

Summer 2016



## Luckiamute Watershed Council

www.LuckiamuteLWC.org

### Getting Ready (Again) For a Hot, Dry Summer

#### 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 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](http://www.LuckiamuteLWC.org) for location and details. Meetings are open to the public. Please join us!

Welcome to our newest staff members! Meet Hannah Buleza and Terri Croft on page 3.

#### Events:

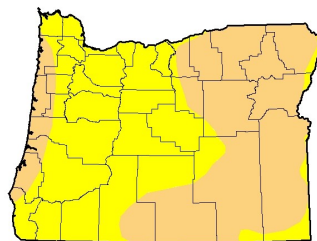
Join us on July 19 at Burgerville in Monmouth from 5 to 8pm, for a Burgerville Partnership night! Visit the [LWC website](#) for details.



Our Community Science series will be starting up soon! Read about our upcoming workshops on page 3.

#### U.S. Drought Monitor Oregon

July 12, 2016  
(Released Thursday, Jul. 14, 2016)  
Valid 8 a.m. EDT



	Drought Conditions (Percent Area)					
	None	D0	D1	D2	D3	D4
Current	0.00	100.00	49.75	0.00	0.00	0.00
Last Week (prior)	0.00	100.00	49.75	0.00	0.00	0.00
3 Months Ago (prior)	45.95	54.05	29.87	1.00	0.00	0.00
Start of Calendar Year (prior)	14.52	85.48	80.45	65.33	39.55	0.00
Start of Water Year (prior)	0.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	87.29	0.00
One Year Ago (prior)	0.00	100.00	100.00	83.71	34.09	0.00

**Intensity:**  
 D0 Abnormally Dry      D3 Extreme Drought  
 D1 Moderate Drought      D4 Exceptional Drought  
 D2 Severe Drought

The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. See accompanying text summary for forecast statements.

**Author:**  
 David Miskus  
 NOAA/NWS/MCE/PCPC



<http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/>

The most current [U.S. Drought Monitor report](#) shows 100 percent of Oregon is already experiencing "Abnormally Dry" (yellow) conditions or "Moderate Drought" (tan).

Here in the Willamette Valley, it might be easy to take water for granted. The stereotype of this area, after all, is that we are one of the wettest places in the country! However, 70—80% of our rainfall occurs between the months of October and March. And less than 5% of our rains come during the months of July and August, when demand is often the highest. So despite our reputation for being so wet, we are certainly no stranger to water scarcity during the summer months. But even so, many of us in the Willamette have felt insulated from the severe droughts that have affected communities elsewhere in the country. Until last year, that is.

The extraordinarily hot and dry weather we experienced last year resulted in many Oregon counties facing 'drought' designation for the first time in over 20 years. In fact, we are now

living in a time of more uncertainty when it comes to the availability of water. While July temperatures have been near or even below average, NOAA's Climate Prediction Center is forecasting above normal temperatures to resume and continue through September. The Drought Monitor reports that all of Oregon is in the D0 (abnormally dry) category, with 50% of the state also listed in the D1 (moderate drought) category. And according to the latest report from the Oregon Water Resources Department, average streamflows for the state are at 44% of normal. Despite receiving near average amounts of precipitation for the year so far, this was not enough to offset the early loss of snowpack this spring. What does this mean for residents of our watershed?

In Oregon, water is publicly owned. However, cities, businesses, factories, farmers and some other users must obtain water rights permits from the Water Resources Department in order to use groundwater or stream water. When water gets scarce, there may be water shut-offs — which affect irrigation but

## *Getting Ready (Again) For a Hot, Dry Summer (continued from page 1)*

not household use. The older (or more 'senior') water rights permits are the last to be shut off during a water shortage, while the most recently granted (or 'junior') permits may be faced with restrictions earlier. Before being faced with a shut-off however, there is always a call to voluntarily restrict water use in order to help protect the water supply.

With the mercury topping out at 100 degrees for several days last month, we already had our first taste of summer. For some of us, we felt a bit of déjà vu — the memory of the long, hot summer of 2015 is still strong. OWRD Watermaster Joel Plahn, who oversees Marion, Polk, Yamhill and Benton Counties, says that the entire region has entered "uncharted territory" when it comes to dealing with low stream flows and record high temperatures for the past couple of years. Though significant rainfall earlier this month resulted in Luckiamute flows peaking at 125 cfs on July 11, stream flows are already dropping back down to below average. Without a precedent to look back to, Joel says it is hard to predict what the situation will look like in the coming months. What is certain, however, is that the entire basin can no longer take for granted that we are immune from the water shortages that have plagued communities elsewhere in the West.

But while there is not much we can do to lower the temperatures or alter the flow of the rivers, there are some options for reducing the amount of water you use on your property. Finding ways to conserve water is beneficial for both your community and the environment, and it can also result in economic benefits as well. For ideas and resources

### *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. To donate, go to [www.LuckiamuteLWC.org/donate](http://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!\*

for reducing water use, you can visit the Oregon Water Resources Department website at [www.oregon.gov/owrd](http://www.oregon.gov/owrd) and scroll down to "Agency Resources."

For large-scale irrigators, The ORWD is now offering those who improve their irrigation systems the opportunity to secure new water rights. The Allocation of Conserved Water Program (ACW) is offering irrigators several cost-share options as well, to help alleviate the funding challenges many face when investing in irrigation improvements. In addition to providing benefits to water rights holders who voluntarily conserve water, the ACW also protects streamflows and helps conserve a precious resource for future generations.

If you are utilizing 'big gun' sprinklers or flood irrigation and thinking about investing in more efficient delivery systems, the ACW program is worth considering. If you want to know more, call the ACW program manager at the ORWD Office, Teri Hranac at 503-986-0881. You can also find additional information at [http://www.oregon.gov/owrd/pages/mgmt\\_conserve\\_d\\_water.aspx](http://www.oregon.gov/owrd/pages/mgmt_conserve_d_water.aspx).



### *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](http://www.LuckiamuteLWC.org).

**August 11, 2016:** Volunteer Hall, Monmouth

**September 8, 2016:** TBD

**October 13, 2016:** 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.*

### Be a Part of Your Watershed Council!

The LWC is currently recruiting new board members! We are seeking representatives from across the watershed to be the driving force of the Council and guide the direction of our work.

Tel: 503-837-0237

Find out more at [www.LuckiamuteLWC.org/become-a-member.html](http://www.LuckiamuteLWC.org/become-a-member.html)

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

### We Need You!

The Council seeks individuals to represent the following interests from our watersheds:

- Small Farms & Forests
- Commerce and Industry
- Education
- Tribes
- Timber
- Local, State or Federal Agencies
- At Large



### Welcome to our Newest Staff Members!



Hannah Buleza is a Senior Fisheries and Wildlife student at Oregon State University. She is specializing in stream restoration and fish conservation and hopes to be graduating with her Bachelors in June 2017. She has volunteered with other watershed councils in the area such as Rickreall and Greater Yamhill by doing stream surveys and some outreach at community events. She also has worked with ODFW on various occasions doing carcass tosses on the Santiam and Helping capture turtles for Weyerhaeuser so they could dig deeper fire ponds. She enjoys being in the outdoors and loves fishing, hiking, hunting, camping and gardening.



Terri Croft has many years of office administration experience -- several of those working for nonprofits in Alaska. Most recently she worked with the Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska as a program assistant in the HR and Care Coordination departments. Terri and her husband Lee moved to Oregon to manage his parents' vineyard and they now live on the Willamette River. The family vineyards are located within the Luckiamute River watershed. Their family has been rafting Alaska's remote rivers for over 25 years, and her youngest son, now 23, is currently a whitewater river raft guide on the Deschutes River in Bend, Oregon. They have already rafted some of Oregon's rivers and look forward to exploring many more as they come to know their new state.



**The LWC Community Science Series will be starting up again in the Fall! We have an exciting line-up prepared this season, including a 2-part workshop that will help you explore options for your land as it passes to future generations. Plus, last year's native plant propagation workshop was so popular, we are bringing it back—and this time the focus will be on herbaceous plants.**

**Be sure to get your name on our mailing list to get event updates sent right to your inbox!**

## Field Journal: Process-Based Restoration in the Luckiamute



Because it provides many benefits to fish, "large wood" placement is an important part of many of our stream restoration projects.

In early May, I attended the first day of a two-day watershed restoration workshop at Oregon State University thanks to grant funding provided through the LWC. Day one of the workshop focused on watershed restoration project prioritization and was led by professors Dr. Guillermo Giannico and Dr. Jon Souder. We explored a range of topics that engaged us to think critically about how to develop a restoration prioritization scheme appropriate for our watershed, or region, and organization. One of the major themes of the day was the concept of **process-based restoration**.

Process-based restoration is not a new idea. It is a strategy that most successful ecosystem restoration-based organizations organize their projects around. However, it can be overlooked if not taken as a core principle when developing projects. And without incorporating its principles, restoration projects can become opportunistic and can end up failing the test of time. So what exactly is process-based restoration? Beechie et al. published a foundational paper in 2010 that discusses the concept in detail. They state, "Process-based restoration aims to reestablish normative rates and magnitudes of physical, chemical, and biological processes that sustain river and floodplain ecosystems." Simply put, process-based restoration aims to **restore the structure and function of ecosystems that make them resilient – or able to "bounce back" from**

**minor disturbances without too much damage.**

Let's look at an LWC project example. The Luckiamute Watershed Council is about to start on a project in Price Creek whereby two culverts acting as fish barriers will be replaced with much larger passable culverts, and over 150 large conifer logs/trees will be placed along 2.4 miles of the stream channel. Along this same stretch, around 200 conifers will be planted and invasive weeds controlled. Together, all these activities make up a process-based restoration project. Without all of these activities being included in our restoration strategy, the entire Price Creek project would be less likely to result in long term success. If only the culverts are replaced, fish such as cutthroat and steelhead may be able to migrate upstream; but without large wood in the stream, high quality spawning gravel for salmonids will not be retained and the ecosystem as a whole will be less complex. On the flip side, large wood could be added, but it would not do much good if the current culverts aren't replaced with larger culverts that allow normal passage of both fish and sediment. By the same token, re-establishing diverse native forest along the banks through planting and invasive weed control will ensure a source of large wood to the stream for several generations. These web of actions are all needed to ensure a self-sustaining resilient ecosystem in upper Price creek.

What does this all mean for the LWC? It means, as we embark on establishing a new set of priority restoration projects, we will be aiming to focus on projects that take a holistic approach to restoration by focusing on key regional areas and developing a set of inter-related projects. Of course, no restoration is possible without the support of the Luckiamute watershed community and landowners, and so ultimately we look to you for your support in carrying out process based restoration.

—by Jean-Paul Zagarola, Project Manager



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

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**[www.LuckiamuteLWC.org](http://www.LuckiamuteLWC.org)**

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