

# CURRENT NEWS

The Newsletter of the Clackamas River-Basin Council

## Pesticides found in the Clackamas River watershed

This spring, the Clackamas River Basin Council (CRBC) launched a pesticide reduction campaign in the Clackamas watershed, prompted by a pesticide assessment performed from 2000 to 2005 by the U.S. Geological Survey in conjunction with the Clackamas Watershed Management Group. Results from this long-term study revealed that small traces of pesticides are present in waterways throughout the lower Clackamas watershed.



**Figure 1:** This map illustrates the subbasins sampled: lower Clackamas River, Eagle, Clear, Deep, Richardson, Rock, Sieben, Carli, and Cow Creeks.

In the analysis of 119 water samples, over 60 pesticide compounds were detected and 97 percent of samples collected from tributaries contained 2 or more types of pesticides. While pesticides were detected, the current levels are well below US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) drinking water benchmarks and other human health standards. However, 7 of the 8 tributaries sampled had pesticide levels that exceeded standards set to protect aquatic life.

The Clackamas River watershed provides critical habitat for wild threatened salmonids including winter steelhead, spring Chinook, and Coho. When salmon are exposed to even small traces of certain pesticides, they can suffer severe consequences, including: a decreased ability to fight disease, impaired swimming ability, stunted growth, and an increased risk of being preyed upon. The presence of pesticides in our waterways is an imminent threat to salmon populations.



Although the current level of pesticides found in our waterways is far below dangerous thresholds, the presence of even small traces of pesticides is a warning that action needs to be taken before it becomes a bigger problem. You can help keep your drinking water safe by taking a few simple actions:

- Mulching your garden, which helps suppress weeds
- Planting native vegetation in your yard
- Removing weeds using hand tools
- Dispose of unused pesticides *at no cost* at the Metro Oregon City Site, 2001 Washington St., for information contact (503) 234-3000
- If you *must* use pesticides, always choose the least toxic alternative, read the label carefully, apply the correct amount, and never apply during windy conditions.
- For more tips, visit [www.clackamasriver.org](http://www.clackamasriver.org)

**You can help your Clackamas River basin!**

Sign up for PGE paperless billing  
and vote for the CRBC.

See page 5 for more details

## More Native Trees Please!

The winter and spring months were busy for the riparian field crew as it worked with streamside landowners to plant native shrubs and trees along riparian areas in the lower Clackamas watershed. The CRBC riparian enhancement planting program, supported by Metro, is dedicated to improving streamside habitat in target areas within the Rock, Richardson, and Deep Creek basins. The sites planted are those designated as priority hot spots due to a lack of adequate riparian vegetation. These hot spots can have cascading effects on the stream environment, such as raising stream temperatures, allowing pollutants and sediments to directly enter our waterways, and diminishing the quality of fish and wildlife habitat.

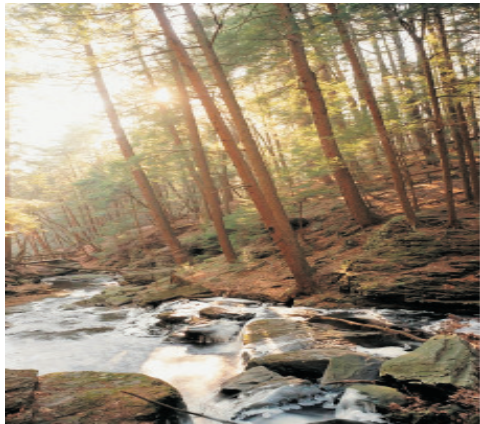
Former Portland State University graduate student, Robin Leferink, quantified the level of shade cover of riparian areas in Rock and Richardson Creeks. A major objective of this study was to identify and prioritize areas in need of shade. The CRBC utilized the results from this study to select locations for the riparian planting program. Planting native vegetation has numerous benefits including: creating quality wildlife habitat, lowering stream temperatures, reducing erosion, offsetting carbon emis-

sions, reducing sediment and pollutants from entering our waterways, mitigating noise pollution, and slowing stormwater runoff.

Throughout the duration of this program, a total of one stream mile will be planted with native vegetation in high priority areas. So far,

approximately 650 feet of riparian habitat has been planted with native shrubs and trees, with an additional 3,750 feet (0.7 miles) scheduled to be planted this coming fall and winter! Before native vegetation is planted, invasive weeds are manually removed. It is essential that these invasives are effectively controlled to prevent them from competing with the new plantings. A diversity of native trees and shrubs are available, including western hemlock, red alder, black cottonwoods, vine maples, salal, Pacific ninebark, sword ferns, and many others.

For more information, or to see if you are eligible for this program, please contact Rachael at (503) 558-0550 or [rachael@clackamasriver.org](mailto:rachael@clackamasriver.org).



## Spring Creek Walking Bridge



For several years the Cedarhurst Improvement Club, community volunteers, and the Clackamas River Basin Council have worked to restore a riparian area at the confluence of Spring and Clear Creeks. This setting, once choked with Himalayan blackberry, reed canarygrass, and English ivy, now features numerous native saplings, such as red cedars, big-leaf maples, and Oregon ash. Hundreds of volunteer hours have been dedicated to removing these invasives and to planting native vegetation.

Other restoration activities implemented at this site include the removal of fish passage barriers and the placement of woody debris to provide shelter to salmon as they migrate upstream. As a testament to the success of the project, salmon have been sighted swimming upstream of where the impeding culverts were removed!

The final stage of this restoration project was the installation of a walking bridge over Spring Creek. This foot bridge provides access to the restoration area for the community, while allowing for the natural movement of water, wood and sediment transport downstream. All of these efforts will help enhance the instream habitat available to salmonids and other species.

## High School Students Throw Salmon into Clear Creek

During the school year, Clackamas High School students tossed over 2 tons - more than 4,000 lbs - of hatchery salmon carcasses into Clear Creek at Metzler Park. You may ask yourself, why would these young adults have a desire to throw dead fish into the stream? Well, these students were actually helping to restore the riparian ecosystem. As salmon grow into adults while living in the ocean, they accumulate marine-derived nutrients in their bodies. After spawning in their natal freshwater streams, the salmon then die, releasing a rich assortment of these nutrients into the riparian environment. These nutrients benefit numerous organisms and cycle through the food chain. Since the Lewis and Clark expedition reached the Pacific Northwest over 200 years ago, salmon populations have declined by 97 percent. This decline in salmon results in less of these important nutrients being released into the stream system. Students learned that throwing salmon carcasses helps bring these nutrients back into our streams.



## Celebrating Water at the 3rd Annual Earth Day Event



On April 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>, local students and families participated in an Earth Day celebration at Clackamas Community College. Earth Day celebrates our connections to water and what water means to our community. The first day involved 450 fifth grade students and their teachers, who participated in a performance by “Recycleman and the Dumpster Divers” and explored the hands-on exhibits, including CRBCs trademark fish-toss game. During the second day of the event, over 100 children and their families attended. Other highlights included free native tree seedlings, Metro’s traveling native garden, door prizes, and free

document shredding. This great weekend was made possible by the Clackamas County Water Education Team (CCWET).

## Getting WET at Happy Valley Park!

On May 28<sup>th</sup>, 30 high school students from Clackamas High School spent the day teaching 120 Happy Valley Elementary fourth graders about the importance of their watershed. The Clackamas River Basin Council, Sunrise Water Authority, Clackamas Community College, and Clackamas High School teacher Andrew Gilford teamed up to organize the special event called Water Education Time, or WET Day. Students began the day dancing to music with a water theme by “Recycleman and the Dumpster Divers.” After the music program, elementary students rotated through a series of interactive learning stations designed and facilitated by the high school students.



Each station hosted a creative activity that demonstrated concepts associated with water and watersheds. This innovative education program reinforced concepts that the high school students learned in science class and gave the elementary students a firsthand understanding of their watershed.

# Cleaning up the Clackamas River, One Trash Bag at a Time

It's official - summer is here and many locals are heading for the Clackamas River to go rafting, boating, floating, and fishing. With this heavy recreational use, our waterway has become heavily littered with cans, bottles, and other trash. When trash blankets the bottom of a river it can have cascading effects on aquatic life and water quality. Most people who enjoy the river want to keep it free of trash, but do not necessarily want to carry discarded bottles, cans, fishing line, and waste around in their pockets or boats.

With this in mind, the CRBC initiated the *Stash the Trash* campaign to support behavior that keeps refuse out of the river, remove barriers to proper litter disposal, and foster personal stewardship for our Clackamas River. The *Stash the Trash* campaign is a community-based marketing effort making reusable litter bags available for residents, boaters, and recreationists. The CRBC began litter bag distribution in early August 2006 and has distributed over 5,000 reusable bags since then! *Stash the Trash* bags are available at Milo McIver State Park, Barton General Store, Barton Park, Carver Boat Ramp, and Riverside Park.



Unfortunately, even though these litter bags are available, trash still accumulates in the river and along its banks. To help keep the river clean, an annual flotilla of volunteers participates in the Clackamas River Cleanup, removing trash from a 13 mile stretch of the Clackamas River. On Sunday, September 7<sup>th</sup>, volunteer whitewater boaters, kayakers, steelhead anglers, youth and many others from the local community will come together to clean the river. In conjunction with the *Stash the Trash* campaign, the 2007 Clackamas River Cleanup removed 3.2 tons of trash, which was over one ton *less* than the previous year. So, these bags are being used effectively!

If you're interested in joining us for this year's Cleanup or would like more information about the event, please email [laura@clackamasriver.org](mailto:laura@clackamasriver.org), call (503) 558-0550, or visit [www.clackamasrivercleanup.org](http://www.clackamasrivercleanup.org). **All participants must pre-register.**



## An Honorary Achievement

The Clackamas River Basin Council along with other Clackamas Stewardship Partners were honored to receive the **Two Chiefs' Partnership Award** presented on January 31, 2008. The Two Chiefs' Award was awarded by the Chief of the US Forest Service and the Chief of the Natural Resources Conservation Service, in recognition of the Clackamas Stewardship Partners collaborative efforts to enhance ecosystem health and economic viability of local communities.

Clackamas Stewardship Partners include: USFS' Clackamas River Ranger District, Clackamas River Basin Council, Pacific Northwest Research Station - Portland Forestry Sciences Laboratory; NRCS, Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife, Clackamas County Soil & Water Conservation District, Clackamas County Board of County Commissioners, Northwest Oregon Resource Conservation & Development Council, Portland State University, the Northwest Forest Conservancy, Bark, Oregon Wild, and the Gifford Pinchot Task Force.

## Pick Paperless, Help Habitat

In honor of Portland General Electric's (PGE) paperless bill customers, PGE is donating \$20,000 to four nonprofit environmental groups. When you sign up for the PGE Paperless Bill option you can vote to help direct a portion of the donation to one of these groups, including the Clackamas River Basin Council. Each organization will receive a portion of the \$20,000 based on the percentage of votes it receives. Not only is switching to paperless billing a sustainable option, it also will help Oregon habitat restoration and watershed protection.

This **Pick Paperless, Help Habitat** promotion begins July 1, 2008 and ends August 15, 2008. If you are already signed up for the paperless option you can still vote online. So don't forget to sign up and vote for the Clackamas River Basin Council! Your vote counts and will help the Clackamas River Basin Council maintain its mission 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.

To sign up and vote visit:

[www.PortlandGeneral.com/Paperless](http://www.PortlandGeneral.com/Paperless)

If you'd like to save paper and receive this newsletter electronically, please e-mail [info@clackamasriver.org](mailto:info@clackamasriver.org)

### Like What We Are Doing?

Want to support our habitat and education projects for clean water and healthy streams?

Use the envelope inside this newsletter to donate.

All contributions are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law.

## Many Thanks to Our Partners and Donors:

Dave Albrecht, Alder Creek Canoe & Kayak, All Star Raft Company, American Whitewater, AmeriCorps, Backyard Bird Shop, BioKleen, Cedarhurst Improvement Club, City of Estacada, City of Lake Oswego, City of Milwaukie, Clackamas CC, Clackamas County Board of Commissioners, Clackamas County Dept of Transportation & Development, Clackamas County Fire Dist #1, Clackamas County Marine Sheriff, Clackamas County Parks, Clackamas County Soil & Water Conservation District, Clackamas County Water Environment Services, Clackamas HS, Clackamas River Water, Clackamas Watershed Management Group, Concordia University, Damascus Civic Club, Dump Stoppers, Eagle Creek Barton CPO, ECONscious, eNRG Kayaking, Estacada High School, Estacada Library, Fertile Ground Landscaping, Friends of Clyde Rice, Friends of Tickle Creek, Happy Valley Elementary School, Higgins Restaurant, Inner City Youth Institute, John Inskeep Learning Center, Johnson Creek Watershed Council, KEEN footwear, LINKS Program, Lowell Hanna Studios, Cheryl & Paul McGinnis, Metro, CM Meyer, Mississippi Studios, Mt Hood CC Youth Employability Support Services, NOAA, Newland Communities, Next Adventure, New Season's Market, NW Rafter's Association, Northwest Steelheaders, Oak Lodge Water District, One Percent for the Planet, Oregon Dept of Fish & Wildlife, Oregon Dept. of Forestry, OSU Extension, Oregon DEQ, Oregon Kayak & Canoe Club, Oregon Roadside Council, Oregon State Parks, Oregon Trout, Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board, Oregon Wildlife Heritage Foundation, Patagonia, Patterson Nursery, PGE, Portland State University, REI, River Network, Sleepy Hollow Tree Farm, SOLV, South Fork Water Board, Spring Mountain ES, Stone Cliff Inn, Student Watershed Research Project, Sunrise Water Authority, The Nature Conservancy, Three Rivers Land Conservancy, Timberline, Jacqueline Tommas, USGS, US Forest Service, West Hills Development and Arbor Custom Homes



**Thanks For Lending a Hand  
to Support Clean Water and Salmon!**

# Clackamas River Basin Council Calendar



- **Natural History of the Clackamas Watershed Naturalist-Led Hikes**

Lace up your hiking boots and grab your cameras to join CRBC board member Bryon Boyce on several Sunday day hikes this summer. All tours meet at 9 a.m. at the Estacada Ranger Station, 595 NW Industrial Way, Estacada, Oregon, 97023.

- **Sunday, July 13<sup>th</sup> Hike - Right Angle Viewpoint**

Expect many wildflowers and views on this moderately strenuous 3 to 4 mile hike. Lush Western Cascade forests open up to wildflower meadows as we hike between the Molalla and Clackamas River drainages. Open areas of poorly drained volcanic soils and rock edifices reveal the volcanic history of the region. We'll hike to a stellar 180 degree viewpoint that overlooks "Old Whitespot," aka Baty Butte, Mt. Hood, Thunder and Fish Creek Mountains, Mt. Jefferson and Ollalie Butte.

- **Sunday, July 20<sup>th</sup> Hike - Headwaters High Elevation Loop**

Visit the under-appreciated highlands of Olallie Scenic Area. Most of the area underwent sheet glaciation rather than valley glaciation, resulting in flatter terrain and so many lakes and ponds that many have never been named. This 5 mile partial loop hike will pass well over a dozen water bodies. Other features include wide-ranging views with the glaciers of Mount Jefferson only 9 miles distant and glacial striations in bedrock.

- **A Day in Damascus - Saturday, July 26th - 10 am until 4pm**

Join us at this great community event at Damascus Civic Community Park, where the CRBC will feature our trademark fish-toss! Portland State University students will test water samples for a variety of water quality parameters for streamside landowners.

- **Sixth Annual Clackamas River Cleanup - Sunday, September 7th**

Mark your calendar for this year's event! Pre-registration required. For more information, visit: [www.clackamasrivercleanup.org](http://www.clackamasrivercleanup.org)

- **Water Environment Services of Clackamas County sponsors habitat restoration work parties**

For more information on how you can help, visit [www.co.clackamas.or.us](http://www.co.clackamas.or.us)

- **Clackamas River Basin Council Meeting**

When: Third Thursday of the month, 6-9 pm. The public is always welcome. You are invited!

Where: Sunnyside Service Center, First Floor Auditorium, 9101 SE Sunnybrook Blvd. Clackamas, OR

- **Want to learn more about the CRBC?**

E-mail [info@clackamasriver.org](mailto:info@clackamasriver.org) to receive monthly announcements.



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Basin Council

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