

Dear Educators and Nature Enthusiasts -

My name is Courtney Payton, and I am a Girl Scout with Troop 8321 in San Diego. As my Gold Award project, I have produced curriculum and artwork for the Tijuana River National Estuarine Research Reserve. My project advisor for this development has been Lorena Warner-Lara, Education Specialist and Research Assistant at the reserve. The purpose of this letter is to share the curriculum with you (or your organization) as a part of the global impact requirement for my Gold Award.

Please let me explain the curriculum:

First, I developed child-friendly art lessons on how to draw various species of bird that are native to the Tijuana River Estuary. Each lesson includes a step-by-step "How-To Draw" guide as well as a fun fact for each bird. These lessons are designed to allow anyone to create a decent representation of the birds regardless of their art skills. In so doing, they may gain an appreciation for the species that depend on the estuary. These can be taught in a classroom environment, or distributed as handouts.

Second, I worked with estuary staff to design a large-format interactive mural representing the Tijuana River Watershed. This includes high-resolution artwork that may be printed up to five feet by eight feet. The implementation chosen by the reserve is 4 feet by 6 feet. Attached is a medium resolution version of the mural. Links to the high resolution version of the artwork will be available on the TRNERR.org website. This is designed to have Velcro pieces adhered to it for the placement of the "interactive" pieces, which are small graphic representations of various elements that impact the watershed – from plants, to people, to chemicals etc. The interactive pieces file is intended to be printed two-sided, and it has both English and Spanish translations on both sides. The pieces are then cut out and laminated, and adhered to the mural with self-sticking Velcro. All of this material is designed to be used in conjunction with the Watershed Activity curriculum from the reserve. This activity is designed to help the audience appreciate the watershed and man's impact on the environment.

Whether you are an educator or simply an interested party, I think you will find that these materials illuminate the importance of the watershed, its ecosystems and our environmental responsibility. Although this project was modeled after the Tijuana River watershed, it is designed to be representative of watersheds in general. I hope that you will enjoy these materials and find them a useful addition to your curriculum.

-Courtney Payton