

Trail ceremony to honor nine years of work by Edgewood students

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Nine years of work by fourth- and fifth-graders at Edgewood Intermediate School went into completing a trail at the Well Site Woods in Ellettsville.

A dedication ceremony will take place at 2 p.m. Saturday at the woods, 501 Sycamore Drive, to commemorate the work done by students since 2006.

The project began when Judy Morran, a former Edgewood Intermediate School teacher, wanted to protect the woods she often took her students out to visit as part of class. Morran and her class attended an Ellettsville Town Council meeting to ask that the land be protected from development, which the board approved. Her students then began creating a 0.8 mile trail for students and the public to use. After Morran retired three years ago, teacher Sue DeMoss and her students continued the project.

Edgewood Intermediate School partnered with Sycamore Land Trust to complete the trail. Students cleared, raked and laid mulch, built a bridge and boardwalks across wet areas and set up signposts.

Sycamore Land Trust Environmental Education Coordinator Carroll Ritter helped students integrate educational value to their work. He said it has been an integral part of the students science curriculum with special emphasis on habitat preservation.

This ensures great students of today are the stewards of tomorrow, Ritter said.

The Well Site Woods was the original source of water for the town of Ellettsville, Sycamore Land Trust spokeswoman Katrina Folsom said. But eventually, wells on the property were unable to provide for the town's growing population. The land is owned by the town of Ellettsville, but it is considered unsuitable for development because of standing water after rains.

Ritter said the Sycamore Land Trust Environmental Education initiative has been implemented in many other area schools at all different grade levels, including a few other projects as large as that at Edgewood, such as working in a 60-acre outdoor lab at Salem High School.

Morran, DeMoss and current and former students who have worked on the trail will speak at Saturday's dedication. Now that the trail is completed, it will be open to the public.

Ritter, however, said it will matter most to the students.

This is their woods, he said.