



Funds Distribution Report

Recipient Organization:

EarthCorps

Address:

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Contact:

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<https://www.earthcorps.org>

Organization's General Goals:

EarthCorps envisions an equitable world where all people and nature thrive together. We bring together passionate and hardworking young adults from the US and countries around the world for a yearlong leadership training program in Seattle, Washington. As we care for the land and each other, our dedication to ecological restoration is guided by our lens of racial equity and environmental justice.

Date of Award:

2022 Q1

Level:

\$5,001 to \$7,500

For more information, please read the attached report from EarthCorps.

8802 27th Ave NE
Tulalip, WA 98271

TulalipCares.org

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Final Report to Tulalip Tribes Charitable Fund

EarthCorps

December 2022

Grant Code: **Q1 2022 14.2**

EarthCorps URL: www.earthcorps.org

EarthCorps is grateful for Tulalip Tribes Charitable Fund's investment in our innovative Blue Carbon Initiative in Snohomish County. We are pleased to provide a report on our progress over the past year. Thank you for your partnership!

BLUE CARBON PROGRESS

Over the past year, EarthCorps has continued our work at the initial blue carbon buffer test sites in the intertidal marsh transition zone along the backshore of the Qwuloolt Estuary in Snohomish County. Throughout 2022, we focused on the following activities at the Qwuloolt Estuary test sites:

- Monitoring experimental hummocks (rounded, raised mounds of soil) and documenting lessons learned about what worked to establish plant vigor and ecosystem health. We hypothesized that hummocks would increase the survival of newly installed native plants. This has been the case! In addition to the photos to the right, current photos of the site in 2022 can be viewed here: <https://app.air.inc/a/bg2l6xbTy>
- Planning for expanded plantings to further increase intertidal habitat buffers in the Qwuloolt Estuary based on what we learned from the trial hummocks.
- Ongoing weeding and maintenance to clear aggressive and detrimental invasive plant species.
- Additional plantings will take place later this year and, in the spring, and fall of 2023.



Before restoration



After restoration (ongoing site maintenance continues)

The Qwuloolt test sites have established so well that we have been able to taper off the need for ongoing weeding maintenance. The establishment of healthy buffer habitat was our original goal, and we have exceeded expectations for these sites with the approach we used. Due to the proximity of our test sites to other sites where traditional restoration is occurring, we are able to see the distinction between EarthCorps' innovative approach and restoration as usual. The results are like night and day, with the hummock test sites having established healthy buffer habitat much more quickly than the traditionally restored sites.

In addition to our continued work at the Qwuloolt Estuary test sites, we also visited Union Slough, a 24-acre estuarine marsh mudflat habitat located in the Snohomish River estuary. We evaluated potential buffer enhancement project locations within Union Slough. We used the Marine Riparian Restoration Assessment, a tool that we created early on in the project, to establish current conditions and structural opportunities for enhancement. We will take what we have learned at Qwuloolt, adapt what has worked for Union Slough's specific site conditions, and replicate the blue carbon habitat buffer efforts in Union Slough. We are also in communication with the Port of Everett to discuss applying our findings to other sites within Snohomish River Estuary. This is an ongoing conversation.

BLUE CARBON INITIATIVE IN 2023: EarthCorps began our Blue Carbon work in partnership with Tulalip Tribes and Restore America's Estuary in the Qwuloolt Estuary. One of our key strategies has been to create riparian buffer zones around tidal marshes in these areas. As sea levels rise, the intertidal marsh will expand toward the shore over time, increasing biodiversity and maximizing carbon sequestration and ecosystem function overall. This strategy simultaneously improves habitat for fish and wildlife, improves overall water quality, protects against storm surges and soil erosion, and enhances infiltration and retention of stormwater runoff.

In the coming year, EarthCorps seeks to continue to monitor and maintain priority sites in the Qwuloolt Estuary and expand the blue carbon work we have initiated in Union Slough and potentially other sites within the Snohomish River Estuary. Our goal is to develop and improve upon Best Management Practices for restoring tidally influenced riparian habitats. We will implement blue carbon restoration efforts through the following activities in two primary areas in Snohomish County:

- Qwuloolt Estuary: We know what works, so now we are going to be doing additional targeted hummock installations and plantings based on the learnings from the test plots. Now that we have established what works and what does not work, we can be more streamlined and efficient as we continue the work.
- Union Slough: Site preparation; planting native plants; site maintenance; monitoring and reporting. While the site conditions are different at Union Slough than in the Qwuloolt Estuary, we will be able to apply the underlying approach, adjust for specific conditions, and implement the establishment of buffer zones in Union Slough, including plantings, removal of invasive species, and creation of hummocks.
- Outreach and expansion: We also hope to reconnect more deeply with project partners, including Tulalip Tribe ecologists and the Port of Everett to expand this work in more meaningful way. As part of our outreach, we will visit potential sites with partners and use the Marine Riparian Restoration Assessment (MRRA), a tool that we created early in the project, to establish current conditions and structural opportunities for enhancement at potential sites.

Based upon a review of currently planned and in-construction restoration projects in the Snohomish estuary, an estimated 2.55 million tons of CO₂ will be sequestered from the atmosphere over the next 100 years. THANK YOU! Blue Carbon work is long-term work, with the opportunity for tremendous gains in combatting the climate crisis by sequestering carbon in restored coastal estuaries and Tulalip Tribe Charitable Fund's support has been integral in this important work.

Strategic Plan

2022 - 2025





A Letter from EarthCorps' Executive Director

Dear Friends,

EarthCorps has always been an organization centered around hope. Day in and day out we work to create a better world because of our hope for our future. This commitment to a better world, one where *all* people and nature thrive together, is moving us forward.

This is an exciting time to be at EarthCorps as we reimagine our place within the global environmental movement. Our dedication to the practice of ecological restoration is strong. Our U.S. and international corps members will continue to restore ecosystems, protect the Puget Sound, and increase access to nature.

However, we have a unique opportunity to redefine who benefits from our restoration work. We believe those closest to environmental problems should be intimately involved in their solutions. Therefore, we are committed to working with the communities most impacted by environmental degradation - listening to their voices and ideas and prioritizing their needs in our work.

At our core we believe in the power of people to tackle the most pressing challenges facing our planet. That is why we invest in the leadership of young adults. Today, our world needs healing from racism, colonialism, and other oppressive systems which remain obstacles to advancing environmental justice. Therefore, we are steadfast in our commitment to graduating corps members grounded in the critical skills needed to lead in today's world including skills in empathy, inclusion, and equity.

We will continue to deliver an exceptional hands-on environmental restoration leadership program through the lens of racial equity and environmental justice. Over the next three years, we will shift who we partner with, what types of projects we work on, and how we are funded - all while continuing to build an actively anti-racist organization.

We hope you'll join us as we embark on this next chapter to cultivate leaders and community partnerships to advance environmental justice. We believe we have a collective responsibility to care for each other and the planet and we look forward to working beside you to realize our vision of a more equitable world where all people and nature thrive together.

“Today, our world needs healing from racism, colonialism, and other oppressive systems which remain obstacles to advancing environmental justice.”

-EVLYN ANDRADE

In Gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Evlyn Andrade'.

Evlyn Andrade
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



STRATEGIC PLAN

OUR MISSION

EarthCorps cultivates leaders and community partnerships to advance environmental justice.

OUR VISION

An equitable world where *all* people and nature thrive together.



STRATEGIC PRIORITY AREAS

Environmental degradation disproportionately impacts low-income communities and communities of color. To realize our mission, EarthCorps has identified five priority areas which are critical to ensuring all people in all communities thrive.





Impactful Environmental Restoration

- Expand the type of work that falls under environmental restoration and increase the number of projects that meet the needs of individual communities and improve their local environments.
- Work with communities to discover needs and actualize projects.
- Build a regional partnership approach to our fieldwork that connects projects, community groups, government, and schools/universities to meet community needs.
- Increase partnerships with and intentionally support BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color)-led organizations, initiatives, and advocacy that advance environmental justice and positively impact local environments.

Community Partnerships

- Increase multi-year community-led partnerships that are BIPOC-led and BIPOC majority. Listen and learn about community needs.
- Increase community-led projects and services that advance youth development and environmental justice in under-resourced communities.
- Establish pipelines for corps participation and EarthCorps employment from under-represented communities in the Puget Sound region.
- Develop and execute a communications plan that encompasses media relations, community engagement, and calls to action.
- Build a robust community volunteer program.

Diverse & Sustainable Resources

- Increase grant revenue and individual contributions to \$2M within three years.
- Develop a robust corporate sponsorship and engagement program.
- Ensure living wages and competitive benefits for staff and corps members.
- Complete a feasibility study for a capital campaign to secure property that improves EarthCorps functionality, security, accessibility, and community engagement.
- Target larger multi-year contracts.
- Become partner-of-choice to smaller, less resourced cities and municipalities by deepening our partnerships and leveraging private funding.





Anti-Racist Culture

- Establish goals for representation across all levels of the organization (corps, staff, and board) to reflect the dimensions of diversity found within our community (including, but not limited to race, ethnicity, gender, LGBTQIA+ status, and ability).
- Foster a culture of belonging that is evidenced by employee retention and satisfaction.
- Create, measure, and improve upon metrics tied to dismantling systemic racism within EarthCorps operations and on behalf of the communities we support.
- Maintain and increase transparency and inclusion in organizational processes and decisions that involve tradeoffs.
- Provide staff with ongoing anti-racism training and expectations to support workplace diversity, inclusion, and belonging.

Environmental Leaders

- Continue to evolve our curriculum to be steeped in environmental justice, racial equity principles, and indigenous rights, including an international lens to ensure graduating corps members are more able to apply equity-based practices in their work.
- Ensure our programs build critical skills needed for today's environmental movement including cross-cultural fluency, advocacy, community engagement, and hands-on environmental work experience.
- Develop pathways for career success within the environmental field, with a focus on increasing access for young adults of color.
- Invest in alumni programming to support their leadership and strengthen their engagement with EarthCorps.





An equitable world where *all* people and nature thrive together.

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