

Behind the Scenes

December 2021



Dear Friend,

In a few weeks time, we will be officially saying goodbye to 2021, and welcoming in a brand new year. Unlike the turn of the calendar pages last year at this time, 2022 comes with more certainty that we'll be able to spend good quality time in-person together with family and friends. In addition to keeping you updated about our on-the-ground restoration work, the LWC looks forward to continuing to provide a robust and engaging Love Your Watershed program, including plenty of opportunities to share the beauty of our watershed together.

We are already getting excited for a full slate of 2022 events, which will include our spring and fall bird walks, more volunteer events, a butterfly and moth nature walk, Traditional Ecological Knowledge-focused landowner tours, and (hopefully) a return to in-person Sips 'n' Science pub talks in the Fall! We are also thrilled to announce that our **20th Anniversary Celebration has been rescheduled for May 14** at Emerson Vineyards, so be on the lookout for an RSVP and invitation, coming to your mailbox (or inbox) soon!

Thank you once again, Friend, for your role in what we've been able to achieve this past year... and what we will accomplish in the next. May you and your loved ones have a safe and joyful holiday season!

--Suzanne Teller, LWC Outreach Coordinator (Outreach@LuckiamuteLWC.org or leave a voicemail at 503-837-0237)



Love Your Watershed: Upcoming virtual Sips 'n' Science



Logging the Luckiamute: Ramifications of Splash Dams and Log Drives

Date: Tuesday, January 11, 2022
Time: 6:30 - 8:00 p.m.
Place: via Zoom (registration required)

The Luckiamute Watershed Council is honored to welcome Stephen Dow Beckham as the speaker for our first Sips 'n' Science event of 2022 with a look at the fascinating history and impacts of logging practices in our region. This presentation examines the use of the Luckiamute River for transportation of forest products between 1853 and 1936. It places the challenges of log transport in the context of changing technologies, particularly the use of river drives and artificial freshets created by splash dams. The illustrated presentation identifies the types of splash dams, their environmental impacts, and the creative responses of lumbermen in the Mid-Willamette Valley to "getting out the cut" of the region's Old Growth forests. **Details at <https://www.luckiamutelwc.org/sips-n-science-splash-damming.html>**

Speaker Bio: Stephen Dow Beckham is the Pamplin Professor of History, Emeritus, Lewis & Clark College. Educated at the University of Oregon and UCLA, Professor Beckham taught college students for 42 years. His courses included "Wilderness and the American West" (environmental history), "U.S. History Survey," "History and Culture of the American Indian," "History of the Pacific Northwest," and "Historical Materials" (research methods seminar).

Beckham has served as an expert witness in eleven court cases involving public floatage rights (navigation servitude) in Oregon rivers, lakes, and estuaries, and thirty cases related to Indian treaties, reservation boundaries, fee-to-trust land conversions, tribal status, and tax issues. He is the author of numerous books, articles, and technical reports and is the former "Oregon Professor of the Year." He is the recipient of the Asher Distinguished Teaching Award, American Historical Association. He is on the board of the Theodore Roosevelt Presidential Library and is Chair of the Oregon Committee on Historic Preservation.

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

Watershed Notes

Welcome, Amanda!



We are excited to welcome a new staff member to our team! Amanda Brackett started last week in her new role as LWC's Monitoring Coordinator. Amanda moved to the west coast from Maine back in 2016, and over the past few years has worked for several ecology research organizations in California, Oregon and Washington. Her education and work experience gives her a strong background in forest ecology, extensive skills in data collection and analysis, and a passion for working in the field. In 2019, Amanda started pursuing an MS degree at Oregon State University, studying forest microclimatology and plant physiology through the lens of adaptive forest management. She'll be wrapping up her coursework in early 2022, and looks forward to applying her knowledge and skills to our monitoring program — and, of course, taking advantage of all the terrific hiking, rock-climbing, tree-climbing and biking opportunities the watershed has to offer!

Coho Return to Pedee Creek!



There have been several stories in local media outlets celebrating the record-setting number of coho salmon returning to our rivers this winter. Monitoring stations at Willamette Falls, Lower Granite Dam on the Snake River and the North Fork Dam on the Upper Clackamas River have all reported the highest return of coho since their fish counting programs first started. This great news sounded even sweeter last month, when Assistant Project Manager Aubrey Cloud caught a glimpse of a few of these sojourners in North and South Fork Pedee Creeks. Here is his account:

"The initial sighting was when I was standing on the Pedee Creek Rd bridge as it crosses over N Fork - I was able to just look out and see them. Initial sighting was at 11:30. I checked back in after retrievals wrapped and at 3:45 they were still there!

While technically N Fork, it's so close to S Fork that I went and checked a few spots after that, just to see if I could get lucky. I checked the replaced bridge and one of the log structures, but no dice - the flows at those spots seemed not quite deep enough for the size of these monster fish! I was about to drive off and call it a day, when I thought to check the bridge over S Fork Pedee right before the fork confluence. I didn't see any live salmon, but I did find a carcass!



Along with Pacific lamprey, steelhead and cutthroat trout, coho salmon are an incredibly important part of our ecosystem and economy, and an essential cultural resource for local Tribes. An important goal of all LWC projects is to create and restore healthy habitat for native fish and other aquatic life — all of which are a fundamental part of the overall health and well-being of our streams, lands and communities. To all returning coho: we welcome and honor your arrival, and wish your offspring even greater success in the coming years! [View video and more images of the Pedee coho sightings on our website!](#)

'Tis the (Planting) Season!



On the heels of celebrating the our one millionth planting just last year, we are now getting ready to put in about 260,000 trees and shrubs in 2022! More than half of them — 158,000 to be exact — will be placed within the Luckiamute State Natural Area (LSNA) Phase 5 project area, to fill in a 60-acre field that Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) had previously leased as farmland. As these trees and shrubs grow, we will continue to treat the area for invasive weeds and inter-plant with more native vegetation as needed. These newly planted sixty acres will join the swath of cottonwood-maple-ash bottomland forest that sinews along this stretch of the Luckiamute River and makes up the largest intact remnant of this type of forest in the Willamette Valley.

The remaining plants will go to several other project areas around the watershed, including the "Expand the Benefit" revegetation site along the Little Luckiamute River; within the J2E project area along Vincent Creek; and within the Upper Luckiamute Restoration Project.

The planting of more than a quarter-million native trees and shrubs in the coming months is only possible because of the contributions and hard work of so many individuals, organizations, agencies and businesses — including our partners, funders, planting crews, nurseries, and YOU, our Friends of the LWC! *Thank you to all of you for your ongoing support!*