



Lewis and Clark County Water Quality Protection District

PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ANNUAL WATERSHED RIPARIAN PLANTING SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED

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HELENA --The Lewis and Clark County Water Quality Protection District (District) and the Lake Helena Watershed Group held the 6th Annual Watershed Riparian Planting Project Volunteer Day on Saturday, April 26th at Spring Meadow Lake State Park. Over fifty volunteers turned out for a morning of planting native trees and shrubs at the state park that was burned in last year's fire. People of all ages and representatives of several community groups joined together and planted over sixty potted trees and shrubs, and approximately 200 seedlings along Spring Meadow Lake and in the burnt area of the park.

“We are planting the burn area to reestablish vegetation along the lake and adjacent lands that drain into the lake to help control soil erosion and to restore bird and wildlife habitat,” explained Jim Wilbur, Water Quality District Coordinator. “Since 2002, the annual project has planted woody vegetation seedlings along miles of areas adjacent to streams, lakes, and wetlands within the Lake Helena Watershed. This project attempts to restore the native vegetation of the riparian zones that are so beneficial to the waters and soils of the watershed.”

This year's weeklong project was a cooperative effort of the District, the Lake Helena Watershed Group, formerly the Lower Tenmile and Prickly Pear Creek Watershed Groups, Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks (FWP), Last Chance Audubon Chapter, and Growing Friends of Helena who all donated time, labor, and funding to make this year's effort successful. Tyler Northrup, with assistance from the fellow scouts of East Helena's Boy Scout Troop 212 and Cub Scout Pack 212, built fenced enclosures to protect the newly planted trees from deer predation as an Eagle Scout Project.

Following Saturday's volunteer event, a crew from the Montana Conservation Corps watered the new plantings at the park and sprayed deer repellent on the plants. They continued planting seedlings at the Park, the Lewis & Clark County Fairgrounds, and on private lands to help restore riparian areas within the watershed the rest of the week.

The District and FWP would like to thank Last Chance Audubon Chapter, Growing Friends of Helena, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for the grants that funded the project. We would also like to thank those businesses that donated materials, including; Murdoch Ranch & Home Supply, Pacific Hide & Fur, Power Townsend, and Chadwick Nursery. And a special thank you goes out to all the volunteers who made this event successful. The Lewis and Clark Water Quality Protection District, whose mission is to preserve, protect, and improve water quality within the district boundaries, coordinated this project. For more information, please call 457-8927.

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“To Preserve, Protect, and Improve Water Quality Within District Boundaries”