

**South Santiam Watershed Council
Meeting Minutes, 9/16/2009**

In attendance: KC Briggs, Frank Garcia, Kris Richardson, Nancy Gilmore, Roberta Swift, Eric Hartstein, Scott Marlega, Erika Lang, Hilary McAlister, Paul O'Driscoll, Eric Andersen

Council Meeting

1. **Presentation: *The Santiam Basin Fish Passage Project*, Eric Andersen, Oregon State University Graduate Student**

2. **South Santiam WSC Projects Update**

Crabtree Creek Salmon Habitat Restoration: Two separate log jams were placed this August in Crabtree Creek. The log jams were constructed with logs with rootwads attached and “pinned” in with poles buried in the stream bank, and offer excellent fish habitat as well as offering bank stabilization benefits. To complement both goals, willows will be installed before winter and at least 50 ft. of riparian area will be planted.

McDowell and Brown Creek Restoration: Restoration at McDowell and Brown Creeks continued this summer. The repair at Brown Creek involved placing additional wood and boulders in July. Grass seed was spread and irrigated through the summer for bank stabilization. Additional willows will be installed this fall, with a more diverse riparian buffer planted winter/spring through a federal incentive program (CREP). At Brown Creek, restoration of the small stream involved replacing an undersized culvert that was backing up water in high flow events.

Crabtree Creek Japanese Knotweed Control: Inventory and treatment is nearly complete for the 2009 knotweed season. At this stage, it is mostly mop-up at locations above Larwood Bridge (with some key landowners added this year!). There are still large infestations in the mid-to-lower creek system, but we've been able to access and treat previously untreated areas. The ultimate goal is “control”, as complete eradication of knotweed will be impossible. A discussion took place about knotweed treatment above the locked Weyerhaeuser gate; Scott assured the group that Weyerhaeuser had done treatment with assistance from Oregon Dept. of Agriculture.

Ames Creek Fish Passage: There's been little change to note since the early summer. At his point, we are still planning on writing a biological assessment (BA) which is a document that determines if a construction activity is likely to adversely impact a listed species (in our case salmon and steelhead). The federal agency (National Marine Fisheries Service) then reviews the BA and, if it concludes that the project may adversely affect a listed species or their habitat, it prepares a "biological opinion." The biological opinion may recommend "reasonable and

prudent alternatives" to the proposed action to avoid jeopardizing or adversely modifying habitat. These so-called "RPAs" carry great weight with other federal agencies and are often treated as binding requirements.

Landowner Recruitment Program Update, presented by Erika Lang. Erika presented an overview and budget of the program she has coordinated for the past 2+ years.

Moose Creek Steelhead Habitat Enhancement Project Update, presented by K.C. Briggs. KC updated the Council on the success of the Moose Creek log placement project and efforts undertaken this summer to build on last summers' work.

Board Meeting

1. **SSWC Fiscal Administration Discussion (Nancy and Eric):**

The discussion revolved around the progress of bringing fiscal services in-house. As Nancy G. is doing bookkeeping, Eric will call area bookkeepers to see hourly rates of comparison to avoid perceived conflicts of interest. Nancy also mentioned that both she and Eric have check signing authority and can write checks for one another. Should the SSWC have a policy that addresses this beyond current fiscal policy? It was agreed to discuss this further and have draft fiscal policy finalized at meeting with board quorum.

2. **Governor's Office Tour/Model Watershed Program Progress (Eric):** The Oregon Governor's Office is hosting a tour of the South Santiam, North Santiam, and Calapooia Watersheds on October 8th and members of the Board are invited. In the South Santiam, we will be looking at Ames Creek Restoration and McDowell Creek. In the Calapooia, the sites will include the former Brownsville Dam and in the North Santiam, the Stayton waterfront.

In other regional news, funding has been released to our Councils to begin implementing our participation in the Meyer Memorial Trust/Bonneville Environmental Foundation Model Watershed Program. The first step was sending out mailers to landowners that live along McDowell and Hamilton Creek seeking permission to assess current creek conditions and make recommendations. We have contracted with Demeter Design Group to conduct assessment work, which will hopefully occur before the fall rains begin. Permission forms are still coming back, with a better response in both numbers and permission from Hamilton Creek landowners.

The next step is hiring a landowner outreach coordinator for the regional watershed councils. This position will be through the Calapooia Watershed Council, but similar to Erika, will work across the three watersheds. Application materials from applicants were impressive and we are looking to interview 6 candidates next week at Cascade Timber Consulting in Sweet Home.

As discussed last spring, the SSWC will be responsible for oversight of a regional monitoring coordinator which we'll be looking to get on board in the spring of 2010.

Other developments include some assistance in developing outreach materials (particularly a brochure) and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) training. The program already helped develop a grant to the principle GIS software developer, which resulted in the SSWC receiving over \$3,000 in software and books for \$500.

3. **Network of Oregon Watershed Councils Gathering (Eric):** The Network of Oregon Watershed Councils will be holding their biannual gathering at Klamath Falls October 27-30. If any Board members are interested in attending, please contact Eric!
4. **Discussion of potential SSWC projects and STEWARDS Project (KC):** KC brought up the Canyon and Owl Creek LWD placement project as a possible SSWC/USFS project with an OWEB grant submittal in October depending on completion of design work. The price of helicopters for LWD placement may go up. Regarding STEWARDS, KC explained that the program will be coordinated by Krista Lopez of the USFS this school year with funding through the Oregon Community Foundation and USFS. The program will work with Sweet Home students (including those in Crawfordsville/Holley) as well as try to work in the Santiam Canyon School District.
5. **Other:** Roberta asked if SSWC could think about if there was a minimum log size for LWD that is swept from reservoirs for projects. KC mentioned that USFS is trying to find location for decking LWD. Possible speakers were discussed including Greg Taylor giving an update on the Willamette Biological Opinion and Darren Cross giving aquatic invasive species presentation.