

Partner Newsletter

Winter 2015



WATERSHED WORKS



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Giant Fish is a Big Draw for Local Watershed Event

What do a 14 foot tall fish, a table full of local historical artifacts, and a clothesline of fish-print t-shirts have in common? They were all found at the Milk Creek Watershed Celebration held at Camp Adams!

Clackamas County Soil and Water Conservation District partnered with local organizations to entertain and inform community members about restoration projects and the great habitat on Milk Creek and other tributaries of the Molalla River. Over 100 people joined in the fun!



Visitors describing the event said, “Extremely educational. I learned about Nate Creek and the [Oregon] chub, which I had never heard of before, and it is all in my neighborhood!” Another exclaimed, “Fun, family friendly event! I love seeing families participate in conservation activities!”

The hit of the day was Claudia, the Chinook, who travelled to Camp Adams from Dallas, Oregon. Claudia, standing an impressive 14 feet tall and 29 feet long, is the talk of every event she attends. Local FFA students assisted the young and the young-at-heart inside Claudia to see murals about the life cycle of salmon

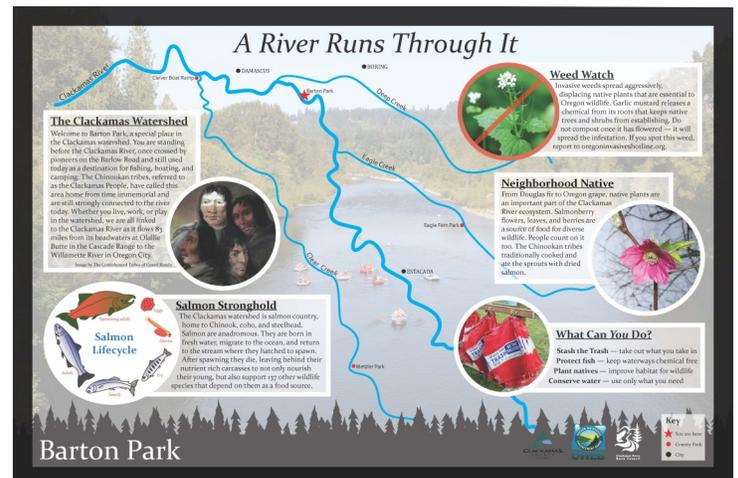
and how they exist with other users of the watershed. Contact Lisa Kilders, lkilders@conservationdistrict.org, 503-210-6002 or visit: <http://conservationdistrict.org>.

CLACKAMAS RIVER BASIN COUNCIL

Signs of Watershed Wisdom

The Clackamas River Basin Council has kicked off 2015 with new signs, literally! Four interpretive signs are now brightening up Clackamas waterways this winter. Learn about the Clackamas watershed while you're hiking, picnicking, and fishing at Eagle Fern Park, Metzler Park, Carver Boat Ramp, and Barton Park.

Signs were designed by CRBC in partnership with Clackamas County Parks to educate park users about the Clackamas watershed, history and natural heritage of the region, salmon life cycle and habitat needs, native and invasive plants, and how individuals can support watershed health. An Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board grant supported the project. Other partners involved included Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, Clackamas County Soil and Water Conservation District, and the Confederated Tribes of Grande Ronde and Warm Springs, with sign fabrication by local Portland firm, Formations. Contact Morgan Parks, morgan@clackamasriver.org or Chelsea White-Brainard, chelsea@clackamasriver.org at 503-303-4372 or visit: <http://clackamasriver.org>.



Slough Stories: Celebration of 20 Years of Work

Columbia Slough Watershed Council (CSWC) celebrated its 20th anniversary year in 2014. There are thousands of stories to tell about the last 20 years. In November of 2014, the CSWC hosted Slough Stories, an event that highlighted personal experiences with watershed impacts through photo, video and written documentation. This event was part of an effort to document efforts large and small that have improved the Columbia Slough watershed and raised public awareness of the waterway and the region.

Attendees were residents, past Council board members and past staff as well as volunteers and event participants. Each person at the event had a unique connection to the watershed. By sharing a memory, story or artifact at Slough Stories, they were able to contribute to a powerful legacy and inspire future watershed activities.

CSWC recently produced a video compilation of a few of the stories told at Slough Stories that can be viewed online at:

http://columbiaslough.org/index.php/about_the_council/slough_stor/.

Contact Penny Beckwith, penny.beckwith@columbiaslough.org, or 503 281-1132.



Past Council Member Mike Houck shares at Slough Stories event.

JOHNSON CREEK WATERSHED COUNCIL

11 Coho Documented in Johnson Creek in 2014

Pairs of volunteers traversed sections of Johnson Creek from October to December looking for evidence of coho as a salmon surveyor. 68 volunteers helped with this popular monitoring project in its fourth year and we have seen more fish than ever before.

Salmon were seen mostly in the Crystal Springs tributary that flows through Eastmoreland Golf Course and Reed College. Scale samples were taken and contributed to overall state monitoring efforts for the Columbia basin. A carcass



Photo credit: brucemacgregorphotography.com

was also retrieved from a section of the main channel in Gresham more than 15 miles upstream. All fish documented were wild coho – both male and female. The return of salmon in greater numbers each year means that Johnson Creek is continuing to prove itself as an urban gem - a green corridor full of threatened animals worth our protection and investment.

Special thanks to East Multnomah Soil and Water Conservation District and the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife for their support of this important research. Contact Amy Lodholz, amy@gcwc.org, 502-652-7477 or visit: <http://jcw.org>.

NCUWC News Features Many Partner Collaborations

On September 27, 2014, NCUWC and NCPRD hosted a SOLVE clean-up event at Hull and Swanson Open Space. Three NCUWC board members and 30 volunteers recovered 689 lbs of trash; 4 car tires; 3 bicycles; and one shopping cart. The group cleared 2,000 square feet of blackberries and English ivy.



NCUWC partnered on many events in October and November: October 11, 2014 with Urban Green for the Trimet Park Avenue LRT planting; October 18, 2014 with NCPRD at Stringfield and Risely Parks; October 25, 2014 with NCPRD at Spring Park Natural Area; October 26, 2014 with NCPRD for split rail fence construction at Scott Park; November 2, 2014 with NCPRD and WES to clean up litter at 3-Creeks Natural Area (an event featured in a 10/29/14 article in the Clackamas Review); and a November 15, 2014 planting with WES and SOLVE at Phillips Creek.

We hosted a presentation “Restoration of the Natural Area in Meldrum Bar Park and Other Projects on the River” on November 19, 2014. Our excellent guest speakers included John Runyon of Cascade Environmental Group, Gayle Killam of River Network, and Samantha Dumont of Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership. Nearly 50 people attended!

On December 23, 2014, NCUWC published our FY 13-14 Annual Report. An electronic copy is available on our website. Printed copies, in booklet format, are available by contacting Tricia Sears at tricia@ncuwc.org, 503-550-9282, or visit: www.ncurbanwatershed.wordpress.com.

SANDY RIVER BASIN WATERSHED COUNCIL

Restoring Oak at the Sandy River Delta

The Sandy River Delta is a unique location that combines habitat and recreation. Local residents and visitors from far away bring their dogs to enjoy this site, informally known as the “1000 acres”, that is home to wildlife including nesting rare birds such as the Yellow-Billed Cuckoo and Sandy River salmon including coho, steelhead, and Chinook. This winter, in November and February, volunteers have planted over 2000 native trees and shrubs to restore oak woodland habitat. Events here have attracted over 450 volunteers in the last two years!

This newly established oak woodland creates valuable habitat for wildlife, and allows for service learning and new educational opportunities for visitors to learn about restoration at the Sandy River Delta. This project has been a success due to partnerships with Friends of Trees, Confluence Project, the US Forest Service, Friends of the Delta, East Multnomah Soil and Water Conservation District, Ash Creek Forest Management, the Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership, and project funders. Contact Corinne Handelman, corinne@sandyriver.org, 503-564-8391 or visit: www.sandyriver.org.



Volunteer Numbers Growing for Tryon Creek Watershed Council



Tryon Creek Watershed Council has underwent some big changes this past fall/winter. First, TCWC successfully attained its 501(c)(3) status and is thrilled to be an independent non-profit! Most of this effort is credited to our Treasurer Kristie Focht, who worked very hard to accomplish this for TCWC.

Second, we have our first-ever Volunteer Coordinator, Adra Lobdell, who started in September. Adra is fulfilling the position through the Confluence Environmental Center AmeriCorps program. Since starting, Adra has been able to increase our volunteer capacity, improve our communication with volunteers, and create systems to accurately track volunteer hours and project accomplishments. TCWC is especially excited about the partnerships made with three different schools (Pacific Academy, Renaissance Academy of Arts and Sciences, and Wilson High School) for service-learning projects involving native species planting and invasive removal. Since September, our volunteers have removed 3 acres of invasive species, released 140 trees from ivy, and have planted 110 native species in the Tryon Creek watershed. We look forward to seeing the growing number of volunteers and restoration this coming spring! If you have any questions about our volunteer programs, please contact Adra Lobdell, tcwc.volcoord@gmail.com, 904-476-5592 or visit: <http://tcwc.tryonfriends.org/>.

TUALATIN SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT and TUALATIN RIVER WATERSHED COUNCIL

TW3 Teams Up To Tackle Invasives

Invasive weeds – the lists vary, but almost every watershed has them. In the Tualatin River Watershed, a coalition of conservation groups works to locate, eradicate and educate residents about the species of greatest concern. The Tualatin Soil and Water Conservation District (TSWCD), the Tualatin River Watershed Council, Clean Water Services and Tualatin Hills Parks and Recreation District comprise the Tualatin Watershed Weed Watchers (aka TW3).

Leveraging Oregon State Weed Board funds, TW3 treats invasive species like garlic mustard and giant hogweed that threaten water and habitat quality in urban and rural areas as well as human health and local economies. Newly minted Weed Watchers, residents trained to identify and report weed infestations in parks, natural areas and other areas of concern in the county, receive annual training through workshops and monthly updates on weeds and their control online. By promoting early detection and rapid response (EDRR), citizens learn how to identify these species so they don't spread beyond our control. TSWCD also offers rural landowners technical assistance with weed control. Contact Jennifer Nelson (Tualatin SWCD), tualatinswcd@gmail.com, 503-648-3174 x121 and April Olbrich (Tualatin River Watershed Council), trwc@trwc.org, 503-846-4810, or visit: www.swcd.net/help-for-homes/weed-watchers/.



From surveys & treatment to deputizing new Weed Watchers, the Tualatin Watershed Weed Watchers work hard each year on control of invasive weeds.

Urban Watershed Mentors Training

West Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District increasingly found itself in a situation that many Districts can probably relate to. The more you spread the word about all the good work you're doing, the more projects you're being called on to handle. That's a great problem to have, but staff and budgets can only take on so much. So how do you do more with the same resources? Specifically, the question facing invasive weed program managers was how to remove more weeds and cover more ground without adding more staff.

Since program managers can't physically train every single person in the District, they decided the best way to increase effectiveness was to train more people to do it on their own. The Urban Watershed Mentors Training Program grows exponentially over the years as newly-trained experts mentor the next round of interested students in the program. Volunteers, students and professionals receive an intensive training program including a 21 hour field and classroom component and a 25 hour service project to learn how to develop and implement conservation plans. The plans address invasive plant control, native plant establishment, stormwater management and wildlife enhancements. The classes are held on three Saturdays each spring and feature instructors from a wide variety of businesses, public agencies, and non-profit companies.

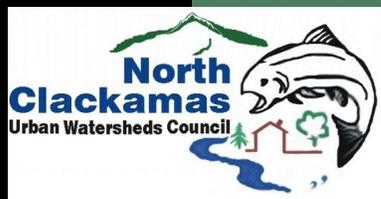
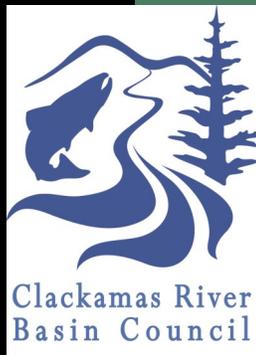
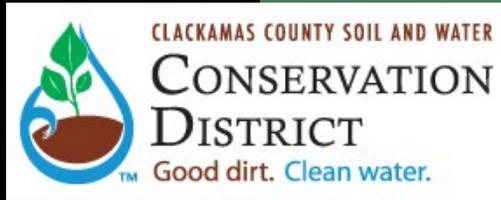
The service component, led by a trained mentor, is required for all students and takes place over the course of the next year. Students gain valuable experience in applied urban restoration and on-the-ground implementation. The program benefits the Conservation District's natural resources by creating more knowledgeable and engaged land stewardship leaders who help create and guide conservation plans from concept to implementation.

The District charges \$30 per person for the program (which covers the cost of breakfast and program materials) and while it's limited to 30 people only, it fills up in just a few weeks.

For more information, contact Mary Logalbo, mary@wmswcd.org, 503-238-4775 x103, or visit www.wmswcd.org.



This partner newsletter is compiled quarterly by Watershed Councils and Soil & Water Conservation Districts within the Portland Metro region.



Questions? Contact Amy Lodholz, amy@gcwc.org, 502-652-7477