

LWC Mission:

To engage landowners and communities in the voluntary protection, restoration and enhancement of the Luckiamute and Ash Creek watersheds.

What we are:

The Luckiamute Watershed Council is a volunteer, nongovernmental, advisory group composed of stakeholders living or working in the Luckiamute and Ash Creek watersheds.

Council meetings:

Held the second Thursday of every month at 7 p.m., Visit our website at: www.LuckiamuteLWC.org for location and details. Meetings are open to the public. Please join us!



Events:

Join us on April 11 at 9:00 am at Riverview Park for our Ash Creek Ivy Pull event. Ivy pullers of all ages are welcome! Equipment and gloves are provided, as well as water and light snacks. Details on page 3.

Luckiamute Watershed Council

www.LuckiamuteLWC.org



The Creek Next Door

By Suzanne Teller



Ash Creek, Summer 2014

You might not notice that small creek behind your local grocery store. Your eyes might see right through the sign on the bridge that lets you know which stream you are driving across. But these urban waterways are so much more than just places that have avoided being paved over.

Think back to when you were a child, and a trip out to nature was a special event to spend time with your family. Do you have a particular place in mind? Perhaps a secret hideout in your backyard where you and your siblings allowed your imaginations to run wild? Or a nearby creek where you hunted bullfrogs and chased dragonflies? Many of us have fond childhood memories of exploring a backyard creek, or catching our first trout in a local stream. These experiences not only engaged us in the outdoors, they educated us about the connections between nature and our community – an education that could not be replicated in a brick-and-mortar school.

In addition to their educational value, urban streams also have ecological value. They provide oases for many kinds of birds and wildlife that otherwise might find a typical residential landscape inhospitable. As soon you step away from the sidewalks and manicured lawns of the cityscape, you are guaranteed to encounter the calling cards of your non-human neighbors. From chewed twigs left by beaver to the sudden rattle of a startled kingfisher, there may be quite a few signs of wildlife as you move closer to the water's edge. Waterways in urban and suburban landscapes are not only sources of food, water, shelter and nesting sites—they also provide safe migratory corridors for animals as they navigate from one feeding or breeding site to another.

One urban stream that is not going unnoticed is a stretch of Ash Creek that flows through Monmouth and Independence. In 2014, the LWC was awarded a grant from the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board to restore the ecological health of Ash Creek. In partnership with the City of Independence, Monmouth Public Works, Central School District 13J and the Ash Creek Water Control District, the LWC is working with local landowners to remove invasive species that have taken over much of the riparian area, and re-plant streamside areas with native vegetation.

The Creek Next Door, continued

You may be surprised to learn that Ash Creek is home to winter steelhead trout, a federally listed threatened fish species. Ash Creek is also within the range of Essential Fish Habitat, which means that it provides the habitat conditions needed to support healthy fish populations.

Ash Creek not only provides educational and ecological value to our communities, it also serves as a picturesque refuge from day-to-day work routines. Yet despite these valuable contributions to our community, Ash Creek continues to face many challenges. Much of its riparian corridor has been removed and altered, allowing invasive plants to spread unchecked. Pollutants are entering the creek via several pathways, including down storm drains on our roads and in runoff over the ground. Garbage and debris litter both the banks and bed of the creek.

The LWC's Ash Creek Restoration Project aims to reverse some of the damage that has impacted the creek. Perhaps

you've already noticed the progress we've made during the project's first phase. Where once grew impenetrable thickets of blackberry, will soon harbor Oregon grape, swamp rose and red elderberry. Mats of ivy that were smothering streambank habitat are being replaced with thimbleberry and cascara. The landscape is slowly being revived to a state more similar to what it used to be many years ago.

This spring, why not take the opportunity to inspire your inner child and get to know your neighboring stream a little better? Delight in a streamside picnic, listen to the morning birdsong, or witness the beauty of an early evening stroll along Riverview Park's trail. And be sure to check out the LWC's Ash Creek Restoration Project page at www.LuckiamuteLWC.org/Ash-Creek-Restoration-Project, to find out more about what we are doing for Ash Creek!



Look for our Restoration Project signs along the creek!



Central High School Transitions students help clean up trash along Ash Creek



Our planting crew (D. Franco Contracting) behind Talmadge Middle School.

Save the Date!

Celebrate Earth Day with the LWC at Burgerville on April 22!

This Earth Day, you will have the opportunity to support local agriculture, a home-grown Oregon business, and your watershed all at once! On April 22, 2015, join the us at the **Monmouth Burgerville** from **5:00 to 8:00 p.m.** for some delicious and locally-sourced fare. Burgerville will donate 10% of all sales to support the work of the Luckiamute Watershed Council. Plus you will have an opportunity to participate in a raffle for fun prizes!

Hope to see you there!

Ash Creek Ivy Pull

On April 11 from 9:00 to noon, come join us at Independence's **Riverview Park** by the new campsite area to help get rid of invasive ivy and Scotch broom. We will have tools, gloves, wheelbarrows and bags available, but feel free to bring your own pruning shears or loppers as well. Ivy pullers of all ages are welcome! Light snacks and water will be provided.



Rockin' the River



Chatoe Rogue Tasting Room

Rogue Farms, 3590 Wigrich Road, Independence, OR 97351

Wednesday, June 17, 2015

5 pm to 8 pm

Beer and food by Rogue* ★ Live music by The Morgans

Auction of locally-sourced gift baskets and native garden supplies to raise money for the Luckiamute Watershed Council

Don't miss the fun!



**available for purchase*

ROGUE

Details and Directions at www.LuckiamuteLWC.org/Rockin-the-River

About the LWC

The Luckiamute Watershed Council is comprised of volunteer watershed residents who care about the health of the watershed. Current members represent interests ranging from farming and forestry to education and water resources.

The Council is recruiting new board members and seeks individuals who work, live, or play in the watershed—you are a watershed stakeholder.

We also welcome donations to support the work of the Council. All charitable donations will be used towards building the organizational resources needed to address our goals of water quality enhancement, habitat restoration and community education.

To donate, go to www.LuckiamuteLWC.org/donate or you can send a check to: **226 S. Main St. Suite L, Independence, OR 97351**

Thank you to our supporters!

Upcoming Council Meetings

Join us for Council Monthly Meetings, held the second Thursday of each month at 7 p.m. Our meetings are always open to the public and discussion topics include local watershed issues and actions. For details, please visit our web site at www.LuckiamuteLWC.org.

April 9, 2015: Henry Hill Educational Support Center, Independence

May 14, 2015: Falls City H.S. Resource Room, Falls City

June 11, 2015: Location TBD

**Your contribution may be tax-deductible. The Marys River Watershed Council will provide a letter of documentation early next year, following your donation.*

***As our fiscal sponsor, the Marys River Watershed Council maintains the right to redirect funds if the LWC does not comply with our agreement or applicable laws.*

Coordinator's Corner: Charting a Course

The only constant is change. This expression is somewhat of a cliché, but at the same time, it's something I find myself thinking quite often in the watershed council world. Ecosystems change—a river channel widens in one place and narrows in another, a tree falls into a stream and alters the movement of water and sediments, stream flows vary widely over the short and long term. People change—our staff, landowners, volunteers, board members, colleagues, and partners will flow in and out of the picture for one reason or another. Funding sources change—the state of the economy, the priorities of funders, and the generosity of donors all affect our funding prospects to get the work done.

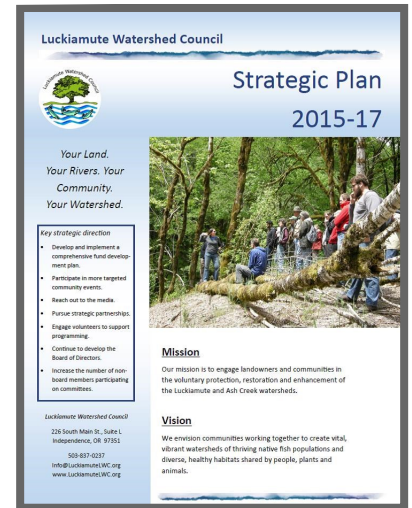
So how does a small non-profit manage in the face of so much change? We make a plan. We make a plan while recognizing that internal and external factors will be different in the coming weeks, months and years and the plan will have to be adapted and updated often.

One very important function of a watershed council board is bringing together the diverse perspectives represented by the various board members. The board members examine issues and challenges from their respective lenses and collectively choose a course of action to achieve our mission and strive towards our vision. This can sometimes be straightforward and other times be complex and challenging. A plan can help this be somewhat less challenging if you have already

collectively charted your course forward.

I am grateful that the LWC recently worked with a facilitator to complete a strategic planning process. We examined our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, and identified four primary goal areas to focus on over the next three years. These are the areas the board agreed are the most important to work on in order to strengthen our organization. I invite you to take a quick look at the summary on our web site at: www.LuckiamuteLWC.org/our-council.html.

Collectively agreeing on what our focus should be, and what strategies and activities we will employ to achieve those goals, empowers the LWC to navigate through changing times. We have a shared road map that will keep the LWC focused on its mission, vision and goals, while change continues to swirl around us.



Burgerville Fundraiser a Success!

Thank you to all who came by the Monmouth Burgerville for our January 14 Fundraiser. Thanks to you, we raised over \$200 to help us achieve our goals for the upcoming year. If you missed us, don't worry—we will be back at Burgerville for another fundraiser on April 22, from 5 to 8 p.m. Sign up to receive our email alerts at www.LuckiamuteLWC.org, or connect with us on Facebook to keep up to date with all the latest LWC events!



**Your Land. Your Rivers. Your
Community. Your Watershed.**

www.LuckiamuteLWC.org

Luckiamute Watershed Council

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