



The Clackamas

CURRENT NEWS

The Newsletter of the Clackamas River Basin Council Summer/Fall 2004

Your Clackamas River Watershed-Reflections

A peaceful summer day float through a pool and drop section of the lower river reveals osprey, bald eagles, swimmers, rafters or riverside residents cooling off in the shade of a tall Douglas fir tree. A salmon slides through a shallow riffle tempting nearby fisherfolk. Basking beach goers toast bronze in the sun. For a range of reasons the Clackamas River is a favorite to many.

The Clackamas River headwaters start near Ollallie Butte and Timothy Lake, and its swirling waters course through steep canyons and around broad gravel bars along its 83 miles to Oregon City. The river comes from subalpine lakes and spring-fed wildflower meadows and eddies past the communities of Springwater, Estacada and Damascus until it comes to the Willamette River at Clackamette Park. Along the way it waters our berries and Christmas trees, fills our water taps and showers, and carries salmon to their spawning grounds.

Over the years, the Clackamas River Basin has captured the attention and affection of residents and visitors alike. Rudyard Kipling, author of the *Jungle Book*, fished along its

"The Clackamas River sings through the wilderness in color. Greens of Iceland, greens of glaciers, greens of the darkest jade."

-MJ Cody; writer who grew up on the river near Estacada

"As a child, I used to spend all day down by the river; it was a perfect playground for me. Now I want to go down to the river and paint it, swim in it."

-Earlean Marsh; teacher, riverside resident since 1947.

"It's like a treasure that people want to take care of and there are major things and major decisions coming up that will affect its future. Are we going to protect it now or not at all?"

-Ris Bradshaw; riverside landowner, former Clackamas County sheriff.

"Picture a river in your mind. Where does it start? Where does it end? How far does it travel? What path does it take? How does it affect the world around it? How is it impacted by the world? What does it try to tell people? Is it in pain? Can it be helped? What do people think about it?"

- James Boger; Clackamas High School Student

To submit your Clackamas Reflection for possible posting in future newsletters or on our website send to: info@clackamasriver.org

banks near the mouth of Clear Creek in 1889 and wrote, "it was a day to be remembered...on the banks of the Clackamas... imagine a stream seventy yards wide running over seductive riffles and swirling into deep quiet pools where the good salmon goes... How shall I tell the glories of the day."

The river provides an opportunity for reflection and reverence. MJ Cody a local writer who grew up on the Clackamas River states in an excerpt from a poem, "nothing can take away the color. The green of memory, the green of sorrow, the green of all things enchanted, the green of deepest comfort and regret. The color of home. The Clackamas."

What do you like about the Clackamas River, its streams, its national forest or its neighboring communities? Do you have a favorite story or memory to share about the river or one of its many streams? Exclamations of appreciation for the Clackamas are bountiful. I am sure you have your own.

Do you have a quote, poem or essay of your own about the landscape of the Clackamas? Please share.

See inset for reflections from the watershed community.

Current With the Watershed- The Clackamas River Basin Council in Action

The past few months have been busy for the council. In March we moved to our new office in Damascus, unpacked and got settled in. April found us **planting trees at Bargefeld Creek, with the help of AmeriCorps volunteers.**



In May the Knotweed crew made progress working with landowners to identify and remove invasive Japanese Knotweed. (see story on Knotweed) and June found us hosting a tour for NOAA to demonstrate the effectiveness of the partnerships they supported that are restoring salmonid habitat by addressing fish passage issues in the Clackamas.



In late June the **talented and energetic Lauren Rector, an Oregon State University student intern joined us.**

Lauren helped overhaul our display and

make it fun for children, and extended our outreach program, taking our **display to local events such as Mary Charlotte's Garden party at Phillip Foster Farm.**



July heated up and found us working with twenty-one Clear Creek streamside residents from age two to seventy-two and an AmeriCorps crew to remove invasive species along the tributary in preparation for a fall tree-planting. It was a great day of community building and stewardship.

An exciting July event was the unveiling of the new Clackamas Watershed sign.

Look for these signs at river and stream crossings in the lower watershed. The signs developed in partnership with the Art Institute of Portland's Advanced Studio Design Class, are being placed along creek crossings with the generous support of Water Environment Services of Clackamas County.



The 2nd Annual Clear and Foster Creek Water Quality Snapshot Event held at Carver Park July 19th attracted locals living along those creeks who were curious about the quality of their water. Student



volunteers analyzed water samples at the park for water quality indicators such as nitrogen, phosphates and bacteria and returned the results to participants. Summarized data will be available on our website.



What Can I Do About Knotweed?

Check Your Property.

If you have Knotweed call us for recommendations and help with control.

Avoid spreading Knotweed.

Be careful working around it as small fragments can easily resprout if it gets into machinery or slash piles or are left in moist places.

Because of Knotweed's large root system and strong ability to resprout following cutting, **care must be taken to successfully control it - Especially around water.** Call our Knotweed Team at **503.813.7554** for free assistance in eradicating this noxious plant from your property.



An excellent reference on Knotweed and control methods is available on-line at:

<http://tncweeds.ucdavis.edu/moredocs/polsp01.pdf>

Japanese and Giant Knotweed Threaten the Clackamas

An Escaped Ornamental Native to the Far East

Japanese and Giant Knotweed are perennial plants native to Asia, brought to the United States as an ornamental garden plant. Along rivers and streams the plant is aggressive, spreading rapidly and crowding and shading out native plants.



Left unchecked it spreads by rhizomes, forming dense thickets that are inhospitable to native plants and animals.

Giant Bamboo-like Stalks and Heart-shaped Leaves

Knotweed is sometimes called elephant ear, fleecflower or Mexican or Japanese Bamboo. Its bamboo-like green or reddish stems form dense stands that thrive in the moist soil and cobbles along creeks. The leaves are large, smooth and heart-shaped. Spikes of small white flowers in summer look a bit like the native mountainspray flowers. During winter dormancy, the brown bamboo-like stalks remain standing while the leaves wither.

How This Noxious Plant Spreads

Along the Clackamas and its tributaries Knotweed often spreads when its roots are moved by floods or when cut and moved by beavers, people or machinery. Root fragments as small as one half inch long can sprout and form new plants. The '96 floods distributed the plant in several parts of the watershed, particularly along the northern tributaries and the mainstem. In 2003, the Clackamas River Basin Council recognized the threat to water quality and wildlife habitat. Because of the high potential to eliminate this noxious plant in some tributaries, CRBC teamed up with METRO to sponsor AmeriCorps volunteers who have been hard at work mapping infestations in the watershed and conducting systematic treatment. With the assistance of volunteer landowners, we expect to successfully control the plant in the southern tributaries.

Treatment by Lethal Injection

One especially promising treatment method is an unusual method called "stem injection." Initial controlled experiments showed that when lower stems were directly injected with an approved herbicide the plant died. This method has now been approved for general use and is the preferred method of treatment. If you have Knotweed on your property you qualify for assistance in our special eradication program. Call 503.813.7554 for help or for more information.



"...probably no tributary of the Columbia has abounded so profusely with Salmon in the past as the Clackamas"

- Livingston Stone, US Fish Commission 1877

Coho Salmon; Silver Treasure of the Clackamas

In 1877, Livingston Stone, a fisheries biologist charged with operating the first fish hatchery in Oregon at the mouth of Clear Creek near Carver, reported the above statement to his superiors at the US Commission of Fish and Fisheries.



One of the salmon species Stone found in abundance was the Coho, or Silver Salmon, a hook jawed fighter that flushes red when it returns to its birth stream after a few months to three years in the ocean.

Coho fry emerge from the gravel in the spring and most fry stay in the stream for over a year feeding on aquatic insects, zooplankton and other small fish. The juveniles live in shallow river and stream margins and defend territories from other salmonids as they grow. Adequate stream cover, cool temperatures and lots of dissolved oxygen in the water are very important to juvenile survival. Small Coho prefer quiet areas free of current, with submerged woody debris, from which they dart out to seize drifting insects.

"The Clackamas, and its tributaries of Clear Creek, Foster Creek, Richardson and Deep Creeks are important habitat for one of two last significant runs of Coho in the Columbia Basin."

Migrating to sea in the spring, some male coho (jacks) will mature and return to their birthplace to spawn in the fall of the same year. The rest continue to grow rapidly in the ocean for up to three years, feeding first on plankton, and later on squid, herring and other small fish. They return in the fall to the Clackamas mainstem above North Fork Reservoir and to the tributaries of Clear, Eagle, Deep, Foster and Richardson Creeks, and spawn from October to January.

Today the Clackamas and its tributaries are still home to Coho, though the big runs of the early days are diminished. The Clackamas and its tributaries are important habitat for one of the two last significant runs of Coho in the Columbia Basin. A candidate for threatened status on the federal roster and listed as endangered on the Oregon state list, the Coho Salmon has declined in much of it's range due to the usual gauntlet of challenges salmon face including impacts to its habitat, historical overfishing and predation by non-native species such as the bullfrog and bass. The CRBC is working with volunteer landowners in the watershed to protect water quality and improve habitat for people and Coho. Salmon are amazingly resilient, and we have reason to believe that working together on good stewardship of our river and tributaries, there is a flash of silver hope for the Coho in the Clackamas.

Who We Are: Our Member Groups...

- Small Woodlot Owners
- Commercial Woodproducts Agriculture (Non-Timber) Commerce Industry
- Fish & Wildlife Interests
- Environmental Interests
- Recreation Interests
- Federal Land Owning Agency
- Special Districts
- Water Providers
- State Natural Resource Agency
- Native Tribes & Interests
- Local Hydropower Utility
- City or County
- Riverfront Property Owners
- Property Owner on Tributary
- Rural CPOs
- Urban CPOs
- Education / Youth
- Citizens at Large

We welcome the public to join us at our council meetings, held the third Thursday of the month from 6 - 9 p.m.

For meeting location and agenda, or if you would like to serve on the Council by representing one of the above groups please call 503.558.0550 or email info@clackamasriver.org

A Dynamic Duo Teams Up for Watershed Health

In the 1940's a young man from North Portland by the name of Cole Gardiner discovered the lure of the Clackamas. These were the days when you could hop a trolley to the end of the line in Estacada, walk down to the river and catch your-



self a fine steelhead or salmon and be back in Portland for dinner. For many years Cole fished and hunted the Clackamas Watershed,

first as a young man, then later with his own family. After many years of enjoying the river, Cole decided he wanted to give something back. He began to volunteer to help with conservation projects. He's worked with the CRBC since its beginning in 1997. Cole has served as Chair the of our Fish and Wildlife Committee and taken a lead in developing community partnerships for streamside tree planting. With support from landowners, fishing groups, the Forest Service, the BLM and Clackamas County, Cole has worked on behalf of the CRBC to plant over forty thousand trees in the watershed that will help protect water quality and wildlife habitat. This type of partnership epitomizes what the Clackamas River Basin Council is all about.

This spring the Clackamas County Commissioners recognized Cole for his years of service to the community

(photo right) and we recognize Cole each year by the "*Cole Gardiner Stewardship Award*" which the council presents at our annual Salmon Bake/Watershed Celebration to an outstanding conservation partner.

Another Shining Star

Last year this award recognized contributions of board member *Lowell Hanna* who is Cole's right hand man and key player on the tree planting team.

Lowell is a unique combination of right brain, left brain; a retired fiscal manager and former water commissioner, who makes beautiful pottery which is exhibited in several galleries in Oregon. Lowell has been indispensable to the council's riparian restoration efforts- helping to organize work crews, transport plants to sites and coordinate plans.

Lowell also pitches in with a myriad of council tasks, from helping to move our office to serving on the council's wildlife committee.



A huge thanks to both these stellar board members!



What is a Watershed Council?

The Clackamas River Basin Council (CRBC) is a local and voluntary nonprofit watershed council.

We have representatives from 21 diverse member groups.

Our mission is to foster partnerships for clean water and to improve fish and wildlife habitat and the quality of life for those who live, work and recreate in the watershed.

We consider the entire river drainage, and focus our work along the mainstem and the tributary streams that enter the Clackamas River below Estacada.

The council meets the third Thursday of each month and citizen participation is encouraged. Join us!

For more information please visit our website at www.clackamasriver.org or call us at 503.558.0550

Clackamas River Basin Council Watershed Calendar

- ◆ Fourth Annual Watershed Celebration and Salmon Bake- Sept. 19
- ◆ Advance Pasture Management Seminar, Clackamas Community College - Sept. 30
For details call Clackamas Soil and Water Conservation District at 503.656.3499
- ◆ Fall Riverside Cleanup- Oct. t.b.a.
- ◆ Small Farms Workshop- Oct. t.b.a.
- ◆ Clear Creek Tree Planting Work Parties- Nov. 6 and Dec. 4- Call to Volunteer
- ◆ Clackamas Watershed Basin-wide Action Planning Workshop- Nov. 11 and 12
- ◆ Clackamas Stream Team - Streamside Tree Planting - Nov- March

In This Newsletter:

- ◆ **Your Clackamas River Watershed Reflections**
- ◆ **Clackamas River Basin Council Current Activities**
- ◆ **Coho Salmon**
- ◆ **Lethal Injection- A Treatment for Knotweed**

Coming Soon to Your Watershed:

Fourth Annual Watershed Celebration and Salmon Bake

Sunday September 19th
2-5 p.m.
Phillip Foster Farm, Eagle Creek

The CRBC would like to express a special thank you to the following local businesses and organizations for their generous support:

Clackamas County Water Providers
Student Watershed Research Project
All Star Rafting

Portland State University Outdoor Recreation Program
Aunt Fannie's Olde Egg Shoppe and Mercantile, Eagle Ck.
Phillip Foster Farm- EagleCk.



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