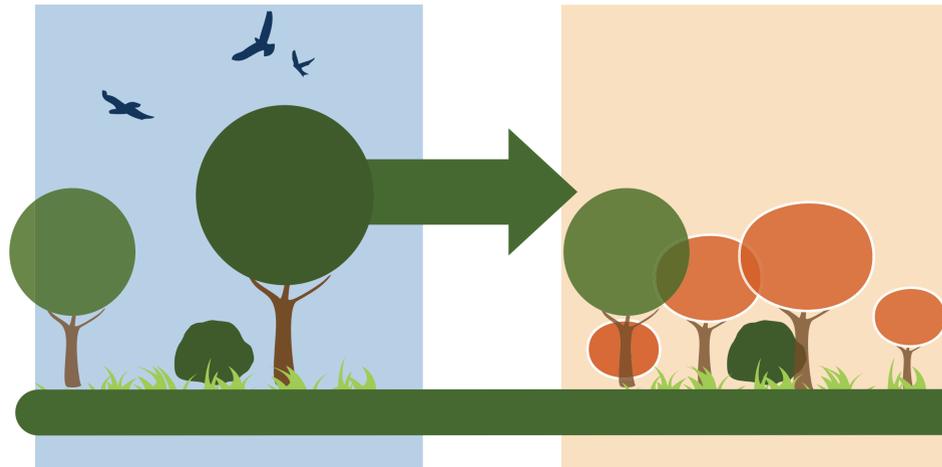


# Scenic Heights Elementary School Forest Ecological Restoration

## Promoting Stewardship Through Restoration

**Welcome** to the Scenic Heights School Forest Restoration! This project will help restore a healthy ecosystem in the school forest that promotes clean water in nearby Purgatory Creek and critical habitat for local wildlife.



**200 Years ago** this landscape looked much different. It was a diverse ecosystem of tallgrass prairies and oak savannas. Deep-rooted grasses held the soil in place while wildflowers, shrubs and sparse trees provided habitat for many animal and insect species.

**NOW invasive species** like garlic mustard and buckthorn have outcompeted native plants, and erosion is common. When European settlers suppressed fire, cleared vegetation and introduced agriculture and livestock, the soil became degraded and many native plants disappeared.



Oak Savanna



Buckthorn



Honeysuckle



Undesirable Tree Species



Erosion



**By restoring the forest** we can re-establish a healthy ecosystem in the Scenic Heights School Forest. The first step will be to remove invasive plants and unhealthy or undesirable trees. Secondly, native species will be planted and cared for so they can establish. Finally, long-term care of the site is critical in order to keep invasive species at bay and keep the native plant communities thriving.

### What Does Restoration Look Like?



Invasive Removal



Tree Removal



Controlled Burning



Invasive Control



Planting



A diverse native plant based savanna will fully establish with thoughtful on-going site management.



**If we don't act** many native plants will be lost, and there will be less habitat for wildlife such as birds, mammals, frogs and pollinators. Invasive species will dominate the landscape and the soil will continue to erode.

## PROJECT TIME-LINE



## Join the Community of Stewards

**Restoration is a big job.** We're going to need a community of stewards to help keep the forest healthy. Find out how you can be a part of caring for the school forest now and in the future! Contact Michelle: [mjordan@rpbcwd.org](mailto:mjordan@rpbcwd.org), 952-607-6512.

Project Updates at [RPBCWD.org](http://RPBCWD.org)

Project Partners

