiety, attention deficit disorder, bullying and depression.

But why is this happening? Health experts warn that excessive recreational screen time and the allure of screen media is both unhealthy and addictive. And many argue it directly competes with the kind of outdoor experiences that were once the norm in childhood. The Deschutes Children’s Forest seeks to change this. Given our region’s rich natural resources, dynamic conservation education programs and strong partnerships, we possess the collective capacity to reverse this trend and address what Richard Louv has famously coined “nature-deficit disorder.”
The Deschutes Children’s Forest began in May of 2011 when Deschutes National Forest, partnering with Discover Your Northwest, was awarded a national grant to become one of twelve Forest Service sponsored demonstration Children’s Forests in the country. The structure and activities of a Children’s Forest can vary widely depending upon the interests and resources in a particular region. To identify potential places, programs and themes for the Deschutes Children’s Forest, several key stakeholders were convened from a wide variety of education, recreation, conservation and health disciplines. Several intensive planning sessions were held during the summer and fall of 2011 to work on this strategic plan, resulting in a mission, vision, goals, governance structure and operational framework.

Mission Statement: “The Deschutes Children’s Forest provides a network of outdoor places and programs dedicated to moving all children along a continuum of learning, exploration, and healthy living through engagement with nature.”

The graphic below captures what we call our “Stepping Stones” approach of moving children and youth along a continuum.

Vision Statement: “A world in which every child is inspired by nature to become a healthy individual and create a sustainable future.”
Goals/Objectives:

1. Develop opportunities for all children and youth to safely and accessibly engage in free play, exploration and recreation activities that connect them to nature

2. Provide all children and youth first hand connections with nature by providing meaningful, inspirational, and interdisciplinary education programs including STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math), social studies, creative writing, and art.

3. Improve health outcomes in youth by providing opportunities that lead to increased physical activity outdoors

4. Develop programs that foster leadership skills in youth, promote a sense of connection and stewardship for public lands, and provide potential environmental and natural resource career paths

Three important and unique elements emerged from these planning sessions:

1. The Deschutes Children’s Forest is **not specific to any one place; rather, it is a network of places and programs** focused on moving youth along a continuum towards greater awareness, engagement and participation in the outdoors. By working with the community to transform school culture and energize teachers, the Deschutes Children’s Forest will create pathways that encourage students to become active stewards of their public lands and beyond.

2. The Deschutes Children’s Forest has a “health” overlay that broadens both the scope and focus of our work. We believe strongly in the connection between time spent in nature and improved health and well-being. As such, we recognize that for many, the move from time inside spent staring at a screen to playing and exploring in the backyard or a nearby park is an important first step that can lead to greater engagement with nature down the road.

3. The programs, places and activities of the Deschutes Children’s Forest should **reach all youth** which means we need to plan for optimal accessibility and a focus on targeted outreach to underserved children, youth and families.

The Deschutes Children’s Forest has a unique structure and business model. Run by the original stakeholders, it has been designed to add value to the work of existing organizations and agencies by providing increased coordination, enhanced publicity and
additional funding and volunteer resources. The Deschutes Children’s Forest operates as a project under Discover Your Northwest (DYNW) which gives it 501(c)3 nonprofit status. It has limited staffing (a single Children’s Forest Project Manager), a formal Advisory Board (which has been delegated authority by DYNW for making local decisions) and four Committees that do much of the day-to-day work:

1) Marketing/Advocacy Committee  
2) Program Committee  
3) Sites and Facilities Committee  
4) Fundraising Committee  

The Deschutes National Forest is located in Deschutes, Jefferson and Klamath Counties. The Deschutes Children’s Forest core area is Deschutes County, but will also include parts of Jefferson, Crook and northern Klamath counties. The Deschutes Children’s Forest Coalition is strongly aligned with key partners, programs and activities to orchestrate meaningful outdoor opportunities for all Central Oregon children. This effort is built upon a foundation of proven place-based education and recreation programs that have demonstrated years of success.

With solid organizational capacity and decades of expertise, the Coalition of Children’s Forest partners is uniquely qualified to expand current outdoor programs and opportunities to engage each and every child in Central Oregon. By increasing and expanding funding from a wide net of regional and national supporters, the Deschutes Children’s Forest will ensure that no child is left inside.
2.0 MISSION STATEMENT

“The Deschutes Children’s Forest provides a network of outdoor places and programs dedicated to moving all children along a continuum of learning, exploration, and healthy living through engagement with nature.”

3.0 VISION STATEMENT

“A world in which every child is inspired by nature to become a healthy individual and create a sustainable future.”

4.0 CORE PRINCIPLES AND VALUES

- All children and youth in Central Oregon can benefit from experiences in the natural world
- Accessible opportunities with nature must be provided for children and youth of all abilities, backgrounds and ages
- Nature based curriculum strengthens and diversifies core education programs
- Lifelong health and wellness habits are developed through engagement with nature based programs, activities and experiences
- Leadership skills and possible future career paths for youth can be identified and encouraged through nature-based activities and learning opportunities
- Stewardship and sustainability are core ethics learned by children and youth in Central Oregon through guidance by experienced adults and engagement with the natural world.
- Collaboration is essential to our success
5.0 SWOT ANALYSIS

Strengths

- The Deschutes Children’s Forest addresses many critical societal issues (e.g. education, health/wellness, environment, sustainability, stewardship of public lands, etc.)
- Active partners along all elements of the continuum – key players are well established with good reputations and strong relationships with the community
- Highly collaborative group with many existing relationships in the region (as well as with state and federal stakeholders) strengthens delivery of services
- The Deschutes Children’s Forest concept is focused on “value added” – it uses and supports existing entities rather than creating an additional layer of bureaucracy
- Overhead costs are very low as the Deschutes Children’s Forest concept relies upon existing organizations/agencies and volunteers to do most of the work
- It is aligned with the national movement – “No Child Left Inside” - and helps implement the Oregon Environmental Literacy Plan at the state level (HB-2544 passed by the Oregon Legislature in 2009)

Weaknesses

- New model for a Children’s Forest (i.e. health focus, Partner driven, etc.) - we cannot necessarily point to a successful implementation elsewhere
- A significant marketing challenge relying on a complex message, with several identity issues, and reliance on the cooperation of a diverse group of organizations that are at times competing with each other
- Limited staffing may put a cap on overall capacity or delay progress - relies upon existing organizations/agencies and volunteers to do most of the work during a time of challenging economic conditions.
- It may be difficult to consistently track or measure “participation” as this will look quite different at various points along the continuum
- A heavy dependence on the public sector, many of whom will likely experience a significant reduction in discretionary funding moving forward. Public agencies tend

In a 2010 survey of 130 students at a local Bend elementary school, 62% of students reported having a TV in their bedrooms.
to be politically driven and are vulnerable to outside influences (i.e. changes in the administration, reorganization, and redirection of their mission)

- May be difficult for the public to understand the concept of the Deschutes Children’s Forest as it is not based in a single location and also includes programs
- There is only limited data to date showing the success of conservation outdoor education versus traditional classroom learning

**Opportunities**

- Creates a comprehensive “pipeline” for all entities along the continuum – very synergistic model
- High level of visibility across multiple markets (health, conservation, education, private business, etc.) creates increased potential for funding from a wide range of resources (both public and private $)
- Potential for significant high-level research into a wide range of topics - “Nature -Deficit Disorder,” obesity reduction, environmental education, etc.
- Potential for agencies/organizations to work together in new ways
- Opportunity to shape a community of practice around monitoring and research

**Threats**

- Keeping multiple organizations focused on common goals
- Risk of “trying to run before we walk” – lots of interest from potential stakeholders who are close, but not quite a good fit for the Children’s Forest, may cause us to lose focus and spread our resources too thinly
- Balancing expectations – Partners may expect to see additional resources that may or may not materialize
- Without a well-crafted message that is directly tied to specific outcomes, funders may not see the added value

*Note: This analysis is a reflection of the current situation at the beginning of 2012. We fully recognize that the challenges and opportunities associated with any start-up organization may look a lot different after a few months so this analysis will be conducted by the Advisory Board on an annual basis.*
6.0 GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND STRATEGIES

**Goals:**
Through meaningful engagement with nature ALL Children and Youth:
1. **learn and achieve at their fullest potential**
2. **attain optimal health**
3. **develop an ethic of environmental stewardship**

**Objectives:**
1. Develop opportunities for all children and youth to safely and accessibly engage in free play, exploration and recreation activities that connect them to nature
2. Provide all children and youth first hand connections with nature by providing meaningful, inspirational, and interdisciplinary education programs including STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math), social studies, creative writing, and art.
3. Improve health outcomes in youth by providing opportunities that lead to increased physical activity outdoors
4. Develop programs that foster leadership skills in youth, promote a sense of connection and stewardship for public lands, and provide potential environmental and natural resource career paths

**Strategies**
*Objective 1: Develop opportunities for all children and youth to safely and accessibly engage in free play, exploration and recreation activities that connect them to nature*

- Develop and expand Skyliners Lodge into a “Discovery Center” for increased Children’s Forest program use
- Identify and develop seasonally appropriate and accessible facilities and places that support the Inclusion Strategy within the Deschutes Children’s Forest Mission
- Design places in parks and neighborhoods that encourage free exploration and unstructured recreational play

---

**Coping with ADD: The Surprising Connection to Green Play Settings**

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), ADD/ADHD is a serious public health problem that impacts approximately 9% of children aged 4-17 years. An increasing amount of evidence is showing that exposure to natural environments can mitigate a child’s attention disorder. Authors of a 2001 study analyzed this concept by surveying parents to compare their child’s attentional functioning when engaging in leisure activities in indoor vs. outdoor settings. Results included that children had better attentional functioning after activities in greener settings. The greener the setting, the less severe the symptoms of the child’s attention disorder.
• Embed outdoor places with information and activities that children and families can do on their own to learn how to respect and care for the natural world and the value of stewardship

• Provide web based and printed materials that direct children and families to parks, trails and programs where children can connect with nature

• Deliver and facilitate recreation programs centered in the Deschutes Children’s Forest boundaries that encourage engagement with the outdoors

• Design curriculum within child/youth recreation programs to have nature-based components

• Identify other “walled” classroom locations within the Deschutes Children’s Forest

• Identify alpine and desert locations for additional Deschutes Children’s Forest Partner use

Objective 2: Provide all youth first-hand connections with nature by providing meaningful, inspirational, and interdisciplinary education programs

• Launch a “Forest For Every Classroom” (FFEC) that provides workshops and a summer institute for early elementary teachers to learn how to instill in their students an understanding and appreciation for the public lands adjacent to their communities

• Provide rigorous “Environmental Education” and related courses and activities for students and teachers

• Develop a “Resource Co-op” as a cost-effective way to acquire, store and utilize equipment and supplies for outdoor use

• Serve as a resource for teacher professional development and core teaching curriculums in public, private and home schools

• Deliver and facilitate multi-age and multi-disciplinary education programs (e.g. science, arts, social sciences, math) within a broad range of outdoor learning experiences

• Provide nature based educational programs that are in alignment with the learning strands of the Oregon Environmental Literacy Plan and the Common Core State Standards of Education

• Provide projects and programs that include STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math) educational objectives
Objective 3: Improve health outcomes in youth by providing opportunities that lead to increased physical activity outdoors.

- Provide a referral system, in partnership with the medical community, to connect children and youth at risk of obesity with Deschutes Children’s Forest programs, activities and places (“Rx: 2Thrive – Nature Tracks”)
- Bring nature (and Deschutes Children’s Forest programs and activities) close to home through “NatureHoods”
- Develop a research partnership with higher education, the medical community, and coalition stakeholders

- Create opportunities and programs that focus on the value of nature as a venue for wellness
- Develop media to promote the benefits of outdoor play in nature as a powerful competitor to recreational screen time.
- Develop media and print materials that address parental concerns of the risks of allowing children to play outdoors
- Establish an institute for research specific to “Nature-Deficit Disorder”
- Establish data collection and analysis methods for benefits/outcomes of using Deschutes Children’s Forest sites to provide research for future decision making and media use

Objective 4: Develop programs that foster leadership skills in youth, promote a sense of connection and stewardship for public lands, and provide potential environmental and natural resource career paths

- Develop an intern program for students who want to work in the National Forest
- Teach conservation and stewardship skills in education and recreation programs
- Provide youth programming with relevant and meaningful opportunities to participate in hands-on community stewardship projects throughout Central Oregon
- Establish training programs that teach and demonstrate teaching skills to peers and to adults
- Empower youth to be teachers to their peers, the community and the visiting public
- Develop community audiences and venues for youth to present their community project work throughout Central Oregon
- Develop a pathway of choice for Deschutes Children’s Forest participants that links them directly to project partners, community leaders, higher education, and environmental and natural resource career choices (e.g. fish biologist, forester, etc.).
7.0 OUTPUTS AND MILESTONES

- At least 10,000 students will participate in Deschutes Children’s Forest programming by December 2013, and 15,000 students annually by December 2014
- At least 300 teachers will participate in Deschutes Children’s Forest programming through teacher trainings, field trips, classroom presentations or related activities by December 2013
- Skyliners Lodge will be transformed into the Children’s Forest Discovery Center (CFDC) and utilized at least 50% of the available school days during the 2012-13 SY
- The number of Deschutes Children’s Forest sites identified in Central Oregon will increase from 20 to 40 by June 2013
- The Deschutes Children’s Forest will provide nature-based educational programs that are aligned with the learning strands of the Oregon Environmental Literacy Plan and the Common Core State Standards of Education
- 25% of referrals coming through Rx: 2Thrive’s Nature Tracks will remain involved with Deschutes Children’s Forest programming or report an increase in active outdoor play for at least one year
- Childhood obesity rates in Deschutes County will be reduced by 5% by 2015
- At least 1 Naturehood will be developed by December 2012, 3 NatureHoods by December 2013, and 10 NatureHoods by 2015
- At least 3 publications examining the linkages between exposure to nature and health outcomes will be published and distributed to national journals by 2016
- At least 100 students per year will act as teachers as they share their Deschutes Children’s Forest experiences with the wider community at a regional student summit

Note - We fully recognize that what is most important in our work is outcomes and results-based accountability – the outputs above are largely milestones towards our ultimate goal of changes in attitudes and behavior such that youth in Central Oregon have a healthier lifestyle due to the system of supports that gets them outdoors and into the forest. A priority during our first few years will be to establish a series of assessment and evaluation tools that will allow us to better track progress toward this goal.

In addition to the raw number of DCF sites, over the next 12 months we will develop criteria to allow us to assess how accessible DCF sites are and the extent to which we are able to locate and/or create new sites in underserved areas (e.g. Redmond).
The following table represents the Deschutes Children’s Forest (DCF) priority Strategies, Projects and Activities for Yr 1 (2012). All activities are assumed to occur in 2012 unless otherwise noted.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority Strategies (from 6.0)</th>
<th>Key Action Items</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Assignment/Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Ensure organizational stability and effectiveness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Staffing/Governance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fundraising</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Marketing and Outreach</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hire DCF Project Manager</td>
<td></td>
<td>Completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Finalize agreement with DYNW and MOUs with partner organizations</td>
<td>Jan – Apr</td>
<td>DYNW lead role</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Develop DCF marketing materials (handout, PSA, etc./schedule presentations throughout the community)</td>
<td>Jan – Apr</td>
<td>Marketing/Advocacy Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Develop DCF website as a resource for multiple stakeholders</td>
<td>Feb – Initial page June – Full site</td>
<td>Marketing/Advocacy Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Convene DCF Committees to determine program and site expenses and pursue funds through grants and contracts</td>
<td>ongoing</td>
<td>DCF staff and Committee chairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Implement Rx: 2Thrive - “Nature Tracks”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Develop formal agreement among partners (e.g. medical community, BPRD)</td>
<td>ongoing</td>
<td>DCF staff and Kids@Heart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Determine which DCF programs and activities qualify as part of Nature Tracks and develop both metrics and monitoring protocol</td>
<td>Mar - May</td>
<td>DCF staff and Kids@Heart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Update and develop marketing materials (e.g. prescription, Nature Tracks brochure, Nature Tracks website, “Passport”)</td>
<td>Mar - May</td>
<td>DCF staff and Kids@Heart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provide additional training for physicians on the Nature Tracks component</td>
<td>Mar - May</td>
<td>DCF staff and Kids@Heart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Conduct outreach to families and students about the program</td>
<td>ongoing</td>
<td>DCF staff and Kids@Heart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Implement monitoring and evaluation system</td>
<td>May - June</td>
<td>DCF staff and Kids@Heart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Implement the “NatureHoods” Program</td>
<td>Develop concept and formal criteria for what constitutes a “NatureHood”</td>
<td>Completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Identify potential sites and get approval from Bend Park and Recreation District (BPRD)</td>
<td>ongoing</td>
<td>DCF staff and BPRD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Develop Interpretive Plan and site plan for pilot NatureHood including trail or other site improvements along with engaging activities</td>
<td>May - Sept</td>
<td>DCF staff and BPRD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Conduct outreach to local schools and neighborhoods (and other prospective NatureHoods)</td>
<td>June</td>
<td>DCF staff and BPRD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Develop activities and programs for the NatureHoods (i.e. summer events)</td>
<td>Ongoing – pilot site July</td>
<td>DCF staff and BPRD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pilot a “Naturehood” at Pine Nursery in partnership with Ponderosa ES</td>
<td>Sept</td>
<td>DCF staff, BPRD and USFS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Secure funding for site improvements (trails, signage, etc.)</td>
<td>Ongoing – pilot site August</td>
<td>DCF staff, BPRD and Fundraising Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Introduce concept to other communities/other Park and Recreation Districts</td>
<td>Sept - Oct</td>
<td>DCF staff and BPRD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Planning work to launch a Forest For Every Classroom (FFEC) in 2013</td>
<td>Look at existing FFEC programs in other states and develop a Best Practices Report to guide implementation</td>
<td>Feb - May</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Develop sample curriculum and have K-2 teachers provide feedback</td>
<td>Aug - Oct</td>
<td>DCF staff and select teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Finalize curriculum and supporting materials</td>
<td>Oct – Feb 2013</td>
<td>DCF staff and Program Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Develop and schedule workshops and summer institute for teachers</td>
<td>Jan – Mar 2013</td>
<td>DCF staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Recruit teachers</td>
<td>Feb – May 2013</td>
<td>DCF staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hold pilot program at Skyliner Lodge</td>
<td>June – July 2013</td>
<td>DCF staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Implement Environmental Education and Stewardship programs and activities</td>
<td>Increase current capacity for Environmental Education and related programs by 15% through increased staffing and programming resources</td>
<td>April - Dec</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Align current programs with OELP (Oregon Environmental Literacy Plan)</td>
<td>ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Develop and communicate clear message about Environmental Education and Stewardship Program goals and outcomes</td>
<td>Feb - Dec</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Coordinate student Watershed Summit</td>
<td>Annually in May</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Develop Skyliners Lodge as the Deschutes Children’s Forest “Discovery Center”</td>
<td>Work with stakeholders to determine necessary site improvements (e.g. facility, trails, equipment, signage, etc.) to rebrand the facility</td>
<td>Feb - May</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Work with DCF Partners to develop specific programs and activities that can take place at the Discovery Center</td>
<td>ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Obtain funds for improvements through grants and donations</td>
<td>ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Conduct outreach to local teachers and organizations to let them know of the resources available</td>
<td>Mar – Initial Sept - Full</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Raise funds for bussing, subs and equipment as needed</td>
<td>ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Hold programs and activities at Skyliner Lodge</td>
<td>ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Implement “Inclusion Strategy” to improve accessibility in the Children’s Forest for all children</td>
<td>Conduct inventory assessment to determine if all targeted sites, facilities, and hiking trails meet applicable federal accessibility standards under the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968</td>
<td>Feb - Sept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provide storage for equipment or hardware that can enhance access for all children</td>
<td>Sept - Skyliner</td>
<td>USFS, HDESD, Sites and Facilities Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provide educational materials in alternative formats (i.e. develop an app linked to interpretive signs, kiosks or educational materials)</td>
<td>Sept - Skyliner</td>
<td>DCF staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provide accessible bus drop-off locations at all targeted sites</td>
<td>Sept – Skyliner, Ryan Ranch</td>
<td>USFS, Sites and Facilities Committee, Site manager takes lead (if applicable)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Develop a “Resource Coop” for outdoor equipment and supplies</td>
<td>Conduct inventory of existing equipment and supplies</td>
<td>Mar - May</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Develop list of additional items needed</td>
<td>May - June</td>
<td>Partners, School Districts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Identify location (or locations) to host Resource Coop</td>
<td>May - Sept</td>
<td>Partners, Sites and Facilities Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Raise funds to acquire new equipment</td>
<td>May - ongoing</td>
<td>Fundraising Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Develop check-out system and process for maintenance and replacement of equipment</td>
<td>Oct</td>
<td>DCF staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Provide teacher training and funds for field trips</td>
<td>Hold Education Summits for teachers and administrators from Bend-La Pine, Redmond and Sisters School Districts</td>
<td>Feb - Apr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Share information on available resources (e.g. personnel, curriculum, equipment, activities)</td>
<td>Mar - ongoing</td>
<td>HDESD, School Districts, Partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Conduct workshops and formal professional development sessions for teachers</td>
<td>Summer and Fall</td>
<td>Partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Raise funds for field trips and out-of-classroom activities</td>
<td>ongoing</td>
<td>Fundraising Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Coordinate partners to deliver integrated teacher training for hands-on stewardship projects</td>
<td>Summer</td>
<td>Partners, Program Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project</td>
<td>Task Description</td>
<td>Time Period</td>
<td>Responsible Parties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop DCF intern program</td>
<td>Recruitment of partners to host interns</td>
<td>Apr - May</td>
<td>DCF Staff and USFS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Develop program design w/ interested partners</td>
<td>Apr - June</td>
<td>DCF Staff, USFS and interested Partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Establish agreements w/ partners who will host DCF interns</td>
<td>Summer</td>
<td>DCF Staff, USFS and interested Partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Recruit interns and placement</td>
<td>Aug - Sept</td>
<td>DCF Staff, USFS and Host Partner(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop a medical research partnership with higher education</td>
<td>Identify potential partners within the medical community and higher education</td>
<td>July</td>
<td>Kids@Heart, COPA, academic partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Identify potential areas of research and research questions</td>
<td>ongoing</td>
<td>Kids@Heart, COPA, academic partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Secure funding for first research project</td>
<td>Late 2012, early 2013</td>
<td>Kids@Heart, COPA, academic partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Implement first research project</td>
<td>2013-14</td>
<td>Kids@Heart, COPA, academic partners</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Staffing/Personnel</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DCF Project Manager (coordination, PR, fundraising, etc.)</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staffing support</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$30,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Office space</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In-kind (USFS)</td>
<td>In-kind (USFS)</td>
<td>In-kind (USFS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Contract Services</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insurance</td>
<td>$3,000</td>
<td>$3,000</td>
<td>$3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Training and Travel</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DCF staff (mileage, conferences, etc.)</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DCF Advisory Board and Partners</td>
<td>In-kind</td>
<td>In-kind</td>
<td>In-kind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Marketing and Outreach</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing plan development/annual update</td>
<td>$3,000</td>
<td>$3,000</td>
<td>$3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brochures and handouts</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Videos and related projects (i.e. PSAs and video series on watersheds)</td>
<td>$4,000</td>
<td>$4,000</td>
<td>$4,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Website (design, hosting and updating)</td>
<td>$20,000</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distribution of marketing materials</td>
<td>$3,000</td>
<td>$3,000</td>
<td>$3,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### PROGRAMMING CAPACITY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Staffing and operations of Deschutes Children’s Forest programs</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservation education and youth engagement organizations</td>
<td>$150,000</td>
<td>$300,000</td>
<td>$450,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outdoor equipment and supplies</td>
<td>$35,000</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health outcomes research and evaluation</td>
<td>In-kind</td>
<td>In-kind</td>
<td>In-kind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scholarships for students</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Travel</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bussing and subs to allow field work (all 3 school districts plus private schools)</td>
<td>$35,000</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
<td>$75,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Professional Development</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Teacher training (esp. in Environmental Education)</td>
<td>In-kind</td>
<td>In-kind</td>
<td>In-kind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- stipends (for summer/out-of-school time work)</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Site and Facility Operations</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Skyliners Lodge/Discovery Center (HDESD)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Facility Improvements</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Skyliners Lodge (HDESD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Additional sites outside of Bend similar to Skyliners Lodge for conducting DCF programs (TBD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Signage at all DCF sites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- NatureHoods facilities, signage, etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Expanding career pathways to replace aging workforce</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Intern program</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total**

~~$444,500~~

~~$629,000~~

~~$801,500~~
The Strategic Plan will be monitored on a regular basis with progress or changes noted for each action item due at that time. Given that the Deschutes Children’s Forest is a start-up organization, this will be done monthly at first and then shifting to a quarterly review later in the year. To evaluate our overall progress, we will consider the following key questions:

**Are our goals and objectives being achieved or not?**

- If they are, then:
  - acknowledge, reward and communicate the process to key stakeholders
- If not, then consider the following questions:
  - Will the goals be achieved on a new timeline? If so, when?
  - Do personnel (i.e. Children’s Forest staff and the various Committees and Task Forces) have adequate resources to achieve the goals and objectives? If not, what are the limiting factors and conditions?
  - Should organizational priorities be changed to put more focus on achieving the goals and objectives?
  - Should the goals and objectives themselves be changed?
  - What can be learned from our monitoring and evaluation in order to improve future planning activities and also to improve future monitoring and evaluation efforts?

Results of monitoring and evaluation will be in writing and will be provided to the Advisory Board in their quarterly meeting packet. The Report will include:

- Answers to the key questions above
- Trends regarding the progress (or lack thereof) toward goals, objectives, strategic initiatives, etc.
- Recommendations about the status
- Any actions needed by the Advisory Board

The Strategic Plan will be reviewed and updated annually. Recommendations for any interim changes to the Strategic Plan should address the following questions:

- Why should the changes be made?
- What specific changes should be made, related to goals, objectives, strategies, timelines and responsibilities?
The Strategic Plan will play a critical role in helping to guide the development and formation of the Deschutes Children’s Forest.

As such,

• All Advisory Board members and staff members will have access to a copy of the Strategic Plan. New DCF Partners will receive copies as part of their formal orientation.

• The mission, vision, organizational principles and other appropriate elements of the Strategic Plan will be communicated through various media and presentations to schools and community organizations. This includes a DCF brochure, PSA video, and website to begin.

• Portions of the Strategic Plan will be provided to stakeholders as appropriate or used for fundraising and grantwriting purposes.

• The Strategic Plan will be made available at all levels of the US Forest Service and may in part be used by other Forest Service sponsored Children’s Forests across the country.

Neighborhood Greenness and 2 Year Changes in Body Mass Index of Youth

A retrospective cohort study appearing in the December 2008 issue of The American Journal of Preventive Medicine followed low income children ages 3-16 years for two years. Authors calculated their change in BMI and measured the amount of green space in each child’s neighborhood using satellite images. After adjusting for potential variables such as age and gender, it was found that higher greenness was associated with lower odds of increased change in BMI (OR: 0.87, 95% CI: 0.790.97). Authors suggested that efforts to get children outside and engaged in healthy behaviors should be promoted as a means to help combat childhood obesity.
Management Structure

Deschutes Children’s Forest Places and Sites

Deschutes Children’s Forest Environmental Education Programs

Priority Initiatives and Strategies for 2012-14

- Rx: 2Thrive – Nature Tracks
- NatureHoods
- A Forest For Every Classroom
- Environmental Education and Stewardship Programs
- Discovery Center (at Skyliner Lodge)
- DCF Website
- Deschutes Children’s Forest Intern Program
- Inclusion Strategy
- Teacher Engagement
- Resource Co-op

List of Terms
Deschutes Children’s Forest Advisory Board
The Deschutes Children’s Forest operates under a DBA in conjunction with Discover Your Northwest, a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization closely affiliated with the USFS. The DCF Advisory Board (“Advisory Board”) is the local Deschutes Children’s Forest decision-making body that oversees the work of the various DCF Committees (see below). The Advisory Board is comprised of the “founding” Deschutes Children’s Forest members with the ability to add additional key Partners if desired. Advisory Board membership is tied to the agency/organization and they can choose a designee if the regular representative is going to be absent. The Advisory Board meets monthly.

Agency/Organization (as of April 15, 2012)
US Forest Service (USFS) High Desert Museum
Discover Your Northwest (DYNW) Wolftree
Bend-La Pine School District Upper Deschutes Watershed Council
Redmond School District Bend Park and Recreation District
Sisters School District Kids @ Heart/St Charles Health System
High Desert Education Service District Central Oregon Pediatric Associates (COPA)

Deschutes Children’s Forest Staff
From its inception, a goal of the Deschutes Children’s Forest has been to develop a new model where the “infrastructure” of the organization remains lean with most of the “work” done by existing partner organizations and agencies with support from a limited staff. Currently, the Deschutes Children’s Forest is staffed by a part-time Project Manager through Discover Your Northwest.

Deschutes Children’s Forest Committees and Task Forces
The Deschutes Children’s Forest Committees and Task Forces have been established to provide important structural support and complete a lot of the operational work for what will be a very lean organization with limited staff. Committees will include Advisory Board members, DCF Partners and other interested parties. The DCF Project Manager will essentially “sit” on all of the DCF Committees.
Four DCF Committees (Standing)

1. **Marketing/Advocacy Committee**
   Responsible for all marketing and public relations for the Deschutes Children’s Forest including brochures, handouts, PSAs, surveys, the website and signage at the sites. The Marketing/Advocacy Committee will develop talking points for Partners and assist in outreach and advocacy opportunities. This committee will support the DCF Project Manager who will serve as the de facto “spokesperson” for the effort.

2. **Program Committee**
   Responsible for reviewing and evaluating the various options and determining what programs, organizations, activities, etc. qualify and should be included as part of the Deschutes Children’s Forest network. The Program Committee will also gather/coordinate all operational funding requests, prioritize them, and then work closely with the Fundraising Committee on grants and fundraising opportunities.

3. **Sites and Facilities Committee**
   Responsible for overseeing the various sites and facilities in the Deschutes Children’s Forest (this includes existing as well as new ones that need to be developed). The Sites and Facilities Committee plays a very similar role to the Program Committee in that it helps to develop a “Capital Improvement” Plan that outlines prioritized capital needs and works closely with the Fundraising Committee on grants and outside fundraising opportunities.

4. **Fundraising Committee**
   The Fundraising Committee has several responsibilities:
   - work with the new “Friends” group (being established to support Deschutes National Forest) to determine specific fundraising roles
   - identify opportunities for grants, sponsorships and other outside funding events and activities
   - work with both the Program Committee and the Sites and Facilities Committee to strategically coordinate/prioritize DCF Partners’ needs for alignment with particular funding sources
   - write grants as needed. See Grantwriting section below.

Two DCF Task Forces (Ad Hoc)

**Membership** - develops formal criteria for becoming a Deschutes Children’s Forest “Partner” (and Advisory Board member) along with an application form and review process. Assists with identification and recruitment of new DCF Partners.
Research - identifies opportunities for research tied to Deschutes Children’s Forest programming along the entire continuum. It takes the lead role in developing and refining evaluation and measurement tools/metrics and working to disseminate findings to other communities.

Grantwriting
The Fundraising Committee will identify potential sources of grant funding that fall into the Tier 1 category below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tier 1 – new $</th>
<th>Tier 2 – existing relationship</th>
<th>Tier 3 – unique relationship</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New funding sources where the best approach is from a coordinated DCF proposal; specific components to be developed by the Fundraising Committee</td>
<td>Funding sources where one or more DCF Partners has already received funds and there is an existing relationship. DCF Partners are encouraged to developed coordinated approaches to these funders whenever possible</td>
<td>Funding sources where the DCF Partner has a long-standing and unique relationship – and – adding additional partners or emphasizing the DCF might be seen as diluting the product</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A small sample of potential funders to be approached include:

Audubon TogetherGreen Innovation Grants Program
Autzen Foundation
Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation
Bill Healy Foundation
Boeing
Collins Foundation
Meyer Memorial Trust
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
National Science Foundation
Oregon Community Foundation
Pacific Power Foundation
Paul Allen Foundation
PGE Foundation
State Farm Youth Advisory Board National Grant Program
and many others ....
The following lists represent both current and proposed Deschutes Children’s Forest “places” and sites/facilities for a wide variety of activities including formal education as well as play and exploration. These sites were selected based on traditional environmental education programs, adequate facilities (i.e. bathrooms, bus parking, etc.) and unique areas for student exploration. Future sites will be added by the Sites and Facilities Committee.

Please visit our website for more information: www.deschuteschildrensforest.org

Note: This website is live, but not yet fully implemented/developed.

Deschutes Children’s Forest Places/Sites (see accompanying map)

- Metolius Preserve
- Riverside Campground (Salmon Watch)
- Head of the Metolius
- Bird Beach (Whychus Creek Stewardship)
- Whychus Creek Falls
- Camp Polk
- Wolftree Discovery Outpost
- Caldera
- Trout Creek
- Cline Butte
- Cline Falls
- Dry Canyon (Redmond)
- Smith Rock State Park
- Steelhead Falls
- The Island
- Rimrock Springs
- Redmond Caves
- Skyliner’s Lodge (DCF Discovery Center)
- Tumalo Creek
- Welcome Station
- Shevlin Park
- The Badlands
- Discovery in the Wilderness
- High Desert Museum
- Ryan Ranch Meadow
- Mt. Bachelor
- Hosmer Lake
- Sparks Lake
- Soda Creek
- Elk Lake
- Todd Lake
- Skyline Forest
- Benham Falls
- Lava Lands Visitor Center
- 18 Fire
- Pine Mountain Observatory
- Lava River Cave
- Lava Cast Forest
- Sunriver Nature Center
- Ogden Group Camp
- Browns Crossing
- Sheep Springs (Kokanee Karnival)
- Davis Aspen Restoration
- Crescent Creek Field Classroom
- Big Marsh
- Paulina Visitor Center
- Little Deschutes River
- La Pine Wetland (south)
- La Pine Beaver Ponds (north)
- Osprey Point
- Crescent Lake
Children's Forest Sites
Deschutes National Forest

Legend

Children's Forest Sites
- Current Sites
- Proposed Sites

Children's Forest Regions
- Bend / Sunriver Region
- Crescent Region
- La Pine Region
- Redmond Region
- Sisters Region

This product is reproduced from geospatial information prepared by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service. The Forest Service cannot assure the reliability or suitability of this information if used for a purpose other than which it was created.
Potential NatureHood sites - see Priority Initiative #2 for description of a NatureHood

The following are considered the most likely candidates for a “pilot” NatureHood

- **Near Pine Nursery Park** – features Ponderosa ES, three parks with natural areas, reasonable sidewalk access
- **Hollinshead/St Charles area** – would tie Orchard, Hollinshead, Stover and Moody Parks to St Charles for recovering patients to have outdoor opportunities. Could also tie with Ensworth ES and Mountain View HS
- **Near Pilot Butte State Park** – existing trails, large natural areas, three schools (Marshall HS, Juniper ES, Pilot Butte MS)

Longer term, here are some additional potential NatureHood Sites around Central Oregon (with appropriate neighborhood school to the right)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trout Creek</td>
<td>Sisters MS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village Green</td>
<td>Sisters ES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City Park</td>
<td>Culver Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bean Park</td>
<td>Jefferson County MS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juniper Hill</td>
<td>Jefferson County MS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friendship Park</td>
<td>all Madras schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Legion Park</td>
<td>Vern Patrick ES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baker City Park</td>
<td>Lynch ES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Umatilla Complex</td>
<td>Sage ES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spudbowl Park</td>
<td>Evergreen ES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dry Canyon Park</td>
<td>John Tuck ES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quince City Park</td>
<td>Tom McCall ES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sawyer Park</td>
<td>REALMS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hollinshead Park</td>
<td>General Bend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rock Ridge Park</td>
<td>Lava Ridge ES/Sky View MS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shevlin Park</td>
<td>General Bend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overturf Butte</td>
<td>General Bend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hollygrape Park</td>
<td>Elk Meadow ES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Desert Park</td>
<td>High Desert MS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sun Meadow Park</td>
<td>Jewell ES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ponderosa Park</td>
<td>Bear Creek ES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drake Park</td>
<td>Amity Creek ES/Highland ES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Big Sky Complex</td>
<td>Buckingham ES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lewis &amp; Clark Park</td>
<td>High Lakes ES</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
By working with existing partners, who already provide environmental and conservation education services to youth in Central Oregon, the Deschutes Children’s Forest will hit the ground running with a strong foundation of program offerings. The challenge will be to coordinate all these efforts (and expand capacity where appropriate); ensuring providers are addressing Deschutes Children’s Forest outcomes and filling a needed role on the continuum.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program/Project</th>
<th>Target Audience</th>
<th>DCF Partner</th>
<th>Program/Project Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1000 Drops</td>
<td>Grades 1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; - 2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>UDWC</td>
<td>Regionally based hands-on learning program to guide local students to understand the path that water takes through the Upper Deschutes watershed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hometown Waters</td>
<td>Grades 6&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; - 10&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>UDWC</td>
<td>Students connect to their home watershed through place-based activities in watershed science, mapping, math, and art.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salmon Watch</td>
<td>Grades 8&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; - 11&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>UDWC</td>
<td>Students participate in hands-on streamside learning activities to understand the conditions necessary to support healthy fish populations (aligned with ODE standards and 8&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; grade learning benchmarks).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Stewardship Project</td>
<td>Grades 10&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; - 12&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>UDWC</td>
<td>Through research, writing, art, science, and community interviews, students participate in all aspects of a hands-on stream stewardship project. Students present their projects and watershed stories at Students Speak: A Watershed Summit each spring.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program</td>
<td>Grades</td>
<td>Sponsor(s)</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Volcano in the Classroom</strong></td>
<td>4&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; - 6&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>DYNW</td>
<td>Classroom presentation on geology and volcanic history of the Cascades and Newberry Volcano with the goal of giving local students a better sense of place and preparing them for a visit to NNVM.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lava Lands Discovery Tours</strong></td>
<td>4&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; - 8&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>DYNW, DNF</td>
<td>Spring and Fall field trips to the main visitor center for NNVM focused on hands-on exploration of unique local geological features.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lava River Cave Conservation Tours</strong></td>
<td>4&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; - 8&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>DYNW, DNF</td>
<td>Spring and Fall field trips to a local lava tube focused on this unique habitat and its use by native wildlife esp. bats and the threats to these populations (i.e. White-nose Syndrome).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Project SNOW (Studying Nature Outdoors in Winter)</strong></td>
<td>4&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; - 12&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>DYNW, DNF, Wolftree</td>
<td>Travelling by snowshoe or cross country skis, students use a field based and experiential approach in science inquiry to assess nivation environments; using snow science tools, animal tracking, and seasonal adaptation studies, students address ODE benchmarks and standards for physical, life, and earth sciences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Youth Conservation Corps (YCC)</strong></td>
<td>16-18 year olds</td>
<td>DNF, DYNW, COIC, HOC</td>
<td>Summer youth work program in trail maintenance and forest restoration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SEED Project</strong></td>
<td>ALL</td>
<td>DNF</td>
<td>Providing a dynamic, age appropriate, hands-on learning experience in the field and classroom for South-Central Oregon students. Programs include tree planting, recycling, restoration projects, native species monitoring.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cascade Streamwatch</strong></td>
<td>5&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; - 12&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Wolftree</td>
<td>While exploring aquatic environments in waders, students use a field based and experiential approach in science inquiry to assess habitat health; using water quality tests, macroinvertebrate collection, and riparian assessment. Students’ satisfaction of ODE benchmarks and standards include physical, life, and earth sciences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Science in the Forest</strong></td>
<td>5&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; - 12&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Wolftree</td>
<td>Hiking through a variety of terrains, students use a field based and experiential approach in science inquiry to assess terrestrial environments; using topographic map analysis, forestry tools, biotic and abiotic identification. Students’ satisfaction of ODE benchmarks and standards include physical, life, and earth sciences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program</td>
<td>Grades</td>
<td>Partner</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kokanee Karnival</td>
<td>4&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; – 5&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>DNF, CO Flyfishers, ODFW</td>
<td>A dynamic, hands-on learning experience to educate and excite students about fish conservation and healthy watersheds.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fired Up About Oregon Forests</td>
<td>4&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; – 8&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>HDM</td>
<td>Explores the role of fire in forests of the west. Using both historical and contemporary management approaches, students use hands-on, inquiry-based activities to learn how ponderosa pine are fire adapted and how fire is an integral component of a healthy forest.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire, Water, Earth</td>
<td>8&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; – 10&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>HDM</td>
<td>During this unique experience, students learn how to combine indigenous knowledge and western science with hands-on, inquiry-based activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discovery Classes</td>
<td>K – 8&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>HDM</td>
<td>Engaging, hands-on, inquiry based learning experiences in a Museum setting with an emphasis on the geology, watersheds and wildlife of the High Desert. Students explore our outdoor classroom and connect with the region’s natural history through science projects. Activities are aligned with ODE standards and benchmarks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EarthSmart Kids Community Connections</td>
<td>5&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; – 6&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>COEC</td>
<td>Through hands on activities and in-class presentations, students learn about sustainable actions and how they can affect their community once a month. The field trip component brings students to the source of their water, the end of their waste and provides a sense of connection to their world through two outdoor school days held at Skyliner lodge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creature Kids</td>
<td>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; – 3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>COEC</td>
<td>Through hands-on science observation, exploration, games, reflection and art activities, students will learn basic ecological principals such as interdependence, biodiversity, habitats and adaptations through different activities throughout the day.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Event Name</td>
<td>Age Group</td>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outdoor Day</td>
<td>Grades 3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt; – 5&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>COEC</td>
<td>Students will learn about the various flora and fauna of in the ecosystems surrounding the Skyliner Lodge and our interdependence with nature. Students explain how species interact within an ecosystem and describe dependencies on other species. Activities focus on learning how to explain the interdependence of plants, animals, and environment, and how adaptation influences survival. Students will learn about the ways to preserve and protect environments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Puppets in the Park</td>
<td>Ages 3-8 yrs</td>
<td>BPRD</td>
<td>This free summer program is designed to connect children and adults to nature through the fun and laughter of puppets! Held every Thursday from July 12 - August 30 (from 11:00 am - 12 noon), this program rotates to a different neighborhood park each week. Activity time will follow each week’s performance! Check the BPRD website for exact schedule.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arbor Week Tree Planting</td>
<td>School age</td>
<td>BPRD</td>
<td>This free tree planting program includes a brief interpretive talk, supervision of hands-on tree planting and lots of fun digging in the dirt! 2012 Tree planting takes place: Saturday, March 31, from 9:00 am – 1:00 pm; Tuesday &amp; Wednesday, April 3 &amp; 4, from 2:00 – 5:30pm.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
To round out existing programs and to ensure a full continuum of opportunities for all children and youth, the following Initiatives and/or Strategies will be launched or prioritized in the first three years.

- Rx: 2Thrive – Nature Tracks
- Naturehoods
- A Forest For Every Classroom
- Environmental Education and Stewardship Programs
- Discovery Center (at Skyliners Lodge)
- DCF Website
- Deschutes Children’s Forest Intern Program
- Inclusion Strategy
- Teacher Engagement
- Resource Co-op
Connecting Youth to the Outdoors to Promote Healthy Living!

Overview
Rx: 2Thrive is a new program developed to connect Central Oregon children and families with resources in their community that help them thrive - including programs that help connect children and youth to nature. Families receive actual “prescriptions” for healthy active living and will have access to health and recreation coaches who help them find the right community programs or places for their interests, including opportunities to engage with the Deschutes Children’s Forest. We will work closely with Kids@Heart to fully develop the Nature Tracks component of Rx: 2Thrive and integrate this program into the Deschutes Children’s Forest framework.

How The Program Works
At a child’s routine medical visit, their pediatrician or family doctor may write a prescription based on a healthy eating and active living goal that they develop in conjunction with the family. In addition, the family can ask for help from an Rx: 2Thrive “play coach” to find a Deschutes Children’s Forest program or activity that interests them. The physician may also go over an evidence-based, standardized prevention message (e.g. 7-5-2-1-0 related to the new food pyramid) to help the child follow a few simple guidelines to keep his or her mind, heart and body strong. For more information about this program, please visit www.rx2thrive.org.

Reducing Screen Time
The term “screen time” applies to recreational time spent with just about anything that glows - televisions, video games, computers, smart phones, tablets, etc. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends limiting total screen time to no more than two hours per day for children and discourages any media use at all for infants and young children less than two years old. The Deschutes Children’s Forest strongly believes that spending time in nature is a great alternative to screen media. We encourage you to consider a hike or hide-and-go-seek in a local park or DCF site.

Ensuring Follow-through: Nature Tracks “Passport to Discovery”
One of the challenges already facing the Rx: 2Thrive program is encouraging families to stick with the program beyond just the first few months. With this in mind, we will develop and launch a new incentive program for Nature Tracks. Each child who signs up will be handed a “Passport to Discovery” which will be a way for the child and the family to track his or her progress by stamping their book each time they take part in a Deschutes Children’s Forest Program. Once completed, the book can be returned to a Discover Your Northwest store to receive a gift.
Nature in Your Neighborhood

Rationale/Purpose
In spite of living in the midst of an exceptional natural landscape, there are many children in Central Oregon who never have the opportunity to experience all that the region offers. Many students live in households that do not emphasize the outdoors, and our schools don’t take full advantage of utilizing outdoor learning opportunities since the cost of bussing or students missing other classes are seen as obstacles.

A new project of the Deschutes Children’s Forest, NatureHoods highlights natural places within local communities with the goal of helping the community and local schools be aware of and appreciate their unique setting.

With the leadership and support of Bend Park and Recreation District, designated NatureHoods will provide families and schools with safe, accessible contact with the natural world. Free play and guided exploration opportunities will strengthen their sense of place, enhance health, growth and development, and foster stronger connections to natural areas within their communities.

It is important to draw a distinction between a “park” and a NatureHood. As proposed, a Naturehood may include a public park (or other open and accessible greenspace) but what will set this designation apart will be the ability to meet the following criteria:

Primary NatureHood Criteria
1. Accessible – must be walkable, close to home, appropriate for all ages and safe
2. Natural landscaping – must have landscaping/terrain that provides opportunities for guided and self-guided environmental education programs
3. Formally designated – must be formally designated by the Bend Park and Recreation District (or related park entity in other communities) – process TBD

Secondary NatureHood Criteria/considerations
1. Near to school(s) – must be within safe walking distance of a school(s) to maximize use by teachers and their students*
2. Multiple destinations - has at least 2 internal “destinations” that are linked
3. Have a community component(s) that allow for greater engagement – i.e. community garden, greenhouse, etc.
Potential NatureHood interactive activities and programs

- Scavenger hunt-type activity
- On-line information tour – create apps that allow people to download info
- Community garden or greenhouse
- Exercise trail (or similar)
- Regular presentation/lecture by naturalist

Potential resource and funding needs/expenses

- Signs/kiosks – both informational and interactive
- Trail development – planning, development and maintenance
- On-line research/activities – for planning/research
- Outside presenters

* This will encourage use in three ways:
  1) **Independent Use**: as part of the students’ daily lesson plan
  2) **Formal Program Use**: working with a Deschutes Children’s Forest partner organization
  3) **Train-the-Trainer Program Use**: testing Deschutes Children’s Forest curriculum and associated materials developed through a training program (i.e. Forest For Every Classroom)
Professional Development Workshop Series for Early Elementary Teachers

Overview
A Forest for Every Classroom (FFEC) is a professional development program for early elementary educators focused on place-based education. Teachers who participate in FFEC develop curriculum that fosters student understanding of and appreciation for the natural world. The teacher-developed curricula will integrate hands-on natural explorations that address concepts in ecology and sense of place through sensory exploration. At the heart of the FFEC program is the belief that students who are immersed in the interdisciplinary study of “place” are more eager to learn and be involved in the stewardship of their communities and public lands.

Rationale/Purpose: Reaching a Younger Audience
The Deschutes Children’s Forest Partners realized early on in our planning that the barriers to reaching early elementary students in Central Oregon were directly related to either limited budgets for school field trips and/or providers not offering enough programs that were geared to this particular audience. FFEC’s train-the-trainer style of programming will allow early elementary teachers to have the freedom to incorporate the curriculum as it best fits their interest and schedule. Place-based education is the process of using the local community and environment as a starting point to teach concepts in science, mathematics, social studies and other subjects across the curriculum. This approach is proven to increase academic achievement while helping students develop stronger ties to their community, build appreciation for the natural world, and instill early in their lives a heightened commitment to becoming active stewards of the land.

Strategy/Outcome: Teacher Workshops at Skyliner Lodge
Following similar models that have been developed in Vermont, New Hampshire and Montana, DCF will launch the first FFEC professional development program in the Northwest. Building upon current teacher training opportunities (e.g. the teacher workshop for ES teachers in the 1000 Drops Program), FFEC will train and empower teachers to coordinate place-based education activities with their students. A year-long series of workshops and a summer institute will provide educators with the opportunity to develop the skills, knowledge, and support they need to create standards-based curriculum that connects their students to the public lands in Central Oregon. Workshops will take place at the Children’s Forest Discovery Center at Skyliner Lodge. Along with the training, teachers will leave with the “tools” (i.e. curriculum, materials, equipment, etc.) to bring the program to their classroom and beyond, encouraging self-guided use of a local NatureHood or other DCF outdoor classroom. 2012 will be spent planning and developing curriculum and workshops so the program can be formally launched in 2013.
**Overview**

A fundamental component within the Deschutes Children’s Forest includes environmental education activities and place-based stewardship projects. These hands-on activities and projects educate the next generation while connecting participating youth to the natural world. Through meaningful educational experiences along a nearby creek, at a local park, or within the national forest, students study wildlife, forests, and streams as they explore a local watershed or investigate a complex ecosystem. When students are given an opportunity to apply this knowledge to hands-on stewardship projects with community partners they are empowered to become active stewards of the natural environment.

Our interdisciplinary approach to environmental education and stewardship is multifaceted:

- Guide students to better understand and care for their environment through hands-on projects, art, music, writing or science
- Empower students to become natural resource leaders
- Bring community awareness to student projects in restoration, art, music and science
- Engage and educate students and community members through natural history exhibitions in a Museum setting.

**Environmental Education and Stewardship Program**

Environmental education and stewardship programs provide students with the opportunity to participate in hands-on science, history, writing, and creative art activities in order to become truly informed and engaged in the maintenance and preservation of their environment. Project ideas are often inquiry-based and student-driven to address local issues related to the natural world and environmental health. Students can participate in project- and place-based, service learning endeavors ranging from scientific investigations to creative arts explorations.
Students have opportunities to present their findings and share their creations with their peers and communities through natural resource and conservation publications, Watershed Summits, at the High Desert Museum, and other local venues. The student stewardship program is a comprehensive process that guides students through the development of their own unique project, meeting both ecological and educational needs. Each project varies in length, duration and type, but typically includes multi-day in class and field research and restoration activities.

**Education Objectives**
Specific objectives within environmental education and student stewardship programs include:

- Increase student engagement in wildlife, forestry, or freshwater research and restoration projects
- Intensify an interdisciplinary approach to applied learning, providing dynamic ways for students to satisfy educational goals and diploma requirements
- Advance student skill development and career related learning in science, technology, engineering, arts and math (STEAM)
- Enhance the engagement of students in all phases of community-based restoration project planning and implementation;
- Unite schools and communities in lasting partnerships that dually satisfy educational and ecological goals;
- Support and facilitate students in sharing their projects through local Watershed Summits, natural resource publications and exhibits
- Inspire students to pursue related college and career interests
- Motivate students to act as engaged citizens, caring for and improving their home communities and freshwater ecosystems.
Overview
Early on, the Deschutes Children’s Forest Partners determined that the best approach to achieve all the goals identified in this plan was to create a network of outdoor “classrooms” under the children’s forest “umbrella.” However, we still recognize the power (and efficiency) of a specific centralized location that the community can identify with and where we can build capacity to conduct Deschutes Children’s Forest activities.

With that in mind, we intend to create a fully inclusive learning environment at the new “Children’s Forest Discovery Center” (CFDC) located on Forest Service land west of Bend. The location is close to our three partner school districts and features a creek and Skyliner Lodge (former OMSI science camp site) so it fully lends itself as a landscape and learning center that is accessible and provides multiple learning experiences. We are fortunate that High Desert ESD began leasing the lodge from the Forest Service in 2010.

Skyliner Lodge has space indoors for up to 60 students with an appropriate number of chaperones. There are two indoor bathrooms as well as outhouses on the property. The facility has access to an important watershed, an old burn area, hiking, skiing, a fire pit and an outdoor presentation area. Coordination and reservations are currently taken through the High Desert ESD, though the DCF may begin assuming many of those responsibilities.

Rationale/Purpose: Expand Programming to All Youth
Knowing that many of our existing Children’s Forest sites and facilities are not fully accessible, we aim to use the creation of the CFDC as a pilot project that will enable us to learn how best to expand programming to youth with special needs. Strategies to be considered, but not limited to include (see also Priority Initiative #8 for more information about our Inclusion Strategy):

- Ensuring all targeted sites, facilities, and hiking trails meet applicable federal accessibility standards under the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968; as well as providing equal opportunity to the programs in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- Providing storage for equipment or hardware that can enhance access
• Provide educational materials in alternative formats including developing an app linked to interpretive signs, kiosks or educational materials
• Provide accessible bus drop-off locations

**Strategy/Outcome**

1) **Increase programs provided by DCF Partners at CFDC** – we have already created a full menu of programs provided by various Partners that are offered at this location. Partners will be critical in helping us determine how this facility can build capacity to offer these programs to all students and teachers throughout the community.

2) **Teacher Trainings** – We will encourage teacher training programs to be conducted here (e.g. A Forest for Every Classroom and other Partner teacher trainings). DCF Partners will help identify facility needs to conduct these programs year-round.

3) **Discovery Center Resource Co-op** – with the CFDC being our focal point for inclusive learning, we will develop and house a resource co-op on site. DCF Partners will help identify equipment and storage needs and will build this shared resource together to reduce overall costs for providers. Examples of likely items include: D-nets, microscopes, binoculars, snowshoes, stereoscopes, water labs, field guides, and waders, etc. (See also Priority Initiative #10 for more information)

4) **Potential “Outdoor School” Site** – Certain funders, High Desert ESD and the Partner school districts are looking at this site as a potential Outdoor School for Central Oregon. We will explore this possibility and hope to pilot a program at this site in the not-too-distant future.
The Deschutes Children’s Forest website is designed to be engaging, easy to access, and highly functional. It will contain a lot of information and be a great resource for different users (i.e. family, educator, DCF Partner, student, volunteer, donor, etc.) and also use pictures, videos and a “Hot Box” link to capture people’s attention so they will return frequently looking for “the next thing.”

As proposed, key elements of the DCF website will include:

- List of Deschutes Children’s Forest Partners and Sponsors
- List of Deschutes Children’s Forest Committees w/contact info
- News section with “latest greatest thing” and an archive for past articles and other highlights of interest (e.g. “No Child Left Inside,” “Nature Deficit Disorder” etc.)
- Deschutes Children’s Forest Strategic Plan
- Overview of the ten Deschutes Children’s Forest Priority Initiatives and Strategies
- Map of all the Deschutes Children’s Forest locations with “pop-up index cards” that explain available options and resources at that particular site. This section would be searchable by checklist – grade topic/standards, type of activities, ADA compatible, distance from different schools/communities, best season to go, size of group, etc.
- Resource for teachers – the DCF website will give teachers the ability to access information on DCF Programs and Places by geography, grade level and activity plus the ability to post curriculum, lesson plans, monitoring surveys and any other materials relevant to educator one-stop shopping
- Information about the Resource Coop including how to check out items/equipment
- Overview of our philosophy regarding play and the value of unstructured exploration with links to various parks and programs in the region (Park and Rec, State Parks, etc.)
- Article or section giving parents ideas on how they can expand play such as guide children to natural play spaces and encourage them to interact with their surroundings
- Provide links to local agencies with information on volunteer projects and opportunities
- Explanation of the Deschutes Children’s Forest and its management structure including our DBA with Discover Your Northwest. Include that we have 501(c)3 status and donations are tax deductible
- Sponsorship opportunities – this will be a section where we would appeal to potential corporate sponsors – what type of projects they would be supporting and what type of publicity they would receive in return
- Marketing packet – with tools for providers to use to promote DCF

The DCF website is still in the development stage and we are looking for funding (or in-kind support) to launch it. Information including pictures is being gathered by teachers and DCF Partners so the website can be quickly populated once built.
One of the important goals of the Deschutes Children’s Forest is to help generate a “pipeline” of young people who will have the interest and preparation to enter a career related to natural resources, conservation education, and the great outdoors. While we do not expect every student who participates in a DCF activity to pursue this option, we feel it is important to make students aware of career opportunities and to give them a sense of the work environment.

To do this in the most cost-effective way, Deschutes Children’s Forest Partners will offer internships to high school and college-aged students. As envisioned, internships would involve the following:

- 4-12 week paid internship (rate may vary somewhat between host organizations)
- Host organization could be any of the Deschutes Children’s Forest Partner organizations (i.e. Forest Service, Wolftree, Upper Deschutes Watershed Council, High Desert Museum, Bend Park & Recreation District, etc.)
- Interns would be engaged in activities that promote, improve or further the mission of the Deschutes Children’s Forest
- Candidates would be selected to promote cultural diversity and inclusion

The intent of the Intern Program is to extend the “stepping stones” continuum of the Deschutes Children’s Forest and help students become fully engaged in the work of conservation education, watershed restoration so they can teach others about the challenges facing our forests and public lands.
INCLUSION STRATEGY

The Deschutes Children’s Forest (DCF) is committed to developing programs and activities that can be enjoyed by and benefit all students. To help guide this work, DCF Partners are employing an Inclusion Strategy that considers three general categories of engagement:

1. Exploration and Discovery
2. Project Work and Vocation (including service learning)
3. Learning (Curriculum based programming meeting state standards)

Within all three categories, DCF facilities and programs need to be adapted to allow for greater access. Strategies to be considered include (but are not limited to):

• Ensuring all targeted DCF sites and facilities meet accessibility standards; for single use trails (i.e. hiking) on federal lands assure they meet the accessibility requirements of the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968 and look for opportunities to upgrade to the more rigorous ADA standards
• Providing enough room within a restroom or a separate room that would house a changing table
• Access to power for emergency service needs within “changing room”
• Storage for equipment or hardware that can enhance access
• Develop apps and utilize Braille to make interpretive signs, kiosks or educational materials more widely available
• Modify bus drop-off to accommodate wheelchairs

As part of an effort to test program, facility and access ideas at one destination, the DCF is developing a specific plan to enhance experiences at Skyliner Lodge and surrounding grounds for all students - see Deschutes Children’s Forest Discovery Center (DCFDC) initiative for more specific details. All three categories of engagement could be offered on the Skyliner Lodge Campus with the ability to test any new program ideas. We would target starting formal programs in Fall 2012.

General education Deschutes Children’s Forest programming is on-going so the intent is to look at these programs and explore ways to make them 100% inclusive. Proposed strategies to enhance DCF programming may include:

• Teacher and Educator Inclusion Training – Special teacher and educator trainings will be offered that enhance inclusive experiences in the Deschutes Children’s Forest. These trainings will take place at the DCF Discovery Center to build teacher confidence in bringing their special needs students to the facility. The focus will be placed on inclusive programming, ensuring all students can equally experience the Deschutes Children’s Forest.
• **There’s an App for That** – to achieve the Deschutes Children’s Forest mission of reaching all youth in Central Oregon, we need to develop learning connections for youth with differing abilities. Children with different sensory, mobility, auditory, and vision abilities are finding iPads to be an amazing link to learning. We will develop a DCF Discovery Center app as a pilot, utilizing student created materials, creativity and intuition. The app will feature information about the ecosystem surrounding the Discovery Center, including how to identify birds, bugs, trees, and fish. The app will offer an interactive tool as a watershed guide and will incorporate both visual and auditory experiences.

• **Expand current Bend Park & Recreation Therapeutic Recreation programming** - to include Exploration and Discovery, Project Work and Vocation and tie it to Deschutes Children’s Forest activities; include increasing transportation to students from 2 days to 3 days per week.

• **Greenhouses to Greenscapes** – Central Oregon students will raise native plants and vegetables at campus greenhouses and nurseries as an educational venue for learning a trade and understanding about native plant restoration, seeds, soils, composting, plant biology and human nutrition. Life Skills students will participate in native plant restoration projects located on the Deschutes Children’s Forest with a focus on upcoming restoration projects. Students will develop a business plan to promote a “seed-to-table” healthy foods program within the schools and local restaurants. As part of this program, students, community members, Forest Service specialists, and faculty will refurbish a 1,500 ft² greenhouse (in Sisters), including allowing access for disabled students. Bend-La Pine and Redmond School Districts already have greenhouses ready to participate in this program.

• **Expand CTE programs** – these valuable Career and Technical Education programs, such as the La Pine Forestry Program, can be expanded to host off-campus “exchange” students (within District). Other CTE programs can be incorporated into DCF programming to create new products or outcomes (i.e. stand exam, biological monitoring, interpretive signs, etc.)

• **Develop a docent program** - at Lava Lands Visitor Center, Sunriver Nature Center, or High Desert Museum using assistive technology and other means for students to utilize interpretive services

• **Design and market individual vocational education opportunities** - with Forest Service or integrate into youth conservation corps program

• **Enhance relationship with Oregon Adaptive Sports and other related programs** - develop relationship with Trail of Dreams to become part of Project SNOW program at Mt. Bachelor; and explore other opportunities outside of Mt. Bachelor programming.

• **Re-constitute peer-to-peer mentorship programs** - in elementary and middle schools for DCF programming
DCF Partners recognize that in order to reach all students, we must effectively engage with our teachers. The role of local schools/teachers is critical since they have a unique opportunity to influence how children view and interact with the out-of-doors. Many teachers can attest to the powerful inquiry-based learning that takes place outside the classroom when students make connections between abstract concepts and physical reality. As such, Deschutes Children’s Forest programs and activities will be available to all teachers K-12 with high quality programming provided by local nonprofits and tied to specific science strands. The DCF will be pursuing grants so funds and resources are available for field trips, classroom presentations, special projects, professional development and equipment. A website is also being developed that will allow teachers to access information on DCF Programs and Places by geography, grade level and activity.

In Spring 2012, Bend–La Pine, Redmond and Sisters School Districts partnered with High Desert ESD to sponsor three “Educator Summits” to develop a strategy for making all teachers aware of the Deschutes Children’s Forest and sharing opportunities for their students to learn out-of-doors. Each school district sent a team of 4-7 reps, including specially selected teacher leaders, SPED staff and administrators. These educators learned about the goals of the Deschutes Children’s Forest, the programs provided by DCF Partners (both in the classroom and outdoors), the success of Sisters School District’s IEE (Integrated Environmental Education) Program, the value of service learning projects, and had an opportunity to identify critical standards that need to be addressed at every grade level. They also developed a targeted outreach strategy about how best to share all this information with their peers in their respective communities.

• Some initial ideas that the Deschutes Children’s Forest would like to pursue include:
  • Ensure that DCF programs are “added value” and not added work for teachers
  • Ensure that DCF programming meets State Standards and Benchmarks and is in alignment with the Oregon Environmental Literacy Plan
  • Offer internships for teachers to develop specific curriculum and programs for the Deschutes Children’s Forest
  • Partner with school districts to develop DCF trainings that count towards credits for re-certification; develop (w/Bend-La Pine) or continue (w/Sisters and Redmond) agreements that ensure teachers will receive PDU’s for attendance at DCF trainings
  • Work with Oregon State University or other accredited universities to offer graduate level credit for DCF trainings
  • Develop a Teacher Scholarship Fund to cover teacher expenses for attendance and tuition for graduate level credits for DCF trainings
  • Host Teacher in the Woods internships in partnership with the Forest Service
Recognizing that the lack of outdoor gear, equipment, supplies and other resources may limit (or even preclude) a valuable teaching experience, the Deschutes Children’s Forest would like to pool resources and materials across Central Oregon in centralized locations for teachers and educators to use as part of DCF programming.

The DCF Resource Co-op would be developed through the following steps:

- Take an inventory of Partner resources and materials available for use in a co-op model (this can range from waders and life jackets and snow shoes to hand-held monitors that measure water quality)
- Conduct an inventory of current and proposed DCF programming and determine specific resource gaps
- Pool resources in centralized physical locations based on regional programming needs (it is likely that 2-3 Resource Co-op stations would be needed)
- Identify potential funding sources and write grants as needed to help augment the resources of DCF Partners and provide funds to help replace or repair items that are lost or damaged as a result of normal wear and tear
- Forest Service or other partners could offer Resource Co-op storage space and would provide a point of contact for checking out resources
- Develop a web-based reservation system for equipment and materials that will be accessed through the DCF website
- The Deschutes Children’s Forest Coordinator would be the overall manager of the Resource Co-ops
LIST OF TERMS

**Children** – defined as infant through roughly 8 years of age

**Conservation Education** - helps people of all ages understand and appreciate our natural resources and how to conserve those resources for future generations. Through structured educational experiences and activities targeted to varying age groups and populations, conservation education enables people to realize how natural resources and ecosystems affect each other and how resources can be used wisely.

**Environmental Education** - refers to organized efforts to teach about how natural environments function and, particularly, how human beings can manage their behavior and ecosystems in order to live sustainably. In practice, “Environmental education” is usually used interchangeably with “sustainability education.” The state and national conversation is more focused on environmental/sustainability education than on conservation education.

**Environmental Literacy** - encompasses the following dispositions and skills: (a) ecological knowledge; (b) verbal commitment; (c) actual commitment, or environmental behavior; (d) environmental sensitivity; (e) issue identification and issue analysis skills; and (f) action planning.

**“Nature-deficit disorder”** – is a term coined by Richard Louv in his 2005 book *Last Child in the Woods*, which refers to the alleged trend that children are spending less time outdoors, resulting in a wide range of problems. Louv claims that causes for the phenomenon include parental fears, restricted access to natural areas, and the lure of the screen. Recent research has drawn a further contrast between the declining number of National Park visits in the United States and increasing consumption of electronic media by children. This disorder is not formally recognized in any of the medical manuals for mental disorders, such as the *ICD-10* or the *DSM-V*.

**Stewardship** - is “the responsible use (including conservation) of natural resources in a way that takes full and balanced account of the interests of society, future generations, and other species, as well as of private needs, and accepts significant answerability to society” (published by Worrell and Appleby)

**Underserved** – refers to populations or places that are not typically users or participants in the respective programs or activities. This can be due to socio-economic, cultural, geographic and other factors. With respect to the Deschutes Children’s Forest, it is intended to encompass low-income, minority, female and persons with a disability.

**Youth** - defined as roughly ages 8 through 18
Acknowledgements

The following individuals were instrumental in the development of the Strategic Plan

Deschutes Children’s Forest - Staff

Larry Berrin, Branch Director (Deschutes National Forest), Discover Your Northwest
Larry is the Project Manager for the Deschutes Children’s Forest and has been involved in the field of informal science education for over 20 years. He has worked for a variety of non-profits and government agencies including holding such positions as Senior Manager of Education for the High Desert Museum, Assistant Director of the National Environmental Education Development Collaborative, Director of Programs & Exhibits for the Vermont Institute of Natural Science, and Vermont State Education Director for the National Audubon Society where he was the recipient of the 2001 Audubon ACE award for Excellence in Team Achievement.

Deschutes Children’s Forest - Advisory Board

Bruce Abernethy, Grant Writer, Bend-La Pine School District (co-chair)
Bruce is the former mayor of Bend and a graduate of Harvard University where he received his Master’s degree in Public Policy. He brings valuable skills to the effort including grant writing and extensive strategic planning experience.

Rebecca Barrett, Science Instructor, Redmond School District
For over 30 years, Rebecca has been a professional educator teaching science and education courses for several school districts and universities. For her work specializing in outdoor focused stewardship projects she has been nominated twice for both Oregon State Teacher of the Year and the Presidential Award for Science and Mathematics Teaching. As an international consultant, she has trained many teachers in all disciplines across the U.S. and Canada to design engaging curriculum units to meet diverse student needs.

Dr. Mary Brown, Board Certified Pediatrician, Central Oregon Pediatric Associates (COPA)
Dr. Brown is COPA’s longest-tenured physician and one of the clinics original founders. In addition to her practice in Bend, Mary spends much of her time traveling the country helping to craft pediatric health care policy. She has served on the board of the American Academy of Pediatrics and is a key advisor to author Richard Louv and his national Children & Nature Network movement.

Sean Ferrell, Volunteer & Partnerships Program Manager, US Forest Service, Deschutes Nat’l Forest
Sean is USDA Forest Service liaison to the Deschutes Children’s Forest project. He has worked for the US Forest Service since 1989 as a fisheries biologist, natural resources staff leader and has received many regional, national and international awards for his work and leadership in conservation education.

Jim Golden, Superintendent, Sisters School District
Jim has been a professional educator for 28 years including being a teacher, special education director, assistant principal, principal, and superintendent. He is involved with state educational leadership and innovation for continuous improvement and systemic change.
**Sue Jorgenson, Recreation Manager, Bend Park & Recreation District**
Sue manages Youth & Adult Outdoor Programs, Therapeutic Recreation Programs, Youth Enrichment, Before & After School Care and Summer Day Camps for the Bend Park & Recreation District. She has worked for the district for over 25 years and in that capacity supports various community efforts around assisting vulnerable populations in Bend. Sue is engaged in multiple community collaborations that are issue based as well, such as addressing childhood obesity, reconnecting youth to the out of doors and providing positive activities for youth during non school hours.

**Robin Laughlin, Design Manager, Bend Park and Recreation District**
Robin is a landscape architect with the Bend Park and Recreation District. Her 24 years of practice have been balanced between public and private sector work with a variety of projects ranging from wetland restoration to park design. She is grateful to serve her community through park creation and enjoys creating little bits of wild space in every neighborhood.

**Dale Waddell, Executive Director, Wolftree Inc. (co-chair)**
Dale has been a leader in outdoor science education for almost two decades. In 2005, he was awarded both the White House Conference on Cooperative Conservation Award for outstanding leadership and personal stewardship in achieving results in cooperative conservation and the Civic Engagement Award for excellence in partnerships in student learning from Portland State University.

**Dr. Dana Whitelaw, Vice President of Programs, High Desert Museum**
Dana holds an M.A. and Ph.D. in Anthropology from the University of Colorado at Boulder, and has more than ten years of classroom and science-outreach teaching experience. With funding from the National Science Foundation, she studied wild ring-tailed lemurs in Madagascar, and has widely published her research findings. Joining the Museum in 2008, Dana manages its collections and exhibits, wildlife, living history, and education departments.

**Kolleen Yake, Education Director, Upper Deschutes Watershed Council**
With a Master’s Degree in Environmental Literature and Eco-critical Theory from Western Washington University, Kolleen has been coordinating place-based education projects for the Watershed Council since 2002. She utilizes her writing background to integrate poetry, songwriting, and journalism into conservation education activities for students along the Deschutes River, Whychus & Tumalo Creeks.

**Additional Advisory Board Members**
- **Paul Andrews**, Executive Director of School Improvement, High Desert Education Service District
- **Dennis Dempsey**, Superintendent, High Desert Education Service District
- **Randy Jones**, Owner, Central Oregon Geographic
- **Kate Wells**, Director of Community Outreach and Kids@Heart, St. Charles Health System

**Photo Credits**
Environmental Education Association of Oregon, High Desert Museum, High Desert Education Service District, Upper Deschutes Watershed Council, USDA Forest Service.
The Deschutes Children’s Forest provides a network of outdoor places and programs dedicated to moving all children along a continuum of learning, exploration, and healthy living through engagement with nature.

deschuteschildrensforest.org

Deschutes Children’s Forest Advisory Board

The USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.