

# Behind the Scenes "Lite"

October 2022



Dear Friend,

Happy Autumn, everyone! What a lovely experience to feel that first real rainfall of the season last week, not to mention the return of chilly mornings and the beautiful transition of the fall foliage. This issue of Behind the Scenes "Lite" features an update about the ongoing efforts to restore the health of Upper Maxfield Creek. Then, make sure you grab a comfy seat and your favorite fall beverage to dig into the LWC's quarterly Meanderings newsletter, which contains additional project news, announcements and some exciting upcoming events!

--Suzanne Teller, LWC Outreach Coordinator



## Project Update: Upper Maxfield Creek

Born in the hills east of Kings Valley, Maxfield Creek weaves through a patchwork landscape of managed timberlands, riparian forests and farmland as it wends its westward journey towards the Luckiamute River. Before being channelized into a single channel in the 1900's, Maxfield Creek consisted of multiple braided streams that spread out over its floodplain, which provided high quality habitat for aquatic wildlife and wetland-dependent plant and animal species. This change in the structure of the creek, along with historical practices of logging to the river's edge and the removal of logs from the creek, has resulted in the loss of gravel, streambed being scoured to bedrock in many places, and a deepened channel that prevents interaction between the floodplain and the creek.

Since 2006, the LWC has been working with local landowners and project partners to address these challenges by removing fish passage barriers, realigning two sections of the adjacent roadway, removing noxious weeds, planting native vegetation and placing large wood in the stream channel. As a result of these actions, we are seeing improvement in the health of the creek - including areas where natural creek meanders are once again being created and gravels are able to settle on the streambed to provide macroinvertebrate habitat and spawning sites for salmon, trout and lamprey.

This June, Emilie Blevins (Senior Conservation Biologist with Xerces Society), Jean-Paul Zagarola (Senior Project Manager with Bonneville Environmental Foundation), and LWC staff members participated in a freshwater mussel survey and found western pearlshell (*Margaritifera falcata*) in an area where stream habitat restoration activities had taken place. In this spot, gravel and sand had accumulated and roots from planted streamside trees had helped stabilize the banks. Brook lamprey (*Lampetra richardsoni*) were also found during the survey, which is a hopeful sign that Maxfield Creek is providing better habitat and opportunities for aquatic life of all kinds.

This year, we received funding from Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB) to expand upon these restoration efforts with another round of large wood placement, additional native plantings, and conifer enrichment alongside the streambanks. An additional log placement in the stream channel is set to begin the week of October 19. A big thank you goes to North Santiam Watershed Council and the Bureau of Land Management for providing these logs, and to all of our partners for their support in restoring the health of Maxfield Creek!

Visit [LuckiamuteLWC.org/upper-maxfield-creek](http://LuckiamuteLWC.org/upper-maxfield-creek) for more details about the Upper Maxfield Creek Project and a full description of the ways our many project partners are involved.



Photos by Emilie Blevins

Along with western pearlshell mussels, a brook lamprey was spotted in Maxfield Creek during a freshwater mussel survey in June 2022.

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Fall  
2022

# 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:

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

Karin Stutzman, *Secretary*  
Monmouth

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.*

## South Fork Pedee Creek Project “Capstone” Underway



(L) Located in the upper part of the watershed, South Fork Pedee Creek is a tributary of mainstem Pedee Creek, which in turn, flows into the Luckiamute River. (R) Construction crews begin work to replace an undersized and perched culvert with a properly sized one, which will result in both immediate and long term benefits to native fish and other aquatic life.

By Suzanne Teller, *Outreach Coordinator*

For some restoration projects, it takes many years to see the impacts of our work and the positive results to the ecosystem. In fact, in many cases, the full benefits of a restoration project may not even be realized for several generations. But then there are those times that the benefits of a single restoration action can be seen almost immediately. These projects are often the most exciting and engaging of all, since we are able to witness those impacts on a human timescale rather than that of a forest or a river.

South Fork Pedee Creek will see just such a dramatic change this month when the second of two undersized culverts will be removed and replaced. Thanks to our project partners Manulife (formerly Hancock) and Bureau of Land Management (BLM), migrating salmon and trout will no longer face a passage barrier along their journey to upstream habitat. Additionally, a large amount of gravel that had been held back by the culvert would be released and allowed to move freely downstream, greatly improving spawning habitat for many native fish.

This culvert replacement is referred to as the “capstone” of the South Pedee Creek Enhancement Project because it is the final step in a checklist of actions meant to restore and enhance in-stream and riparian (stream-side) habitat quality. Completed project activities include large wood placement within the stream channel, invasive species control, conifer plantings, and the removal of a downstream culvert in partnership with Manulife and Starker Forests.

In addition to BLM, Manulife and Starker, a big thank you goes to Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB) for their partnership and support. We are also grateful to Bonneville Environmental Foundation, Forests Forever, Inc., Western Oregon University, Oregon State University Extension Service, Falls City High School Career Technical Education Program, Mike Adams Construction, Trask Design & Construction, and D. Franco Contracting— all of whom have contributed in various ways to make this project a success.

We look forward to sharing the progress of this project visually with you in the coming months—thanks to a newly installed time-lapse camera! Look for details and updates at [LuckiamuteLWC.org/sfpedee](http://LuckiamuteLWC.org/sfpedee).

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## *Celebrating a Decade of Service to the LWC and the Watershed!*



*On September 8, past and present LWC Board members gathered with some of the LWC staff at J2E Tree Farm in Kings Valley for a monthly Board meeting and recognition of Kristen Larson's 10 years of service as LWC's Executive Director.*

For almost half of the LWC's 21 years of existence, Kristen Larson has been at the helm. To recognize and show appreciation for Kristen's ten years of service as Executive Director, the September 8 monthly board meeting was shortened to make time for a post-meeting celebration of her leadership and achievements. Wine glasses were raised and words of appreciation were spoken by several past and present board members and LWC staff, and then Kristen was presented with a beautiful glass water drop sculpture. A drop of water is an often-used metaphor for a watershed council's community-based approach, which celebrates the individual contributions of many to achieve watershed health. Kristen alluded to this as she accepted the sculpture, saying that "the success of the LWC is due to the hard work and dedication of so many of you, and the whole watershed community."



**Zoom AND in-person  
options available!  
Details at  
[LuckiamuteLWC.org](https://www.luckiamutelwc.org)**

## *Love Your Watershed*

### *Upcoming Sips 'n' Science Pub Talk*

**Kalapuyans of the Mid-Willamette Valley, History & Culture**

**Tuesday, October 18 @ 6:30 - 8:00pm**

Dr. David Lewis, member of the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, OSU Assistant Professor and Tribal historian, will discuss the various Kalapuyan tribes and bands of the central valley, looking at their original culture, how they stewarded their lands, and the impacts of the arrival of settlers.

RSVP at <https://www.luckiamutelwc.org/kalapuya-history.html>

*(You will have the option of participating in the Zoom presentation or attending an in-person watch party at Brew Coffee and Taphouse in Independence!)*

## *Thank You, Mid-Willamette Beaver Partnership Interns!*



From July 15 to September 15, the LWC and Marys River Watershed Council hosted four interns for the Mid-Willamette Beaver Partnership (MWBP) habitat assessment project — three of whom were placed through OSU's [New Beginnings for Tribal Students](#) program. We are incredibly grateful to Aiden Willis, Camille Shokrian, Corey De La Cruz and Tygh Schuster for their dedication and hard work this summer, as they braved challenging terrain, extreme heat and angry wasps to complete 58 field surveys along streams in the Luckiamute, Marys River and North Santiam watersheds. Data they collected is used to verify stream characteristics, and will help the MWBP pinpoint areas that have a high or a low capacity to support beaver and their dams. On behalf of the MWBP, thank you – Aiden, Camille, Corey and Tygh – for devoting two months of your summer to this important work!

The MWBP is a collaboration of the Luckiamute, Marys River, North Santiam, South Santiam and Calapooia Watershed Councils; Bonneville Environmental Foundation; and the Natural Resources Departments of the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde and the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians. We look forward to introducing you to the MWBP and telling you more about its goals and objectives next year, which marks the start of our *Love Your Watershed* theme for 2023 and 2024 — Beavers in the Basin!

## Support the Letitia Carson Legacy Project

Letitia Carson is an Oregon pioneer and symbol of resilience. A formerly enslaved Black woman, she became the only Black woman in Oregon to successfully make a land claim under the 1862 Homestead Act. In order to bring awareness to Letitia's story, the Letitia Carson Legacy Project was formed as a collaboration among Oregon Black Pioneers, Oregon State University, Black Oregon Land Trust, and the Linn-Benton Chapter of the NAACP. The project aims to turn Letitia Carson's homestead in Soap Creek Valley to a place where community members can learn about the interconnected experiences of Black and Indigenous peoples, and practice restorative, regenerative agriculture and land stewardship. On October 29, the NAACP will be fundraising for this project during their annual Freedom Fund Celebration at Linn-Benton Community College (see flyer below or at <https://freedomfund2022.com>). Learn more about the Letitia Carson Legacy Project at <https://letitiacarson.oregonstate.edu>.

Freedom Fund  
CELEBRATION  
October 29, 2022  
Linn-Benton Community College, Calapooia Center  
Reception 6:00 pm ★ Dinner & Program 7:00 pm  
Featuring Keynote Speaker  
AKASHA LAWRENCE SPENCE  
Oregon State Senator for District 18  
Entertainment: Jasmine Lumpkin and The Sound Collective  
Visit our website for tickets and more info  
[linnbentonnaacp.com/events](http://linnbentonnaacp.com/events) NAACP  
Linn Benton Branch

## 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 in January 2023, following your donation.

## Five Ways to Help Migrating Birds



Below are five actions you can take that will help migratory birds safely navigate to their winter feeding grounds. If you'd like to delve deeper into the incredible journeys that many native birds make during this time of year, check out Audubon's Bird Migration Explorer tool (<https://explorer.audubon.org>) to see how over 450 species are moving around the Western Hemisphere, and what challenges they face along the way.

- 1) **Keep areas of your property natural.** Leaving areas of your lawn unmowed and allowing leaf litter to stay on the ground attracts insects, worms, and other small creatures that birds feed upon.
- 2) **Leave flowers and stems intact after blooming.** Instead of deadheading spent flower heads, allow them to develop seeds and provide a nutritious food source for many types of birds.
- 3) **Plant native trees, shrubs and flowers.** Research shows that the health of many of our native birds populations depends upon native plants and the insects that have co-evolved with them.
- 4) **Turn off outside lights at night.** Many birds migrate at night, but bright lights can lure birds away from their routes and disorient them. During peak migration times, make sure to turn off bright outside lights when it is dark.
- 5) **Keep feeders full.** Providing food does **not** affect migration habits, so by all means, make sure your feeders stay full (and clean!) while birds are most in need of that supplemental food source.

## 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).

October 13 @ 6:00 - 8:00pm (via Zoom)

November 10 @ 6:00 - 8:00pm (TBD)

December 8 @ 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 June 16 to September 30, 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>*

*Anonymous Donor*  
*Anonymous Donor*  
Judy Beebe  
Michael Cairns & Gail Oberst  
Maya & Jim Cook  
Whitney Francis  
Jeremy Gordon  
George Grosch & Ann Bowen  
Stephen & Ava Howard  
Danny & Renee Jaffer  
Becky Jay

Paige Jenkins  
*In Honor of LaDonna Brave Bull Allard*  
Deb Merchant  
Becca Meskridge  
Erin Murphy  
Terry Murphy  
Eric Noel  
Linda Samuels  
V Environmental LLC  
Scott Youngblood

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

Your purchases earned us **\$42.10** for the second 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**

### June 16 - September 30, 2022 Donors

### June 16 - September 30, 2022 Volunteers

*Anonymous Donors (1)*  
Judith de Szoeki  
Mark Henkels & Marcella Dupler-Henkels  
Chris & Kathy Jensen  
Jessica King  
Gary Larson  
David & Tamar Myhrum  
Karin & Terry Stutzman  
Jay & Jane Tappen  
Trout Unlimited - Bluebacks Chapter  
Willamette Habitat Restoration Fund

Greg Archuleta  
Brian Bangs  
Judy Beebe  
Marc Bell  
Andrea Berkley  
Britton Castor  
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Kristen McAlpine  
Morgan Neil  
Amy Pinkley-Wernz  
Chris Seal  
Jackson Stalley

Karin Stutzman  
Jay Tappen  
Mike Unger  
Scott Youngblood

*For another great way to contribute to the LWC, find out if your employer offers an Employee Matching Gift Program!*



## THANK YOU TO ALL OUR BUSINESS CIRCLE SUPPORTERS!

Croft Vineyards  
The Independence Hotel  
KWIP La Campeona 880 AM  
Manulife Investment Management

Les Schwab  
Spiritopia  
Starker Forests, Inc.  
Western Skies Cattle Ranch



### Partner Spotlight

*We'd like to give a special shout-out to the Bluebacks Chapter of Trout Unlimited for their \$1000 contribution that helped provide waders and field supplies to our Mid-Willamette Beaver Partnership interns for their stream survey work. Also, Blueback Chapter members have been volunteering for three years to do steelhead redd surveys at our Upper Luckiamute Enhancement Project site. Thank you, Bluebacks!*



## Luckiamute Watershed Council

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Independence, Oregon 97351  
503-837-0237  
[director@LuckiamuteLWC.org](mailto:director@LuckiamuteLWC.org)

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

**Executive Director:** Kristen Larson  
**Operations Coordinator:** Maya Cook  
**Outreach Coordinator:** Suzanne Teller  
**Monitoring Coordinator:** Amanda Brackett  
**Project Manager:** Aubrey Cloud  
**Project Manager:** Jean-Paul Zagarola (B.E.F.)

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