

## **May 2013 Tualatin River Watershed Council project updates**

### **Lower Gales Creek Habitat Enhancement Plan**

**Overview:** The Lower Gales Creek Habitat Enhancement Plan evaluated a four mile stream reach of Gales Creek and identified potential restoration projects, such as in-stream complexity, floodplain connection and riparian within the reach. Activities and projects are funded in part by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation.

#### **Projects and Activities:**

##### **A. Riparian and Uplands Invasive Weed Removal and Planting Project on Washington County owned property (Rippling Waters)**

**Project Description:** The Council and partners have worked on this 20 acre Washington County owned demonstration site since 2004 with community volunteers and Council partner focusing on invasive weed treatment/removal and planting native trees and shrubs. Funding for the project has included an OWEB Small Grant. The site has received recognition as a demonstration site for invasive weed removal and restoration activities by the Four County Cooperative Weed Management Area. The Cascade Environmental Corps installed native plant stakes on the floodplain on November 29, 2011. Additional work parties were held since 2011, with the April 20, 2013 SOLVE work day removing 22 bags of English ivy.

##### **B. Student Watershed Research Project – Water Quality Monitoring.**

- 1) Forest Grove High School students and the Student Watershed Research Project performed water quality parameter activities Gales Creek during October 15, 2012, and April 15, 2013. Information gathered is used for trends monitoring.

##### **C. Spawning Surveys**

- 1) Spawning survey training was held on October 20, 2012 with 10 participants. Spawning surveys have begun with Coho salmon being seen primarily in the East Fork Dairy Creek sub-basin. The 2012 Coho run passing through Willamette Falls fish ladder is approximately 6500 adult fish and 6300 jacks (immature males).

##### **D. Invasive Plant Species Survey and Treatment**

- 1) Council member Clean Water Services' contracted crews continue to treated and re-treated knotweed and garlic mustard in the Gales Creek sub-basin. Contracted crews paid for by CWS have treated both garlic mustard and Japanese knotweed in June and August. Throughout 2011-13, Pacific University students and other community volunteers picked up trash and pulled invasive English ivy. April 20, 2013 workday with SOLVE volunteers resulted in removal of 22 bags of English ivy. *During May, 2013, a contractor mowed invasive reed canary grass around native plants in restored areas.*

##### **E. Projects within the Lower Gales Creek Habitat Enhancement Plan reach**

- 1) During summer 2009, a private landowner and the Council implemented a project that removed a farm road along the stream and expanded the riparian area, placed large wood in the stream to create more pool habitat benefiting fish, created several amphibian areas, through an OWEB restoration grant funds. 2.5 acres of riparian area was planted with native plants, through Tualatin SWCD programs. The project design was funded through Bureau of Reclamation monies. The grant term finished December 31, 2010 with monitoring and maintenance ongoing and a year one update submitted in April 2012.
- 2) The Council is working with interested landowners prepared a 60% design plans for a secondary channel and bank stabilization. An OWEB grant application was submitted for the project and was not recommended for funding. Options will be reviewed to see how the work might be implemented.
- 3) Council partners met with a landowner within the stream reach to discuss a project that will include large wood placement, secondary channel and floodplain connections, invasive weed treatment and riparian planting. An OWEB grant application was submitted October 17, 2011, for the large wood and road decommissioning activities with

- a project site tour for grant funder review team members held on Nov 17, 2011. The grant funder review team's recommendation is "to fund" but the ranking of the project was 11 of 12, resulted in the project not being funded. The Council is investigating funding sources for implementing the road decommissioning portion of the project.
- 4) The Plan's oversight committee met on November 14, 2011 to discuss projects for current and future Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) funding. A larger group (including Restoration & Enhancement Committee members and the TRWC coordinator) met on March 6, 2012 to discuss and refine a scope of work on project and activity descriptions. These will be used to craft a modification document to the current TRWC scope of work to BOR and be used to begin planning on the Gales Creek Restoration Action Plan. A proposal has been selected for the first step, review of existing information and identification of critical gaps. *Other projects within the BOR scope of work grant proposal include Rapid-Bio-Assessments for Gales Creek and for upper Dairy-McKay and upper Tualatin sub-basins.*

#### **Other Gales Creek Projects and Activities**

- 1) *North Fork Gales Creek LWD placement project.* Partnering with landowners Oregon Department of Forestry and Stimson Lumber Co. and partner Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Council was awarded an OWEB restoration grant application that funded placement of 100 logs on a one mile stream reach in the North Fork Gales Creek watershed during Sept 2009. The Hillsboro High School students planted over 1050 conifers at the project site on February 25, 2010. The project has been completed with the grant report submitted November 30, 2010 and a year one report in February 2012. Project monitoring continues over the next four years, with updated report and photos being submitted to OWEB during the third and fifth years.
- 2) *Upper Gales Creek LWD placement project.* Partnering with landowners Oregon Department of Forestry and Oregon Department of Transportation and partner Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Council was awarded an OWEB restoration grant application that funded placement of large wood in a one mile stream in upper Gales Creek. Approximately 106 trees were placed in Sept 2010 in the 0.75 mile stream reach. Planting of 600 conifers was completed in March 2011. During the 2011 in-water work period, 67 whole trees/logs were placed in a 0.5 mile main stem upper Gales Creek stream reach. Planting in disturbed areas occurred during March 2012. The grant term ended June 30, 2012 and the Council submitted the grant report, final billing, and other materials. A tour of several stream sites where large wood was placed held on Sept 29, 2012 with tours to be planned during 2013. Monitored Large Wood in upper reach (above campground) and first installation on lower reach on March 31, 2013.
- 3) *Bateman Creek stream crossing designs.* The Council partnered with a private landowner and secured funding for design and implementation of a project that would remove three road crossings and replace with bridges or culverts. The Council was awarded an OWEB technical assistance grant, selected a consultant and obtained 50% design plans for review. The grant term concluded June 30, 2012 and the Council submitted the grant report, final billing, and other materials. Opportunities for funding will be investigated.
- 4) *Clear Creek LWD placement project.* Partnering with the City of Forest Grove, the Council was awarded an OWEB restoration grant for a Clear Creek restoration project located on city-owned property. The work was completed in mid-September 2012, and include placement of large wood structures in a one mile stream reach, removal of an obsolete weir from the stream channel and implement a small graded riffle to improve migratory adult fish access to a fish ladder at an intake structure. The City of Forest Grove held a tour in October that included viewing several large wood structures. Recognitions of TRWC partners were held at the February 2013 TRWC meeting.

- 5) A Dorman Pond trash pickup workday was held on Sept 29, 2012 led by a local area Eagle Scout in conjunction with SOLV.

#### **Other Projects**

- 1) **Dairy-McKay sub-basin.** The Council applied for and received Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Regional Area Committee (RAC) funding for identification, assessment and prioritization of fish passage barrier culverts located on private lands. During July 2012, selected landowners were contacted by letter and phone, with Pacific University students performing field work. *Extension of funding was approved with committee members selecting interns who will contact private landowners and conduct additional culvert information.*
- 2) **Freshwater Mussel Surveys.** The Council partnered with Xerces Society on September 8, 2011 on a Gales Creek main stem reach to sample for freshwater mussels. 5 Council members participated. A western pearl shell mussel shell was found in the reach.

#### **OWEB Small Grant program**

The OWEB Small Grant program provides funds for on the ground restoration projects, usually small in scope. The Lower Willamette West (LWW) OWEB Small Grant team reviews and recommends submitted grant applications for funding, based on watershed priorities it has established. The Lower Willamette West area is located west of the Willamette River, from Wilsonville to its confluence with the Tualatin River, west to the Tualatin Basin watershed boundaries and north to and including Sauvie Island.

The LWW team is composed of Tualatin Soil and Water Conservation District, West Multnomah Soil and Water Conservation District, Oswego Lake Watershed Council, Tryon Creek Watershed Council and Tualatin River Watershed Council. Soil and water conservation districts and watershed councils act as applicants and fiscal agents for landowners who seek funding for restoration projects. The team accepted grant applications for the fifth submittal period, September 1-15, 2012 and the last of the funds for 2011-13 biennium were committed. No funding for the LWW team is available until August/Sept 2013. *The Council is currently working with several landowners/organizations to prepare grant applications for 2013-15 future application periods. During the current biennium, a total of two grant applications were submitted by TRWC for riparian restoration located on Fanno Creek and a tributary with two Tigard HOAs were approved.*

#### **Coordinator Activities.**

*Lower Gales Creek Projects:*

D- Checked mowing of invasive reed canary grass and status of treated garlic mustard.

F –Contact with BOR regarding contracting instrument, grant application, for scope of work and worked with Council member Jan Miller on completion of various forms. Coordinated billing for Bureau of Reclamation FY 2013 funding.

*Other projects:*

1) Upper Fanno Creek technical assistance. Through a partnership with the Southwest Water Resource Center, Southwest Neighborhoods, Inc, TRWC and the Hayhurst neighbors, funding from a two year FISH grant fund is used to treat invasive plants with volunteers and neighbors planting native plants on a Pendleton Creek stream reach. Coordinating plant needs for 2012-13 plantings. Received grant submittal reimbursement; made request for 2013 planting materials. Native plantings occurred March 16, 2013 at the site; an update on the project will be given at the June TRWC meeting. *Prepared grant fiscal administration documentation.*

2) Watershed Councils located wholly or partially in Clackamas County meet quarterly with Clackamas County SWCD staff and explored coordinated opportunities to work together in the future. Working with CCSWCD, landowner and consultant on future riparian planting project in

Rock Creek (lower Tualatin Basin). The Council was awarded \$3000 for 2013. *The group met on April 9, 2013 to exchange information.*

3) West Fork Dairy Creek tributaries within Stub Stewart State Park, re: fish presence and passage barriers surveys; TRWC is providing past information gathered from fish passage barrier surveys and being a partner with OPRD, which is heading up the project. *The survey work began in March 2013 and is currently finishing up;*

4) Dairy-McKay watershed fish passage barrier surveys on private lands. Completed documentation for funding extension and met with committee members and surveyor

7) WCVA grant for *Play in the Tualatin Watershed*; discussion with WCVA staff and TRWC steering committee regarding funding for research and compilation; review potential funding sources for work. Sent description for research and writing for a possible PU student Capstone project.

8) West Fork Dairy Creek Restoration Project: *monitored sites during May 2013.*

9) Murtaugh Creek Fish Passage Project: monitoring.

*OWEB small grants:* i) Bonita Firs/Waverly Meadows: May 2013 invasive retreatment work;  
ii) Bonita Firs: Hired contractor began invasive species work in May, 2013.

*Funding Council projects and capacity.* Reviewed and researched various restoration resources and funding sources for Council and other basin projects.

*Meetings, outreach and other tasks:*

- Prepare for and facilitate May TRWC committee meetings (5/13, 5/14/; 5/15; 5/22);
- Assisted with Tualatin Basin outreach for May 7 & 9 Tualatin Basin Early Detection, Rapid Response workshops
- Participated in May 6 OWRD/TRWC conference call meeting
- Followed up on Council member recruitment;
- Meeting with Quail Hollow HOA re: OWEB small grant application (5/08);
- Participate in Network of Oregon Watershed Councils meeting (5/16);
- Attend SOLVE Green Team westside presentations (5/22)
- Participate in SWRP Summit (5/24)
- Participated in ongoing training meetings on Council website update
- Attended Molalla River Watch Bio-Surveys presentation/final report on RBA activities (5/29)
- Updated federal database registration and information
- Responded to inquiries and requests, office and fiscal management, etc.

**Upcoming Council Education & Outreach opportunities:**

June 1: National Trails Day, Stub Stewart State Park, Buxton, OR