

Behind the Scenes

March 2020



Dear Friend,

Being stuck at home may not be how we expected our first week of Spring to go, but there are still plenty of ways to stay connected with each other, our communities, and our watershed! Read on to find out how you and your whole family can take action for watershed health this month by joining our Earth Month Eco-Challenge. We also invite you to explore the many ways you can get involved in community science initiatives by visiting our new community science webpage at <https://www.luckiamutelwc.org/community-science.html>.

I also want to take the time to thank you for your support during this challenging time. In addition to the physical and emotional toll being taken by the COVID-19 pandemic, the long-term impacts of quarantine on our local businesses and those who have lost their jobs is truly devastating. I sincerely wish for you three things for the coming month: (1) physical and emotional well-being, (2) regular connections with those you love, and (3) plenty of time to engage in a favorite around-the-home activity. Take care, and happy reading!

--Suzanne Teller, LWC Outreach Coordinator (Outreach@LuckiamuteLWC.org or leave a voicemail at 503-837-0237)

Join the Earth Month Eco-Challenge!

Although we we had to cancel our April 25 Earth Day Ivy Pull event, we can still celebrate our home planet this month by doing what we can to make our home planet a healthier, more equitable, and more sustainable place for all. We invite you to join us to take action for a better shared future over the next 30 days! Organizations across the Willamette Valley have teamed up to bring you the Mid-Willamette Earth Day Eco-Challenge, an opportunity for you to celebrate Earth Day all month long. From April 1 - 30, we will be completing Earth-related activities and challenges from the comfort of our own homes. Learn how you can join our Mid-Willamette Earth Challenge Team at <https://www.keizer.org/earthchallenge/>!



What's happening with our **Love Your Watershed** events?



Although our May and June events are still on the calendar for now, we are all preparing for the very real possibility that the "stay at home" order will remain in place for the rest of spring. We'll be evaluating whether or not we'll have to cancel our upcoming events in the next couple of weeks, and we are also exploring ideas to bring our events to you in another format. Stay tuned for updates at <https://www.luckiamutelwc.org/loveyourwatershed.html>!

Spring Bird Walk

Sat., May 9 @ 8:00 am - 12:00 pm

Plant ID Walk & Learn

Wed., May 20 @ 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm

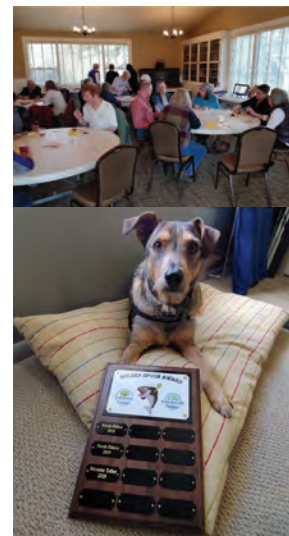
Planting for Pollinators Field Day

Sun., June 7 @ 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm

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

Watershed Notes

It seems like ages have gone by since we held our March 1 LWC Social & Celebration at Gentle House. A big THANK YOU goes to all who were able to attend what turned out to be our last group gathering before the current COVID-19 restrictions went into effect. We thoroughly enjoyed seeing you there, chatting with you, and trying all of the delicious entries to our *Like Chocolate for Water* competition! Congratulations to Suzanne Teller, for her winning chocolate tres leches cake! Her name is now immortalized on our new "Golden Spoon Award" plaque, along with two-time winner Sarah Ehlers, who contributed first place entries for both our 2018 and 2019 *Like Chocolate for Water* contests. This year, second place went to Sarah Ehlers for her delicious triple chocolate layer cake, and third place went to Nadine Grubb's delectable chocolate-hazelnut tassies — congratulations to you both! To everyone who entered our contest this year, thank you so much for participating and 'treating' us to your outstanding kitchen talents. We are already looking forward to judging next year's competition on the first Sunday in March — so mark your calendars for March 7, 2021! A big round of applause also goes to our award winners for Watershed Champion (Cliff & Gay Hall), Collaborator Extraordinaire (Jennifer Beathe of Starker Forests, Inc.) and Volunteer Superstar (Terry Murphy). Thanks for all you do towards helping us achieve our goal of a *healthy watershed for all!*



LWC Project News - Hot off the Press!

During this time of social distancing, much of our restoration and outreach work has had to shift gears, and we've all had to spend time re-thinking some of our procedures for getting things done. That makes the news we received yesterday an extra exciting boost to morale! Two project proposals we are a part of that were submitted to the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB) have just been recommended for funding! The next step is for funding to be officially approved by the OWEB board during their April 22 board meeting, so stay tuned for the official news in a few more weeks. In the meantime, read on below for a quick summary of each project!

Protecting the Best: Upper Luckiamute Mainstem Anchor Habitat Enhancement



Tucked away in the remote Polk County timberlands near the headwaters of the Luckiamute River lies some of the best salmonid (salmon and trout) habitat in the watershed. This project aims to expand on habitat restoration work done 15 years ago by adding log jams and planting conifers along a 1.6 mile long section of the upper Luckiamute River. Another objective of this project is to survey and develop a management plan to protect a rare high elevation Coast Range wet prairie/wetland habitat — within which a unique hybridized Nelson's-meadow checkermallow (*Sildacea campestris x nelsoniana*) was found to be growing. There are no documented instances of this hybrid occurring naturally and therefore this population represents a unique genetic makeup of the checkermallow genus! Our project partners include Hancock Forest Management, Starker Forests Inc., Institute for Applied Ecology, Xerces Society, and the Bureau of Land Management.

J2E River to Ridge Diversity Project



J2E Tree Farm is a small woodlands operation located along 1.5 miles of Vincent Creek, a tributary to the Luckiamute River. This project will focus on a holistic approach to enhance the broad range of habitat types found on this property, and support a diversity of fish and wildlife. Douglas fir thinning, invasive species removal and native understory plantings will help restore a 16-acre oak corridor that provides critical habitat for Taylor's checkerspot butterfly. Large wood placement and willow planting aims to promote beaver activity that will help re-connect the river channel to its floodplain. Additionally, strategic placement of boulders will resolve a fish passage barrier, extending cutthroat trout access to cold-water refuge habitat. Project partners include the landowners, Benton Soil & Water Conservation District, Natural Resources Conservation Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife.