

LONG TOM WATERSHED COUNCIL

November 2003

Monthly Meeting
Tuesday, November 25, 2003 6:30-9:00
Lower Long Tom Subbasin—Monroe High School Commons

Please bring snacks to share - we'll do the drinks!

Lower Long Tom folks, please bring snacks.

AGENDA

6:30 Sign-in, Browse Info, and Socialize

7:00 Welcome and Introductions

7:10 Indian Creek Restoration Project
(45 min)

OCF LUMP Committee Members:
Anna Scott, Dennis Todd, Steve Wisnovsky

7:55 Break

8:05 Cox Butte Culverts (20 minutes)
Cindy Thieman, Projects Coordinator, Gary
Holm, Landowner

8:30 Open Discussion of Council Activities
(20-30 min)
Dana Erickson

9:00 Announcements and Reports

9:10 Wrap-up and Adjourn



Culverts on Lower Long Tom at Cox Butte

!!! Inside !!!

Otters in the watershed
Cox Butte Project Update
Upcoming Events
And More....!!!

Remember,
No Meeting
In December.
Happy Holidays!!

Our Mission

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

Watershed News

Otters, Otters Everywhere

By Jim Ekins with help from Bill Castillo

I saw the river otters well before they saw me. Distracted by their game of chase, and oblivious to my canoe (the solar-powered trolling motor is even quieter than my paddling), I closed in to within fifteen feet of the frisky pair. One dove into the eddy, gracefully eluding me by continuing its watery back flip, while the other popped up and looked right at me. Its eyes grew big as saucers in the moment before it, too, dove out of sight. I eased past their private backwater, the second otter chattering its annoyance toward me. For a moment, I thought that I had heard that one before, but that couldn't be! I am here at the north Long Tom/Willamette Rivers confluence, and I saw them earlier this week, 20 miles upstream near Green Island.



Actually, according to my copy of the Atlas of Oregon Wildlife, river otters (*Lontra canadensis*) range far and wide, up to 50 miles up and down a stream. The pair may well have been the same. Otters are common along the tributaries of the Willamette, finding a convenient existing hole in the bank for a night's slumber. They are strong, agile, aggressive swimmers, easily catching fish, crawdads, frogs, turtles, and other prey. On the coast they will eat mussels and nesting seabirds, but here in the Long Tom, I have a hunch that they regularly dine on abundant and invasive bullfrogs. Few predators, even hungry cougars and coyotes, catch these wily, agile critters, though pioneer-era trappers had a big impact on otter populations throughout the West. Today, with limited trapping and predation, otter populations are up, resulting in increased competition with mink, beaver, and nutria for habitat and food.

Otter spotting is possible along the Willamette and the Amazon bike paths, and in the Delta Ponds area. In fact, keep an eye out for them from the high cascades to the Coast Range, and anywhere in between. Even in winter, otters are active throughout our area, and move about at will. Only when food supplies are abundant, or in spring if a pair has pups too young to keep up, will they stay put in one area. Watching a

Each month, volunteer editor Jim Ekins arranges a column for the West Lane and Tri-County News on behalf of the Long Tom Watershed Council. Submissions of topics are always welcome, as is an offer to write a column, or a name of someone you think could. Authors get their names in the byline of the article! For more information, contact Jim at ekinsja@yahoo.com.

Coordinator's Letter



LONG TOM WATERSHED COUNCIL

751 S. Danebo Ave ❖ Eugene OR 97402
www.longtom.org

Dear Watershed Landowners and Residents, Council Members and Friends,

The fall leaves show that every tree is busy pulling energy back into its core to weather the winter and ready again for spring. Around here we are investing our energy into a number of exciting projects...

Conservation Strategy - Steering Committee has just approved the direction and timeline for building our conservation strategy. This will be a long-term, overarching strategy to be applied sub-watershed by sub-watershed with the support and partnership of interested members and landowners. Please see the next page for more information and ways you can be involved.

Sub-Watershed Enhancement Program – The time is here to continue with our sub-watershed enhancement program as we have gained a small bit of funding to help us work in more areas. Would you like to problem-solve the water quality or habitat impairments we are aware of in your creek basin with some help from the Council? If so, please call me so I can note your interest and tell you more about the program.

Volunteer Program - In addition to doing our water quality monitoring program and producing our newsletter, Brian Issa, our Monitoring and Outreach Assistant, is hard at work developing a Volunteer Program for the Council. Although many volunteers are successfully working for the Council now, we currently have many more opportunities and interested people, but are struggling to link them. This program will better connect people with the opportunities to help.

Website Updates - Susan Payne is hard at work on our website updates and we are thankful! These updates will include tours of the restoration projects, volunteer opportunities, new reports, and an online version of the newsletter.

The next Council meeting is a cornucopia of projects in honor of Thanksgiving!

We will see a slideshow and presentation of the Indian Creek Project, which is an excellent example of what could be done in the lowlands, such as agricultural land, because the project improves the creek considerably without taking up much space. We will also learn about the current work underway to provide important fish passage at the Cox Butte culverts. Please see Cindy's Projects and Monitoring Update in this newsletter for a background of this project.

I hope to see you at the November meeting!

Steering Committee Members: *At-Large:* Duane Zentner, Ryan Collay, Chris Massingill;

Amazon: Anita Ragan, Scott Duckett, Rich Margerum;

Lower Long Tom: Mike Kesling, Dave DeCou, John Reerslev;

Upper Long Tom: Rick Allison, Larry Rhodes, Dennis Capps.

Coordinator: Dana Erickson

Phone: (541) 683-6578

e-mail: longtom@efn.org

Projects & Monitoring Coordinator: Cindy Thieman

Phone: (541) 683-2983

e-mail: cindythieman@yahoo.com

Watershed News

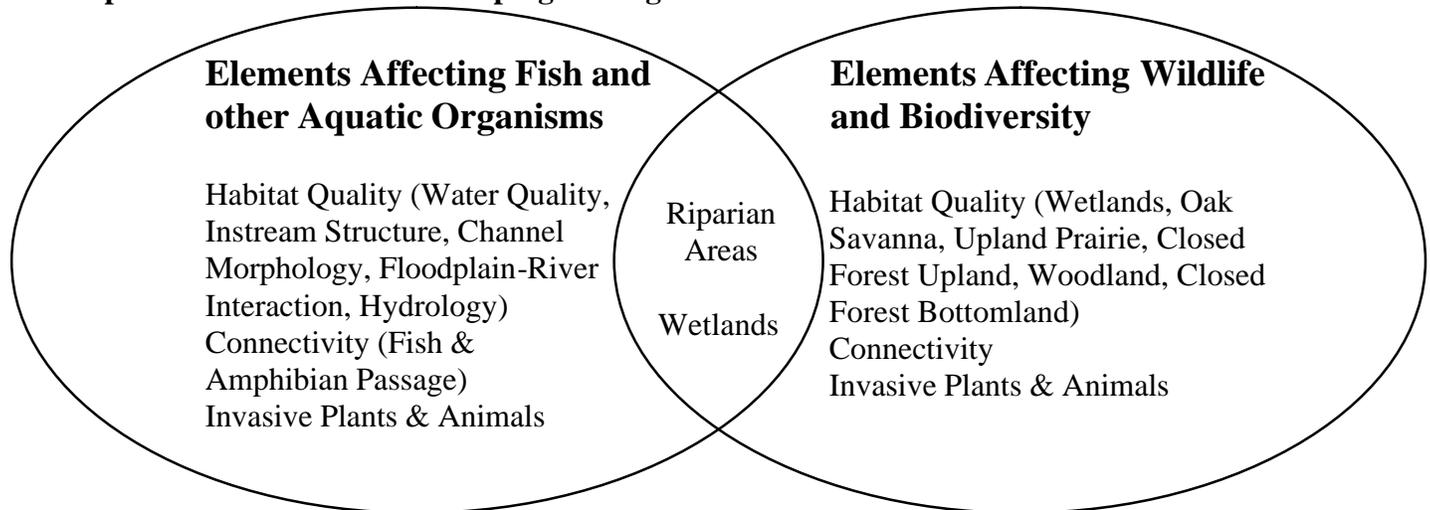
Long Tom Watershed Conservation Strategy to be developed between now and next October

We'd like to announce the beginning of the development of our Conservation Strategy. This will be an overarching document to guide our efforts toward conservation in the Long Tom Watershed, which includes protection, restoration and enhancement.

We'd like to have a full first version complete by October of 2004 and are planning for Council meeting interaction on this topic between February and May.

We will be welcoming assistance from members of our Technical Team and Steering Committee, as well as Council members. Please let us know if you have time for some concerted effort on this project.

Conceptual Framework for Developing Strategies and Actions



Strategies and Actions

We will develop strategies and actions for *most* elements or sub-elements. Each action will be prioritized. High priorities will be given additional attention toward implementation.

The overarching strategy for each element will address the following four parts, in this order of priority. The answers to these questions will be the actions the Council or other entities implement.

1. **Protection** - How can we protect this element or sub-element in places where it is functioning or of high quality? (Note that any kind of conservation easement would be taken on by other entities that have that ability as the Council does not.)
2. **Connecting high quality, functioning habitats** - Where do high quality habitats need to be reconnected and what strategies can we use to reconnect them?
3. **Restore process and function** - Where can function be passively restored if a process is reinstated? (For example, removing a blockage to creek movement or flow).
4. **Restoring or enhancing habitat** - Where are key functions and habitats in need of enhancing or restoration to rejoin a functioning system? (Note: many of our current projects would fall under this strategy).

"Laws Change; people die; the land remains."

- Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865)

Projects & Monitoring Update

By Cindy Thieman, Projects & Monitoring Coordinator

Long Tom Fish Passage Assessment Project: Part 1

In June of 2001 the Council received a technical assistance grant of \$12,620 from the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB) to investigate fish passage through culverts located at Cox Butte Road and the Long Tom River. The OWEB grant covered the costs of survey and design work. The Army Corps of Engineers, a major project partner, contributed over \$20,000 of hydraulic modeling and technical assistance. Other project partners included a fisheries biologist and fish passage engineer from the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) who provided many hours of technical advice. In addition, several volunteers helped to collect data on channel cross sections and elevation in the summer of 2002.

We investigated fish passage through two sets of culverts at this project site. The first set run through the Long Tom levee and divert water from the Long Tom River into a 3.5-mile segment of the historic Long Tom River. The second set are approximately 150 feet downstream of the levee culverts and go under Cox Butte Road (see map on following page). The significance of the historic channel and providing passage at these sets of culverts is that they can allow fish to circumvent a 10-foot drop structure that blocks upstream fish passage on the mainstem of the Long Tom. The target species for fish passage are fluvial and resident cutthroat trout. Declines in water quality and the loss of habitat have led ODFW to designate Willamette cutthroat trout as a stock of concern. Despite the loss and degradation of historic stream habitat, cutthroat still inhabit most of the tributaries and mainstem of the Long Tom River. However, seasonal and perhaps year-round distribution is limited in some streams by decreased amounts of habitat, poor water quality, and barriers to fish passage.

Originally we suspected that at certain stream flows the levee culverts created a velocity barrier to fish attempting to swim upstream from the historic channel into the Long Tom River. This is because during most of the winter a nearby landowner blocks three out of four culverts with boards to prevent flooding of farm land that is adjacent to the historic channel. We suspected that forcing all the water through one culvert created water velocities that were too high for trout. To test our hypothesis the Corps created a hydraulic model that determined velocities through both sets of culverts at typical flows in the Long Tom from November through May. We selected this flow period because it is the season of cutthroat trout migration and spawning in the Long Tom Watershed.

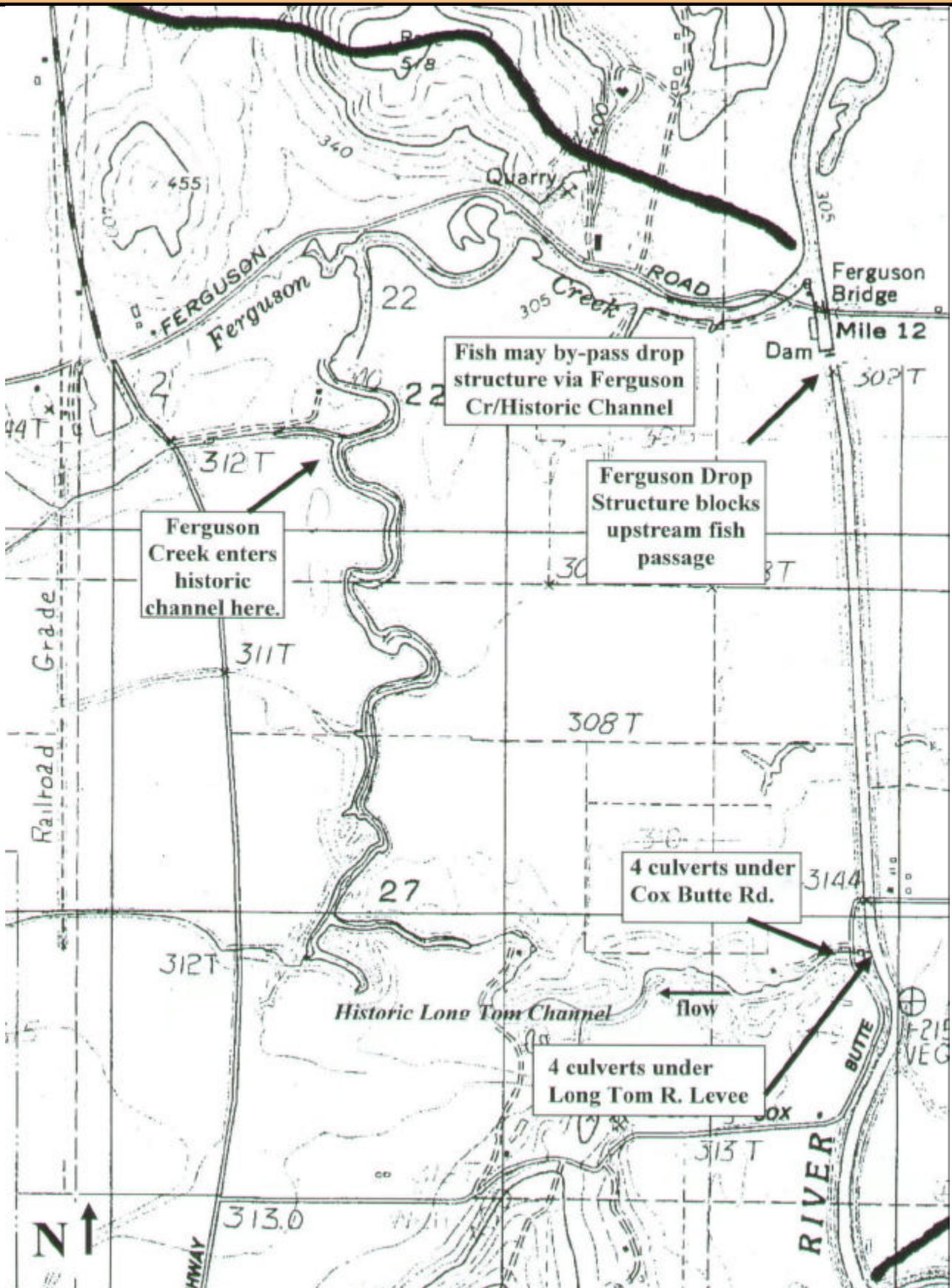
Modeling results confirmed that when 3 out of the 4 levee culverts are blocked from November through May the culverts are impassable to fish during most of this time period. Conversely, if the culverts are not blocked the culverts are passable. Unexpectedly the model also showed that when the levee culverts are unblocked the set of culverts under Cox Butte Road are a fish passage barrier during much of the winter. This happens because the water level at the inlet of the Cox Butte Road culverts is higher than at the outlet, creating a velocity barrier.

Our next step was to come up with management plans and/or modifications to the culverts that would allow for both fish passage and flood control. These results will be presented at the November Council meeting and in Part 2 of this article in the January newsletter.



Culverts at Cox Butte.

Projects & Monitoring Update continued...



Council News

Long Tom Watershed Council Steering Committee Membership

Lower Long Tom sub-basin

1. Mike Kesling, Field Dept Manager, SureCrop Farm Service, (serving 2001-05), 1st Vice Chair
2. John Reerslev, Agricultural Landowner, Reerslev Farms Inc. (serving 2003-06)
3. Dave DeCou, Agricultural Landowner, One Step Forward Farm (serving 2001-04), Chair

Amazon sub-basin

1. Anita Ragan, Eugene resident, (serving 1999-2004)
2. Scott Duckett, Wetlands and Open Waterways Manager, City of Eugene, (serving 2002-2005)
3. Rich Margerum, UO Professor of Community and Regional Planning (serving 2003-06)

Upper Long Tom sub-basin

1. Rick Allison, Poodle Creek landowner, (serving 2000-05)
2. Larry Rhodes, Woodland Owner, Professor of Education (serving 2001-04), Treasurer
3. Dennis Capps, City of Veneta Public Works Department (serving 2003-06)

At-large

1. Ryan Collay, Educator and Spencer Creek landowner, (serving 2002-05), 2nd Vice-Chair
2. Chris Massingill, Riparian Ecologist, (serving 2003-06)
3. Duane Zentner, Forester, Roseburg Resources, (serving 2002-05), 1st Secretary

Charter Changes

During the last meeting, the Council successfully updated our Charter. The substance of the items changed was described in the last newsletter. The Council members approved those, with some excellent changes in the wording to make the intent and function clearer. If you would like a copy of the new charter, please email or call Dana (683-6578) or wait for about a month as the new website updates will include it!

Thank You!!

Cox Butte Fish Passage Contributors

US Army Corp of engineers:

Rick Hayes

Jim Beal

Jim Crain

Oregon Dept. of Fish and Wildlife

Gary Galovich

Jane Kelly

Council Volunteers

Will Peters

Michele Stowe

Note on Notes

By Dana Erickson

Due to the changing of Steering Committee officers, we did not have a recorder for the October Council meeting. The main orders of business were to approve proposed changes to the Charter and affirm new Steering members. Both were completed successfully and the results are reported in this newsletter. Awards were presented to Michael James, Andy Gilmore, and Duane Zentner for their dedicated work with the Amazon Working Group. Outgoing members of the Steering Committee were profusely thanked. The Council Coordinator and Projects and Monitoring Coordinator made presentations that were well-received (if I do say so myself). Finally, the Finance Committee shared our financial status with the Council and gave notice that we'll be fundraising and welcome assistance.

Council News

Ways to help

Creek Basin Problem-Solving - We have an opportunity open for one or more people to work on problem solving water quality and habitat issues in individual creek basins with landowners. We have done this program before and will provide clear supervision and support. The work would entail creating background materials and potentially some maps to support landowners in each of a few select creek basins as they work to understand the water quality and habitat situation in their area, and problem-solve ways to address it. This could be done as a volunteer or a graduate-level internship and could make for a terminal project or thesis work. **Timeline:** Between December 2003 and June 2005 for part or all of that time.

Conservation Strategy - In addition to helpful members from our Technical Team, and other entities naturally interested in the conservation strategy, there is an opportunity open for Council members or graduate-level interns to work on developing the conservation strategy. The type of work could vary widely and would depend on your skill and interest. See the description in this newsletter of the developing strategy and also remember there is a strong education component as we work with the Council members to develop and support the Strategy. **Timeline:** Between December 2003 and October 2004, for part or all of that time.

Fundraising Strategies - We are looking for Council members to join some Steering Committee members on the Finance Committee in order to gain the necessary funds to support the Council's work in the next few years. Please contact Scott Duckett at scott.duckett@ci.eugene.or.us. You would be especially qualified if you meet any one of these descriptions:

- ◆ **You have a head for business or numbers,**
- ◆ **You have done a project with the Council,**
- ◆ **You have connections to someone or some organization you think would be willing to donate,**
- ◆ **You have any experience with finance or fundraising**
- ◆ **You are enthusiastic about the Council's work in education, projects and or monitoring!**

Timeline: Between December 2003 and June 2005, for part or all of that time.



River otters can hold their breath for up to 8 min. and can run at speeds up to 29 km/hour.

Watershed Calander & Events

Calendar of Events

(Details on following pages)

November 22nd & December 6th

Streamside Gardening Workshop

Saturday, November 22nd,

Children's Bird Program

10am-noon

West Eugene Wetlands

Tuesday, November 25th

Long Tom Watershed Council Meeting

6:30-9:15 Monroe HS Commons

Dana 683-6578

Saturday, December 6th, 2003

"Showing Kids how to see with the Camera's Eye"

1pm-3pm

Wednesday, December 10th

SOLV for Volunteer Action Training in Eugene

Thursday, December 11th

Steering Committee Meeting

6:30-9:00pm at Council Office

751 S. Danebo (Wetlands Project Office)

Saturday, December 13th

Bird Hike at the Fern Ridge Reservoir

8:30-10:30am

Honoring Our River: A Student Anthology

The Honoring Our River Student Anthology is a compilation of literary work selected from student entries submitted from throughout the Willamette River Watershed. **Students from kindergarten through university level** are invited to participate. This project is designed to nurture respect and appreciation for the river system that connects all basin inhabitants and provides a showcase for student writings that **honor our river**.

- **Entries must be postmarked by February 19, 2004**

For a copy of the submission form and additional information, call

503-585-8798 or email: bridgetma@aol.com

Streamside Gardening

When: A 2-day workshop on Saturdays November 22 and December 6, 2003, 8:30-4:00

Where: Public Works Auditorium, 2050 Lafayette Ave, McMinnville (immediately adjacent to OSU Extension Service offices. Field sites to be announced)

Cost: \$25.00 (includes lunch on Nov. 22). **Limit 30 people.**

Description: Learn how to incorporate Northwest native plants into streamside gardens & how to enhance stream function and biology. Includes practical tips and information on landscape principles for gardeners. If you are gardening near streams or water, whether "in-town" or in the countryside, come learn about native plants, planting techniques, and aftercare.

Call 503-434-7517 for more information.

SOLV Volunteer Training

Wednesday, December 10th in Eugene, 8:30 - 4:00
Even though the training is open to anyone, we ask you to pre-register so we can plan. You can register electronically on the SOLV website, <http://www.solv.org>.

For more Information Contact: Neil B. Schulman
Toll-free within Oregon: (800) 333-SOLV FAX:
(503) 844-9575 Email: neil@solv.org

Watershed Events continued...

November and December Programs in the West Eugene Wetlands

Children's Bird Program
Saturday, November 22nd,
2003
10am-noon
Limit: 15 participants



Calling all 5-8 year-olds for an exciting morning learning about birds in their natural environment through stories, games and activities! Take a bird walk using binoculars to look for birds, make a pine cone bird feeder, and learn about the role of birds in this wetland ecosystem. Meet at the West Eugene Wetlands Yurt at the corner of W. 11th and Danebo. Dress appropriately; we will be outside playing in the wetland. To register, call Holly McRae at 683-6494 or email at west_eugene_wetlands@hotmail.com.

"Showing Kids how to see with the Camera's Eye"
Saturday, December 6th, 2003
1pm-3pm
Limit: 10 participants



The West Eugene Wetlands are a fantastic place to learn nature photography. Photography is not just about pointing and pressing a button; it's a decision making process. Join West Eugene Wetland volunteer and nature photographer Donovan Keith for an introduction of basic concepts in photography such as lighting and composition. Each student will need to bring a camera, 2 rolls of film, good walking shoes, and a snack. Meet at the West Eugene Wetlands Yurt at the corner of W. 11th and Danebo. To register, call Holly McRae at 683-6494

Bird Hike at the Fern Ridge Reservoir
Saturday, December 13th, 2003
8:30-10:30am
Limit: 20 participants



Extensive wetlands provide unique habitats for a variety of birds at Fern Ridge Reservoir. The large exposed mudflats and shallow water at the end of Royal Avenue attract shorebirds, gulls, ducks, geese, herons, and raptors. Join naturalist Dennis Arendt for a morning hike to discover the birds that use this area for the winter season. Wear shoes appropriate for walking in wet areas and mud. Binoculars will be provided. Meet at the end of Royal Ave at the gate west of Fisher Rd. To register, call Holly McRae at 683-6494 or email at west_eugene_wetlands@hotmail.com.

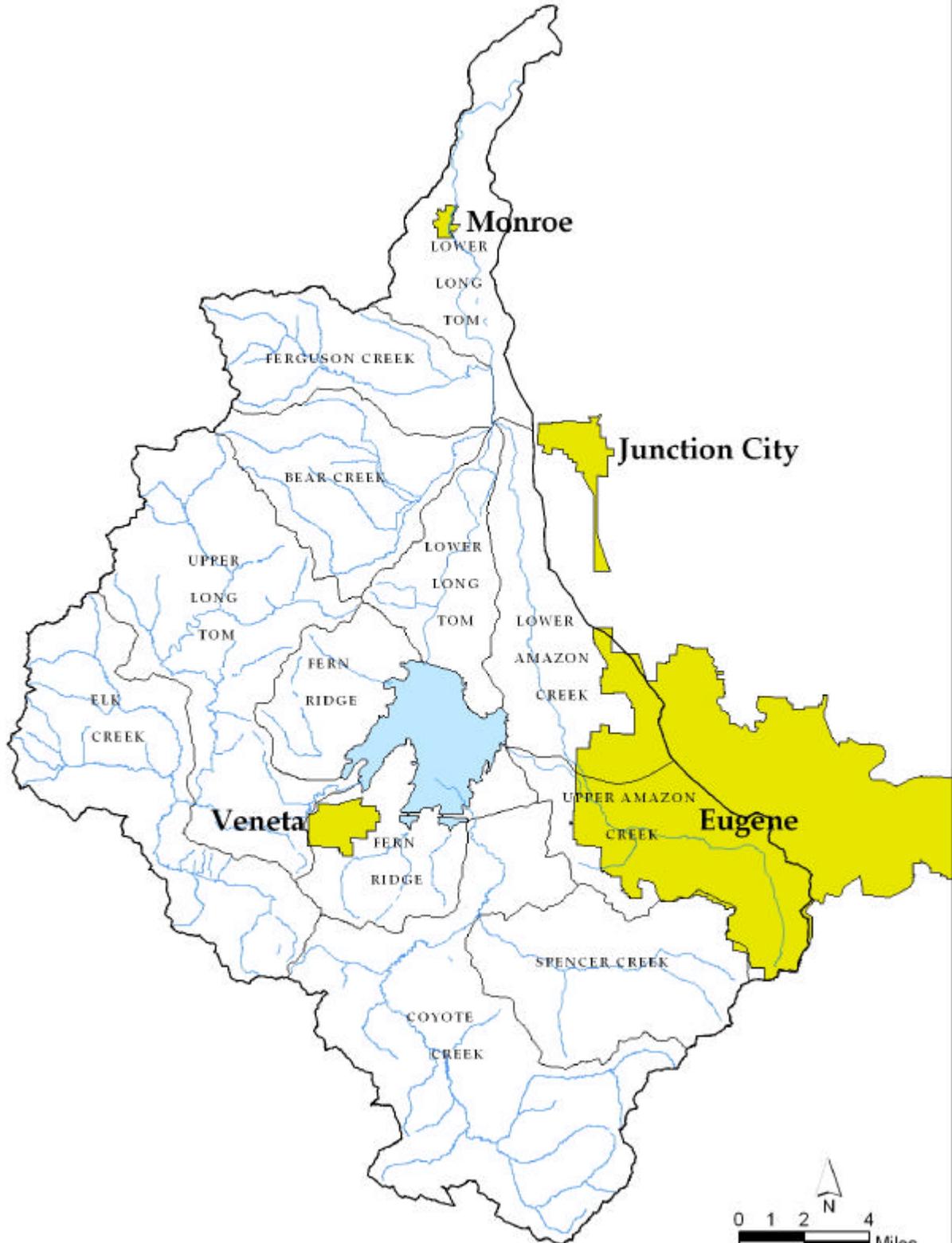
Amazon Creek Planting with Eugene Stream Team

When you ask? 10:00 am to 12:30 pm
Where? by the main footbridge crossing the creek
How steep? pretty steep...
How many plants? LOTS
Will there be gloves and tools? Yes, provided by Stream Team
Will there be snacks? Yes, provided by Lane County Fairgrounds

Who will be there? Many of those familiar Stream Team faces as well as the regular Jefferson/Westside Neighbors.
Why? Because it is so rewarding and fun!
Please dress for the weather and let me know if you are coming. Thanks so much!
Contact Lorna at 913-1292

Watershed Map

Long Tom Watershed Ten Major Subbasins



Please call or email me to correct your mailing info, or **get this newsletter by email and save us postage!**
Dana Erickson, (541) 683-6578

Long Tom Watershed Council
Phone: 683-6578 e-mail: longtom@efn.org
www.longtom.org
751 S. Danebo Avenue
Eugene, OR 97402

To get to the Monroe High School Commons: Lower Long Tom Subbasin

Monroe is on Highway 99W between Corvallis and Junction City. The high school is at the North end of town on the main highway, and sits on the North side of the East side of the road.. The Commons is the building on the North side of the main school - it has orange doors and you can't miss it. The parking lot is in between the two buildings.

