



Luckiamute Watershed Council

www.LuckiamuteLWC.org

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 for location and details. Please join us!

Events:

Join us on **April 24** at Monmouth Burgerville from 5 to 8pm, for a Partnership Night event!



Come celebrate Earth Day on **April 22** with the LWC and Central Lions Club as we plant native trees at Luckiamute State Natural Area!

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Help keep trash out of our streams! Join us on Independence Day as a Grand Parade Volunteer!

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Local Youth Help Restore Ritner Creek Park



Seventh graders from Luckiamute Valley Charter School plant trees at Ritner Creek Park.

— by Suzanne Teller, Outreach Coordinator

As you drive along our roads and walk through our parks, you’ve probably noticed that some of our forested areas are shrouded in green leaves no matter the time of year. English ivy, one of the most pervasive invasive weeds in the Pacific Northwest, has taken over much of our landscape — particularly the areas near our roads and trails. In 2013, Luckiamute Watershed Council staff noticed ivy taking over a tiny county park along Gage Road called Ritner Creek Park.

Located in southern Polk County, Ritner Creek Park hosts visitors drawn to its remote location, picnic tables, fishing opportunities and a small loop trail perfect for a peaceful walking routine. Because the streamside habitat found there is otherwise quite healthy and contains a thriving native plant understory, it was important to tackle the ivy threat as soon as possible — before it got out of hand. Already, the ivy had suc-

ceeded in “jumping” the park fence into a neighboring landowner’s property, and was poised to spread beyond Ritner Creek into public and private land still untouched by the invasive plant. But rather than limit the project focus strictly to ivy control, the Council decided to use this as an opportunity for students at a neighboring school to get directly involved in hands-on restoration work within their community.

Daniel Shimek, 7th and 8th grade science teacher for the Luckiamute Valley Charter School (LVCS), was on board with the Ritner Creek Park project proposal from the very beginning. He valued the chance to take his class to the field for a project that both involved his students in serving their community, and engaged them in actively caring for the natural world. With his support, the partnership of Polk County, the blessing of the neighboring landowner, and funding from the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board and Meyer Memorial Trust, the Council was able to put the final pieces in place to restore this little corner of our watershed.

On April 14, 2015, forty LVCS students working in two shifts cut and cleared an enormous amount of ivy that had been taking over parts of Ritner Creek Park

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Ritner Creek Park, continued from page 1

along Gage Road, and the neighboring landowner's property. Before and after shots below show the dramatic difference that these students made in the amount of ivy covering the trees. At the end of the day, the students were proud of their hard work — which resulted in a dump truck-load of ivy being hauled away to the incinerator!

Since successful control of an established ivy infestation is more likely with a combination of techniques, contracted crews were brought in the following month to treat the remaining ivy with targeted herbicides. Manual ivy pulling has had positive impacts on the restoration process since it results in less herbicide being needed, and helps ensure that the treatment will be more successful.

The second step of the restoration process was more low-key, but inspired just as much student enthusiasm. On November 16, 2016, a group of ten LVCS students returned to Ritner Creek Park to plant the next generation of native conifers — a total of 60 young Douglas fir, Western Red Cedar and Western Hemlock trees. Though it was a rainy, muddy experience, the jokes were constant and the laughter contagious. As they boarded the bus back to school, one student was all smiles as she reflected on the day: "One day I'll come back here with my kids and we'll be standing under the trees that I planted!"



Species Spotlight: English Ivy

English ivy is a non-native plant that grows both as a ground cover and a climbing vine. As it creeps along the ground, English ivy forms very dense mats that prevent the growth of native plants. Once it climbs into the canopy of trees, it blocks sunlight and kills entire branches. These trees are much more likely to topple during high winds and heavy rain or snowfall events, which poses a threat to our roads, walkways and homes.

Celebrating a Milestone

Though there won't be a noticeable difference in how we interact with our community, this month marked a milestone in Luckiamute Watershed Council history. As of August 1, 2016, the LWC has formally been granted 501(c)3 status, and as of March 1, 2017, we are no longer using a fiscal sponsor! A BIG thank you to [Marys River Watershed Council](#) and [Cascade Pacific Resource, Conservation and Development](#) for stepping in as our non-profit fiscal sponsors over the past 15 years. We are grateful to them, and to you — our supporters — for your help in making this transition possible. Now that we are an independent 501(c)3 organization, you have some new ways to support us:

- ◆ **Amazon Smile Program:** By shopping through [smile.amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com/smile) and designating the Luckiamute Watershed Council as your preferred charitable organization, Amazon will donate a percentage of the price of your purchases to the LWC.
- ◆ **Fred Meyer Community Rewards:** By linking your [Fred Meyer Rewards Card](#) to the Luckiamute Watershed Council, you will be supporting the LWC every time you shop at Fred Meyer!
- ◆ **PayPal:** Whenever you make a donation through Paypal, the Luckiamute Watershed Council receives 100% of your contribution. No fees, no hassle. Make a donation today by clicking [here!](#)





Earth Day at LSNA!



Date: Saturday, April 22
Time: 9:00am - 12:00pm
Place: Luckiamute State Natural Area
 8989 Buena Vista Rd, Albany

Join the LWC and Central Lions Club of Independence to plant trees and shrubs at Luckiamute State Natural Area (LSNA). Located at the confluence of the Luckiamute, Santiam and Willamette Rivers, LSNA is one of the most beautiful and unique landscapes in our watershed. We invite you to help restore this natural area's wetlands by joining us on Earth Day to plant native vegetation!

Details at www.LuckiamuteLWC.org

SAVE THE DATE!

LWC Fundraiser at
River Gallery
 October 7, 2017
Details coming soon!

HELP THE LWC FIND A NEW HOME!



We are looking at options in our service area that meet our office space needs, including:

- Three work stations
- High-speed internet
- On-site storage
- Non-profit discount welcome!

Have some ideas? Please call (503) 837-0237 or email info@luckiamutelwc.org. Thank you!

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.

The Council is recruiting new board members and seeks individuals who work, live, or play in the watershed—you are a watershed stakeholder! Click [here](#) for details.

We also 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.

To donate, go to 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!

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.

April 13, 2017: Luckiamute State Natural Area**

****Pre-meeting walk along LSNA's loop trail departs North Tract parking lot at 5:30pm sharp!****

May 11, 2017: Location TBD

June 8, 2017: Monmouth Volunteer Hall

July 13, 2017: Location TBD

**Your contribution may be tax-deductible. The Luckiamute Watershed Council will provide a letter of documentation in January 2018, following your donation.*

Watershed Hero Snapshot

The LWC would like to take this opportunity to recognize the heroes at the frontlines of restoration work. This is a photo of our planting crew leader, Juan Franco, taken at Luckiamute State Natural Area on an extremely soggy day. Why does Juan do this work? *"It's awesome to go back and see that we created this landscape," he says. "It's a successful project if, when it's all done, it looks natural and nobody would ever know we were there."*



AUGUST 17 - 21, 2017

Join us at Burgerville on April 24!

Come out and support local agriculture, a home-grown Oregon business, and your watershed all at once! On **April 24**, join us between **5pm to 8pm** at the **Monmouth Burgerville** for some delicious and locally-sourced fare. Burgerville will donate 10% of all sales to support the work of the Luckiamute Watershed Council. Plus you will have an opportunity to participate in a raffle for fun prizes!

Hope to see you there!

Be a part of the Monmouth-Independence Grand Parade!



Help keep trash out of our streams by volunteering to be a part of the "rear detachment" during the annual Rotary Club Grand Parade. Your mission will include riding or walking beside our truck as part of the Independence Day parade, holding up signs, and helping to collect trash along the parade route.

Don't miss this unique opportunity to keep our waterways clean, and interact with the cheering public as part of a well-loved Independence Day tradition!

Visit www.LuckiamuteLWC.org/grand-parade-volunteer.html for details.



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

Luckiamute Watershed Council

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www.LuckiamuteLWC.org

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