



2024

Rain Garden Community Communications Intern

Isabella Jones
Western Washington University

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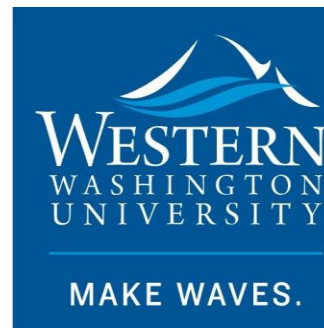
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COLLEGE OF THE ENVIRONMENT



Internship Title: Rain Garden Community Coordinator Intern

Organization Worked For: Jefferson County Marine Resources Committee

Student Name: Isabelle Jones

Internship Dates: 5/25/23 8/18/23

Faculty Advisor Name Cathy Reidy Liermann



Department ENVS

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STUDENT SIGNATURE _____

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Isabelle Jones', written over a horizontal line.

12/20/23

DATE: _____

I. STUDENT/INTERN INFORMATION

Name: Isabelle Jones	W#: W01474151
Major: Environmental Studies	Concentration: Environmental Science
Internship Title: Rain Garden Community Coordinator Intern	
Period of Internship: May 2023 – August 2023	
Avg. Hours per Week: 20	Total Hours Worked: 240

II. HOST INSTITUTION INFORMATION

Institution Name: Jefferson County Marine Resources Committee
Institution Address: 121 Oak Bay Road, Port Hadlock WA 98339
Institution Mission: To restore and protect the marine environments of East Jefferson County by raising community awareness of issues, engaging volunteers in stewardship, and generating support for Northwest Straits Commission programs and activities.
Supervisor Name and Title: Monica Montgomery, MRC Coordinator
Supervisor Contact Information: Jeff.co.mrc@gmail.com

III. DESCRIPTION

Provide a brief description of the project or program on which you worked, the objectives of that project or program, and your role as an intern within that project or program:

The MRC created their rain garden project in 2014 to address concerns about stormwater pollution in East Jefferson County, which were heightened due to the area's proximity to the Puget Sound. Tire particulates and other contaminants were threatening the health of native species like Coho salmon due to being flushed directly into the Puget Sound. Rain gardens were determined to be effective natural bioretention systems that can filter stormwater before it reaches the Puget Sound. Over the next decade 18 rain gardens were installed across Port Townsend, Port Hadlock, and Quilcene. The MRC struggled with maintaining stewardship of the gardens as they rely on volunteers for upkeep to maintain function and appearance.

I was tasked with recruiting both one-time volunteers for work party events and long-term stewards for more committed maintenance. Part of this included increasing general community awareness and knowledge of the program. In doing so, I created a system for volunteer recruitment, a pool of active volunteers, and an educational framework to ensure the program's success well into the future. Being the first person to fill this newly created position, I had a substantial degree of creative freedom in how to achieve these goals. I became a leader and supervisor for rain garden events and directed the rain garden program over the 3 months that I was employed at the MRC.

IV. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Provide a list of your specific duties and responsibilities as an intern:

1. Research rain gardens and how they function as stormwater systems, as well as how to maintain them to ensure function and appearance.
2. Create educational materials, including an ArcGIS Storymap, about rain gardens and disseminate them to the community.
3. Reach out to local volunteers and recruit new ones to garner engagement in short and long-term rain garden maintenance.
4. Create and disseminate promotional materials to advertise for the program in general as well as for specific work events.
5. Assist MRC members in evaluating the status and needs of rain gardens to determine priorities for future work events.
6. Schedule, organize, and host work events for rain gardens. This involved gathering volunteers, managing the days' priorities and schedule, gathering supplies, and answering questions about the rain gardens.
7. Participate in meetings with partner organizations to discuss facilitating rain garden stewardship.

V. LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Describe what you learned from your internship and how this experience contributed to your educational goals:

I learned both hard and soft skills from my internship as maintaining the rain garden program was severalfold. The synthesis of environmental sciences, communications, gardening, outreach, and volunteer coordination fulfilled the **ES 5** learning objective of integrating multiple disciplines into environmental sciences. I had to quickly become an expert in rain gardens and bioretention systems. This included learning about native plants, landscape maintenance, best practices for removing invasive plants, and stormwater pollutants. Applying my newfound knowledge to real-world gardening and maintenance met the **ES 4** learning objective of applying environmental sciences to real world applications. I was able to utilize concepts from my ENVS program—the danger of invasive species being one of them—in my work in the rain gardens, effectively fulfilling **ENVS 4**.

I also learned how to create an ArcGIS Story Map, which involved gathering data from a large collection of files and synthesizing them to be incorporated into a map. The end result had to be palatable for both the local community as well as for other MRC members, fulfilling the **ES 3** learning objective.

I learned a decent amount about file organization through utilizing Dropbox throughout my internship. I wrote a press release for the first time, learning how to structure and word it to best disseminate information about the rain garden program. This practice in effectively communicating the program and its needs met the **ENVS 6** learning objective. I also honed my graphic design skills in the numerous promotional materials that I created to advertise our need for volunteers.

Throughout my management of the rain gardens I encountered invasive species, overgrowth, dead plants, and other problems within them. Part of my internship was visiting the gardens and assessing their needs and problems, effectively researching them, and then coming up with solutions. This aspect of my internship, fitting with **ENVS 5**, was put into practice with my efforts to diminish the invasive Canada Thistle in some of the gardens.

I learned soft skills like managing a crew of volunteers, being a community liaison, and coordinating with several people's schedules at once. I had to be a contact for community members, neighbors, longtime volunteers, organization members, and others. In some cases I had to handle conflicting opinions about maintenance responsibility. All of this I did collaboratively with other MRC members, meeting **ENVS 3**.

As my educational goals are to focus on structural management of environmental programs, this internship gave me the confidence to move forward with those goals. I was able to thrive in this position that synthesized environmental knowledge and management and leadership, so I know that I am heading down the right path. My internship equipped me with valuable technical skills that will likely assist me with future classes, as well as soft skills that will indelibly benefit me regardless of what I'm doing.

APPENDIX I. SUPERVISOR LETTER

Attach a signed letter from your supervisor, on the host institution's letterhead, stating that you have completed the internship according to the organization's expectations and confirming the dates and number of hours of your internship work.

Internship hours for Isabelle Jones

Montgomery, Monica <monica.montgomery1@wsu.edu>

Wed 9/08/2023 12:53 PM

To:Catherine Reidy Liermann <reidylc@wwu.edu>

You don't often get email from monica.montgomery1@wsu.edu. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hi Catherine,

Isabelle Jones, who has been interning with the Jefferson County Marine Resources Committee this summer, has requested that I email you to confirm her hours worked as our Rain Garden Community Coordinator intern. As of the end of July, she has completed 182.5 hours and is on track to complete the 240 hours of her internship (ending the week of August 14th). She has been a wonderful addition to this project, helping to organize rain garden maintenance work parties and collecting and creating some key materials for an "Adopt-a-Rain Garden" program. Please let me know if you need any additional information.

Sincerely,



Monica Montgomery (*she/her*)

Water Programs Coordinator

Jefferson County Extension

Washington State University

Office: 360-379-5610 x230

Email: monica.montgomery1@wsu.edu

Websites: <https://extension.wsu.edu/jefferson/> |

<https://www.jeffersonmrc.org/>

APPENDIX II. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Attach copies of any reports, presentations or other deliverables that you produced during your internship, if applicable.

ArcGIS Story Map Link: <http://tinyurl.com/EJRainGardens>

Volunteers needed to help with city's rain gardens | Letter to the editor



LEADER PHOTO BY BRIAN KELLY

Posted Monday, July 17, 2023 8:44 am

Get involved in stewarding Port Townsend's community rain gardens!

Be a part of Port Townsend's natural stormwater solutions by helping to care for one of the many rain gardens located across town. Since 2014, the Jefferson County Marine Resources Committee has worked with local organizations and community volunteers to build and maintain 19 rain gardens across East Jefferson County, 12 of which are located in neighborhoods across Port Townsend. You may be just a block away!

Maintaining a local rain garden is a great way to get involved with your community and contribute to keeping our beloved Salish Sea healthy and beautiful. To see the list of rain gardens and sign up to be a steward, visit the following link: bit.ly/RainGardenStewards.

Isabelle Jones
PORT LUDLOW

Jefferson County seeking rain garden volunteers

By Peninsula Daily News
Friday, August 11, 2023 1:30am NEWS JEFFERSON COUNTY



PORT TOWNSEND — The Jefferson County Marine Resources Committee is seeking volunteers to help maintain 18 rain gardens that the committee has installed over the last nine years.

Rain gardens, which are planted with native plants such as catmint, creeping raspberry and red hot pokers, help filter stormwater runoff before it returns to the Salish Sea.

The gardens' special soil mixtures, plants, and their mycorrhizal and microbial communities work together to filter out harmful contaminants such as 6PPD-quinone, a chemical in tire particles that has been linked to mortality in adult coho salmon.

The gardens only require a few days of weeding, watering and mulching each year, according to Marine Resource Committee press release.

Volunteers can choose to adopt a specific garden or to join a mailing list to announce work parties throughout the year.

To volunteer visit, www.bit.ly/RainGardenStewards.

For more information on the marine resources committee, visit www.jeffersonmrc.org.



Team up with your neighbors to care for a community rain garden.



Learn more and sign up here:



www.bit.ly/RainGardenStewards





Working With the MRC

My experience as the Rain Garden Community Coordinator

Intern

Summer 2023



ArcGIS Story Map



Adopt-A-Rain-Garden



Articles in the PDN and the Leader



Educational materials



Work parties



Cultivating Skills & Experience

Here's what I'm growing in my garden.



RAIN GARDEN PLANTING DAYS

July 13th and 14th

JULY 13TH

Corner of Franklin st.
and Adams St.

When: 10am - 12pm

JULY 14TH

121 Oak Bay Road
(WSU Office)

When: 10am - 12pm

Join us in giving two rain gardens some TLC by planting perennials, weeding, removing debris, and watering. Supplies and refreshments will be provided!




Sign Up:
bit.ly/43f81oq





Sponsored in part by:

Rain Garden Work Party: Maritime Center

08/01/23

WHERE:
Intersection of Monroe and Water sts.; in front of the Swan Hotel

WHEN: 10 am - 12:30 pm **WHAT:** Weeding & mulching



<https://bit.ly/TuesdayWorkParty>



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 21st, 2023

Contact: Isabella Jones
Rain Garden Community
Coordinator/ Intern
(360)-440-6416

Rain Gardens Are the Salish Sea's Natural Defenders—and They Need Your Help

Port Townsend, WA—Since 2014, the Jefferson County Marine Resources Committee (MRC) has installed 18 rain gardens across East Jefferson County with the help of numerous community partners and volunteers. These gardens—home to catmint, creeping raspberry, red hot pokers, and more vibrant native plants—fight the Salish Sea's greatest pollution threat: stormwater runoff. Located on unassuming suburban street corners, the gardens' special soil mixtures, plants, and their mycorrhizal and microbial communities work together to filter out harmful contaminants like 6PPD-quinone, a tire particulate-related chemical that has been directly linked to mortality in adult coho salmon.

The MRC's rain garden program is, at its heart, a community project—being built and cared for largely by volunteers. Rain gardens not only treat stormwater runoff but also offer a way for volunteers to connect with other community members while learning about green infrastructure and tangibly improving our shared environment.

Rain gardens require just a small amount of maintenance, with only a handful of days needed to weed, water, and mulch throughout the year. Volunteers can choose to adopt a specific rain garden or be on call for work parties throughout the year via a mailing list. If you are interested in being a part of Jefferson County's green stormwater solutions, please visit the following link:
www.bit.ly/RainGardenStewards.

For more information, please visit www.jeffersonmrc.org

***About the Jefferson County Marine Resources Committee (MRC):** The Jefferson MRC is an advisory group to the Board of County Commissioners and part of the regional Northwest Straits Marine Conservation Initiative. MRC members are citizen volunteers committed to protecting and restoring marine habitats in our ecologically rich corner of the world. This work is funded by the State of Washington and US Environmental Protection Agency through the Puget Sound Partnership.*

Let's Mulch!



Thursday, 6/15

Time: 10 am - 1pm

Location: Meet at Franklins + Adams Street

Bring: Water, warm layers, gardening tools (provided--but feel free to BYO!)

