

Gray Family Foundation Annual Report 2012

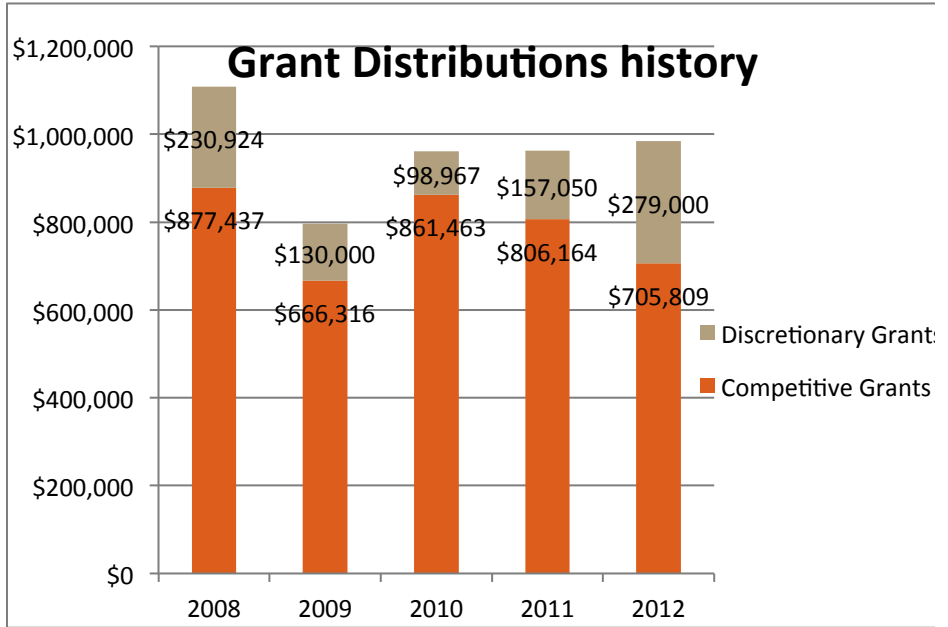
Measuring Progress

The Gray Family Foundation is working to raise the level of civic engagement in Oregon. We do this by encouraging programs that get kids outside, stimulate a high level of environmental literacy, build geographic literacy, develop leadership in the growing Latino community, and build the capacity of teachers to teach subjects relating to the environment and geography.

So how do we know if we are making a difference? How do we measure our progress?

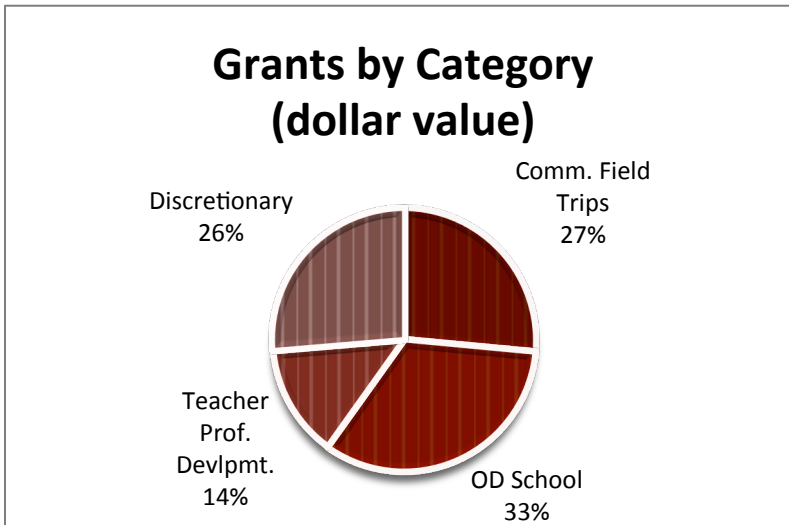
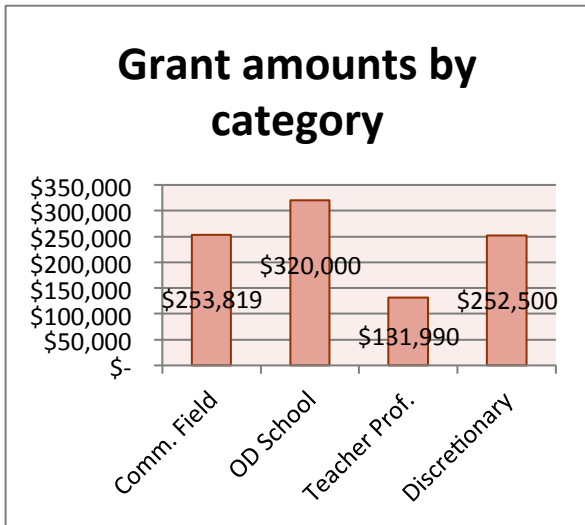
Looking at distributions over time, at a basic level, indicates how many dollars are going out into the community. In general our grant totals for competitive grants have declined over time. But this has been offset by discretionary grants that have kept our total grant distributions relatively constant. Grants in 2008 were exceptionally high in response to the greater need caused by the economic recession. In 2012 our total grants amounted to \$984,809.

Reviewing grants by region gives a sense geographic disbursement across the state. The chart on the right shows the percentage of grants by dollar compared to the percentage of population.



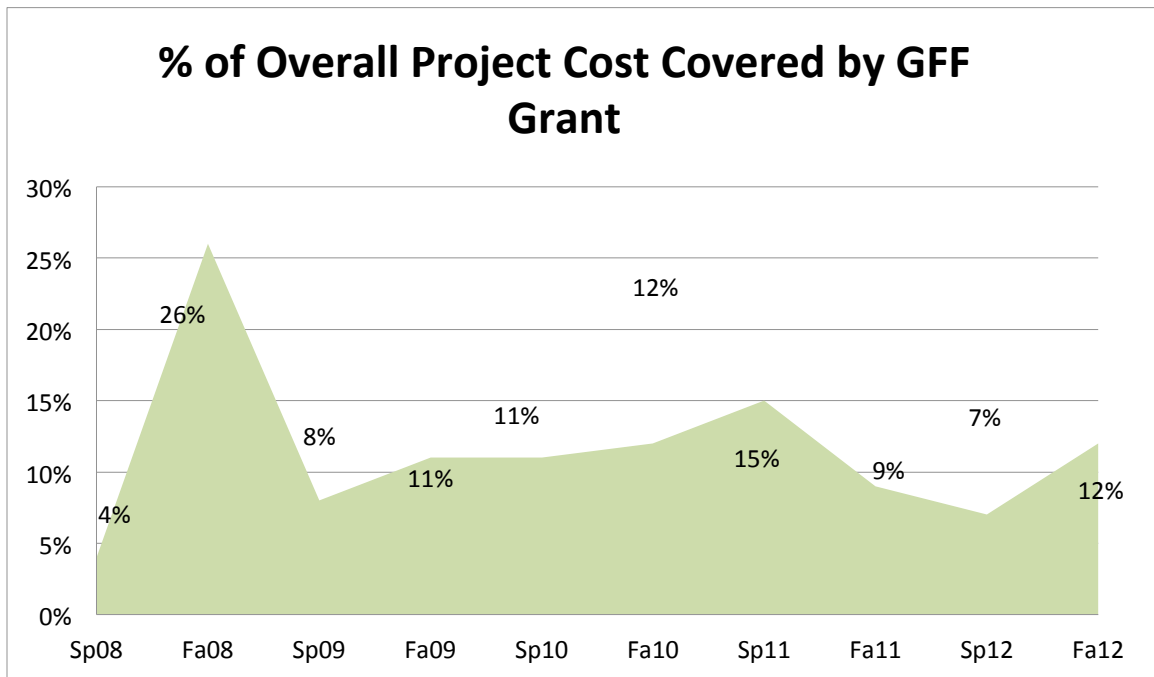
Grants by Region		2012	
	Population	Grants	Amount
Portland Metro (Clackamas, Hood River, Multnomah, Washington)	48%	43%	\$415,088
Southern Willamette Valley (Benton, Douglas, Lane, Linn)	16%	11%	\$103,957
Northern Willamette Valley (Marion, Polk, Yamhill)	12%	4%	\$33,500
Southern Oregon (Jackson, Josephine, Klamath, Lake)	9%	7%	\$70,220
Central Oregon (Crook, Deschutes, Jefferson, Sherman, Wasco, Wheeler)	5%	4%	\$35,000
Eastern Oregon (Baker, Gilliam, Grant, Harney, Malheur, Morrow, Union, Wallowa)	5%	5%	\$52,068
North Coast (Clatsop, Columbia, Lincoln, Tillamook)	4%	7%	\$64,740
South coast (Coos, Curry)	1%	1%	\$12,000
Statewide		18%	\$167,736
Out of State		<1%	\$4,000

With "Grant amounts by Category," we see how GFF allocated grants across the categories we care about. We can see that outdoor school is getting the majority of grants, followed by Community Field Trips and Discretionary Grants (including contributions to OCF for the database \$100K and the Latino Partnership Program (\$90K).

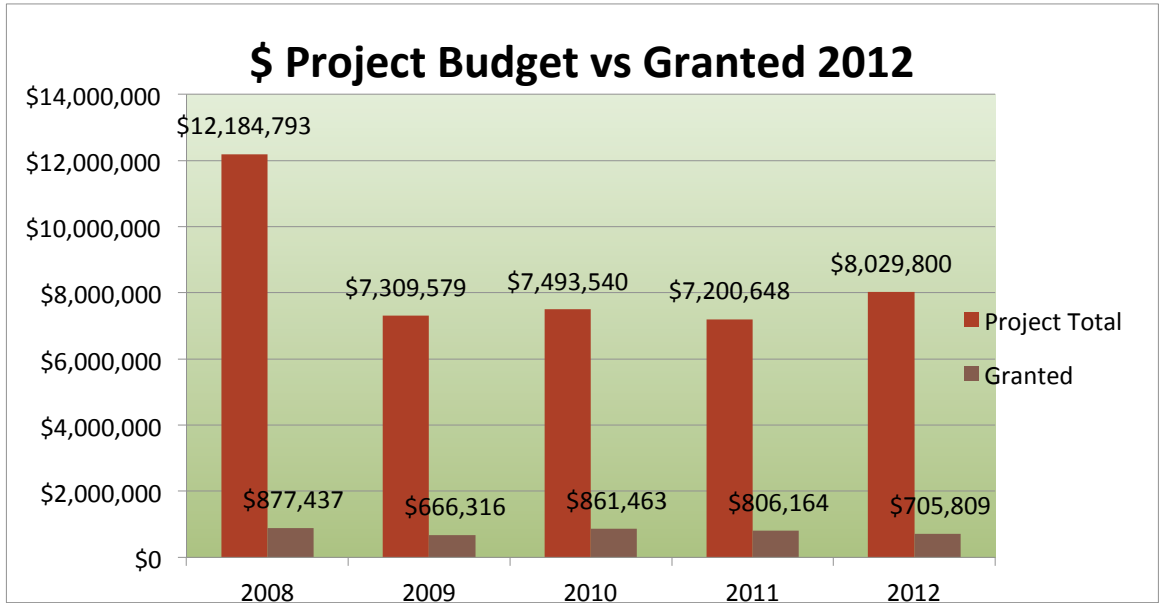


Another way to view our impact comes from looking at percentage of funding we give to projects on average. We have called this leverage, i.e. how many other dollars are attracted to projects to which we are contributing.

Since 2009 we have stayed in a fairly consistent range between 7-15%.

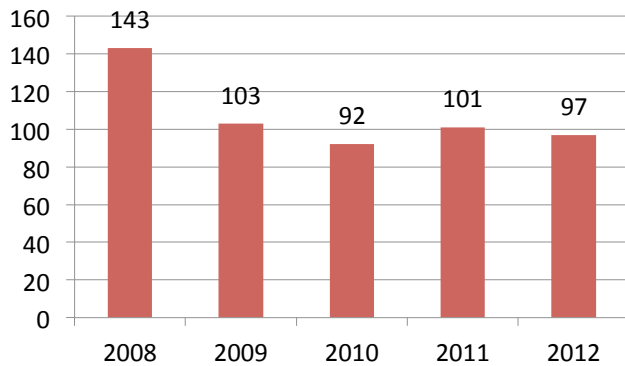


As a dollar value you can see our contribution relative to the total value of the projects we have funded. (This chart only considers competitive grants, excluding discretionary grants).

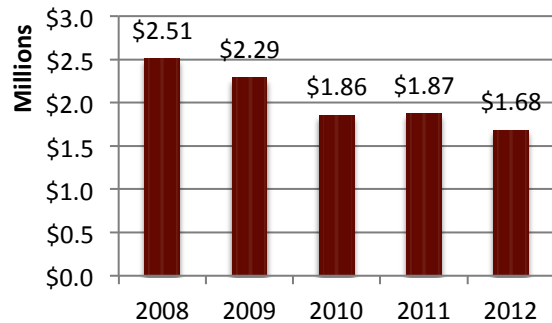


We also looked at the number of requests for grants we received. This chart can be viewed from different perspectives. Are we doing our job if the number of requests goes down over time, suggesting either that we are helping organizations build sustainability, or does it mean that we are seen as a “difficult” funder with not enough money to be worth the time to apply? The trend shown may also indicate that grantees are getting a better sense of what we fund and targeting their requests accordingly.

Total Proposals Received



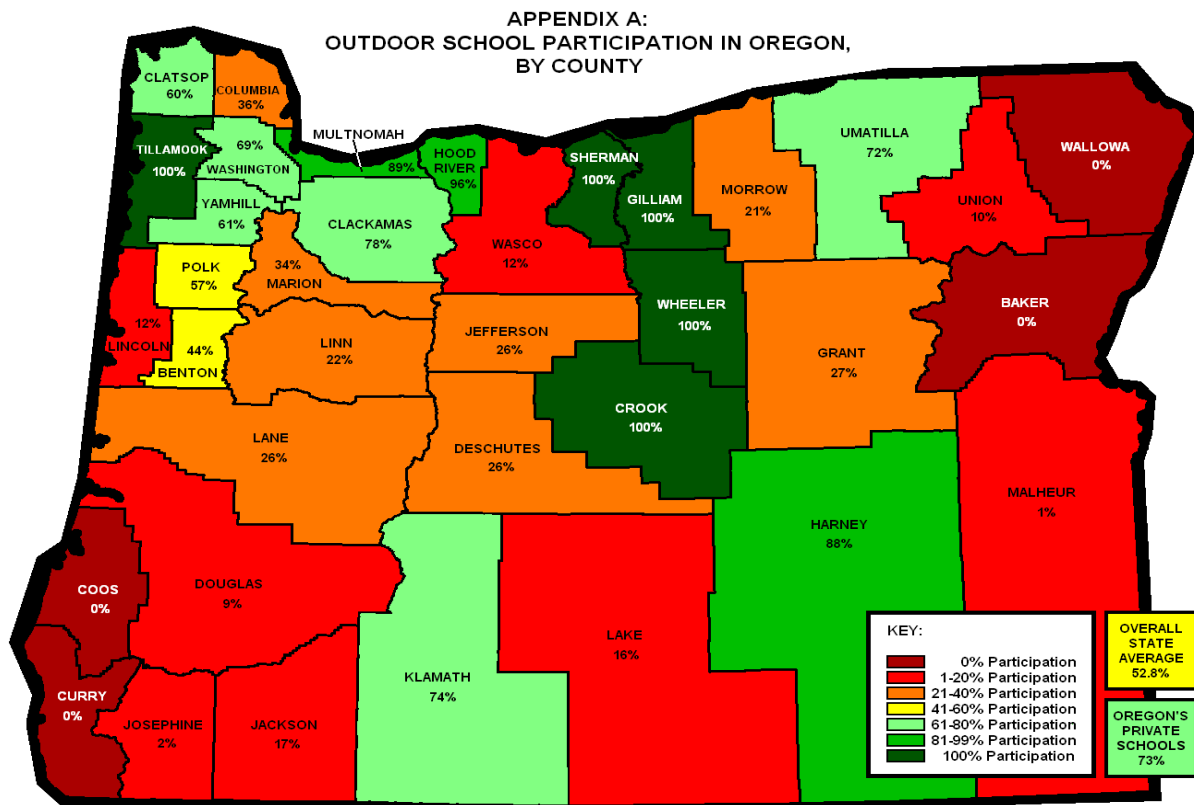
Amount Requested



In 2012 we conducted our first census level study of students attending Outdoor School:

In 2011-2012 52.8% of students attended an outdoor school experience by the end of 6th Grade. This represents 26,220 students. Future censuses will show whether our efforts are increasing the number of students who participate in an outdoor school experience.

The map below shows the percentage of kids attending outdoor school in each county. Oregon’s private school children attend at higher rate (72%) than their public school equivalents.



In 2012, we continued our investments in evaluation, hiring Bora Simmons to conduct two-tiers of research on our work using the evaluation frameworks returned by the grantees from 2008 to 2010.

In the formative evaluation, Simmons interviewed individuals who had some familiarity with the Gray Family Fund and could speak to the status of environmental education in Oregon. It was clear from participants that the Gray Family Fund is held in high esteem. Interviewees felt that the Fund had made significant impacts in a short amount of time. The interviewees listed our strengths as: the efforts made to get children outside, fund outdoor school programs, increase environmental education within schools, and support statewide initiatives such as the Oregon

Environmental Literacy Plan. The interviewees recognized that increased levels of funding were needed in order for systemic changes to be made (specifically change that would drive environmental education in Oregon). Although each individual interviewee made specific recommendations on how we should move forward, the following themes cut across the majority of participants:

1. Maintain a broad range of funding goals or categories that support environmental education activity at schools
2. Set priority funding for programs that engage children in outdoor experiences, while also addressing wider environmental literacy goals
3. Ensure that funding addresses equity issues both in terms of geographic distribution and underserved audiences
4. Develop a long-term strategy for systemic capacity building for EE in Oregon
5. Use the considerable influence of the Gray Family members to broaden the support for EE by educating, recruiting, and working with other funders and policy-makers.

The summative evaluation focused on the numeric outcomes of Gray Family Fund grants gathered via analysis of grant recipient documents. Overall, the analysis indicates that the Gray Family Fund is reaching a large number of students and teachers in Oregon. Almost two-thirds (66%) of the grants were designed and implemented to provide participants with nature-oriented experiences; 23.6% of the grants were designed and implemented to increase youth involvement in stewardship projects; and 20.1% of the grants were designed and implemented to increase the number of teachers and volunteer mentors who lead projects promoting sustainability and stewardship in their communities and schools. Ninety-seven percent of grants included in the evaluation reported that an outdoor field component was included in the funded project. One of the many interesting data sets that Simmons was able to capture was the cost per participant shown here:

Table 10: Cost per Participant by Group and Activity

Participant Group	# of Participants Served	Total Cost (\$)	Cost Per Participant (\$)
Overnight, Residential Outdoor Education Participants (Category 1)	19,823	784,238	39.56
Outdoor Exploration and Community Field Trip Participants (Category 2)	31,855	732,137	22.98
Environmental Professional Development for Teachers and Volunteer Mentors (Category 3)	1,279	419,535	328.02
All Students*	59,514	1,868,250	31.39

* Calculated based on all 144 grants awarded across all six funding categories.

Based on the information provided by grantees, it was determined that 95.5% of grantees were substantially addressing and on target to meet their objectives by project completion. Further, grant funded activity is making the desired impact as described by the four funding goals that

were articulated by the Fund at the time of the report as well as the 17 funding objectives. While most grantees suggested, in their narrative reports, that changes in knowledge, attitudes, skills and/or behaviors occurred as a result of participating in a Gray Family Fund project, most did not provide specific qualitative or quantitative evidence of this change.

What's missing?

Some measures, such as the number of environmentally literate or geographically literate 12th graders, which might tell us about our success, do not currently exist. We would need to partner with schools to identify literacy in these categories and fund their study. This is something we are considering for future projects.

On an organizational structure level, 2012 was the year in which we began the transition from a donor advised fund at OCF to the Gray Family Foundation Supporting Organization. This transition included establishing a brand identity, setting up a website, hiring staff, moving staff, setting up a budget and accounting relationship with OCF, establishing checking accounts, credit card accounts, and payment systems. We began an online Grant application system in December for our spring 2013 grant cycle. We also released the printed guide for how to start an Outdoor School. This publication has been well received although only a few dozen have been requested (plus an estimated 100 downloads).

This was also the year that we lost John Gray, passing the stewardship of the Gray Family Foundation on to the next generations.

As its founding year for the Gray Family Foundation, 2012 was a year full of activity and promise, setting the stage for many years of multi-generational philanthropy.