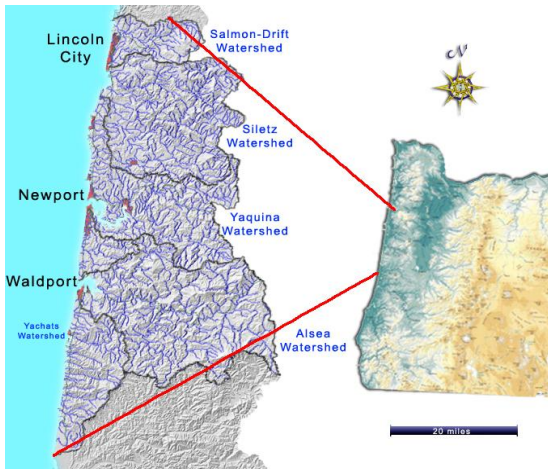


MidCoast Watersheds Council 2012 Annual Report



The MidCoast Watersheds Council (MCWC) is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to improving the health of streams and watersheds of Oregon's central coast so they produce clean water, rebuild healthy salmon populations and support a healthy ecosystem and economy.

Our projects help salmon migrate to and from their spawning grounds, improve water quality, and conserve or restore river and bay habitat. Of the \$8.8 million dollars of state, federal and private money raised over the 14 years for this work, more than \$7 million has been used to pay for local labor and contracts that have put projects "on the ground", helping our local economy and communities.

We encourage public participation in our meetings, which feature an educational presentation about timely scientific and management topics. Please come! They are at 6:30 pm, the first Thursday of the month in Newport, in Lincoln County PUD's meeting room, across from Safeway.



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Coordinator: Dr. Wayne Hoffman

Chairman's Statement

The 2011-2012 fiscal year was financially challenging to the MidCoast Watersheds Council. Support from Oregon Watershed Board was reduced due to state budget cuts. Subsequently, we spent more time in fund-raising this year. We had a great dinner tour of Yaquina Bay as one of those fundraising activities. During the boat tour we saw some of the projects we had worked on over the years, talked about partnerships with other groups, did a small tow sample to see some of the underwater life thriving in Yaquina Bay and noted the importance of estuarine and tidal marsh habitat to salmon and other juvenile fish and wildlife.

Despite these challenging economic times, we continue our work on projects that improve salmon habitat, work with local landowners, state and federal agencies, and non-governmental groups to plan projects, and employ local people as contractors for our surveys, our work planting riparian areas, replacing culverts, placing large wood in the creeks and other such endeavors. As always, I truly appreciate the opportunity to be part of the staff and volunteers that form the MidCoast Watersheds Council team.

Sam Adams

Coordinator's Statement

Fourteen years ago the MidCoast Watersheds Council committed ourselves to a strategic approach to restoration work. We used our Watersheds Assessment and some follow-on analyses to prioritize 6th field sub-basins (drainages of 5,000-15,000 acres) for stream and riparian restoration. We then employed Limiting Factors Analyses to identify the most effective restoration projects within the high-priority 6th fields. We have completed Limiting Factors Analyses (done under contract by Bio Surveys LLC) for most of the high-priority sub-basins, and have just a few years work remaining to finish implementing the restoration projects in them, working with interested landowners.

Now, we are embarked with our local partners on a process of defining a new prioritization for future work. Currently several planning efforts are working to set priorities for their work, and we are participating in those efforts. Oregon Department of Environmental Quality is working to develop water quality management tools for our area. Implementing these will involve numerous riparian planting projects, in-stream habitat projects, and sediment management projects, prioritized according to their determinations of how to best improve water quality. Simultaneously Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife is developing a Native Fish Conservation and Management Plans for coastal salmon and trout, and NOAA Fisheries is developing a recovery plan for Oregon Coastal Coho Salmon. These plans will set priorities for habitat restoration. We will look to align our work with these priorities, positioning us and our partners for lead roles in implementation of restoration projects in key areas. We anticipate more estuarine restoration work will be part of the important needs that are identified. These projects are very expensive and complicated to organize and implement. With agency focus, funding and permitting assistance may be forthcoming. We look forward to working with all our partners in making this transition in restoration priorities and directions, and anticipate that the MCWC will continue to play a productive role in improving watershed health, while contributing to the local economy of the Mid Coast region.

Wayne Hoffman

Education

In partnership with Community Services Consortium disadvantaged and at-risk youth are hired to perform "Natural Resource Crew" work for numerous resource management agencies and scientists. Youth learn job skills and also learn about the ecology and wildlife of the local environment. This year the crew continued working with Dr. John Chapman of OSU on

mud shrimp biology, learning about estuarine ecology and laboratory procedures. With ODFW they maintained the Schooner Creek fish trap, and were instructed by biologist Christine Clapp on salmon life history and management, also on stream macroinvertebrate biology. Trail work, tree planting, caging, and release, removal of invasive plants was done for multiple agency and non-governmental partners. With the Siuslaw National Forest and US Fish and Wildlife Service the

crews planted violets for the caterpillars and nectar plants such as asters, goldenrod and yarrow for Oregon Silverspot butterflies near Nestucca and Yachats. They also worked with The Wetland Conservancy on the Starr Creek Preserve. They installed, then monitored bird boxes for occupancy rates.



Restoration Projects

The Role of Beavers

The MidCoast Watersheds Council has invested over 9 million dollars in watershed restoration, education, and outreach, over its 18-year history. Our largest single category of expense has been restoration projects to improve instream habitat and stream ecosystem function. We consider this money well spent, but we also recognize that beavers, “the real ecosystem engineers” can accomplish some of this work at much reduced expense and sometimes with better results than we get. Stream surveys show that beaver ponds and dams have declined in abundance here over the past two decades and that these were valuable habitat.

We therefore have entered into an effort to encourage beaver activity in selected locations where their dams and ponds can greatly improve stream function and health, and provide good rearing habitat for Coho and other salmonids. We have just completed a project planting willows, and other preferred beaver food species in meadows along a tributary of the Yaquina River that was formerly stair-stepped with beaver ponds. Reed-canary grass had dominated the stream floodplain and prevented recolonization by plants that provide



beaver food and dam-building materials. Once tree establishment has been successful, we will remove protection from the trees and allow beavers access. “Beaver deceivers” by culverts and pond levelers will be installed where needed.

We have also worked with the residents of Five Rivers on a restoration plan that includes plantings to attract beavers where their dams and ponds would improve salmonid habitat and watershed function without unduly affecting residents’ property.

Currently we are engaged in developing grant proposals to fund implementation of these and other restoration activities in Five Rivers, in partnership with the Alsea Watershed Council.

Partner Watershed Councils

Siletz Watershed Council (SWC)

In 2012 the SWC, led by Aaron Duzik, kept busy coordinating council events, helping different agencies with research, and commenting on regulation changes that affect the Siletz River. Each year the SWC hosts their annual river cleanup to remove debris from the river and banks in order to preserve the river’s biological integrity and improve aesthetic values. The 2012 river cleanup was our most successful to date, 28 volunteers with 11 boats helped to remove about 3500 pounds of trash and 1 car chassis.



With some materials donated by Lincoln County Road Department the SWC constructed a kiosk at the top of the Morgan Park boat ramp so there is a proper place to put educational material and warnings of emergency fishing regulation changes.

SWC members met with river users and a representative from the Oregon State Marine Board (OSMB) to discuss a regulation change regarding the size of outboard motors that are being used above Morgan Park. The SWC and other river users believe the integrity of the 1987 regulation that banned the use of jet pumps upriver of Jack Morgan Park is being circumvented with new technologies that allow propeller driven boats to make it further up river. OSMB staff is now preparing a report for the marine board which may lead to a regulatory revision in 2013.

Council members escorted an Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife biologist on a Double Crested cormorant survey on the lower part of the Siletz River to investigate the loss of steelhead smolts to predation. To our relief there were not many cormorants feeding on the release of hatchery smolts and it appears the Siletz doesn’t have as big a predation problem as some other coastal rivers.

The Siletz Watershed Council meets every third Tuesday of the month at 7 PM in the Siletz Library which is located at 255 Gaither Street in the town of Siletz.

Yaquina Watershed Council

The Yaquina Basin Planning team (YBPT) Coordinator facilitates communication between Yaquina watershed residents and the Council and provides outreach and volunteer coordination for the MCWC. Along with our community partners, the team hosted an ivy pull at Newport's Forest Park behind the City Pool. Volunteers removed 2100 lbs of invasive English ivy and holly and saw a marked reduction in the amount of regrowth of invasives. The team also hosted an Oregon Silverspot Butterfly Habitat Planting day in partnership with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Forest Service and the Oregon Zoo. The event attracted fifty-two volunteers who planted 2,000 plants in a day.



The YBPT, led by Lisa Mulcahy, continues its involvement with the Upper Yaquina community where MCWC has ongoing salmon habitat restoration projects. By working with the railroad, DEQ, and community members, the group facilitated the removal of multiple large piles of creosote-covered railroad ties in the Nashville/Blodgett area. Outreach efforts included organizing and promoting a successful fundraiser at Local Ocean Seafoods, organizing a dinner cruise focused on the Yaquina estuary, and a presentation at Newport City Council. A field trip to restoration sites on Cook Creek allowed the group to view salmon spawning.

Salmon Drift Creek Watershed Council

The Salmon Drift Creek Watershed Council (SDCWC), led by Catherine Pruett, was extremely busy in 2012, completing three major restoration projects, monitoring water quality at 27 sites, establishing a native plant nursery, and lining up a number of future projects. In August, SDCWC completed the Crowley Creek Marsh Restoration Project, where artificial dikes, an undersized culvert, and invasive plants had impeded natural hydrologic and ecosystem function. That same month, SDCWC facilitated the removal of the last remaining infrastructure at the former Pixieland Amusement Park site. In September, SDCWC completed the Bear Creek Large Woody Debris Project. The project will help boost summer pool frequency, encourage floodplain interaction and trap mobile gravel resources for spawning. SDCWC is in the process of revegetating the three sites with native plants. Some of those plants came from the native plant nursery that SDCWC established at Taft High School in April 2012. Learn more about the SDCWC's work at www.salmondrift.org. Monthly general meetings are held from 6:30-8:30 p.m. on the second Tuesday of each month.



Financial Report July 1, 2011-June 30 2012		Partners		
Statement of Revenues and Expenditures As of June 30, 2012		We are grateful for the work and assistance of our partners in helping us, our watersheds and our communities		
Revenues:	Expenditures:	Alesea Stewardship Group	Portland Audubon Society	Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission
Federal Grants 25,084.00	Personal Services 87,202.05	Alesea Watershed Council	Property owners, Lincoln County	Plum Creek Timberlands
State Grants 357,095.25	Mat'l/Supplies 80,363.84	Bio Surveys LLC	Natural Resource Conservation Service	Property owners of Lincoln County
Admin Receipts 29,296.44	Admin Expenses 29,296.44	Community Services Consortium	Oregon Youth Conservation Corps	SOLVE
Donations 890.00	Office Rent 10,800.00	Dahl Disposal Service	Oregon Community Foundation	Starker Forests
Fundraising 6,218.00	Contracts 223,587.40	Englund Marine	Oregon Dept. of Environmental Quality	Thompson Sanitary Service
Line of Credit 3,500.00	Internet/phone 2,434.07	Ferris Landscaping	Oregon Dept. of Fish & Wildlife	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Interest 38.67	Travel/Conf 6,907.09	James Stannard Foundation	Oregon Parks & Recreation Dept	U.S. Forest Service, Siuslaw Ntl Forest
Other Receipts 21,776.85	Office Expenses 12,281.17	Lincoln County Public Works	Oregon State Police	Weyerhaeuser
Total \$443,899.21	Dues and Fees 430.00	Lincoln County School District	OSU Extension Service	The Wetlands Conservancy
	Insurance 1758.00	Lincoln Soil & Water Conservation District	Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board	THANK-YOU!
	Interest Expenses 16.600			
	Total \$444,023.66			