

# Behind the Scenes “Lite”

January 2023



Dear Friend,

Post-holidays, many of us feel the desire to lower our activity levels a notch or two, and take the time to settle into a comfortable chair with a good book or pick up a crafting project that had lain neglected since last winter. But for the LWC Project Managers and the restoration planting crews, January is one of the busiest times of the year since it is when most of the trees and shrubs get planted within our project areas. In fact, wintertime tends to be the best time of year to plant native trees and shrubs at home too, which is why so many plant sales are happening in the next couple of months (see the native plant sale chart and planting tips in the attached winter issue of Meanderings!)

The start of 2023 also heralds a new theme for our Love Your Watershed outreach and education program. For this year through the end of 2024, many of our events will focus on the roles that beavers play in watershed health and function, and the history of human interaction with these unique rodents. Throughout 2023, we will be highlighting the benefits that beaver bring to the basin, and in 2024, we will be introducing and showing examples of techniques we can use to coexist with them. Beaver behavior, like that of many of our wildlife neighbors, can cause problems too - particularly when it impacts our infrastructure and livelihoods. And yet, when we find ways to minimize the negative impacts and at the same time encourage the incredible array of positive impacts beaver can have on our rivers and lands, we can create an opportunity for a win-win-win scenario. In short, what's good for beavers can be good for humans and for watershed health as a whole! Stay tuned for more on beavers and the benefits they bring in the months to come.

Happy New Year!

--Suzanne Teller, LWC Outreach Coordinator

## Recordings Now Available!

Did you miss some of great presentations that happened last month? No problem — we have links to both recordings below! For more recorded presentations and workshops, check out our YouTube channel at [YouTube.com/@LuckiamuteWatershedCouncil](https://www.youtube.com/@LuckiamuteWatershedCouncil).



Hutton's Vireo. Photo by Mark Lundgren.

### What are birds telling us about habitat use and survival at Luckiamute?

by Dr. Josée Rousseau, Research Ecologist, presented for the Salem Audubon Society on December 13, 2022.

From a rare Red-eyed Vireo to the abundant Swainson's Thrush, a wide range of breeding, migrating, and wintering birds are using the Luckiamute Landing State Natural Area. These birds respond to changing local habitat conditions and the landscape attributes of the Willamette Valley. By capturing and tagging these birds, we are able to assess site fidelity, survival, reproductive success, and many other indices that can be used to learn about the health of these bird populations and ultimately guide conservation. For this talk, Josée shares stories, supported by science, about aspects of the full-life cycle of these birds. Watch a recording on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-rOyHsNp1cM>



### Living With Fire in the Luckiamute: Wildfire History and Futures

by Aaron Groth, Regional Fire Specialist, presented as an LWC Sips 'n' Science pub talk on December 14, 2022.

In this Sips 'n' Science presentation, Aaron Groth covers wildfire history in the Luckiamute, and steps you can take to protect your community, family, home, and property. Additionally, fire's role in the restoration of ecosystems across the Luckiamute basin is considered. Watch the recording on our YouTube channel at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pW-Dhk9yZOI>

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

Winter  
2023

# LWC Meanderings

Watershed News & Reflections



## LWC MISSION:

To engage and assist 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 501(c)3 non-profit comprised of stakeholders who live, work or recreate within the Luckiamute and Ash Creek watersheds.

## WHO WE ARE:

Karin Stutzman, *President*  
Monmouth

George Grosch, *Treasurer/Secretary*  
Kings Valley/Hoskins

Britton Castor  
Pedee

Dave Ehlers  
Kings Valley/Hoskins

Nick Hazelton  
Kings Valley/Hoskins

Jackson Stalley  
Dallas

Jay Tappen  
Kings Valley/Hoskins

Scott Youngblood  
American Bottom/Buena Vista

## COUNCIL MEETINGS:

Typically held the second Thursday of every month from 6 — 8 pm.

Details and links will be posted at:  
[www.LuckiamuteLWC.org](http://www.LuckiamuteLWC.org)

The Luckiamute and Ash Creek watersheds are part of the ancestral lands of the Kalapuya Indians, who are represented today by the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde and the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians.

## *Well I'll be Dammed: Beavers Bring Benefits to the Basin!*

By Suzanne Teller, Outreach Coordinator



Beaver dams create wetland habitat rich in biodiversity. Photo credit: Emily Fairfax

The year 2023 starts a new biannual theme for our *Love Your Watershed* education and outreach program — Beavers in the Basin! Why are we choosing to highlight this buck-toothed rodent for the next two years? The answer may surprise you!

The North American Beaver (*Castor canadensis*) is one of the few species that deliberately and profoundly alters its environment for its own benefit. Beavers often construct dams in order to slow the flow of water and create an open water habitat. These pools provide a safe place for beavers to build their home lodges and access their favorite food – the inner bark layer of certain species of trees, including willow, alder and cottonwood.

The ponds and wetlands that are created behind beaver dams do more than provide beaver with a safe place to live, they provide a vast array of benefits to the surrounding landscape and their resident plant and wildlife communities. Some of these benefits we've known for a long time, while others are only just beginning to be fully documented. Below are just a few of the many benefits of beavers and their dams:

- 1) Beaver ponds create new high-quality habitat for fish and other aquatic life, as well as countless species of birds, reptiles, amphibians, mammals, insects and plantlife which depend upon a reliable source of water.
- 2) The slower-moving waters behind a beaver dam allows sediment to build up at the bottom of the pond, improving water quality. When the beavers eventually move on and the dam breaks down, the water recedes, leaving a lot of nutrient-rich soil behind.
- 3) Beavers build canals into the neighboring woodlands that radiate out from their home pond. Along with their ponds, these canals allow water and nutrients to flow over the landscape, which creates off-channel habitat for fish and increases water storage, recharging aquifers and raising water tables.
- 4) Beaver dams and their ponds can filter toxins and pollutants from the water.
- 5) Beaver ponds and wetlands provide refuge for wildlife during wildfire, and help increase the resilience of the surrounding land to wildfire damage.

During the next two years, the LWC is looking forward to highlighting the history of beaver in the watershed; dispelling some myths; sharing details about the many positive effects that this industrious rodent can have on the health of our rivers and lands; and offering strategies to help reduce beaver-related impacts and increase coexistence opportunities. In the meantime, you can learn about how beavers create ponds and wildlife-rich wetlands by visiting the High Desert Museum's interactive beaver stream website at <https://highdesertmuseum.org/beaver-interactive/>.

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

## Welcome to our newest staff member!



Ross joined the LWC as Restoration Projects Manager on December 8, 2022 and while new to the work in the Luckiamute, he is an Oregon native and has lived most of his life here. Ross was raised in a family of loggers and grew up hunting and fishing and enjoying the outdoors as often as possible. When Ross became aware of fluvial geomorphology as a field of study in college it was a watershed moment for him, and it became the primary focus of his time at the University of Oregon and for his MS from the University of Idaho. Ross has worked on water rights issues in eastern Washington, water quality in the Redwood forests of Northern California, and was on the state-wide wildfire cleanup project from beginning to end. Ross enjoys playing basketball, backpacking, and multiple sci-fi mediums while he navigates the treasures and treacheries of parenting a high schooler. You can contact Ross to welcome him to the LWC team at [restoration@luckiamutelwc.org](mailto:restoration@luckiamutelwc.org).

## Jean-Paul's Winter Planting Tips

by Jean-Paul Zagarola, Bonneville Environmental Foundation Senior Project Manager



Now that winter is here, we are at the best time of year to plant native trees and shrubs. For those of you ready to put some plants in the ground, here are a few quick planting tips to get your new trees and shrubs off to a great start. George Kral, botanist and owner of Scholls Valley Nursery, recommends planting roots deep on most plants, particularly shrubs and plants that grow from cuttings, an inch or more above the collar. This will help spur additional root growth and better prepare plants for the drought season.

In general, we tend to avoid planting conifers this way, but he recommends doing this with cedars especially as they will tend to grow extra roots. OSU Extension also gives the okay on planting above the nursery soil line as long as you're not planting any twigs or needles (see link posted below). Finally, make sure the hole where they are planted is sufficiently large to avoid j-rooting, a common problem with conifers. Dig the hole a few inches below where the roots will end up to provide a buffer of soft soil where healthy roots can grow. Happy Planting! *Plant Conifer Trees Correctly* (OSU Extension): <https://extension.oregonstate.edu/news/plant-conifer-trees-correctly>

## Soil and Water Conservation District Native Plant Sales Happening Now!

Your local Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs) are a great source for native plants all year round, but winter happens to be the *best season* for native plantings! Learn more about local District plant sales by clicking on the links in the chart below.

Key Dates	Benton SWCD <a href="http://www.bentonswcd.org">www.bentonswcd.org</a>	Marion SWCD <a href="http://www.marionswcd.net">www.marionswcd.net</a>	Polk SWCD <a href="http://www.polkswcd.com">www.polkswcd.com</a>	Yamhill SWCD <a href="http://www.yamhillswcd.org">www.yamhillswcd.org</a>
Pre-order Deadline	<i>Last day to order is February 1!</i>	Online ordering open January 1 through February 5!	<i>Order now for the best selection!</i>	Ordering starts on January 3!
Order Pick-up Day	February 25 <i>order pick-up only</i> Benton County Fairgrounds 110 SW 53 <sup>rd</sup> St., Corvallis	March 3: 9am—3pm March 4: 9am—2pm Bauman's Farm, Gervais	Feb. 3: 9am—4pm Feb 4: 9am—12:30pm 560 Oak Grove Rd. Salem	March 3: 9am—6pm March 4: 9am—2pm Yamhill Valley Heritage Center
In-Person Native Plant Sale (Overstock Sale)	N/A Order online or call (541) 753-7208 x204	March 3: 9am—3pm March 4: 9am—2pm Bauman's Farm, Gervais	Feb. 3: 9am—4pm Feb 4: 9am—12:30pm 560 Oak Grove Rd. Salem	March 3: 9am—6pm March 4: 9am—2pm Yamhill Valley Heritage Center
For More Information	Teresa Matteson (541) 753-7208 x204	Heath Keirstead (503) 949 - 4709	Morgan Neil (503) 623-9680	YSWCD Main Office (503) 472-6403
Link to Native Plant Sale Information	<a href="http://bentonswcd.org/shop">bentonswcd.org/shop</a>	<a href="http://marionswcd.net/shop/">marionswcd.net/shop/</a>	<a href="http://polkswcd.com/plant-sale.html">polkswcd.com/plant-sale.html</a>	<a href="http://yamhillswcd.org/nps">yamhillswcd.org/nps</a>



# Love Your Watershed

## Upcoming Sips 'n' Science Pub Talk

### Pleistocene Paleoecology of the Mid-Willamette: A Ghost Story

Wednesday, January 25 @ 7:00 - 8:30pm

You won't want to miss this fun and interactive in-person Sips 'n' Science at [West Valley Taphouse](#) in Dallas! LWC Project Manager Aubrey Cloud will transport us back in time to discover the lost world beneath our own feet. Join us for a tour of a land both familiar and surprisingly wild. Hear about exciting fossil discoveries in our watershed and its neighbors. Learn about local Pleistocene paleoecology; the mammoth-sized hole it has left in our modern world, and the lessons it holds for our future. You are invited to reimagine how you think of the land; to engage with it on its own time scale instead of our own.

*Space is limited!* RSVP at <https://www.luckiamutelwc.org/paleoecology.html>

## Partner Events in the Watershed

what does a positive, sustainable future look like?

### IMAGINE OUR FUTURE

a community art & writing project for all ages



learn more at <http://bit.ly/imagine-our-future>

#### Call for Entries - Artists and Writers!

Submissions: January 1 - February 15

Online Gallery: April 22 Earth Day

### Join the FRIENDS OF THE LWC!

What does it mean to be a **FRIEND OF THE LWC?**

- Monthly "Behind the Scenes" Bulletins
- Early access to event registration
- Discounts on workshops and our online store
- *Knowing that you are helping improve the health of your watershed!*

**Ready to Join?**

Find out how at

[www.LuckiamuteLWC.org/Friends!](http://www.LuckiamuteLWC.org/Friends!)

We 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.

\*Your contribution may be tax-deductible. The LWC will provide a letter of documentation early the following year.

## LIFEWAYS OF THE KALAPUYA PEOPLE

In this family-friendly workshop presented and designed by local tribal member Stephanie Craig, participants will learn how to work with tule and make a traditional duck decoy.

Come and learn about the traditional lifeways of the Kalapuya People, including Traditional Ecological Knowledge, plants, family belongings, and more!

JAN. 21, 2023 | 2PM | HERITAGE MUSEUM



**\$10 per participant**

Registration required.

[www.orheritage.org](http://www.orheritage.org)



On January 21, the Independence Heritage Museum has a fantastic hands-on opportunity for you to learn about the traditional lifeways of the Kalapuya people, including traditional ecological knowledge, plants, family belongings, and more!

RSVP at [www.orheritage.org/events-1/lifeways-of-the-kalapuya-people](http://www.orheritage.org/events-1/lifeways-of-the-kalapuya-people)

### Upcoming Council Meetings

Join us for our LWC Monthly Meetings, typically held the second Thursday of each month. Our meetings are always open to the public and discussion topics include local watershed issues and actions. Details, driving directions, and/or Zoom links are posted at [www.LuckiamuteLWC.org](http://www.LuckiamuteLWC.org).

January 12 @ 6:00 - 8:00pm (via Zoom)

February 9 @ 6:00 - 8:00pm (via Zoom)

March 9 @ 6:00 - 8:00pm (TBD)

To donate to the LWC, go to [www.LuckiamuteLWC.org/donate](http://www.LuckiamuteLWC.org/donate) or you can send a check to:

165 D Street, Independence, OR 97351

**Thank you to our supporters!**

# THANK YOU TO OUR MOST RECENT DONORS AND VOLUNTEERS!

We are so grateful to the following donors and volunteers who have contributed their hard-earned dollars and their time and energy to our conservation goals from October 1 to December 31, 2022. Your support of the Luckiamute Watershed Council makes a BIG difference, and helps us achieve our goal of a *healthy watershed for all*. **THANK YOU!**

## Special Recognition to the LWC's Bedrock Society

*A special note of thanks goes to our donors who are opting to make automatic monthly contributions to the Luckiamute Watershed Council! Like the bedrock that underlies every stream of our watershed, recurring donations provides a foundational layer of support for our organization with a steady stream of income that we can count on every month to advance our mission. Find out how you can set up a recurring monthly donation and become a part of our Bedrock Society at <https://www.luckiamutelwc.org/donate.html>*

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*Anonymous Donor*  
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**THANK YOU,  
Amazon Smile and  
Fred Meyer Community  
Rewards participants!**

Your purchases earned us **\$40.57** for the third quarter of 2022!

You can participate in the Amazon Smile program by shopping at <https://smile.amazon.com> (same log-in as regular Amazon account) and choosing the **Luckiamute Watershed Council** as your designated charity!

For Fred Meyer, sign into your account at [www.FredMeyer.com](http://www.FredMeyer.com), and link your Community Rewards card using our nonprofit number: **Q1717**

## October 1 - December 31 Donors

## October 1 - December 31 Volunteers

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*In Memory of John Potter*  
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## Luckiamute Watershed Council Staff



**Executive Director: Kristen Larson**  
**Operations Coordinator: Maya Cook**  
**Outreach Coordinator: Suzanne Teller**  
**Monitoring Coordinator: Amanda Brackett**  
**Project Manager: Aubrey Cloud**  
**Restoration Projects Manager: Ross Hiatt**

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