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# PRESS RELEASE

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FOR: COLLIER ARBOR CARE

## COLLIER ARBOR CARE CHOSEN FOR SUSTAINABLE SITES PILOT PROJECT

Clackamas's Collier Arbor Care has been chosen as one of only three Oregon sites to participate in an international pilot program testing the nation's rating system for green landscape design, construction and maintenance.

Collier's four-acre site on SE Jennifer Street, completed in 2002, is one of 175 other pilot projects from 34 states, Canada, Iceland and Spain as part of the program designed to evaluate the new national uniform Sustainable Sites Initiative (SITES) rating system for sustainable landscapes.

The SITES system has been devised to provide a road map leading to LEED certification for an overall site, expanding the Green building rating systems beyond the buildings' skins.

Collier's initial Jennifer site development, which abuts Carli Creek, included replanting and creation of a conservation corridor along the creek and installation of bio-swales to collect run-off water from parking lots and the two buildings on the property.

Under the pilot program the firm will retrofit the property's irrigation system, re-develop the bio-swales into a rain garden and replant the conservation easement.

The firm also will use 100 percent organic products for weed and pest control and for plant maintenance and soil health.

"We're treating blackberries with vinegar and are using vinegar and soap products for weed control on the property. We're also using mulch, compost tea and organic fertilizer for plant maintenance and soil health," said Collier President Terrill Collier.

Although not part of the SITES project, Collier Arbor Care also is in the process of installing solar panels. It is seeking an Eco-Biz designation from the Pollution Prevention Outreach team, a group of pollution prevention experts from seven agencies in the Portland metro area. Ultimately, Collier hopes to obtain LEED certification for the site.

Under the pilot project, Collier will be reducing landscape irrigation by 70 percent and replanting the conservation corridor with native shrubs to make it a mini-arboretum.

Specifically, Collier plans to:

- Remove invasive plants to help restore the stream bank conservation easement.
- Install native trees and shrubs to restore a native ecosystem in the conservation easement.
- Install a native tree and shrub arboretum to demonstrate the use of native plant in natural area, bio swale and urban landscapes.
- Retrofit the existing irrigation system to a drop system to reduce water usage
- Implement a landscape maintenance program using sustainable practices: an Integrated Pest Management program using organic and reduced risk products, monitoring for insect and disease management, a soil health program using compost tea, organic fertilizer and mycorrhiza to provide plant nutrition and improve soils.

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“When we’re finished, we’ll have 40 species of trees and that’s not bad for an industrial site. We’re trying to transform the original four acres that were bare ground and blackberries. We’re re-vegetating the property,” said Collier.

Beginning with introduction of its organic-product based Plant Healthcare System 20 years ago, Collier has aimed at being a national leader in sustainability. During his recent term as chair of the national Tree Care Association, he initiated a sustainability task force.

“We see this as another step in our efforts to continue as a national leader among arborists in sustainability,” Collier said.

He believes his project was chosen for the SITES project because it was one of only five industrial sites that applied “and, we’re an arborist, have the bioswales and a conservation corridor...we’ll be an arborist managing an industrial park in a 100 percent organic way.”

Collier joins the Smithsonian Institution’s African American History & Culture museum, a New Orleans project to absorb storm water on the streets of the lower Ninth Ward flooded during Hurricane Katrina and other pilot projects that include academic and corporate campuses, public parks with hundreds of acres, transportation corridors and private residences of less than one acre.

Like other sites, Collier will test the point system for achieving different levels of site sustainability on a 250-point scale, and the performance benchmarks associated with specific credits. SITES will use feedback to revise the final rating system and a reference guide by early 2013. The pilot program runs through June 2012.

The Sustainable Sites Initiative is an interdisciplinary partnership led by the American Society of Landscape Architects, the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center at the University of Texas at Austin and the United States Botanic Garden. Their aim is to transform land development and management practices with the nation’s first voluntary rating system for sustainable landscapes, with or without buildings.

“All these guidelines will become the accepted practices by professionals and non-professionals alike, transforming the way we design and build on the land, creating landscapes that nourish life for generations to come,” said a communiqué from SITES.



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