

Natalie Rynne

Ner117@humboldt.edu

ESM Education and Interpretation Fall 2021

Paper Towel Compost Expansion Project

My idea is for HEIF to fund enough hours for student positions through WRRAP's compost team to collect paper towels from campus restrooms. The existing bins can become paper towels only, trash can go in the small bins in the stalls or trash bins outside of the restrooms. The paper towels can be composted at CCAT, by WRRAP in the earth tub, or by the Local Worm Guy. This project would require education materials such as signage on bins themselves and digital media such as short videos and instagram posts to inform campus community members that we are collecting paper towels separately. Paper towels are a great source of carbon and would divert more of HSU waste from the landfill.

Project Narrative

1. Description:

All the tools and materials required for this project exist on campus. The new electric bike cart could be used by the student to commute around campus for paper towel collection and deliver to CCAT or the earth tub at facilities. If neither were able to receive the incoming paper towel compost, HSU could work with local farmers such as the Local Worm Guy to compost paper towels from campus.

2. Needs Statement:

This project meets all five of HEIF's specific mission based goals of creating a more sustainable campus. Removing paper towels from our landfill waste stream reduces our negative impact and creates a positive impact building the soil in our local area. Student employees could monitor quantities of paper towels composted locally. Assuming HSU as a campus creates more compost than it can process on site, there are opportunities to work with local farmers. Clubs like CCAT, WRRAP, Green Campus, and others have many members who are knowledgeable about compost and would be interested in expanding campus compost operations. Healthy compost is 30:1 Carbon: Nitrogen, or brown material: green material. Paper products, such as the towels from campus restrooms, would be a great source of brown material to help balance out our compost.

3. Outcome:

This project will divert paper towels used on campus from the landfill to instead go to a local compost facility and be processed into soil. This will create more student employment and opportunity for research projects. Students can measure quantities diverted from landfills and the volume and quality of soil produced from campus compost materials. Using the electric cargo bike through WRRAP will also save emissions transporting the waste from campus.

4. Partners:

Organizations: HSU Facilities Management, WRRAP, CCAT, Green Campus, HEIF, SERC, ESM Energy and Climate, ESM Education and Interpretation, ERE department, Soil science, fire and ecology, forestry, wildlife

Instructors/Individuals: Lonny Graffman ERE Energy and TEchnology courses, Jenn Tartlton ESM EEI, Morgan King Facilities

5. Appendix: Compost Carbon/Nitrogen or Browns/Greens ratio:

<http://compost.css.cornell.edu/chemistry.html>