



Long Tom Watershed Council

DRAFT Strategic Plan & Work Focus

Remaining work: add measures to address intent, leadership, descriptions

2009 – 2012

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Introduction

This document is intended to express goals and strategies for a 3-5 year time period and was approved by Steering Committee on _____. Measures for tracking progress are included where appropriate. This plan will be reviewed and updated during the Council's biennial self-evaluation process.

Vision

A healthy watershed that ensures water quality and riparian and wetland habitat for fish, wildlife, and native plants while recognizing the importance of people's economic livelihood and quality of life.

Mission

The Long Tom Watershed council serves to improve water quality and watershed condition in the Long Tom river basin through education, consultation, and cooperation among all interests, using the collective wisdom and voluntary action of our community members.

Purpose

The Council will provide opportunities for people who live, work, play, derive benefits from, or are affected by the Long Tom watershed to cooperate in promoting the health of the watershed and communicating the social and economic benefits to the community.

Goals

Founding Goals

1. Maintain and improve water quality.
2. Enhance habitat, especially riparian and wetland habitat, for fish and wildlife.
3. Encourage communication, learning, and participation among people with interests in the watershed.
4. Promote continued benefits from a healthy Long Tom River Watershed.
5. Help people get the assistance they need for watershed enhancement plans and projects (educational, technical, financial, etc.).
6. Gather, verify, and share information on current and past watershed conditions.
7. Recommend ways that citizens, organizations, and local, state, and federal governments can help achieve the goals of the Long Tom Watershed Council.

8. Educate, motivate and provide feedback to all interested persons in the watershed working toward these goals.

Ecological Goals. Stated in the Conservation Strategy.

1. Aquatic passage

Unrestricted passage for a variety of aquatic species to stream reaches that include breeding and rearing habitat and summer and winter refuge. Note: this excludes natural barriers.

2. Instream Habitat

Streams with sufficient channel complexity to support native fish and other aquatic species.

3. Water Quality

Water quality and quantity conditions, including groundwater, that support viable populations of native aquatic life.

4. Riparian Zones

Riparian zones that provide a high degree of ecological function with an absence of invasive non-native species.

5. Wetland habitat

Sufficient acreage and variety of wetlands to support stream hydrologic functions and viable populations of native wetland dependent species, and an absence of invasive non-native species.

6. Upland habitat

Sufficient acres of threatened habitat types (especially oak savanna, upland prairie, and bottomland hardwood forests) to support viable populations of species dependent on these habitats, and an absence of invasive non-native species.

Appropriate management of conifer or mixed-conifer forested landscapes to support viable wildlife populations dependent on these habitats and an absence of invasive non-native species.

7. Hydrology

Streams that exhibit a natural hydrologic regime, such that they interact with their floodplains to reduce peak flows, increase base summertime flows, exchange nutrients, promote groundwater recharge, and provide off-channel habitat.

8. Sediment Supply

Sediment delivery to streams that is within natural range of variation in both timing, character, and amount so that no adverse effects occur to native aquatic organisms.

STRATEGIES & OBJECTIVES

1. PLANNING. Plan Strategic Actions

1.1. 10-Year Plan for 3 sub-watersheds

Develop a 10-year plan addressing specific ecological objectives for 3 priority subwatersheds – Coyote, Bear, and Ferguson. Set targets and monitoring strategies for each objective resulting in a comprehensive narrative and detailed restoration/conservation matrix with maps and photos to indicate current and desired conditions. Commence baseline monitoring, outreach, and formulation of priority restoration projects.

- *Measure: Included in objective.*
- *Board Leadership: Peg Boulay, Jim Pendergrass*
- *Technical Team Interface: Full Technical Team*
- *Staff Lead(s): Dana Dedrick and Cindy Thieman*

1.2. Project Stewardship Program

Evaluate post-project conditions (e.g. plant survival) at selected completed restoration projects. Document findings and use to evaluate potential of projects proposed in future and to create helpful policies aimed at preventing problems encountered in the future. Conduct project maintenance and discuss stewardship with landowners. (see also 2.4 Effectiveness Monitoring).

- *Measure: Did we learn from completed projects and is the organization's learning put to good use (for example, policies and potential project evaluation tools and others).*
- *Board Leadership: Carl Harrison*
- *Technical Team Interface: _____*
- *Staff Lead(s): Jed Kaul*

1.3. Long Tom River Floodplain Function

Continue to cultivate emerging Long Tom floodplain conservation and restoration activities by the Army Corps: develop and submit conservation studies and proposals. Including Coyote Creek hydrology, lower Long Tom revetments, confluence area.

- *Measure: Has the Council done everything within reason to get the Corps to create better floodplain functions? Riparian areas? Are those conditions trending positive or negative?*
- *Board Leadership: Kat Beal*
- *Technical Team Interface: Steve Smith*
- *Staff Lead(s): Cindy Thieman*

1.4. Upper Willamette Floodplain Function

Document a collaborative floodplain restoration strategy to address the Upper Willamette Basin (upper mainstem and confluence areas of major tributaries), engaging adjacent watershed councils, the University of Oregon, government agencies and others to identify, define and develop relevant projects. Seek funding as a collaborative. Postpone. Council Support Grant not fully funded.

- *Measure: Are people of key organizations working together in a regular (meetings) and collaborative (3+orgs) way to address upper Willamette floodplain issues and is some funding or landowner sign-ups happening? Has a strategy been crafted? Do we see a way to participate in moving things forward?*
- *Board Leadership: Eric Wold?*
- *Technical Interface: Dave Hulse, Stan Greogry*
- *Staff Lead(s): Dana Dedrick*

2. MONITORING. Assess and Monitor Watershed Conditions

2.1. Regional water quality monitoring. MFWWC is lead. Provide technical support to fulfill agreed-upon grant objectives.

2.2. Fish Barrier Assessment. Assess, prioritize, map & document fish barriers in western portion of watershed, including western portion of Coyote Creek (coming out of Coast Range where best fish habitat is).

- *Measure: Number of barriers assessed. Success of outreach. Quality of information. Mapping and summary of information presented in useful format?*

2.3. Amazon toxics monitoring (2009 - 2011). Engage landowners, DEQ and others in Pesticide Stewardship Partnership to assess conditions, implement BMP's, and do follow-up monitoring. See also 5.2.

2.4. Project Effectiveness Monitoring. Assess effects of restoration and enhancement activities at selected project sites, e.g conduct effectiveness monitoring on a 100-acre oak savanna/woodland restoration project, measuring responses of species. Increase the percentage of monitored projects to broaden scope, number of sites, and application of monitoring results. Collaborate with Meyer/BEF, U of O and OSU, TNC, BLM, City of Eugene and Upper Willamette Watershed Councils to increase all partners' understanding of certain restoration treatments.

3. AQUATIC RESTORATION PROJECTS – Implement projects to achieve specific objectives to practice restoration and to provide examples. Identify, develop and implement fish passage, riparian and water quality enhancement, wet prairies, and instream habitat enhancement projects in

priority subwatersheds. These projects will include significant volunteer participation for technical review of projects and Council volunteers on riparian enhancement projects. Partners will include the Corps of Engineers for fish passage on the Lower Long Tom, ODFW for technical assistance, landowner match for projects on private lands, and TNC, USFWS, and BLM on wet prairie restoration.

3.1. Fish passage enhancement projects in priority subwatersheds. Specific projects include: replacing a fish passage barrier on Deck property on Owens Creek (pending funding); using the completed design for the Stroda Drop Structure to pursue Corps 1135 funding and other grants to restore fish passage at this site; currently seeking funding (Army Corps Planning Assistance to States) to assess fish passage and design alternatives at the Monroe dam on the lower Long Tom. Results from the fish barrier inventory will provide a prioritized list of sites. Other plans include developing and completing 7 additional fish passage projects.

3.2. Riparian and water quality enhancement projects in priority subwatersheds. Pursue grassed waterway projects at agricultural sites; 2 farmers have expressed an interest in developing a project this year. Complete 15 other priority riparian enhancement and livestock exclusion projects to address widespread interest and need in this area. Continue discussions regarding large-scale collaboration opportunities with the Corps on riparian zone enhancement for the lower Long Tom River.

3.3. Instream habitat and wetland enhancement projects in priority subwatersheds. Pursue 2 large woody placement and historic channel restoration projects as outreach and landowner connections produce priority project locations.

3.4. Wet prairie enhancement projects in priority subwatersheds. Restore 30 acres of wet prairie at Erickson's (pending funding). This site is significant for its large population of Bradshaw's lomatium. Non-native species and encroaching shrubs currently threaten these plants. The project will remove competing woody vegetation enabling the landowner and partners to maintain the site through mowing and burning. Pursue 1 other priority site.

4. UPLAND RESTORATION PROJECTS – Implement projects to achieve priority objectives, practice restoration and provide examples to others.

Partner with USFWS, the McKenzie River Trust Restoration, and others to enhance upland prairie, oak savanna, and oak woodland.

4.1 Oak Savanna and Oak Woodland enhancement projects

Restore 62 acres oak savanna/floodplain forest along the Lower Long Tom River. This will include eradication of invasive plant species and thinning trees in savanna and woodland areas to enhance understory conditions.

Continue development of 2 projects, one oak woodland and savanna enhancement on a 60-acre parcel, and one upland prairie and savanna enhancement at a 140-acre site.

Complete 5 other high quality upland priority projects, developed from the NFWF-funded, multi-partner outreach and project development work as described in Strategy 5, below.

5. SUBWATERSHED ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM – Utilize subwatershed approach to bring relationships, projects and practices to local creek level and leverage neighbor relations.

5.1. Coyote Creek Subwatershed outreach and project development

Provide education and technical assistance to landowners in the Coyote Creek subwatershed, a key native species recovery area of oak savanna and prairie, to develop restoration projects and stewardship actions that address critical water quality and habitat issues. Carry out outreach to landowners. Form 2 groups of 7-10 landowners and co-host meeting with key landowners. Host tours for each group through multiple private and public sites to see reference conditions on some and evaluate where restoration is needed on others. Direct landowners to project partners most appropriate to their needs (Council, TNC, SWCD, NRCS, USFWS, etc.). Partner with TNC to share landowner contacts and provide interpretation on habitat tours. McKenzie River Trust will share landowner contacts and participate to bring acquisition tools to bear. Produce parcel maps and a habitat and water quality profile; prepare and submit reports to funding agency. Expand and repeat for Ferguson and Bear Creek. Start one of those by 2011.

5.2. Amazon sub-watershed strategy and implementation. Utilize Settlement funds and the interests of the City and other potential partners to focus on stormwater retrofitting for key businesses that wouldn't otherwise fall under new development or re-development code requirements. Explore (Hire urban restoration/outreach/marketing staff). Expertise developed here is related to opportunities to work with small local jurisdictions in water and habitat planning and management a la Stoneybrook Millstone (New Jersey) example – see also Strategy 7. See also 2.3.

6. CITIZEN LEARNING – Increase public learning via targeted involvement and education programs.

Increase the natural resource knowledge base of council members, local government officials, landowners and other citizens on watershed science and issues.

6.1. Education and Outreach Strategy : document a strategy that targets specific issues and audiences and outlines objectives for educational endeavors. Document an Outreach Strategy for same. Identify 1-2 volunteer speakers for basic council presentation.

6.2. Meetings, tours and newsletters : produce bi-monthly newsletters and coordinate bi-monthly presentations, tours and/or panel discussions. Respond to requests for speaking engagements, and update and enhance website based on findings from the education strategy.

6.3. Member and volunteer involvement: Solicit members at presentation, send packets, track information. Involve volunteers and school groups in tree plantings and mulching as well as in research, action and business. Support Council committees and Tech Team: keep them organized with leadership, membership, work plans, timelines and staff time. Recruit and train 5-8 new board members and 8-10 officers. Reward volunteers regularly.

7. COLLABORATION ON OTHER WATERSHED PRIORITIES. Participate in projects that are driven by others.

7.1. TMDL with small cities – Veneta and Junction City, TMDL

7.4. Invasive Weeds. (OSU Extension?). Address as part of restoration projects. Seek ways to document locations. Participate in building EDRR program by advertising trainings, providing data. Identify 1-3 species and practice False Brome is probably not yet established. Meadow Knapweed and Shiny Geranium are established in some areas. The goal is to use GPS units and the fact that we have field staff to start creating GIS layers on the fly for a few target species and start sharing that information. Opportunity may exist in collaboration with other Meyer model watershed program participants.

- *Measure: Have we built and shared data layers for the three most invasive species in our watershed from an EDRR standpoint?*

7.2. Agriculture Water Quality Management Plan (SB1010) . (Upper Willamette SWCD; ODA). Support agriculture community in learning its purpose, goals, prohibited conditions for this basin. Support lead organization in using this tool. Include this subject in education program.

7.3. Rivers to Ridges Partnership. Utilize collaboration with Ridgeline partners to achieve habitat and water quality objectives in “Ridgeline Area” Spencer Creek, part of Coyote Creek, Fern Ridge.

7.4. Groundwater. (DEQ, LCOG). Support lead organization as possible. Steering liaison participate in GWMA. Include this subject in education program.

8. RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

8.1. Grant Funding. Steady or increase.

- *Measure: Are priority programs and projects supported?*

8.2. Increase Unrestricted Funding.

- *Measure: Does the council have enough funds to be flexible, and approach work in steady fashion, and plan and reflect? If this is not working we'll see cash flow problems, or seeking grants that don't match plans, priorities, and/or skills of staff.*

8.3. Office Space and Physical Resources. Address as necessary.

- *Measure: Can council staff and members work effectively hold meetings, involve volunteers. Is there a good balance between economy of "free space" and room to do what we need?*

9. EVALUATE & ENSURE EFFECTIVENESS. Evaluate programs, spending and involvement.

9.1. Self-evaluations. Use biennial council self-evaluations, council and members included, to share thoughts and identify things to continue and things to change. Evaluate business practices

9.2. Risk Management and Fiscal Diligence. Fiscal and employee insurance, external audits, etc. Conduct business effectively. Address risk. Keep proper policies in place.

NOTES

Cross referencing should be completed with any update to the following documents:

- Council Work Plan (for Council Support grant) and/or Progress or Final Report for same.
- Leadership Roles for Steering Committee
- Individual Staff Work Plans