

Behind the Scenes

February 2020



Dear Friend,

Now that we are heading into spring, a walk outside will reveal many of our native trees and shrubs in full flower, or starting to unfurl their leaves. Many of our resident birds are busy preparing nests, and some of our migratory species are already returning from their winter retreats down south. With all of nature's exuberance this time of year, it is easy to get into a spirit of joy and gratitude. Our annual **LWC Social & Celebration** at the Historic Gentle House in Monmouth on March 1, from 2 - 4pm, is one way we like to celebrate the accomplishments we've made together. The successes we've had with our restoration projects and community education events would not be possible without your generous contributions of dollars and volunteer time. We hope you are planning to join us in raising a toast to the LWC and to YOU, our Friends of the LWC! If you can't make it this year, we hope to see you at some of our upcoming Spring events, featured below. Happy reading!

--Suzanne Teller, LWC Outreach Coordinator (contact me at Outreach@LuckiamuteLWC.org or 503-837-0237)

Upcoming **Love Your Watershed** Events!

Stream Temperature Monitoring in the Luckiamute



March 12 @ 6:00 - 8 pm & April 1 @ 6 - 7:30 pm
Monmouth Volunteer Hall & Pedee Women's Club

Join us on March 12 during our board meeting or on April 1 at a public forum for an in-depth look at the LWC's Temperature Monitoring Program! Caleb Price, LWC's Monitoring Coordinator, will be presenting the highlights of our 2019 monitoring results, and answer your questions about stream temperature in our watershed. More details and **RSVP at www.LuckiamuteLWC.org/temppmonitoring.html**

Watershed Recreation Fair



April 18 @ 10:00 am - 2:00 pm
The Grove Coffeehouse

Come to downtown Independence for an open-house style look at the recreational opportunities that can be found within our watershed! Bring the whole family for a chance to discover some of the many ways to have FUN outdoors in our local area! **Details at www.LuckiamuteLWC.org/recfair.html**

Weed Out *Invasive Ivy!* - two locations!



April 18 @ 9:00 am - 2:00 pm
Independence Riverview Market **and**
Independence Farmer's Market at Umpqua Bank

Come by one of our information tables to learn how to identify and control invasive ivy, and get some tips on some excellent native plant options to replace it with. We'll also be giving away free pruning shears and a copy of Field Guide to the Weeds of Willamette Valley to everyone who stops by, so make sure to come early before we run out!

Earth Day Ivy Pull



April 25 @ 10:00 am - 1:00 pm
Private property along Ash Creek (located in Monmouth)

Spend the morning at a streamside conservation easement along Middle Fork Ash Creek and help us free some beautiful old oaks - some of them over 200 years old - from the grip of invasive ivy! **Details at www.LuckiamuteLWC.org/earthday2020.html**

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

Watershed Notes

Drinking Water Q & A

On January 25, a total of 52 people attended our Community Drinking Water Forum at Monmouth Senior Center, which featured a panel of six Polk County drinking water providers. Because there wasn't enough time to address all of the questions that were asked of our panelists that day, we've dedicated this space to the answers to those questions provided by some of the panelists. We've also included the contact information for local drinking water utilities. Please mark down this information and feel free to reach out to your water utility whenever you have a question or concern about your drinking water!

Will proposed loosening of federal EPA standards on wastewater release affect Oregon-enforced standards?

If EPA does loosen standards on wastewater releases, Oregon DEQ would have to agree with those changes and amend their standards as well. Judging from Oregon DEQ's history of strict standards, it would seem unlikely that Oregon DEQ would loosen its standards. But if they do, any increase in source water contaminate levels would have an effect on the efficiencies of treatment for those sources. – Matt Johnson, City of Monmouth

Any plans for joint ventures between Independence and Monmouth to hold treatment facilities costs down?

Yes. The two Cities have been developing shared source/treatment facility options for years now. A joint wellfield is currently being developed/constructed at this time. Also, future shared facilities/sources are currently being researched. – Matt Johnson, City of Monmouth

What happens to Monmouth's wastewater? Where does the treated water go? How "clean" is it?

Treatment is made in Monmouth. Treated water is then discharged to the Willamette River via buried gravity pipe. The pipe discharges just North of Independence. The discharged wastewater is very clean and routinely surpasses the minimum standards set by Oregon DEQ and US-EPA. – Matt Johnson, City of Monmouth

(To City of Salem) What happens if an earthquake hits your plant? Do you have a supply for the duration?

That's a tough question. As long as the piping remains intact, which we expect will be the case in small events, we should be fine. If the 9.0 Cascadia event happens, our piping systems will be compromised. We have portable water distribution stations if needed, but given the large population in our geographic area (Salem, Keizer, and surrounding small towns), we estimate meeting approximately ½ the needed demand. We will rely on the National Guard and local retail sources for the balance. During the 2018 Algal Toxin Crisis in Salem, we learned national retailers, such as Costco, Walmart, Fred Meyer, and Safeway, can quickly get water to Salem due to their massive distribution chains. – Dwayne Barnes, City of Salem

(To Luckiamute Domestic Water Cooperative) How much withdrawal can the aquifer in the American Bottom sustain?

To my knowledge there is not a study that has been done that has determined: "If you pull out this much water you will reach a point of no return". What I do know is that every water user in the American Bottom has a water right, with a limit on how much water can be withdrawn in and at a given time. As an example, Luckiamute Domestic Water Cooperative has a year-round limit of 3.7 cubic feet per second (cfs). Some of the farmers may have a higher cfs, but are limited in the months that they can draw water. Additionally, American Bottom, like every other water source in Oregon is over appropriated, meaning that if every user pulled their maximum rate all at the same time, the water would stop. However, it is a bit like airline booking, where they overbook knowing that some passengers won't make the flight. Not all users will use their appropriation all at the same time. - Danny Jaffer, LDWC

Water Utility Contact and Quality Info

City of Independence

(503) 838-4781

www.ci.independence.or.us/publicworks/page/water-quality-report

City of Monmouth

(503) 838-2173

www.ci.monmouth.or.us/pview.aspx?id=33018&catID=552

City of Falls City

(503) 991-2234

www.fallscityoregon.gov/water-quality

City of Dallas

(503) 831-3508

www.dallasor.gov/271/Water-Division

City of Salem

(503) 588-6311

www.cityofsalem.net/drinking-water

Luckiamute Domestic Water Coop.

(503) 838-2075

www.luckiamute.com

Perrydale Domestic Water Assn.

(503) 835-7221

www.perrydalewater.com/

Rickreall Community Water Assn.

(503) 623-2016

<https://rickreallwater.com/>

more at www.co.polk.or.us/pw/who-call