

October 5, 2010

To: Mayor Ron Brean;

Yachats City Council Members: Greg Scott, Dave Riesick, Sandy Dunn, and Larry Nixon
City Hall
Yachats, Oregon, 97498

From: Val Knox – Planting Committee, Joanne Kittel – Community Relations, Mark Dixon –
Garden Coordinator

Yachats Demonstration and Community Garden (YDCG)
7th Street & Driftwood
Yachats, Oregon

Subject: Request for City of Yachats Assistance for Yachats Demonstration and Community
Garden

We are writing to you today to share a community success story. In 2009, members of the Lincoln County Master Gardeners™ Association along with community volunteers from Yachats and local coastal communities at large, planted seeds for a project rooted in sustainable design, community outreach, education, beautification, and fun.

Initially, many thought the location of this garden was placed in an impossibly windy growing area. We recognized the challenges, but with the varied skills and experience of our group we took this challenge head on. Remember, we are a demonstration garden as well. So we experiment to find the most effective ways to grow food in this windy and cooler climate, while growing necessary natural wind barriers. Our goal and mission is to make this information available to the community and visitors at large while creating an attractive and informative addition to Yachats.

Here are just a few examples of what we have achieved over the past two years:

- First came the land use donation from the Yachats Community Presbyterian Church, including water.
- A deer fence, recycled from a metro area, and re-fabricated on site.
- An irrigation system.
- Raised beds, to warm both the soil and hearts of those who can no longer bend like Gumby.
- Soil and rock from local building sites and quarries.
- Gravel to aid in accessibility.
- Natural windbreak plantings – the subject of our request.
- Donated seeds and plantings.
- Community beds available for adoption on a yearly basis.
- The first two growing seasons have produced 500+ pounds of potatoes, onions, garlic, root crops, broccoli, cabbage, kale, chard, tomatoes and cucumbers donated to local food shares.

- Yachats Youth and Family Activities Program planted a successful vegetable garden even with this year's abbreviated growing season.
- Two students from the 2010 Master Gardener Training Program have built and grown class projects utilizing various wind break and cloche techniques.
- All of our improvements and plantings to the site are by volunteers, both Master Gardeners and local community members, and are purchased through donations and monies from various fund raising efforts as a part of our nonprofit status.
- And the list continues to grow.

We would like you to join us by helping us solve one problem:

Even though the windbreak plantings on the front of the garden along 7th Street (south and south west perimeters of the garden) are thriving, our windbreak plantings on the west side of the garden along Driftwood Street are having a difficult time getting established. The soil is marvelous, the plants are well suited to the site, and hardy, but they are drowning in perched ground water held back by the soil piles along the drainage trench adjacent to Driftwood Street.

Over the years, while maintaining the drainage ditch areas, soil has been excavated and piled on the banks of the channel in several spots adjacent to 7th Street, rather than hauling it off site. These soil dams are creating ponds for many months at a time, submerging the root systems of nearly half of our plantings. City staff, being the wonderful partners in community building that they are, dug strip ditches last year in an effort to alleviate the problem. While these small ditches did help, they did not allow the drainage of enough water, and additionally, have created tripping hazards for garden visitors. After monitoring the site for more than two years it is clear that the grass covered dirt piles need to be removed for the health of the garden and ornamental windbreak plantings.

Our volunteer group, as resourceful and hardworking as we are, does not have the muscle power or appropriate equipment to remove the soil. Can the City of Yachats join us in our efforts to create a beautiful community garden by donating City time and equipment to remove the soil dams that are impacting the garden site? The rainy season is almost here. We fear losing our ornamental planting investment to the garden. With your help, we can all enjoy an attractive natural windbreak that will be functional and beautiful.

Could you please add this to your next City Council Meeting Agenda for discussion and action? We will gladly have volunteers meet with you onsite when and if the council decides to assist us. Should you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact us. We look forward to your partnership in the Yachats Community and Demonstration Garden.

Sincerely,

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Yachats Demonstration and Community Garden