

PENINSULA DAILY NEWS

Dabob Days volunteers protect trees at the Tarboo Wildlife Preserve

New monthly project maintains restoration efforts

By [Peninsula Daily News](#)

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Sophia Lumsdaine and Sawyer Duval, leaders from Port Townsend High School's Students for Sustainability, demonstrate how to install protective cages using bamboo and wire during the kickoff of Dabob Days.

QUILCENE — Volunteers are gathering monthly to maintain Northwest Watershed Institute habitat restoration efforts in Dabob Bay.

The next Dabob Days will be Dec. 17. To inquire, email megan@nwwatershed.org .

During the kickoff on Nov. 19, a group of 14 volunteers installed more than 130 protective cages around Pacific crabapple and vine maples trees that had been planted in earlier projects.

“These trees were planted around 10 years ago, but consistent nibbling from deer has stunted their growth,” said Wesley Meyers, stewardship director of Northwest Watershed Institute (NWI).

“Their root system is well-established and they should take off now that they have some protection.”

Since 2002, NWI has worked with 45 partnering organizations on a landscape-scale effort to conserve and restore wild salmon and wildlife habitat in the Tarboo Creek-Dabob Bay watershed along Hood Canal.

The institute owns and stewards the 500-acre Tarboo Wildlife Preserve in the heart of Tarboo valley and works with neighboring landowners and agencies on habitat conservation from the headwaters of Tarboo Creek to the far reaches of Dabob Bay.

The best-known of these projects is the annual Plant-A-Thon. Begun in 2005, the event, usually held in February, has combined a massive tree-planting with education and schools’ fundraising.

Megan Brooks, NWI’s new education and outreach director, is leading the monthly Dabob Days to help maintain the native plantings in the area.

During the kickoff event, she said she was “inspired by the enthusiasm and passion of the volunteers, especially the young leaders from Students for Sustainability,” at Port Townsend High School.

“I’m already looking forward to our next project in December,” she added.

Community members of all ages and students are welcome, Brooks said. She hopes to have more volunteers; the cap is 25, she said.

In addition to erecting plant cages, some of the volunteers working Nov. 19 also helped to remove more than 30 tree protectors from larger trees that are now well established on the Tarboo Wildlife Preserve.

“We install these plastic sleeves around the seedlings when they are first planted to keep voles from munching the stems,” Meyers said. “Now that the trees are growing well, we can remove them.”

NWI plans monthly Dabob Days volunteer projects in collaboration with student leaders, school partners and community members of all ages.

“We are excited that the Dabob Days program will address a backlog of stewardship tasks for the preserve while increasing opportunities for everyone to enjoy this special area,” Brooks said.

Gloves for youth participants were donated by Henery Hardware and snacks were donated by The Food Co-op and Pane d’Amore.

Funding to run Dabob Days is made possible by the Clif Family Foundation and Washington State’s No Child Left Inside grant program.

“Performing regular maintenance on restoration sites is critical to their success and NWI is immensely grateful for community support,” Meyers said.

For more about NWI, see www.nwwatershed.org