

CorrectionalNEWS

design+construction+operations

JULY/AUGUST 2013 | VOLUME 19, NUMBER 5

EmlenMEDIA
Publisher of specialized business news since 1994

Visit us at ACA,
Booth # 516



BUILDING
for the
FUTURE

How Following Best Practices Leads to Successful Facilities

INSIDE

Builders Roundtable 25

Effective Delivery Methods 39

Cook County Debuts New Facility 46

Precast Spotlight 50

PRSR STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
COLUMBUS, WI
PERMIT NO. 35

EMLLEN MEDIA
1241 ANDERSEN DR, STE N
SAN RAFAEL, CA 94901

A Win-Win for the Environment, Prison Systems and Beyond

By Jessie Fetterling

It all started with a budget crisis — and a handshake.

In 2003, Dan Pacholke, then superintendent of Cedar Creek Corrections Center in Littlerock, Wash., wanted to expand the prison, but the facility lacked the necessary wastewater reserves required to treat an expanded prison, along with the funds and resources to do it. During that same time period, he met Dr. Nalini Nadkarni, a forest ecologist and Evergreen State College faculty member, at a volunteer banquet. After about 15 minutes, they realized that they could help each other by initiating environmental activities in the prison system that could reduce operating and environmental impacts for the Washington State Department of Corrections (WDOC), while providing low-cost staffing for community nature and conservation projects.

“It opens up prisons so that people can see them as good neighbors that are solving local and regional problems,” Pacholke said.

With basically just a handshake agreement, they formed a partnership between the corrections department and the college. Dr. Nadkarni brought a lecturer to Cedar Creek to speak on hydrology and help start a compost center, and Pacholke asked inmates to scrape foods off their plates for composting, diverting that waste from landfills. These initiatives eventually allowed the facility to save enough waste to expand the prison capacity without having to expand wastewater treatments.

From there, the Sustainability in Prisons Project (SPP) was born, and for the first five years, there was no real contract or budget between the two partners. During that time, both acted together to figure out what worked and soon realized that these sustainable initiatives were cost-effective and provided an opportunity for inmates to contribute to the community.

“It really was about money in the beginning, and then along the way, you get teased with activities that you find rewarding. You also break down the view of prisons,” said Pacholke, now the assistant secretary of the prisons division for the WDOC. “They’re seen as black holes, but when you open them up, [the community] begins to see that there’s a resource in there, a human

capital that has energy and talent. Prisons have something to contribute beyond being just a dark place behind a wall that is scary. We want to be good neighbors.”

The Projects

The activities portion of SPP started with the Moss-in-Prison Project. Using the prison facilities as a controlled envi-

ronment, the Cedar Creek staff, offenders and Evergreen students explored how to grow mosses for the horticulture trade, determining which species could be cultivated to relieve pressures of unsustainable moss harvesting in old-growth forests that have fragile habitats. With significant scientific findings resulting from the project, more scientists and sustainability specialists took interest in

Correctional Products of Enduring Strength

Customer Service That's Second to None



If your top priority is to maximize the strength, security and safety of your facilities, turn to Chief Custom Products. We're a division of Chief Industries, Inc., a diversified global company with over 55 years of experience in steel manufacturing. You can depend on us for high quality detention products and reliable customer service.

- WINDOWS
- DOORS AND FRAMES
- FURNISHINGS
- WALL PANELS
- CEILINGS

CHIEF
CUSTOM PRODUCTS
a division of Chief Industries, Inc.

We Engineer Relationships!

www.customproducts.chiefind.com • (800) 845-1774

Circle #129 on reader service card.



Inmate technicians at Washington Corrections Center for Women sow native plant seeds.

the opportunities at Cedar Creek, leading to the development of more studies and more sustainable projects, designed, initiated and managed by Cedar Creek prison staff and offenders.

SPP worked on another successful initiative, a greenhouse and garden built within the prison's perimeter that produced 15,000 pounds of food annually and saved more than \$17,000 per year on organic vegetables. Food composting and recycling programs were also put into place, diverting more than 2,000 pounds of food from landfills each month and recycling more than 2,000 pounds of paper and 4,300 pounds of cardboard. Together, these projects saved the prison \$15,000 annually.

With the success at Cedar Creek, more environ-

mental projects were added, and SPP efforts are now initiated in all 12 prisons in Washington, which serve approximately 17,000 inmates.

"The inmate reaction has been extremely positive. At the pinnacle of what we do is the restoration of endangered species, but we get equal enthusiasm around organic gardening and other sustainable activities. In large, people want to do things that they see are meaningful," Pacholke said.

The most popular jobs tend to be the three conservation projects, in which inmates work on scientific research studies that involve caring for and raising an endangered species, such as the Oregon spotted frog, Taylor's checkerspot butterflies, and flower and grass species in Puget Sound's prairie ecosystem.

In a partnership with the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, staff and offenders at Cedar Creek work to rear endangered Oregon spotted frogs, and two inmates have been hired since 2009 to be ecological research assistants inside the prison. They are in charge of feeding and cleaning the frogs, as well as collecting data on water quality, growth frog behavior and mortality. Frogs are released into the wild each fall, and due to the success at the facility, the frog capacity has doubled to accommodate 400 frogs.

A similar approach is taken at Mission Creek Corrections Center for Women. Through training, three to four inmates are helping raise up to 2,500 Taylor's checkerspot butterflies each year to be released onto south Puget Sound prairie restoration sites. The prairie restoration project is another study that involves the Stafford Creek Corrections Center, Washington Corrections Center for Women and Shotwell's Landing Conservation nursery. Staff and offenders are currently propagating more than 300,000 native plants for the Joint Base Lewis-McChord military base and other Puget Sound area restoration sites. About 20 inmates and four Evergreen students work with Carl Elliot, SPP conservation and restoration coordinator, to propagate more than 40 different flower and grass species at the three conservation nursery sites.

Apart from scientific studies, SPP offers several sustainable operations activities in which inmates can participate. Recycling, composting and

organic gardening make up the basics, but there are also opportunities for offenders to refurbish bicycles for underprivileged children and work on a K-9 rescue program to rehabilitate troubled dogs for adoption by families.

In order to be eligible for the program, inmates must show good behavior and complete an interview process somewhat similar to what they would expect after applying for a job outside of the prison. Depending on the project — some assignments can be done inside the fence, while others are done on the outside — certain security requirements also apply.

Graduate students and scientists work with the inmates to avoid putting too much of a burden on the corrections staff. The students purchase supplies and develop task lists, acting as a liaison between the prison staff and inmates, and the scientists.

Education and Training

As part of the program, education and training is offered in a variety of ways. For instance, certain projects require specific training, and scientists come in to teach inmates about what they're doing and why they're doing it.

"It's not about just producing frogs or butterflies but providing [inmates] with a connection of why they're doing what they're doing and the challenges of the organism that they're with. We find that [the inmates] are more engaged when they know why they're doing a specific project," said Kelli Bush, program manager for SPP.

SPP also has a monthly lecture series, in which sustainability experts come to speak at various prisons on a wide variety of topics often suggested by inmates themselves. "Our hope is that it inspires them to seek more education or a career path in sustainability after they leave," Bush said.



Evergreen State College graduate students release Oregon spotted frogs into the wild at Joint Base Lewis-McChord.

That hope has become a reality, with several inmates furthering their sustainable education upon release from prison. "We had one inmate who has since been released and went on to pursue his Ph.D. after working on the moss project. Others were involved in the bee-keeping program and started their own bee-keeping projects after leaving the prison system," Bush said.

The Results

In a recent TEDx conference titled "Local Innovations for a Changing World," Andrea Martin, Evergreen Graduate Research Assistant, and Pacholke spoke about the success of SPP, highlighting specific statistics that benefit all of the parties involved.

The WDOC, for example, has reduced increased diversion to recycling by 89 percent, increased food

New water-saving design

Responding to the need for greater water efficiency, Willoughby's new 1.28 gpf combination toilet and wash re-designed with a sleek swirl of paper. Dual new filters feature angled bowl geometry and a flow blow jet design to clear waste with only one 1.28 gallon flush. Check out our water-saving fixtures and commo's at willoughby-usa.com.

WILLOUGHBY

1.800.428.4065 TOLL FREE | www.willoughby-inc.com

Green Scene, from page 28

waste diversion to composting operations by 90 percent, cut per-offender waste in half, decreased potable water use by more than 100 million gallons annually and reduced carbon emissions by 40 percent. As a result, the WDOC saved \$3.5 million from 2005 to 2010.

The scientific projects have been widely successful. This year alone, there

will be 12,300 endangered frogs and 35,000 butterflies released into the wild, and 20 million rare and endangered plants will be restored. Because the program is so popular at Evergreen, the number of graduate students enrolled has doubled in the past year.

The inmates also benefit with positive activities and education. SPP has facilitated more than 100 lectures and 30 workshops on science and sustain-

ability that give inmates knowledge they can use upon release from the prison system.

Bush also commented: "When inmates are sitting idle, there tend to be more security issues. We want to think about how these people are going back into our community, and [this program] can give them new skills for learning sustainability, gardening or working with nature, which may have a thera-

peutic benefit."

Expanding SPP

After years of getting the SPP program in place, other states are starting to take note. In fact, Bush said that they received emails from more than 20 states that want to set up their own sustainability projects.

In September, almost 50 participants from Washington, Oregon, California, Ohio, Utah, Maryland and various national organizations gathered for the SPP National Conference. SPP staff and partners hosted three prison tours and presented the program's history and tips for success, encouraging other state corrections departments to set up similar programs. Another conference in March was held in Utah and furthered the conversation about resources, strategies and benefits.

SPP now receives grant funding from academic partners that normally wouldn't be available for corrections agencies, but because of the partnership with the school, the program is able to offer new and innovative programs.

While the partnership has been a positive one, Pacholke admitted that partnerships can be tough. The parties involved "have different regulatory procedures and budgets and different things they're trying to achieve, but when you can find something that SPP Co-Director Keri Leroy often calls 'a win-win-win-win' for everyone involved, you've got something powerful," he said.

Pacholke said the first step to developing a similar program is to say you want to do something and adopt a project. The next step is to use as much innovation at the least cost possible; stretch and look for partners. Along the way you can adopt a plan and do formal agreements.

Not only is a project like SPP economical and provides the WDOC meaningful work activities, it provides the department of corrections with links to the community, he said. "It opens up prisons so that people can see them as good neighbors that are solving local and regional problems," Pacholke said. "We're a big industry, and communities should see some benefit to us beyond the fact that people are incarcerated in the prison system. [These programs] reduce costs and reduce violence in prisons and lead to better citizenry upon release."

During the TEDx conference, Pacholke reminded audience members that 17,000 men and women are incarcerated in Washington and about 2.5 million are incarcerated nationally. Using the SPP statistics as an example, the national community has the opportunity to benefit by creating similar projects within other state prison systems. Then, if that model was expanded to incorporate juvenile detention centers, drug rehabilitation programs and nursing homes, as well as schools and offices, he said, the sustainability possibilities really could be endless.

34th Canadian Congress on Criminal Justice

—2013—

Congrès canadien de justice pénale

34^e

21st Century Justice:
The Economics of Public Safety

La justice au 21^e siècle :
Les aspects économiques de
la sécurité publique

HYATT REGENCY VANCOUVER BRITISH COLUMBIA / COLOMBIE-BRITANNIQUE OCTOBER 2 - 5, 2013

Mark these dates on your calendar and be sure to join us for this event.
For details on the program, or to register on line, go to www.ccja-acjp.ca.
For further information, please contact Glenn Angus at 604-644-1914.



Canadian Criminal Justice Association
Association canadienne de justice pénale



British Columbia Criminal Justice Association
Association de justice pénale de la Colombie-Britannique

101 - 320 av. Parkdale Ave. | Ottawa, Ontario, Canada | K1Y 4X9
Tel./Tél.: 613-725-3715 | Fax/Télé.: 613-725-3720 | E-mail/Courriel: ccja-acjp@rogers.com | Internet: www.ccja-acjp.ca

Circle #137 on reader service card.