



the Clackamas

# CURRENT NEWS

CLACKAMAS RIVER BASIN COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

Summer 2014

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## Sandy Wetlands in the Clackamas Watershed

Did you know that most of the City of Sandy is located in the Clackamas watershed? Uniquely situated along a ridgetop, Sandy sits on the edge of the Clackamas River and Sandy River watersheds. Tickle Creek, which flows through the town and eventually connects to Deep Creek, is a tributary to the Clackamas River. Beautifully located at the base of Mt. Hood, Sandy and the surrounding areas are a mix of agricultural and urban land uses which make Tickle Creek a high priority for water quality improvement. That's why when the City of Sandy and Oregon Department of State Lands needed assistance with wetland restoration near a new subdivision, the Clackamas River Basin Council (CRBC) stepped in to help! And so work at the Tickle Creek Mitigation Site or "Sandy Wetlands" as we like to call it, began. Since 2010, CRBC has worked with community members to improve the hydrologic function of the wetland and adjacent riparian area as a mitigation project. By enhancing the site's ability to filter runoff (nutrients and pollutants) from nearby neighborhoods, cooler and cleaner water is delivered to the creek for healthier fish and wildlife habitat. In 4 years, 586 native trees and shrubs and 2,300 wetland plants have been planted. As of last fall, species included Pacific ninebark (*Physocarpus capitatus*), Red Osier dogwood (*Cornus cericea*), Douglas spiraea (*Spiraea douglasii*), slough sedge (*Carex obnupta*) and bulrush (*Scirpus microcarpus*). In addition, volunteer plants (plants that grow on their own), such as skunk cabbage (*Lysichiton americanus*) have continued to pop up on their own. Invasive weed removal efforts to date have focused on Himalayan blackberry, birdsfoot trefoil, creeping buttercup, and velvetgrass. Photo monitoring is conducted each summer to assess progress. As native canopy cover increases, the long-term goal is to outcompete and shade out these species.

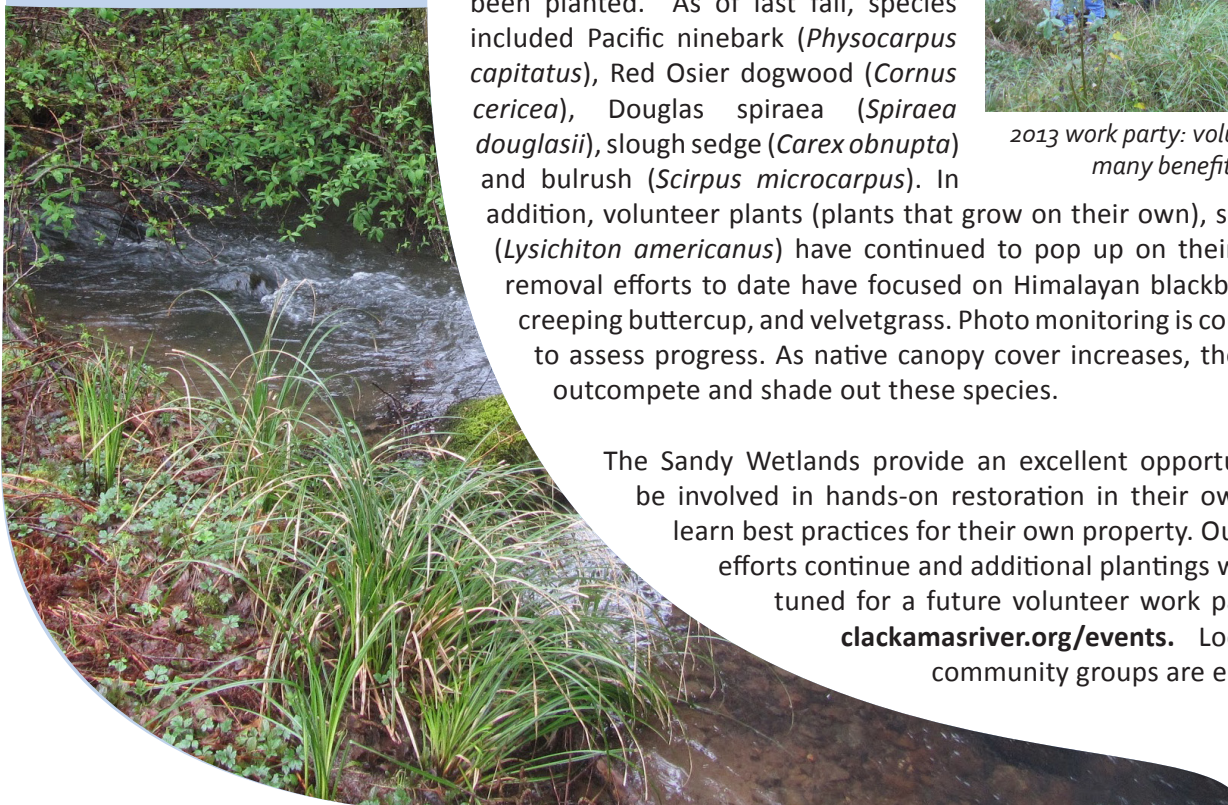


*Skunk cabbage can be an indicator of wetland conditions.*



*2013 work party: volunteers learn about the many benefits of a wetland.*

The Sandy Wetlands provide an excellent opportunity for residents to be involved in hands-on restoration in their own neighborhood and learn best practices for their own property. Outreach and education efforts continue and additional plantings will occur this fall. Stay tuned for a future volunteer work party by visiting [www.clackamasriver.org/events](http://www.clackamasriver.org/events). Local landowners and community groups are encouraged to attend!





## Guided Watershed Hikes

If you've always wanted to explore the Clackamas Watershed, but haven't been sure where to start, come on a CRBC hike this year! Spend a full day learning about geology, local flora and fauna, and the history of the Clackamas watershed, while experiencing incredible scenery. This is a great opportunity to visit environments close to home, often pristine ones, that emphasize the natural beauty and biodiversity the Clackamas River Basin has to offer.

All tours are led by CRBC Board member Bryon Boyce. Bring plenty of water, a camera, bug spray, and a lunch. Be aware that temperatures in the upper watershed are cooler than in town so layer clothing for comfort and wear appropriate footwear. Hikes are free and participants will carpool. Meet at the Clackamas River Ranger District — 595 NW Industrial Way in Estacada, at 8:30 am. RSVP to attend by emailing Morgan Parks at [morgan@clackamasriver.org](mailto:morgan@clackamasriver.org) or calling 503-303-4372 x101.



**July 12th – Bull of the Woods Fire Tour:** Far-ranging views, wildflowers, and high mountain lakes will be seen on this moderate to strenuous 10.5 mile route through wilderness areas of the Bull of the Woods Fire Complex of 2010 and the Mother Lode Fire of 2011. An overview of fire ecology and fire management in Western Oregon will be a focus of the outing. Hikers can expect a 1075 feet elevation gain and 3375 feet loss overall. This hike is limited to 12 participants.

**August 16th – Mount Lowe and Rhododendron Ridge:** Huckleberries, blooming scarlet skyrocket and other vivid flowers will treat hikers along Rhododendron Ridge. This tour will quickly reach the viewpoint of the former lookout tower on top of Mount Lowe at 5350 ft. The area also includes old-growth forests of noble and silver firs and boulder fields, the result of long-ago landslides. This easy hike is about 3.5 miles with 200 ft. elevation gain and 1025 ft. loss overall.

## Tour de Clack Puts Pedals to the Pavement

Do you love combining your favorite things into an awesome fun-filled day? That's why every year we combine cycling with stream restoration, and the result is our annual Tour de Clack, a restoration themed bike ride through the Clackamas River Basin. During this year's third annual ride on June 14th, riders enjoyed beautiful vistas of Mt. Hood and the Clackamas River as they wound through forests, fields, and farms. Fifty riders took off from Milo McIver State Park on their choice of a 32-mile or 48-mile route, stopping at restoration sites as they made their way through the watershed, learning about different types of stream restoration first-hand from our knowledgeable staff. Highlighted projects included a vegetated bioswale at the Estacada Library, fish passage barrier removal in Delph Creek, a streamside planting along Eagle Creek, and improvements to fish habitat in Clear Creek. Blessed with perfect riding weather and enthusiastic riders, the Tour de Clack was another great success. We look forward to seeing everyone again next year!



## Stashing the Trash on the Clackamas River

As warm weather returns to the Clackamas River Basin each summer, locals and day-trippers flock to their favorite river. Easily accessible to the Portland-metro region, the Clackamas River is a popular attraction throughout the summer recreation season for picnicking, fishing, boating, floating, or just plain hanging out. Unfortunately, this means more people and more trash that threaten fish and wildlife, drinking water and the scenic beauty of this waterway. The Clackamas River Basin Council (CRBC) is working to change that by engaging the community in watershed stewardship.

The Stash the Trash Campaign, one of CRBC's flagship programs since 2006, provides reusable litter bags to help people **be the solution** in helping to keep river shores and recreation areas free of trash. Each year, in partnership with Clackamas County and Oregon State Parks, CRBC distributes approximately 6,000 Stash the Trash bags between Memorial Day and Labor Day to Carver Boat Ramp, Barton Store, Barton Park, Riverside Park, and Milo McIver State Park. The bright red-orange bags are hard to miss, hanging on stands near boat launches for recreation users to grab and go. Whether tubing or barbecuing near the river, these bags encourage us all to pack out what we take in and the sturdy mesh material can be easily rinsed and reused.

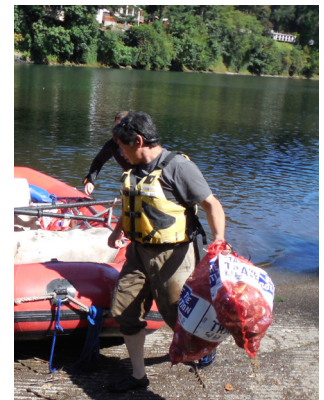
More than ever, people are championing for a cleaner, safer river. An advisory group spearheaded by Clackamas County is working to do just that. The Clackamas River Basin Council is helping to coordinate education efforts aimed at raising awareness and knowledge of the river's values for drinking water, recreation, fish and wildlife habitat, as well as building individual responsibility towards stewardship.

This year an added component to the Stash the Trash campaign includes expanding our partnership with Clackamas County Parks and We Love Clean Rivers to include the Pacific Jet Boat Association and Clackamas High School volunteers (Green Team, Key Club, National Honor Society). Student leader Amber Harvey has coordinated the construction of additional Stash the Trash stands by shop students at Sabin-Schellenberg Center. These stands will be placed between Barton and Carver, making bags available throughout the floating stretch in addition to the parks and complementing the additional garbage bins that are placed and maintained by the Pacific Jet Boat Association. Student volunteers as well as the National Charity League, led by co-coordinators Amber Harvey and Emily Holland, will replenish bags and collect trash on weekends throughout the summer, assist at county park kiosks, and collect important data such as recreation user counts. Trash amounts will be totaled at the end of the season.

Why do volunteers step up to make a difference? In Amber's own words, "About two years ago, when I floated the Clackamas, the amount of trash astounded me! Every bank in sight was covered with beer cans, beer bottles, chip bags, cigarettes and an assortment of other litter. Considering that I, as well as all the salmon depending on the river, drink that water, I couldn't believe it was so dirty. I knew I had to do something."

You can do something too! Join fellow river users to stash trash and recyclables at appropriate containers where you launch and take out at parks or better yet, haul it out with you! Good behavior is contagious so set an example for others to follow and we can all make it easy to preserve the health and beauty of our river.

**Stash the Trash is funded by Clackamas County, Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board, Dump Stoppers, Clackamas River Water Providers, Clackamas County Soil and Water Conservation District, Oregon State Parks, We Love Clean Rivers, Water Environment Services, and the Department of Environmental Quality.**



*Trash on the river is a drag. Take a Stash the Trash bag, fill 'er up, and throw it away!*





# Improving Water Quality

## Landowner Spotlight: J. Frank Schmidt and Son Co.

From small streamside homes to large farms, Shade Our Streams partners with all different types of landowners to work along their streambanks. Gordy Webster manages J. Frank Schmidt and Son's Hood Acres Farm in Boring and is a Board member of CRBC. Alongside fields of the nursery's young plants flows Dolan Creek, a tributary to Deep Creek. Webster recalls that the streamside area, "had been overgrown with blackberries and we were struggling with maintaining it properly. It was always the last priority for us and so the site got worse and worse as the years went by."



*Blackberry and reed canary grass along Dolan Creek before treatments through Shade Our Streams.*

That's where CRBC comes in. Now in its third year, the Shade Our Streams program focuses on the land closest to the stream, which often attracts landscape altering invasive weeds such as Himalayan blackberry, Japanese knotweed, and English ivy.



*Crews planting young trees and shrubs along the creek.*

The blackberries and grasses along the creek were treated last summer, preparing the area to be planted the following winter. So last January, our restoration crews planted 10,000 native trees and shrubs along 2,000 feet of Dolan Creek's banks as it flows through the nursery.

*It was great to find out that this section of property could be planted with trees, and provide shade and habitat for wildlife, at no cost to our company. -Gordy Webster*

Streamside buffers can be particularly beneficial to farms and nurseries because of their knack for filtering nutrients and pesticides that run off the fields.

### What is a Riparian Buffer?

Riparian buffers are created with plants found along the banks of rivers or streams that filter polluted runoff and provide a transition zone between water and human land uses.

### How Do Riparian Buffers Effect Water Quality and Aquatic Life?

Riparian buffers act like a sponge, absorbing contaminants and sediment carried by stormwater or irrigation. Sediment refers to soil particles that enter streams from eroding land and streams. It can clog fish gills, suffocate fish eggs and aquatic larvae, and cause fish to change their feeding and reproductive behaviors. Nutrients are necessary for aquatic ecosystems, but too much can lead to changes in the environment, such as excessive algae growth, and reduce the quality of water for human use. Agricultural lands are the primary source of nutrients in streams across the country as a result of runoff from fertilizers and pesticides. These types of pollutions can bond to soil particles and can be captured when sediment is filtered out as runoff passes through a riparian buffer. Chemical and biological activity in streamside forests can transform nutrients and pesticides in to less harmful forms by storing these particles in their biomass.



Assessing the composition and health of macroinvertebrate communities (water bugs) in streams is often an excellent indicator of water quality and physical habitat conditions due to their various tolerances to pollution and other stressors. Since riparian buffers improve water quality, they can have a direct impact on macroinvertebrates. To learn more about water quality monitoring plan in the Clackamas watershed, visit [www.clackamasriver.org/water-quality--2/technical-data--2](http://www.clackamasriver.org/water-quality--2/technical-data--2) and click on "Lower Clackamas River Basin Macroinvertebrate Monitoring Plan" - commissioned by the Clackamas River Water Providers by ABR, Inc. - Environmental Research & Services.



# Through Shade Our Streams

As one of their founding principles, it is important to J. Frank Schmidt to be good stewards of their land. By planting a native riparian buffer with Shade Our Streams, they have taken a huge step towards protecting the water quality of Dolan Creek. As the plants grow taller their benefits will be enhanced. Their roots will take up more pollution, their branches will provide more shade, and they will support more wildlife habitat.



*Red elderberry planted along the creek with the nursery in the background.*

Summer is setting in, and the plants are establishing themselves in their new home, "I love going to the site to check out the plants and see all the improvements. I look forward to watching the plants grow over the next several years and become a natural area that will protect the stream that flows through it. We are all very happy with the results to date," reflects Webster.

Here at CRBC, we also look forward to watching the young plants grow, and all the benefits to the stream and its wildlife that will come with it, far into the future.

## Shade Our Streams: Coming to a Stream Near You

We're including new subbasins in the Shade Our Streams program, working along the banks of Rock, Richardson, and Sieben Creeks for the first time this year. These new areas have joined the ranks of Deep, Clear, and Eagle Creeks as the newest subbasins to benefit from large-scale weed removal and native tree and shrub planting. Stop and say 'hi' if you see us out visiting streamside properties in your area this summer.



Let us know if you or someone you know has a property that may be eligible for Shade Our Streams. For more information contact Chelsea, (503) 303-4372 x105 or [chelsea@clackamasriver.org](mailto:chelsea@clackamasriver.org). Visit our website at: [www.clackamasriver.org](http://www.clackamasriver.org)

## Riparian Buffers as Part of a Larger Strategy

Planting a riparian buffer is just one strategy being used at Hood Acres Farm. According to Gordy Webster, they have been investing in new technologies over the years to keep their soil in their fields and not in the streams by reducing sediment runoff. In doing so, they are protecting their land assets and the environment at the same time. "Reducing soil erosion has been a major focus for several decades. Each fall we spend countless hours and dollars planting fall cover crops both between our tree rows and on open fields. This greatly reduces soil erosion and pesticide runoff."

Adopting Integrated Pest Management (IPM) (a philosophy and practical approach of land care that stresses preventive care using least risky approaches) such as those J. Frank Schmidt & Son Nursery have embraced, has allowed them to reduce the amount of pesticides needed for their crops and has also improved accuracy and timing of spray application. To learn more about IPM visit: [www.clackamasriver.org/resources/factsheets](http://www.clackamasriver.org/resources/factsheets).





## Restoration at Rock Creek Confluence

CRBC and partners Clackamas County Water Environment Services (WES), SOLVE, ODFW and City of Happy Valley are working together to restore in-stream and riparian function to Rock Creek, a tributary to the lower Clackamas River. Rock Creek is home to a variety of fish species including federally-listed threatened and endangered Chinook, coho salmon and steelhead, as well as resident cutthroat trout. The project is taking place at the confluence of Rock Creek and the Clackamas River and kicked off in 2013 with invasive species treatments to over 12 acres of key riparian habitat - removing blackberry, ivy and reed canary grass from the floodplain. This coming August, project partners will install large wood and boulders into the stream to increase stream complexity and improve fish habitat to over 2,000 feet of stream. Planting will begin in 2015 to restore native vegetation to the riparian area, supplementing work completed by SOLVE Green Team students since 2010. This project is supported with funding from WES, Metro's 2006 Natural Areas bond measure, OWEB, The Nature Conservancy's PGE Habitat Fund and CRBC's Shade Our Streams program. Look for more updates and future opportunities to volunteer or tour this site.



*Confluence of Rock Creek (center) and Clackamas River.*



## Rock Creek Partnership Watershed Wide Event

Volunteers got muddy and went "green" for the third annual Rock Creek Partnership Watershed Wide Event in Happy Valley and Damascus on March 15th over the St. Patrick's Day weekend. One hundred and fourteen community members joined together with the Rock Creek Partnership (Clackamas River Basin Council, Friends of Trees, and SOLVE) to improve water quality in the Rock Creek subbasin by planting 1,200 native trees and shrubs, spreading several yards of nutrient rich mulch, installing coffee bags (to protect, control weeds, and retain moisture), and pulling invasive weeds at three streamside projects along Hemrich,

Tillstrom, and Troge Roads. Festivities kicked off at the renowned Pendarvis Farm with great weather; delicious food from New Seasons, Peets Coffee, Voodoo Donuts, Einstein Bros Bagels, and KIND; raffle prizes from Patagonia; and rockin' bluesy tunes by Wild Rose Trail Band. Huge THANKS goes to Clackamas County Water Environment Services, Sherry and Scott Pendarvis, the National Charity League, SOLVE Ambassadors, Clackamas County Cable and Looking Glass Digital whose video of the event is available on WES's website at: [www.riverhealth.org/watershed-health](http://www.riverhealth.org/watershed-health).

### What is the Rock Creek Partnership?

The Rock Creek Partnership (RCP) was formed in 2011 and is a collaboration between the Clackamas River Basin Council, Friends of Trees, and SOLVE and is supported with funding from Clackamas County Water Environment Services, on behalf of Clackamas Service District #1. RCP works with landowners to revitalize streamside habitats by removing invasive species, such as blackberry and ivy, and re-planting with native trees and shrubs. Restoring streamside habitats with native vegetation creates healthy plant communities which filter pollutants from urban runoff, provide food and shelter for fish and wildlife, reduce bank erosion, and increase property values. Stream flow from Rock Creek eventually enters into the Clackamas River, which provides drinking water to nearly 400,000 people and critical habitat for many sensitive species.

Visit [www.RockCreekPartnership.org](http://www.RockCreekPartnership.org) for more information.



*Timber Lake Job Corps, CRBC Board Members, and a Clackamas County Youth Crew Member mulched 350 native plants and pulled aggressive English ivy along Hemrich Rd.*

## Support our Work, Make a Donation

All donations are greatly appreciated, and are tax-deductible to the fullest extent of the law.

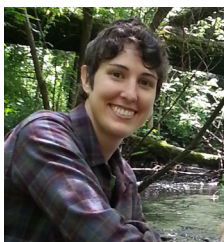
Donate online via PayPal — just head to our website and click the “donate” button.

Our tax identification number is 91-1838169.



## Welcome, New Board Members and Staff

CRBC is pleased to welcome new Board Members: **Gail Shaloum**, representative of Special Districts and **Kelly Warren**, representative of Native American Tribes and Interests.



CRBC also welcomes **Mary Meier** as the new Field Assistant supporting Shade Our Streams field activities.

## Stay Connected



Find us on Twitter by looking for ClackamasRiver.



Search for our Facebook Page by entering “Clackamas River Basin Council”

## Thank You, Sponsors and Partners!

Dave and Jan Albrecht, Adventure Without Limits, Alder Creek Canoe & Kayak, All Star Rafting, American Medical Response, Aquatic Contracting, Bailey's Pub & Grub, Baxter Auto Parts, Bi-mart, Book Nook, Ris Bradshaw, Burgerville, Burlwood Homeowners' Association, Carver Hangar, Cedarhurst Neighborhood Association, Chrysalis Farms, City of Damascus, City of Estacada, City of Gladstone, City of Happy Valley, City of Oregon City, ClackaCraft Drift Boats, Clackamas Auto Parts, Clackamas County Historical Society, Clackamas County Dept of Transportation & Development, CC Marine Sheriff, CC Parks, CC Soil & Water Conservation District, CCWET, Clackamas Fire Dist #1, Clackamas High School (HS), Clackamas River Trout Unlimited, Clackamas River Water, Clackamas River Water Providers, Concordia University, Dave's Killer Bread, Dump Stoppers, Earlean Marsh, EcoZone, eNRG Kayaking, Eagle Creek Elementary, Estacada HS, Estacada Library, Friends of Clyde Rice, Friends of Tickle Creek, Friends of Trees, Hand & Stone Massage & Facial Spa, Harbor Freight Tools, Intel, Jazzy Bagels, J. Frank Schmidt & Son Co. Nursery, John Inskeep Environmental Learning Center, Dick Jones, Laughing Planet Cafe, Lobomassage, Lowell Hanna Studios, Metro, CM & J Meyer, Milwaukie Bowl, Bill Monroe, Mossy Rock, Mountain Moka, Mt Hood Community College Youth Employability Support Services, Mt. Scott Family Dental, National Charity League, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Natural High Rafting, New Seasons Market, Next Adventure, NW Flyfishing Outfitters, NW Rafters Association, NW Steelheaders, NRS, Oak Lodge Water Dist., Organically Grown Company, OR Dept. of Agriculture, OR Dept. of Environmental Quality, OR Dept. of Fish & Wildlife, OR Dept. of Forestry, OR State Parks, OR Trout, OR Watershed Enhancement Board, Oregon Wildlife, OSU Extension, Outward Bound, Pacific Jetboat Association, Pacific Seafood, Pamplin Newspapers, Patagonia, Peets Coffee, Pendarvis Farm, Phil Lingelbach, Portland Aquarium, Portland General Electric, Portland State University, REI, Reser Foods, River Network, Sabin-Schellenberg Center, Safeway, Sah-Hah-Lee Golf Course, Chris Scarzello, Sellwood Cycle Repair, Siri & Son Farms, SOLVE, Spiral Art Gallery, Sportsman Warehouse, Starbucks, Stein Oil Co., Stumptown Coffee Roasters, Sunrise Water Authority, Susan Wilmoth Acupuncture, Talbert Hardware Inc., Terra Casa, Timber Lake Job Corps, Time Cuts Salon, Jacqueline Tommas, USGS, US Forest Service, Velo Cult, Water Environment Services, We Love Clean Rivers, West Linn HS, Wichita Pub.





Clackamas River Basin Council  
PO Box 186g  
Clackamas, OR 97015  
503-303-4372  
[www.ClackamasRiver.org](http://www.ClackamasRiver.org)  
[info@clackamasriver.org](mailto:info@clackamasriver.org)

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## Calendar of Upcoming Events

If you're looking for a reason to get out into the watershed this summer and fall, look no further! Contact Morgan Parks at [morgan@clackamasriver.org](mailto:morgan@clackamasriver.org) if you have any questions about how to get involved. Volunteer opportunities are also listed on our website.

### Council Meetings

We meet on the third Thursday of each month at the Mt. Scott Fire Station, on 9339 SE Causey Avenue in Happy Valley. These meetings are open to the public. Check our website for information about that month's featured presentation.

### Down the River Clean Up on the Clackamas

This year marks our 12th year of teaming up with fellow non-profit We Love Clean Rivers for the Down the River Clean Up. On Sunday, September 7th, our flotilla of volunteers will take to the water again! Grab your raft, kayak, drift boat, canoe, tube, SCUBA gear, or whatever floats your boat and join us as we remove trash from a fifteen-mile stretch of the Clackamas River. Visit [www.welovecleanrivers.org](http://www.welovecleanrivers.org) for more information. Registration opens August 1st.

**THANK YOU to our sponsors and partners for this year's event so far:** Clackamas County, Metro, Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board, Water Environment Services CCSD#1, Clackamas River Water Providers, eNRG Kayaking, Natural High Rafting, Adventures Without Limits, Northwest Outward Bound School, Oregon Rafting Team, American Canoe Association and L.L. Bean, American Medical Response, SOLVE, Goldfoot, ecoShuttle, Mark Gamba Photography, and many more to come!

### First Saturday Work Parties (October - May)

Help plant native trees and remove invasive weeds in our watershed! Volunteering is a great way to get to know your area, meet new people, and get some exercise while helping streams. Tools, gloves, and water are provided. Please bring a water bottle, dress for the weather, and wear closed-toed shoes or boots. All events start at 9:00 am and end at noon, unless otherwise noted.

