



# The Clackamas CURRENT NEWS

## CLACKAMAS RIVER BASIN COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

### Summer 2020

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### Upcoming Events:

- Sept 10: SOLVE River Cleanup at Clackamette Park\*
  - Sept 12 & 13: Down the River Cleanup
  - Sept 24: SOLVE River cleanup at Tri-City Wastewater Treatment Plant\*
- \*sign up: [solveoregon.org/solvecalendar](https://solveoregon.org/solvecalendar)

## The Eagle Creek Logs Have Landed

CRBC kicked off the summer with a major restoration project at Bonnie Lure State Park near Estacada. With support from Columbia Helicopters, Inter-Fluve and Aquatic Contracting, we staged over 150 logs to build logjams on Eagle Creek's side channels to improve habitat conditions for coho salmon, spring and fall Chinook salmon and pacific lamprey.

Logjams may appear to be obstacles for fish but they actually form vital habitat. Logjams redirect the flow of waterways, providing juvenile salmonids with pools and root structures where they can seek cover from predators. Logjams also collect sediments, creating gravelly areas for spawning salmonids to make their redds.



**WATCH on Youtube:** Restoration Program Manager Liz Gilliam explains the project's design and the importance of logjams for salmon habitat.

"We're trying to work within the context of this dynamic channel, allowing it to migrate back and forth but setting it up so that, wherever it does move to it has that structure, those bones of the large wood, to scour those pools and create those riffles," CRBC Restoration Program Manager Liz Gilliam said. "And so we're trying to engineer these specific log jams to go in, knowing that the channel is going to shift and change over time and hoping that we can accommodate that shift and change."

Historically, Eagle Creek would have had lots of fallen wood, but years of logging, fire suppression and improper land management has removed too much of the riparian biomass to ensure juvenile salmonids and lamprey can find the habitat they need. That's why we're working with a grant from the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board to put logs back in the system, making 3,500 linear feet of side channel habitat a better home for Clackamas River salmon.

Construction began on June 26 with Columbia Helicopters dropping the logs near their installation sites. Inter-Fluve and Aquatic Contracting will continue work through early August, placing the logs in the creek and pulling down additional trees in the riparian zone to build the logjam structures. To polish off the project, they will plant willows along the bank to provide shade.

"The changes will be drastic from the fishes' view but really minor for people using the park," Liz said. "There'll still be a trail system and fishing opportunities, but just a little more wooded habitat in the system - and hopefully more fish!"

This project is funded by grants from OWEB and Portland General Electric.



# Black Lives Matter.

CRBC Executive Director Cheryl McGinnis's statement on the Black Lives Matter movement, the coronavirus pandemic, and how CRBC can better support the community during these trying times

The world has fundamentally changed since our last newsletter. The novel coronavirus pandemic forces us into isolation, disrupting our ability to gather, to connect. It makes us re-imagine how we can fulfill our obligations.

The death of George Floyd forces a re-examination of our national identity and demands each of us explore our shadows, expose our prejudices, and commit with conviction to act against racism.

The CRBC, in a transition period with our staff for much of the spring, remained largely silent on these issues. Given that the first step in confronting racism is ending one's own silent compliance, I hope you'll forgive our absence in these conversations and accept our resolve as we affirm: **Black Lives do Matter.**

Black lives matter always; while living within the Clackamas River Basin; while drinking water born from sparkling springs and while working in our community, in our forests and on our farms.

Black lives matter while fishing, rafting, kayaking, birding, hiking, camping, horseback riding, cycling, running, walking, or otherwise playing in and enjoying the amazing outdoors we share.

As a watershed council, our avowed mission reads: "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 believe our organization works to benefit all of our community members and we are committed to understand how we can better support our neighbors of color.

On July 8<sup>th</sup>, our staff and members of our board of directors attended a Cascade Employers Association training on "Unpacking Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion." Along with nearly 50 people from other organizations in Oregon, we discussed race, whiteness and American culture and learned about the history of racism in Oregon including while becoming a state. We also assessed our organization's Racial Justice engagement. I am humbled to acknowledge that CRBC has overlooked racial justice initiatives in our programming, power dynamics, personnel and organizational culture.

While we have made efforts in the past to be more inclusive, CRBC staff and board are committed to reviewing opportunities we have overlooked through sharply focused discussions. The intent will be to involve all communities to benefit and participate in our work. We must find ways to

seek more partnerships with Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC). We must partner and collaborate with minority organizations and businesses to optimize community benefits that we strive to achieve and reevaluate how we can serve our mission of environmental health while striving for environmental justice.

While we continue these conversations internally and with our constituents, we must also acknowledge that African-Americans and Latino/Latina people are disproportionately affected by the coronavirus pandemic. Due to a variety of factors, including working and living conditions, non-Hispanic Black individuals are 5 times more likely than non-Hispanic white people, and Hispanic or Latino/Latina people are 4 times as likely as non-Hispanic white people to test positive for COVID-19, according to the Centers for Disease Control.

The CRBC therefore stands with public health officials as we are all reminded to wear masks when going out in public, to avoid touching our faces as much as possible, to stay home when sick, and to support community efforts to endure the pandemic. Please wear a mask to protect health – yours, your family and friends', and others'.

We've adjusted our operations due to the pandemic. Our staff has been working remotely since March, staggering our in-office time with limited office visits, and we continue to hold our Board of Directors and Executive Council Meetings virtually (which, frankly, has already been a significant success). We've canceled many of our events to avoid opportunities to spread the virus such as some volunteer work parties, and are making adjustments to others, including the Down the River Cleanup.

**To our volunteers – we miss you! We look forward to safely gathering again in the future.**

As we all adjust to these new, difficult realities, we want to assure our diverse community that CRBC will continue to work diligently to protect the Clackamas River and its tributaries and wetlands, to restore salmon habitat, and to create opportunities for everyone to give back to the watershed and realize the benefits of our joint efforts.

With best wishes for your health and safety,

Cheryl McGinnis  
Executive Director  
Clackamas River Basin Council



# CRBC Welcomes New Staff Members

Meet Ari Sindel and Adam Spencer - our two new staff members who joined in June. Ari is our new Riparian Specialist, and Adam is taking over as Communications and Program Coordinator.

**Ari** is an expert in the native and exotic plant species of the Pacific Northwest. Prior to joining the CRBC, he mapped wetlands for the City of Portland and worked with the Oregon Biodiversity Information Center to collect the seeds of rare plants from throughout the state. He has worked in habitat restoration for many years, serving as a technician, a planner, and a researcher. Ari has given back to his communities by teaching gardening to young people locally and teaching English as a second language in South Korea. He says he admires the people he's met in the watershed for their devotion to working toward a healthy landscape.



Ari collects sage in the Oregon Badlands



Adam paddles the Baker River in Chile

**Adam** grew up rafting the McKenzie River and exploring the forests of the Cascades. He studied journalism at the University of Oregon and went off to travel throughout South and Central America to support environmental organizations in telling their stories and helping their communities. Prior to joining CRBC, Adam taught a conservation study abroad program in Chilean Patagonia, leading research expeditions around the glaciers of the Southern Patagonian Ice Field. He is excited to get to know the Clackamas River Basin, to learn from the people who live in the region and to encourage opportunities to connect around promoting ecosystem health. He is also looking forward to providing Spanish-language communications, to create videos about peoples' relationships to the Clackamas, and to work alongside our amazing volunteer teams as we clean and improve the watershed.

## Water Quality Q&A with CRBC Stewardship Manager Suzi Cloutier

CRBC monitors several creeks in the Clackamas watershed for pesticides. Working with the Oregon Dept. of Agriculture and the Dept. of Environmental Quality, Suzi gathers water samples, measures flow rates, and monitors stream health on her monthly watershed health check-ups.

**Which creeks do you monitor and why?** We collect samples from Deep, North Fork Deep Creek, Noyer, Rock and Sieben Creeks because we are monitoring streams that have major potential impacts from roadway runoff and pesticides.

**What are your main concerns in these creeks?** The DEQ tests these samples for 145 pesticides and regularly finds pesticide concentrations above the "aquatic life benchmark." That means our streams have toxicity levels that represent a risk to aquatic life, leading to lasting, detrimental impacts for the plants and wildlife that live in the watershed – not to mention the health of our drinking water.

**What's the trend of stream health?** With the increases in concentrated land use, we are actually finding pesticide detections going up, unfortunately. And yet, Pesticides are only one component of stream health. Many of our streams also absorb soil runoff and fertilizers which can cause harmful algae blooms. Streams that lack trees along their banks for shade also can make the waters too warm.

**What can people do to improve stream health?** First, we must use pesticides and fertilizers appropriately: right type, right amount, right time to apply, right place, right weather – all these considerations go miles to keep these nasties out of our streams. Planting and keeping healthy streamside forests also help. They keep water clear and cool for fish, shield against bank erosion and add critical habitat.

For more info, download our pesticide guide: [clackamasriver.org/education/weed-pesticide-fact-sheets](http://clackamasriver.org/education/weed-pesticide-fact-sheets)



Suzi measures the flow of Noyer Creek

# Invasive Species Prevention Tips

We're in the peak of summer - prime time to explore our great Oregon rivers, forests and lakes. Go forth and recreate! - and please [follow these tips](#) to prevent the spread of invasive species:

## Hiking/Fishing

**Wipe your boots** - Clean all of your gear in between adventures, but especially your boots and pants to ensure there are no seeds or bugs riding along for your next adventure.

**Stay on the trail** - Walk on marked paths to limit the area that invasive seeds may take root.

**Brush your pets** - Use a fine-tooth comb or brush to get all the seeds and burrs out of your furry friends' fur.

## Camping

**Shake out your tent** - Sweep your tent as you pack up to avoid spreading seeds and bugs to your next site.

**Clean your gear** - Wipe clean your tent stakes, as they can hold mud with seeds that you might inadvertently plant at your next perfect camp site.

**Buy it where you burn it** - Don't transport firewood with you as invasive insects can hitch a ride. Burn firewood within 10 miles of where you get it.

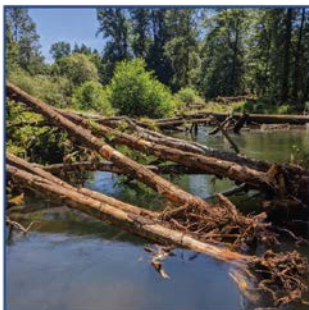
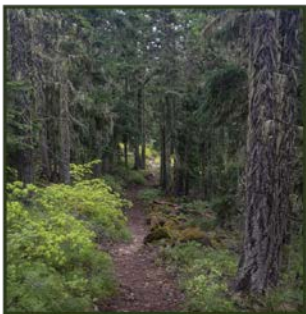
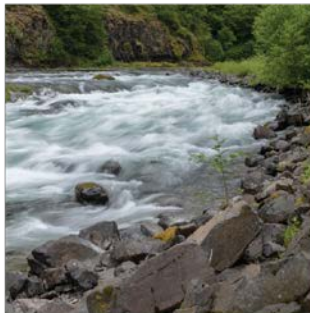
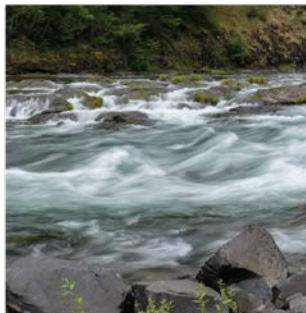
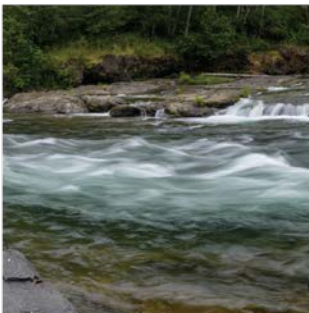
## Boating

**Stow-aways beware** - Clean your craft, paddles, and all equipment after you take it out of the water to remove all plants, animals and mud.

**Leave empty** - Drain all water from the craft and bilge pump to make sure you don't transport aquatic critters and plants to the next body of water.

**Dry Dry Dry Dry Dry** - Let all your gear dry for five days before introducing it into another waterway.

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Email [info@clackamasriver.org](mailto:info@clackamasriver.org) to be added to our [email list](#) for the latest news and upcoming events, or to sign up for a print copy of this newsletter.

Let us know what you would like for the future of your watershed!

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