



YSI Foundation “Minding the Planet” Award

The YSI Foundation, the philanthropic arm of YSI Incorporated, is allocated an annual amount of funds, based on financial results, for charitable giving to a multitude of causes. Since its inception in 1990, the Foundation has donated more than \$2.8 million around the world; thereby practicing good corporate citizenship and demonstrating its commitment to its core values. The Foundation grants have funded a variety of projects, including university environmental science scholarships, high school scholarships, large scale restoration projects, a wetlands data center, science museum children programs, and equipment for fishermen who lost their livelihood in the December 2005 tsunami.

In 2006, the Foundation launched its new “Minding the Planet” grant program to specifically support environmental projects aimed at protecting and restoring water resources and natural habitats.

In 2008, in honor of our 60th Anniversary, at the National Water Quality Monitoring Conference in Atlantic City, YSI awarded a special \$60,000 grant to Columbia Riverkeeper located in Hood River, Oregon for a water quality monitoring program used to train volunteers to collect water quality data on the Columbia River, the Pacific Northwest’s longest river. This grant was for capacity building so that volunteers could monitor 100 sites total in backwaters and mainstem eddies for riparian restoration or protection in order to provide temporary cool-water refuges for juvenile salmonids and other native species. With more monitoring, volunteers soon identified and prioritized at least five restoration sites by 2009, one site per community.

In 2009, at the Coastal and Estuarine Research Foundation Conference in Portland, Oregon, the University of West Florida received a \$25,000 grant from the YSI Foundation to synthesize water quality data and address issues of climate change. With this grant, a graduate student project was funded, which helped analyze nutrient and continuous dissolved oxygen data from five National Estuarine Research Reserves in the Eastern Gulf of Mexico and Florida Atlantic coast to determine the rate of primary production and net ecosystem metabolism. This work provided insights to help local and regional managers address water quality issues within their sensitive estuarine and coastal aquatic habitats.

The YSI Foundation, along with the employee-owners of YSI, are also pleased to have the opportunity to publicly acknowledge and applaud at this conference the very critical work that all of the hundreds of local volunteer monitoring organizations are doing to improve the quality of the nation’s water.