



# The Clackamas CURRENT NEWS

## CLACKAMAS RIVER BASIN COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

### Replant the Riverside: 10 Trees for the Clackamas

#### Fall 2020

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- 2 - Recap: 2020 Watershed Celebration
  - Record salmon returns
  - Eagle Creek Confluence Project
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#### Upcoming Events:

December 17 @ 6pm: Replant the Riverside results and 2020 Stewardship Awards. Register on Zoom: [https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZctc-qo-qDIqGt3HC18cw-4-FqX5YoPslqAo](https://us02web.zoom.us/join/zoom.us/meeting/register/tZctc-qo-qDIqGt3HC18cw-4-FqX5YoPslqAo)

The wildfires that struck our community will forever be burned into our memories.

The smoke, red sky, and walls of flames were terrors to confront. Our hearts go out to those who are still affected by the destruction, especially those who have lost their homes and continue to be displaced.

As a watershed organization, we are not experts on fire, but the Clackamas River Basin Council has many other areas of expertise that we can offer to our community.

During the fires, we leveraged our communication networks to help get important information out to our followers. We continue to update our database of fire information resources, sharing as best we can all of the research we've done to learn how to manage post-fire landscapes.

We also have a long track record of managing environmental engineering projects. In our work to restore our watershed, we have collaborated with foresters, heavy construction crews, biologists and private landowners. As we continue to identify opportunities, we promise to do our best to help direct resources for our community's fire recovery.

One of the best things to do after a fire is to help the forest recover. Trees help prevent erosion and check the post-fire succession of invasive weeds that can get out of control. Burned forests can become shrublands more prone to fire in the future. We need our forests to provide habitat for the wildlife we all love.

And of course, our PNW rainforests define us. Many of us choose to live in the region for the expansive forests of green, the fresh air, and the solace we find when retreating into the woods.

We must acknowledge that each summer the threat will grow, and fires will force us away, fleeing the smoke to return to expanses of blackened landscapes.

But we must also unite together to fight fire with fire - the fire of our resolve to regenerate our forests.

Although fire is natural, the future fire regime we face



**WATCH on Youtube:** Members of the Clackamas River Basin Council share their experiences of the Riverside Fire and ask for your support to Replant the Riverside so our forests will recover.

story continued on Page 2 - please turn to **Replant the Riverside**

## Replant the Riverside - Continued from Page 1

will be unnaturally fierce. Weather trends will bring us more irregularities in precipitation. We will have more frequent droughts that dry out our forests and make them more exposed to fire risk. We will also have wetter Spring seasons that propel the growth of grasses and shrubs, creating more flashy fuels to burn when they've dried by August. These climatic changes encourage fires that are larger in scope and of greater intensity. The fires of our future climate - like this year's massive Riverside, Beachie Creek and Lionshead Fires - will not be regenerative for the landscape. They will be destructive. Our forests will require assistance to return.

We will have to manage our forests to reduce fire risk, manage them to adapt, and manage them to survive.

We are fortunate in Oregon to have a proud tradition of forestry. While our scientists, timber crews and caring citizens develop new solutions to protect our forests, we do know we have a clear path: we must plant more trees.

For the Clackamas River Basin Council, restoring our native forests is one of our most important areas of expertise. We have been working with landowners across the watershed to Shade Our Streams, planting trees to restore over 31 miles of riparian forests (more on that program on page 3).

Now, we are launching a new initiative to help our community recover from the wildfires. We are calling upon you to Replant the Riverside.

## CRBC Convenes first-ever Virtual Watershed Celebration

The Clackamas River Basin Council gathered with dozens of guests on November 19 via Zoom to share some much-needed good news, pulling off our first-ever virtual Watershed Celebration, hosted by Chairman of the Board Bill Monroe.

"The future is bright for the river, its habitats, and its diverse fisheries. Tonight's theme is Replant the Riverside, an invitation to help us do what we do best: giving back to the community and tempering our feeling of helplessness," he said.

**The brightest headline is the record wild salmon run reported by Portland General Electric (PGE) fish biologists.** As of November 23rd, This year's wild coho run on the Clackamas River has exceeded 7688 fish. Over 4,127 wild chinook made it upstream past the North Fork Dam this year. This marks the largest wild chinook run on the Clackamas since counting started at the North Fork dam in 1958.

PGE credits salmon habitat restoration projects for this year's record return. Restoration Program Manager Liz Gilliam explained how **CRBC implemented the Eagle Creek Confluence Project to create juvenile salmon habitat** in her presentation at the Watershed Celebration. CRBC worked with funding from PGE and the Oregon Watershed En-

In our campaign, "Replant the Riverside: 10 Trees for the Clackamas," we are asking you to do three things:

1) **Donate \$10.** That covers the costs of purchasing a seedling and treating a plantation site for 5 years so that our seedlings get established and outcompete weeds.

2) Tag 10 friends on social media to donate too. Please help us spread the word and get the call out to our community, like spreading seeds in the wind.

3) Help us plant these trees. We will gather to plant the trees when it is seasonally appropriate for planting. We hope to gather in late January, public health ordinances permitting.

Together we can help our forests heal. Please consider donating to Replant the Riverside. **Thank you.**

To donate to Replant the Riverside, scan this QR code or go to [https://www.paypal.com/donate?hosted\\_button\\_id=BLN3B3Z3LHZDE](https://www.paypal.com/donate?hosted_button_id=BLN3B3Z3LHZDE)

[paypal.com/donate?hosted\\_button\\_id=BLN3B3Z3LHZDE](https://www.paypal.com/donate?hosted_button_id=BLN3B3Z3LHZDE)

You can also send us a check: PO Box 1869, Clackamas, OR 97015

or call our office so we can take your info: 503.303.4372 x106

Donate to Replant the Riverside:



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hancement Board (OWEB) - to place over 300 logs, creating logjams that stir and oxygenate the water and provide cover for young fish.

Executive Director Cheryl McGinnis highlighted accomplishments CRBC achieved with our partners, including that the **Oregon Community Trees and the Oregon Dept. of Forestry honored our Shade Our Streams program with their 2020 Urban & Community Forestry Award.** Oregon State Parks recognized CRBC with an award for our work at Bonnie Lure State Park, where we collaborated with the Oregon Parks Rec. Dept., U.S. Forest Service and OWEB to remove invasive weeds and replant 72 acres.

Riparian Specialist Ari Sindel shared **CRBC's commitment to hiring women- and minority-owned businesses**, and Communications and Stewardship Manager Suzi Cloutier acknowledged the **class of Shade Our Streams graduates.**

Communications and Programs Coordinator Adam Spencer took guests on a **drone's-eye-view watershed tour called "Clackamas360" before officially launching the Replant the Riverside: 10 Trees for the Clackamas fundraiser.**

To watch a recording go to: [https://youtu.be/4\\_LndxmlAx4](https://youtu.be/4_LndxmlAx4)

## 164 Landowners Graduate 'Shade Our Streams' Program

CRBC honors final class of 'Shade Our Streams' landowners, successfully finishing PGE-funded project

As anyone who jumps in quickly discovers - the Clackamas is a cold river. It's so cold it may force us to jump right back out.

When we change our activity based on our temperature we are performing "behavioral thermoregulation." As warm-blooded mammals, we must jump out of the cold river to be comfortable again.

Our salmon in the Pacific Northwest, on the other hand, prefer the cold waters. For salmon, the temperature of their water is the most influential factor to determine their behavior. Seasonal changes in water temperature act as signals telling salmon it's time to migrate, for instance. Temperature even controls some bodily functions and physiological development, so salmon really need water temperatures to be within certain ranges to grow and reproduce properly.

Unfortunately, the Clackamas River is heating up. Dams and irrigation systems create large pools of water that absorb solar radiation. Riparian forests have been cut down, exposing more tributaries and side-channels to greater amounts of sunlight. The climate continues to change, bringing hotter, drier summers and reduced snowpacks to accelerate the watershed's warming.

When the water gets too warm, salmon suffer. Warmer water encourages bacteria and diseases that harm salmon. Introduced predators like smallmouth bass benefit from warmer waters, making it harder for juvenile salmon. One study found that Sacramento pikeminnow engage steelhead 50 times more frequently in warmer waters. Salmon avoid waters altogether when the temperature is above a certain threshold (for steelhead it's 73°F), meaning entire tributaries could become inhospitable to our native trout and salmonids if the Clackamas watershed continues to warm.

To combat these increasing temperatures, the Clackamas River Basin Council called upon neighbors throughout our watershed to **Shade Our Streams.** With funding from Portland General Electric, CRBC teamed up with landowners whose stream sides were undershaded and plagued with invasive weeds.

The people of the Clackamas responded with enthusiasm. Since 2011, over 160 landowners stepped up to Shade Our Streams. We worked with local contractors to eradicate invasive species and plant native trees, and as of this year we have completed 2 years of monitoring at each site, ensuring these new riparian forests have established themselves and will continue to

thrive.

Together we've planted over 30 miles of riparian forests. That means we've laid waste to 220 acres of weeds and planted 480,000 native trees and shrubs to reduce the solar radiation our streams absorb, slowing the rate the watershed heats up. As our trees continue to mature, they'll block even more heat. When these trees fall, they'll create beneficial habitat features for our fish, providing cover for young fish to hide from predators and forming riffles in the streams that oxygenate the water.

We often think of land, water and sky as separate environments, with land for us, water for fish and the sky for the birds. Trees remind us that all the elements are united; they extend from the land into the sky, they collect, store and transmit water - and, lately, trees have been all too forcefully our reminders of the fourth element, fire.

If humans are to consider ourselves "Masters of the Elements," perhaps the best thing we can do is to plant trees.

We thank and honor the people of the Clackamas who have stepped up to Shade Our Streams. Our success is growing.



**A forest that protects the waters:** Healthy riparian forests are important to help control water temperatures - an ecosystem function of rising importance to counter global warming. At its confluence with the Clackamas, Clear Creek is well-shaded with trees.

# Post-fire forest management insights

CRBC Staff attends Oregon State University Extension Service Fire Program [webinars](#) and regularly updates our [Wildfire Resources webpage](#) to provide information and funding opportunities

## Maintenance

**Erosion Control** - Flooding and landslides are of concern because burned soils absorb less water than normal. Use coir logs to divert flows.

**Protect waterways** - Construct straw wattles along waterways to contain excess sediment or hazardous materials from contaminating the watershed.

**Harvesting hazard trees** - If you plan on harvesting hazard trees, you must replant just like with healthy harvests.

## Regeneration

**Wait for federal support to receive funds** - Don't start before inspection if you anticipate financial support.

**Consider management goals** - Depending on burn severity and land-use goals, natural regeneration may be ok.

**Seeding (from ODA)** - High quality seed mixes or single grass seed species with a seed analysis tag showing no noxious weeds will help avoid bringing unwanted weeds onto your property.

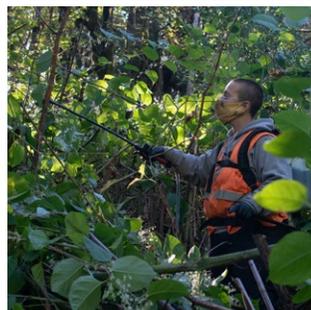
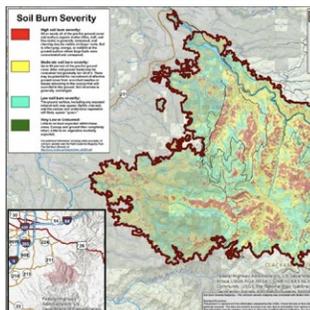
## Funding

**NRCS** - USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service announced funding through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) for those impacted by Oregon's recent wildfires. Application deadlines are Dec. 30.

**FEMA** - Oregon Wildfires And Straight-line Winds (DR-4562-OR).

**2020 Community Rebuilding Fund** - public-private partnership with Gov. Kate Brown and philanthropic orgs.

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

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