

Cereus Grant: K-3 The Beginning

It is imperative to give younger students an understanding of the need to share their habitat with all plants, animals, fish, macroinvertebrates, and living creatures. It is essential to help them to develop an early appreciation for nature and a compassion for the ecosystem as a shared home.

This 2019 Cereus grant continues the work of the Friends of the Van Duzen River (FOVDR) in the Van Duzen Watershed at Cuddeback, Hydesville, and Bridgeville Schools, and expands to develop environmental education in the Eel River Watershed at the Loleta Elementary School.

Special thanks to the Cereus Fund for allowing me to include these younger students in last year's grant cycle. Also, in 2018 I completed my third federally funded grant, Kids in the Woods: The Next Generation for students in grades 4th-8th. Additionally, with a recent Rose Foundation grant, I was able to work with grades 1-2, and grades 6-8 at Loleta School as well as to study the changes in river dynamics on the Lower Eel affecting the migration of the salmon, and to hold meetings to attempt to restore this critical habitat.

The 2019 grant would allow me to give additional environmental opportunities to serve 250 younger students in grades kindergarten through third at four local elementary schools continuing my work with the diverse population in Loleta, while documenting the work of FOVD on our web site at www.fovd.org and in the media: Trees Foundation magazine, newspapers, and television.

This new grant would include the following actions:

1. Kindergarten field trips to the Sequoia Zoo
2. Raising salmon in the classroom at Loleta School
3. Field trips to the Scotia Fisheries Exhibit
4. Field trips to the old growth Redwood Park at Pamplin Grove to count trillium
5. Field trips to Swimmers Delight, Grizzly Creek, or other locations to see salmon spawning depending on weather and the ability to locate spawning areas.
6. Continue placing temperature probes in the Van Duzen River with youth
7. Recruitment of junior high and high school interns for fieldwork with younger students.

FOVDR has developed three fundamental techniques to enhance the learning process.

The 1st concept is to connect classroom learning with field work. Lessons in the classroom give students the opportunity to hear environmental ideas, to have each child look at their own personal relationship to nature, and to share responses in a collaborative way. Following up on the classroom lesson is the field trip which merges the child's inner nature with the outer nature developing a real connection to their world and the world of other living things. The levels of scientific curiosity exhibited by younger children is inspiring!

The 2nd concept is to document the classroom and field work with photos. Using various programs, the photos can then be put into a movie to be shared with the students. Each class and each field trip and each follow up are a 3-part series for learning. Schools provide the matching funds for buses and field trips.

The 3rd concept is to combine environmental education with the Arts. Developed my Barbara Domanchuk Media, her system of Ecology and Arts features drawing, music, and poetry to express students' feelings and impressions of their experience in creative ways. In the past, FOVDR has brought local artists into the schools including Dan Levinson, California Poet in the Schools; Virginia Wood, Art on the Road with the Morris Graves Museum; and renown Abbie Perrot, Cat McAdams, and Augustus Clark. FOVDR would be seeking additional matching grants with the schools to provide some of these services.

These three techniques have been crafted by FOVDR over the past decade, and we are grateful to each of our grant benefactors who have given us the opportunity to teach environmental education in the Van Duzen/Eel River Watersheds. We believe that our work has changed the awareness in our community from a resource extraction mode to a preservation mode, and that caring for our natural resources by and for future generations has become an important part of our environmental consciousness!

Three attachments are enclosed. The first photo around the campfire was taken at Pamplin Grove during the Spring Trillium Tour with the K-3 Bridgeville Elementary School class. The second photo with the puppet was taken at Loleta Elementary School in the 1st/2nd grade class. All these students would continue to benefit from the proposed **K-3: The Beginning** grant.

In May 2018, the Cuddeback kindergarten class created the last attachment, a booklet, about their excursion to the Sequoia Zoo, a trip made possible by the Cereus grant, The Guiding Light. The children and I are assuming the yogic Flamingo posture. These children would take the next step to visit the Scotia Fisheries aquarium with the **K-3: The Beginning** grant.

Thank you for considering FOVDR's newest grant application K-3: The Beginning. FOVDR would like to request the Cereus grant for \$3000 for the 2019 season.

Respectfully submitted,

Sal Steinberg, Community Coordinator, Friends of the Van Duzen River

November 23, 2018