Section 6.0 – Monitoring

Monitoring of completed projects includes both pre- and post-planting. The goal of monitoring is to document planting success, to identify maintenance needs including additional planting, and provide lessons learned to be used in future projects.

6.1 Monitoring Surveys

Survey forms were developed for monitoring planting sites and are included in the Appendix. These forms have been used to evaluate site characteristics, planting success, and provide guidance for future planting events. Additionally, project partners identified a need to develop standardized monitoring forms that school and volunteer groups can utilize during monitoring activities.

6.2 Pre-planting Surveys

A pre-planting survey is conducted for potential planting sites (see Appendix III for Riparian Characterization Form). The survey evaluates planting area size, assesses planting conditions, soil moisture, and current vegetative cover. Other factors evaluated include overhead utility lines, site irregularities (such as trash/debris), erosion, and flooding. Additionally, the presence of wildlife, wildlife habitat, and human disturbance is also recorded.

Figure 6-1: Pre-planting surveys at Central Point.

6.3 Post-planting Surveys

Post-planting monitoring records survivability, species composition, invasive species, animal damage, watering needs, maintenance intensity, and other factors (see Appendix III for post planting monitoring form and instructions). All results are correlated with the

methods used and the species planted at each site. Long-term monitoring will evaluate growth rates, percent shade, and other characteristics.

It is recommended to monitor as many of the plants as possible. For larger sites, random cluster sampling can be used to record 10-25% of the tree and shrub species planted. The percentages of species sampled are increased on smaller sites. Data collected from the initial site are used to develop site-specific maintenance plans and planting prescriptions for future plantings.

6.4 Photopoints

Photos are taken at permanent photo plots, which are established at pre-planting survey and provide a representative view of the planting site. Photopoints are marked in the field and noted on the planting map. Distinct landmarks in the photo assure accuracy of repeated photos in the future and serve as a reference point. A wooden stake marked at 3 feet is used to provide relative scale and a plot description form is placed at the bottom of the photo. Direction and the time of day the photo was taken are recorded (Washington State University, 2003).

Figure 6-2: Potential planting site photo point.