

## PROTECTING ECOLOGICAL AREAS

Volunteers in groups such as the [Jackson Bottom Wetlands Preserve](#) help at the education center, and work on crews that remove invasive plants, maintain trails, and work with marshes. Restoration projects at the [Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership](#) may appeal to those who like to canoe or kayak to a work site.



Organizations such as the [Nature Conservatory of Oregon](#) and [Nature Conservatory of Washington](#) sponsor restoration projects that benefit natural areas in both states.

Look below to find your ideal volunteer activity if you're passionate about sustaining and protecting sensitive ecological areas. Below are links to websites of groups dedicated to maintaining ecological areas and links to their Volunteer pages.

- [Columbia Riverkeepers](#). Works within communities to restore and protect the water quality of Columbia River and all life connected to it, from headwaters to the Pacific Ocean. **Volunteers:** Monitor water quality, educate communities, lead field trips.
- [Columbia Slough Watershed Council](#). A diverse group of neighbors, property owners, businesses, environmental groups, recreation advocates, and government agencies who work to restore and enhance the 60 miles of waterways, wetlands, and slow moving channels in the slough. **Volunteers:** Plant, mulch, remove invasive plants, clean litter.
- [Forest Park Conservancy](#). Protects and fosters the ecological health of Forest Park, maintains and enhances the park's extensive trails network, and inspires community appreciation and stewardship of the iconic, urban wilderness as a gift for future generations. **Volunteers:** Maintain trails and enhance habitat.
- [Friends of the Columbia Gorge](#). Works to protect the scenic, natural, cultural, and recreational resources of the Columbia River Gorge, promoting responsible stewardship of Gorge land, air, and waters; educates the public. **Volunteers:** Work parties, lead or shepherd hikes, help with office projects events.
- [Friends of Ridgefield \(WA\) National Wildlife Refuge](#). Promotes educational programs of the Ridgefield NWR, and works to protect and enhance its wildlife habitat. **Volunteers:** Nature education, wildlife habitat restoration, and naturalist corps.
- [Friends of Terwilliger](#). Protects the natural character and scenic beauty of the Terwilliger Parkway corridor. Habitat and watershed restoration along the parkway. **Volunteers:** Restoration work parties and advocacy.
- [Friends of Trees](#). Brings people together to plant and care for city trees and green spaces in Pacific Northwest communities. **Volunteers:** Various group and individual planting, loading, weekends, weekdays.

- [Jackson Bottom Wetlands Preserve](#). 635-acre wetland wildlife preserve and education center; hiking trails. Near downtown Hillsboro. [Volunteers](#): Crews restore habitat remove invasive plants, maintain trails, work with marshes. Guides, docents.
- [Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership](#). A partnership advancing science, protecting ecosystems, and building connections to sustain the lower Columbia River estuary. [Volunteers](#): tree planting events, and other clean-up and restoration; some involve canoeing and kayaking.
- [Metro](#). A regional governing body that manages 17,000 acres of parkland for recreation. [Volunteers](#): work in some of the region's newest natural areas working with park gardens, native plants, seeds, restoration, trail counts at various locations.
- [Nature Conservancy \(Oregon\)](#). International organization with local activities, works to conserve the lands and waters on which all life depends. [Volunteers](#): Family friendly work parties maintain hiking trails, restore natural areas, plant native plants, clean up areas.
- [Nature Conservancy \(Washington\)](#). International organization works to conserve the lands and waters on which all life depends. [Volunteers](#): Help with a variety of projects from planting trees to answering phones, and a whole lot in between.
- [Oregon Wild](#). Works to advocate for and protect and preserve Oregon's wildlands, wildlife and waters. Hikes and events. [Take Action](#): Outdoor writing, recreation, office tasks, phoning, board of directors, on-ground activities in wild areas. Hike leaders, map landscapes, activism, help in office and at events.
- [Oswego Lake Watershed Council](#). Works to improve the condition and health of the Oswego Lake watershed and its stream network. [Volunteers and Friends Groups](#): Restoration planting and invasive plant removal; education events.
- [Ridgefield \(WA\) National Wildlife Refuge](#). Provides habitat for wintering waterfowl. And invites people of all abilities to experience nature and share their outdoor traditions with others. Conservation management. [Volunteers](#): Restore habitat, conduct wildlife surveys, teach cultural and environmental education and greet the public.
- [The Wetlands Conservancy](#). Dedicated to conserving and promoting wetlands to support fish and wildlife, clean water, open space, public safety, and people's appreciation of nature. [Volunteers](#): Wetlands restoration tasks such as beaver dam monitoring, planting native plants, remove invasive plants.
- [Trailkeepers of Oregon](#). Maintenance and stewardship projects that preserve existing trails. Committed to restoring proper funding and renewing public agency interest in trails. Provides on-line [Oregon Hikers Field Guide](#). [Get Involved](#): Hiking and trail advocates, outreach, trail work, communicating news, education.
- [Tryon Creek Watershed Council](#). Restores, protects, and enhances the ecological health and function of our unique urban watershed. [Volunteers](#): Restoration, cleanup, replant stream banks, remove invasive plants, lead teams, outreach and school education programs. Portland SW.
- [Tualatin Riverkeepers](#). Dedicated to holistic watershed management for the Tualatin River and its 27 creeks. [Volunteers](#): Participate in watershed watch and restoration plantings; lead field trips or day camps, help at events.
- [Vancouver Watersheds Alliance](#). Works with City to provide community outreach, environmental restoration, promote volunteerism, and care for water resources. [Volunteers](#): Families, individuals, college students and school groups; stewardship, outreach and office.

- [Shillpoo Wildlife Area](#). 2,370-acre wildlife area, located within the floodplain of the Columbia River in Clark County. [Volunteer](#) through Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife.
  - [Smith & Bybee Wetlands Natural Area](#). 205-acre waterway and haven for many animal species, and heaven for nature-seeking hikers, bikers and kayakers. Contact [Metro](#) for current volunteer opportunities.
  - [Steigerwald Lake](#). Provides stunning views and year-round wildlife viewing opportunities, managed by National Fish and Wildlife Services. [Volunteers](#): Restore habitat and teach others about wildlife resources. On and off site restoration, education and outreach. Vancouver.
  - [Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge](#). Urban wildlife refuge managed to mimic the natural seasonal cycle, so whatever the season, you'll see many kinds of wildlife here. [Get Involved](#): Participate in restoration and education. Sherwood.
  - [Wapata Lake](#). National Wildlife Refuge designated to protect and restore habitats for benefits of fish, wildlife and people. Not yet open to the public. [Get Involved](#): Restoration work parties, volunteer naturalists. Sherwood.
  - [Willamette Riverkeepers](#). Works to protect and restore the Willamette River. [Volunteer](#): Restoration tasks, paddle trip assistant, help at outreach events, monitor water quality; provide feedback.
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