

■ Project Sites ■

① Revitalization of the Gembe-gawa (river)

The *Gembe-gawa* (river) is the symbol of “*Mizu-no-Miyako, City of Water, Mishima*”, a name given because of the exceptionally pure and plentiful water that springs from Mt. Fuji. Its water level started to fall in the 1960’s, and during the dry season the surrounding environment was devastated by domestic drainage and garbage being directly discharged into its waters. Concerned residents decided to adopt the Groundwork partnership approach involving the residents, NPO, local government, and companies in order to solve this urgent issue.

Groundwork Mishima acted as a coordinator between participant groups when addressing the issue and then proceeded with environmental enhancement along the waterfront of the *Genbe-gawa* (river).

Currently, since the completion of the project, local residents continue with an on-going effort of nurturing the ecosystem, which has returned this once forsaken stream to a beautiful natural icon where fireflies shine.



② The Miyasan-no-kawa (river) -Habitat of Fireflies

The upper riverbed of the *Miyasan-no-kawa* (river) was exposed and became marshy due to its low water level. Here, Groundwork Mishima created an artificial stream to facilitate a natural habitat for fireflies. Under the professional advisement of the *Mishima-Hotaru-no-kai* and other local groups, this project was conducted cooperatively alongside the *Machiju-ga-Seseragi-jigyo* campaign led by the Mishima Municipal Government.



③ Propagation of the aquatic plant – Mishima-Baikamo (Ranunculus nipponicus)

To restore and propagate a once common turned endangered aquatic plant, *Mishima-Baikamo*, which disappeared from the rivers in Mishima due to the decrease of spring water and water pollution, Groundwork Mishima borrowed a spring-fed pond that belongs to Sano Art Museum in 1995. The pond is now being used as a proliferation base for *Mishima-Baikamo* and has become a sightseeing spot for visitors. The plants nurtured at this site are transplanted to the rivers throughout Mishima to revive the once-beautiful waterfront landscape.



■ Access

Groundwork Mishima is about an 8 minute walk from the south exit of JR Mishima.



④ Sakai-gawa (river) and Kiyozumi-ryokuchi

By request from the Numazu Civil Engineering Office of Shizuoka Prefecture, Groundwork Mishima organized nature observation activities and held workshops with the residents’ co-operation so as to reflect the ideas and opinions of the local residents. This concept of regenerating this place of lush green with its ecosystem that is unique to the area was at the heart of our activities. In cooperation with local authorities, and agreement regarding the maintenance and management of *Sakai-gawa* (river) by *Kiyozumi-ryokuchi-Aigo-kai* has been reached and the rich ecosystem has been restored.



⑤ Yoroizaka Pocket Park

Idle land along the prefectural highway that had been left unattended and where waste had been discarded was transformed into a pocket park. Groundwork Mishima acted as a coordinator to integrate local organizations such as the Neighborhood Association, Local Children’s Group, and Senior Citizen’s Group to work together with the local government and businesses to construct this pocket park. Local residents have pledged themselves to the maintenance of the park.



⑥ Kagamiike Pocket Park

This place used to be a water source where plentiful melt water from Mt. Fuji sprung forth. Worshippers of the Grand Shrine of Mishima (*Mishima-Taisha*) used to purify themselves before paying visit to the shrine. Groundwork Mishima, the Neighborhood Association, and local companies acted together to breathe new life into this forgotten and abandoned legacy of Mishima by creating a pocket park where Mt. Fuji spring water bubbles and flows.



⑦ Koshikiri-Fuduson (Fudo in Koshikiri)

Legend has it that in the Edo period, a stone Fudo (Buddhist deity) carved from the waist-up drifted ashore to the *Goten-gawa* (river) and was enshrined here. In the vicinity of *Koshikiri-Fuduson* are other relics such as the stone masonry (commonly called ‘*Korabuse*’) associated with the history of *Gotenchi* and an old water-well. Groundwork Mishima restored the well and revived the traditional festival that has been disrupted for 40 years while working in cooperation with the Neighborhood Association and Local Children’s Group.



⑧ Kaminari-Ido (Kaminari Water Well)

*Kaminari-Ido* is Mishima’s largest water well where natural spring water gushes out throughout the year. This well had been used as the water source for the Tamachi Area Water Supply System, but was abandoned after the integration into the city’s sewage system. As a part of the Izumi Trust Movement, Groundwork Mishima purchased *Kaminari-Ido* and has been conducting its maintenance and management with the cooperation of local residents and companies.



⑨ Matsuge-gawa (river) (Former watershed of Kano-gawa (river))

This area has been threatened by water pollution and had its forested watershed devastated due to the rapid development of its neighboring areas. To preserve and nurture this riparian forest and existing precious ecosystem of this crescent shaped water area, Groundwork Mishima has been organizing nature observation activities and holding workshops as a preparatory step for implementing specific actions.



#### ⑩ Sawaji Global Garden

The GIA (Global Intercultural Association), a group practicing international exchange on a private level, directs the maintenance of this pocket park that was once a wasteland. Foreign residents and student volunteers living in or around the city get together when conducting its maintenance work, providing opportunities for “international exchange” through gardening.



#### ⑪ Midorino-Fureai-no-Sono

By request from the local community, Groundwork Mishima set out on a plan to transform this idle plot overrun with weeds. After a series of consultations spanning 6 months, the construction of this municipally owned plot started with local residents taking the lead in conducting initial construction, with companies providing building materials and facilities, and the Mishima Municipal Government covering the cost for water utility and donating plants. Under this partnership, a beautiful park with strong community attachment was created.



#### ⑫ Biotope in Nagabuse Elementary School

Groundwork Mishima took part in building a biotope upon request from the PTA of Nagabuse Elementary School. Efforts were made to transform a concrete covered quad into a biotope where the students would be able to familiarize themselves with living creatures in a natural environment.



“Yume-tope (Dream space)” was finally completed after spending almost 2 years of study sessions with the PTA and students. Then, through cooperative work with students, their parents, the Neighborhood Association, and the local companies, the dream became reality.

#### ⑬ Biotope in Nakazato Elementary School

Expansion work of a national highway accompanied by the relocation of a nearby pond set the stage for the building of a biotope in Nakazato Elementary School. With the advice of Groundwork Mishima and the students’ hope to build a biotope where fireflies shine, a total of 200 parents, students and teachers, and members of local companies worked on building the biotope with flowing water and a barn for nurturing fireflies.



#### ⑭ Biotope in Mishima Minami High School

In 2003, a biotope was completed at Mishima Minami High School in response to a request from its students. Groundwork Mishima, students of the Science Club, and local companies worked together to build a biotope with a theme of creating a “densely vegetated marsh” there. Among the creatures living in the biotope are *Nagaemikuri (Sparganium japonicum)*, that is listed as endangered, and native rice-fish.



#### ⑮ Biotope in Kannami Sakura Nursery School

In response to a request to build a biotope where even young children can familiarize themselves with a waterfront environment, Groundwork Mishima, child minders, kindergarten children and their parents, and local companies, etc. worked together and completed “Yushi-tope (space where children play)” in 2004 by digging an artesian well. A wide range of transplanted native plants and relocated native rice-fish can be observed at this site.



### ■ Areas of Activities ■

#### Environmental Community Business

Since 2003, Groundwork Mishima has been working on community business projects, with the aim of utilizing local human resources (elderly citizens, displaced workers) and environmental resources (*satoyama*-underdeveloped woodland near populated areas, bamboo groves etc.). Based in the *Yu-Yu-Kobo-Hirokawa*, the members of the *Seseragi-Senior-Genki-Koubou* make wooden and bamboo products using wood thinned from forests and overgrown and neglected bamboo groves. They also help grow wheat and buckwheat at the western range of Hakone with the aim of utilizing unused farmland. These products and other local delicacies are sold at the *Mishima-Umyamon-Yatai* food stall open at the main shopping street during major events held in Mishima, thus playing a part in local revitalization.



#### Nature Observation

From the standpoint of viewing the importance of environmental education from childhood, opportunities are provided for families to participate in various nature observation meetings and workshops held at the groves of shrines and spring-fed ponds (a total of more than 50 locations throughout the city). These practical activities are being recognized as essential elements that encourage and enhance the participants’ awareness of the importance of protecting our environment.



#### Cleanup of Rivers

Regeneration of the rivers in the city inspired many citizens of Mishima to set up the *Kasenn Aigo-kai* whose members conduct regular clean-up operations so as to maintain the clear waters of rivers such as *Miyasan-no-kawa*, *Genbee-gawa* and *Sakura-gawa*.



#### Bilingual Environmental Cards

“Bilingual Environmental Cards” enable players to learn various suggestions for protecting our environment in both English and Japanese. These cards are original products of the Global Intercultural Association and are used as an educational tool for children.



Mishima City was once known as “*Mizu-no-Miyako*” (The City of Water) because of the numerous pristine rivers and bubbling springs flowing in and around Mishima. Due to the rapid and widespread economic development within the surrounding area beginning in the 1960’s however, Mishima has experienced a decrease in water levels in the very streams and rivers which in were once its namesake. In the years following, Mishima experienced an increase in water pollution from industry and residence as well as debris contamination, changing once beautiful streams and rivers into heartbreaking eyesores. In September 1992, eight residents’ groups in Mishima, who were alarmed at the fall of the water supply and subsequent deterioration of their environment, established the Groundwork Mishima Action Committee, aiming to regenerate the city’s waterfront environment.

“Groundwork”, the three-way partnership approach involving public, private and voluntary sectors for taking environmental action, originated in the UK. Groundwork Mishima is the first organization to implement the Groundwork approach in Japan.

Groundwork Mishima continues to promote more than 30 projects such as the revitalization of the *Genbe-gawa* (river), propagation of the aquatic plant known as *Mishima-Baikamo*, the restoration of the city’s historic legacy – *Kaminari-Ido* (Kaminari Water Well) and *Suijin-san* (the Shrine of the God of Water), reviving traditional festivals, the restoration of habitats for fireflies, constructing of biotopes at schools, and the maintenance of public facilities by local residents, just to name a few. In October 1999, Groundwork Mishima obtained an NPO status, and has since developed into a thriving organization with a network of 20 participant groups throughout Mishima.

These and other successful projects initiated and implemented by Groundwork Mishima have been attracting visitors from near and far who recognize the power and benefit of Groundwork’s framework approach of initiating partnerships and implementing action. Recent initiatives of Groundwork Mishima include the opening of the “*Seseragi-Senior-Genki-Kobo*,” aimed at utilizing local human and environmental resources, and “Environmental Community Business” initiatives, such as growing buckwheat in unused farmlands.

In November 2005, the Groundwork National Training Center was opened to provide a national base for human development.

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#### Participant Groups of Groundwork Mishima

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