**NORTHWEST ECOLOGICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE**

**STRATEGIC PLAN – 2024**

MISSION STATEMENT

The purpose of the Northwest Ecological Research Institute (NERI) is to further knowledge of Pacific Northwest natural history through research, training, and dissemination of information.

At NERI, we believe that understanding and protecting the natural world requires the inclusion of all people.  It is only when all viewpoints, life experiences, and cultures are included that we will have the strength and resiliency of a robust environmental community.  NERI board members and associates are committed to playing an active role in reducing barriers, respecting the expertise and traditions of Indigenous nations, and supporting the work of underrepresented groups.

**GOALS, TASKS, AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

**Goal 1 - Actively carry out at least five projects each year. Project leaders will write annual reports and/or summaries on all active NERI projects.**

Task 1 – McGowan Grant – Fallon. 2017 – ongoing.

Send out announcement and request for applications on our website, social media, and appropriate listserves and other venues. Forward applications received to the whole Board to choose. Administer grant awards.

Task 2 – Turtle Projects – Holley, Guderyahn, and Smithers. 2018 – ongoing.

Research, surveys, and training. Train interns and volunteers, monitor turtle populations, suggest and implement habitat improvements, and conduct native turtle nest searches at sites in the Metro region and Yamhill County.

Task 3 – Amphibian Projects – Guderyahn, Smithers, Corkran. 1991 – ongoing.

Research, surveys, and training. Projects include helping with the Vancouver Water Resources Education Center’s bioblitz and helping with the Harborton Frog Shuttle.

Task 4 – Tracking Forest Health – Hayes and Corkran. 2004 – ongoing.

Assist with monitoring wildlife, especially birds and amphibians, and with ongoing habitat restoration projects at Hyla Woods private forestlands in the Coast Range.

Task 5 – Bird Projects – Flick, Dickinson, and Corkran. 1999 – ongoing.

Bird surveys, banding, and training. Includes banding at St. Cloud MAPS station, training in banding techniques, participating in Breeding Bird Surveys, Nightjar Survey, Winter Raptor Surveys, Christmas Bird Counts, and other community science projects, leading birding excursions, and providing bird identification help and training. Create brief YouTube educational videos about feathers, using NERI’s permitted collection.

Task 6 – Anna’s Hummingbirds at Oaks Bottom – LaBelle. 2017 – ongoing.

Monitor hummingbird nests and provide reports and photos for Portland Parks and Recreation, and the NERI website. Try to write an article for *Oregon Birds*.

Task 7 – Bluebird Project – Corkran. 1988 – 2001 study, 2002 – ongoing monitoring.

Continue monitoring nest box use at sites in Wheeler and Grant Counties. Replace old boxes as needed. Summarize data annually. Try to analyze bluebird productivity: over the years of the study, between the counties, and between the two bluebird species.

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Task 8 – Habitat Technical Assistance – Kee. 1991 – ongoing.

Provide management suggestions and on-the-ground restoration assistance to landowners, as requested. Continue restoration work at the Blue Mtn. Ranchlands.

Task 9 – Wetland Wildlife Watch (WWW) – Corkran. 1987 – ongoing.

Monitor wildlife, including Oregon Spotted Frog and Sandhill Crane, on the Mt. Hood

National Forest, and maintain nest boxes at Timothy Lake for Portland General Electric. Enter new and old data into Cornell Ornithology Lab’s eBird.

Task 10 – Pika Project – Corkran. 2015 – ongoing

Participate in Cascades Pika Watch, and monitor American Pika populations in the Columbia Gorge and the Cascade Mtns.

**Goal 2 - Provide training in field techniques and/or project development to at least 100 people per year. Try to reach new people.**

Task 1 – Amphibian and reptile identification and field techniques – Guderyahn,

Smithers, Holley, Ritson, Corkran

Task 2 – Bird identification and field techniques – Flick, Dickinson, Corkran

Task 3 – Native plant identification – Butler, Kee

Task 4 – Restoration and land management techniques – Butler, Kee, Guderyahn, DeLorenzo

Task 5 – Participate in regional ecoblitzes – Butler and all associates

Task 6 – Find opportunities for associates to work with students and adults, and to include them in field work and other parts of projects – All associates

Task 7 – Provide community science opportunities, and guide volunteers to other projects through the website and social media – All associates

**Goal 3 - Publicly present the results of each NERI project, and have speakers available on other northwest natural history topics.**

Task 1 – Keep NERI archives up to date: list of projects and resulting reports, presentations, and publications. Maintain records at NERI office. Maintain downloadable PDF files of unpublished and non-sensitive reports, and titles and abstracts of other publications, on the website.  Corkran, Guderyahn, Bryan (project leaders hand in copies of annual reports on projects that are active and funded through NERI, and any publications concerning NERI projects).

Task 2 – Maintain website and social media, communicating with NERI associates and broader communities. Add links to jobs, volunteer opportunities, seminars, etc. that NERI is associated with, and to other websites. Guderyahn, Bryan (all associates provide announcements of relevant conferences and workshops, etc. and new photographs)

Task 3 – Provide a brief annual summary via email and the website of each project, including activities, number of people trained, and presentations made about NERI projects and related topics, after the end of each field season. Provide each year’s strategic plan or a link to it on the website. Corkran, Bryan (project leaders provide a report on active projects funded through NERI, and a summary paragraph for each active project, with number of trainees, list of presentations, and other announcements)

Task 4 – Look for opportunities to provide speakers, and to present webinars and short videos, on NERI projects and other NW natural history topics. Kee, Guderyahn, Smithers

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**Goal 4 – Increase participation in NERI.**

Task 1 – Contact others, particularly students, and encourage them to become involved. All associates

Task 2 – Try to increase diversity in NERI through participation in the Intertwine and other networking. Each NERI associate should try to find minority groups receptive to outsiders, show up at their open events or meetings and show respect. This could include Wisdom of the Elders and their Wisdom Workforce, Wapato reestablishment projects, PDX Women of Color. All associates

Task 3 – Provide items for the website and social media that encourage people to join. All associates

Task 4 – Build relationships with other organizations, including supporting relevant conferences and workshops, and offering student scholarships to them. All Board

**Goal 5 – Pursue funding for NERI projects, the McGowan Grant, and annual organizational expenses.**

Task 1 – Work with all NERI associates to assist in locating appropriate funding sources and in writing grants to fund projects approved by the NERI Board. The Board will review all grant proposals before they are submitted. DeLorenzo, Corkran

Task 2 – Annually review the finances and determine how organizational costs will be generated. DeLorenzo

Task 3 – Maintain funds sufficient to cover two years of organizational expenses. DeLorenzo

Task 4 – Maintain website capability for donations through PayPal. Guderyahn

Task 5 – Send out email letter soliciting contributions for NERI and for the McGowan Grant, at the end of each year. Try to broaden outreach. DeLorenzo and Corkran

Task 6 - Annually review and try to broaden funding sources. Consider setting up an endowment fund or other investment. DeLorenzo

**Goal 6 – Organize an annual gathering and/or field trip and/or work party**

Task 1 – Decide on place and date. Possibilities include Memorial Day Weekend juniper-lopping party at Blue Mtn. Ranchlands, and having a backyard gathering in late summer. Send out invitation to current and prospective associates. Kee, Corkran