



Long Tom Watershed Council

Watershed news and meeting notice
March 2012

Action
Through
Understanding

A color version of this newsletter is available at www.longtom.org

March Public Meeting

Tuesday, March 27, 2012

Monroe

Free, with refreshments!

*Donations much
appreciated.*

*Harkens Lake area, an example of
conservation and active farming
alongside a large river*

*Hosts: Max Nielsen-Pincus and Chad Stroda,
LTWC Board members*

4:00 Outdoor Tour of private property
conservation area (optional). Please
RSVP for directions.

6:00 Slideshow & discussion at Monroe High
School Commons. Open to all.

Topics

- * Farming alongside a large river
- * Care and use of the floodplain
- * Practical aspects: economics, logistics, and partnership
- * Process of learning & adapting; lessons learned so far
- * A vision for broader conservation in the area
- * History & science

Speakers

- * *Michael Pope & Jeff Baker, Greenbelt Land Trust*
- * *Gary Horning & Steve Horning, Landowners*
- * *David Hulse, UO Landscape Architecture*
- * *Stan Gregory, OSU Fisheries & Wildlife*



Aerial view of Willamette River and Harkens Lake in
southern Benton County.

Photo: Greenbelt Land Trust

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*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.*

751 S. Danebo Ave., Eugene, OR 97402 · Phone: (541) 338-7055 · Fax: (541) 338-7062

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Public Meeting Background

Harkens Lake: Floodplain Habitat Protection & Restoration along the Willamette River

information contributed by Michael Pope, Greenbelt Land Trust

“We know the health of our crops depends on the health of the river system. Our goal for restoration is to utilize important floodplain areas to improve water quality and protect the valuable farm land that our family farm depends on.”

(landowner Gary Horning)



Slough at Harkens Lake during a high flow event provides refuge for native fish and deposits nutrients in the soil.

Photo: Meyer Memorial Trust

On Tuesday, March 27, the Long Tom Watershed Council will host a public meeting, featuring Greenbelt Land Trust and landowners Gary & Steve Horning, to highlight farming and conservation along a major river system. Harkens Lake is an example of private property that is actively farmed and also protected as a conservation area along the Willamette

River floodplain. Prior to the public meeting, there will be an outdoor tour of the Harkens Lake conservation easement on private property. Please RSVP for directions if you would like to attend this tour (Rob, 541-338-7060) by March 26. Space is limited to 20 people.

A Tradition of Farming and Flooding:

Landowners at Harkens Lake have an extensive farming history, stretching across four generations on the land located on the Willamette River floodplain between Corvallis and Monroe. Throughout **these generations Harkens Lake families have learned to respect the river’s unpredictability and deal** with the seasonal inundation of their fields. Farmers approached Greenbelt Land Trust in 2010 to discuss opportunities for conservation and restoration across this landscape because they understood that a healthy riparian and forest system along the Willamette River benefits both wildlife & adjacent farmed fields.

In 2011 and 2012, Greenbelt Land Trust purchased conservation easements on 370 acres on land that includes farmland, wetlands, and bottomland hardwood forest. These easements are funded by the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB) as part of the Willamette Special Investment Partnership and also by the Bonneville Power Administration through ODFW’s Wildlife Mitigation Program.

(continued on next page)

Public Meeting Background (continued)

A Living Floodplain (see aerial close up on front page)

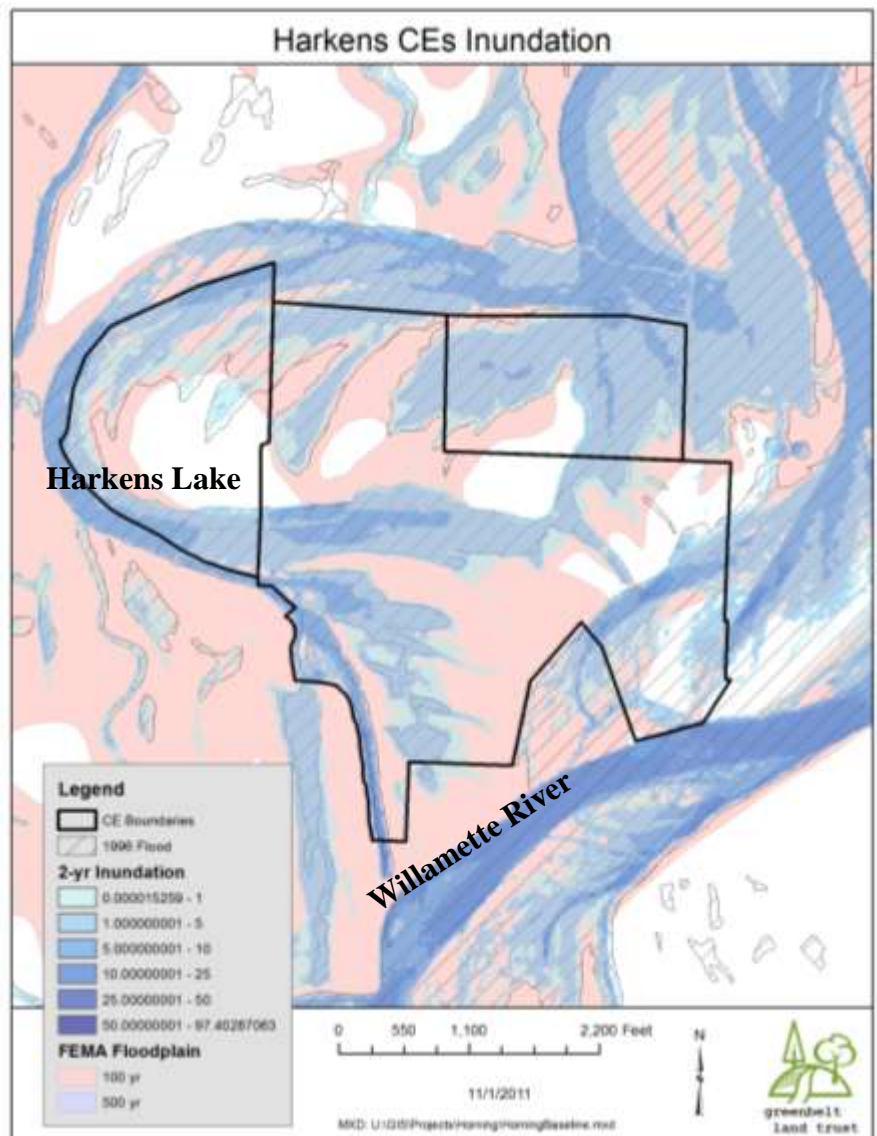
The side-channels and sloughs at Harkens Lake provide a welcoming refuge for native fish, including spring Chinook salmon and cutthroat trout. Eddies and sloughs provide cool back channel areas for juvenile migrating salmon, allowing the young fish time to build strength and endurance before continuing on their epic pilgrimage to the Pacific Ocean. While the braided channels at Harkens Lake, often inundated through seasonal flooding, create challenges for farming, they also provide sanctuary for wetland animals from western pond turtles to red-legged frogs and native fish like cutthroat trout and salmon.

Conservation easements at Harkens Lake aim to maintain and improve the quality of habitat for a diversity of native fish and wildlife and the natural interactions between the Willamette River and the adjacent wetlands, farmlands, and bottomland forests. Specific proposed actions at Harkens Lake include:

- ◆ Enhancing the quality of habitat for native fish and wildlife.
- ◆ Restoration of significant portions of the area to a bottomland hardwood floodplain forest.
- ◆ Increasing water storage capacity to benefit aquatic species such as native fish.
- ◆ Increasing the connections to the river to allow for more natural seasonal fluctuations in water levels from year to year.

Map at Left:

Harkens Lake conservation easement area outlined in black. Map illustrates the seasonal shifts in water fluctuation on a two-year cycle. Note proximity to the Willamette River and the variations in the extent of the floodplain.



Invasive Species Spotlight: Yellow Flag Iris (*Iris pseudacorus*): Beautiful, but bad for native Oregon fish & wildlife

For color photos, see website version of this newsletter

Ecological Impacts

- ◆ Forms dense masses that displace native wetland plants.
- ◆ Rhizomes and dead leaves form large mats that trap sediments and litter, which as it accumulates, can build up the topography and dry out wetlands.
- ◆ Disrupts habitat for waterfowl, fish and other wildlife.
- ◆ Seeds are easily spread in water.

Identification:

- ◆ Perennial wetland **plant that's usually about 3-4 feet tall.**
- ◆ Flowers bloom in spring - usually beginning April or May.
- ◆ Bright yellow flowers with 3 large, drooping petals are most identifiable feature.
- ◆ Flowers grow in clusters on top of each stem.
- ◆ Leaves are stiff, long and sword-like, growing from the base of the stem and overlapping each other.
- ◆ Leaves also have a raised rib in the center and are covered in a whitish wax.
- ◆ When not in bloom yellow flag iris can be confused with cattails and American sedge.
- ◆ Fruit are seed capsules that appear in summer; seeds are spread in fall & winter.

Habitat:

- ◆ Native to Europe.
- ◆ Introduced to much of North America as an ornamental.
- ◆ Found most commonly in wetland habitats, along lakes and streams.
- ◆ Occurs in Oregon, including Willamette Valley. Commonly found in or near urban areas.



Note the large, showy yellow flowers and long, sword-like leaves.

*Top Photo: Tania Siemens,
The Nature Conservancy
Bottom Photo: Johnson Creek Watershed*

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Please Support our Work!

Join our efforts!

The Long Tom Watershed Council is reaching out to you, our friends and supporters, for individual contributions as part of our 2011-12 Inaugural Fund Campaign. Your financial support will help us to continue progress toward our mission of clean water and healthy habitat. It takes a community to keep a watershed healthy—today, and for the future—and **we're asking you to join others who care** about this community resource.



Your gift helps us ...

- ◆ Educate Citizens about the importance of the watershed and how to care for our local land, water **and wildlife resources**. **We've held** 150 educational events and activities since 1998 and reach over 1,100 families with each newsletter.
- ◆ Cultivate relationships with landowners to improve habitat on property of high ecological value for species like cutthroat trout. **We've accomplished nearly** 60 restoration projects, enhancing over 18 miles of stream with 50 property owners.
- ◆ Continue important research such as collecting data on migration and habitat needs of cutthroat trout, and leverage the support of over 40 volunteers who help us tag and track these native fish.
- ◆ Protect restored habitats through maintenance and stewardship. Your support helps us work with **landowners and volunteers to steward projects such as new plantings until they're fully established and can make it on their own.**
- ◆ Improve water for drinking, irrigation, recreation and wildlife. Your gift supports the enhancement of Amazon Creek, an important corridor connecting urban and rural areas, for wildlife and people alike.

Please show your support by making a donation today with the contribution form below. You can also go to www.longtom.org and use the PayPal button to make your tax-deductible gift online.



751 S. Danebo Ave.
Eugene, OR 97402
541-338-7055
longtom.org

Yes, I support community solutions to restore clean water and enhance habitat for fish and wildlife. Enclosed is my contribution in the amount of:

- \$500
 \$250
 \$100
 \$50
 Other \$ _____
 Check
 Credit/Debit (see reverse)

Name: _____
Address: _____
City, State, Zip: _____

Phone: _____
Email: _____

- Please acknowledge me as: _____
 I would like to remain anonymous.
 Please mark my gift as:
 In honor of In memory of

- I would like to learn more about the benefits of making a bequest through estate planning.

Your tax-deductible support allows us to do unique local work for this community! Invest, Restore, Inspire!

2012 Inaugural Fund Campaign



Western Pond Turtle hatchling

Recent Major Donors

*Lochmead Farms
Ninkasi Brewing
Jim & Chris Pendergrass
Deborah Saunders Evans*



Cutthroat Trout

Recent Campaign Supporters

*Ann Bettman & Dan Dingfield, David Chinburg, Mardel Chinburg,
Peg Boulay & Bruce Newhouse, Lee & Margaret Boutell,
Steve & Susan Gordon, Sue Kacskos & Dan Schuck, Beth Krisko,
Tom Lively & Megas MacDonald, Rich Margerum,
Lydia & Joseph McKinney, David Moon,
John Moriarty & Kit Kirkpatrick, Ernest & Wanda Niemi,
Nancy Pierce, Michael Reidy, Court Smith, Shirlee Taylor,
Andy & Maryrae Thomson, Therese Walch*

Agate Alley Laboratory

Territorial Vineyards

This is a one-time credit card gift.

Visa Mastercard Discover American Express

Card Number: _____

Expiration Date: _____

CVV/3-digit Code: _____

Name on Card: _____

Amount: _____

Signature: _____

I would like to give monthly with my credit card.

Automated donations greatly benefit LTWC in their simplicity, \$10 minimum, please.

My gift will occur on the 10th of each month until card expiration or until this date: _____

Cardholder address (if different than mailing address):

*Email and telephone number required for credit or debit card gifts, for purposes of sending receipt, and verification if necessary. Please provide on reverse side. Thank you!

Questions? Please call Dana, 541-338-7055 or Rob, 541-338-7060 or operations@longtom.org.

Yellow Flag Iris (*continued*)

Control Options:

- ◆ Best method is prevention and **understanding what it looks like and how's it's spread.**
- ◆ Still sometimes sold as an ornamental—choose not to purchase non-native, invasive plants.
- ◆ Smaller patches can be hand pulled or dug up. Caution—use gloves because sap can irritate skin.
- ◆ Cutting seed capsules can help somewhat to reduce further spreading.
- ◆ Large patches are more difficult to remove and mechanical harvesters and/or herbicide may be effective.

*If you find or believe you have found Yellow Flag Iris, please report it at:
<http://oregoninvasiveshotline.org>*

Additional Resources for Yellow Flag Iris:

- ◆ Oregon Department of Agriculture: http://www.oregon.gov/ODA/PLANT/WEEDS/profile_yflagiris.shtml
- ◆ Western Invasives Network: http://www.westerninvasivesnetwork.org/pdfs/nature_conserve/weedin/yellow_flag_iris_7_08_2008.pdf



Cluster of yellow flag iris growing along a stream.

Photo: Jefferson County Weed Control

The Long Tom Watershed Council, a local nonprofit, counts on participation from many people and organizations. The local office of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) donates postage for our mailings. They have a requirement to include the following disclaimer, which is now standard procedure for all BLM partnerships.

BLM Disclaimer: "The views and conclusions contained in this document are those of the authors and should not be interpreted as representing the opinions or policies of the U.S. Government. Mention of trade names or commercial products does not constitute their endorsement by the U.S. Government."

The Long Tom Watershed Council is still a local nonprofit (since 1998) with no government authority. We partner with local people, businesses, and agencies in the interest of finding local solutions and bringing grant funding from private and public sources to do restoration, education, and monitoring work in the Long Tom River basin. We're thankful for the donation of postage expenses!

Messy Creeks Make Better Habitat

Adapted from “Woods & Sticks & Stuff,” written by Mike Kelly of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service in 2000

In general, messy creeks make better habitat. By “messy” we’re pretty much talking about wood. Lots of sticks, roots, logs and overhanging branches and all that kind of woody stuff make for good habitat. Basically, the more complex the mess in the stream, the more fish and other wildlife will use it. All other things being equal, you’ll find more fish in a local creek that contains, and is surrounded by, messy complexes of both living and dead wood. The Long Tom Watershed Council has placed nearly 50 large wood structures on seven restoration projects sites across the watershed to help make our creeks messier and more attractive to cutthroat trout, amphibians, insects, and other wildlife.



An excavator was used to place large wood at 5 sites along Ferguson Creek at the Holzbauer property.

So, what does the mess do for the animals anyway? Probably the most obvious thing is that it gives them places to hide. Juvenile fish like cutthroat trout just love hiding in woody cover. It protects them from predators, and it slows the current down so they don't have to waste a lot of energy holding their position in the stream. Not only are the complex masses of small sticks, shrubs and roots great cover for native fish and other animals, but they also catch leaf litter. As logs, leaf letter and other debris decompose they provide food for aquatic insects, which in turn feed fish like cutthroat trout. So wood, sticks, roots, and leaves play an important role in the food web of our local streams.

The vegetation that grows on the bank also helps keep erosion at a natural level. Both accelerated erosion and artificially controlled erosion can be bad for a stream's health. Larger logs and log jams make pools, hold spawning gravel in place, and cause side channels to form. The logs also provide a surface for fungi, algae, certain bacteria, insects, and all that other good stuff that is part of a healthy ecosystem. Large logs may cause some local scour on stream banks, but they provide overall stream channel stability. These logs also create smaller “scour pools” that provide excellent places for trout to hide and escape faster currents. Typically, when the large wood is removed from a stream, the gravel will scour out and the

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Messy Creeks Make Better Habitat (continued)

stream bed will drop. The scouring of stream beds also leads to widespread bank erosion, especially in lower elevation streams. There are far too many streams out there with no wood, no gravel, a bedrock or boulder bottom, high eroding banks, and few fish.

Large wood also creates spawning habitat for trout and improves the prospects of future generations of cutthroat in the watershed. Large wood helps slow stream velocities, which allows gravel to settle and create nice areas for spawning beds that trout love to use. Some of the best spawning areas in the watershed are in the higher reaches of Bear and Ferguson Creek, where LTWC is working to improve trout's access to those areas.



Log jams like this one at the McFadden property on Owens Creek will provide cover and create more pool habitat for cutthroat trout.

A lack of large pieces of wood is a significant limiting factor for cutthroat trout on most streams in the Long Tom Watershed. There are also an insufficient number, size and density of trees along stream banks to replenish large wood and other debris into the stream in the future. Many fish biologists used to believe that large logs and log jams were bad for fish like trout and salmon. They assumed that these debris jams blocked fish passage to upstream spawning habitat, so they used to purposefully remove the wood, which is the opposite of what Boy, what a mistake that was. Sure, occasionally a log jam may block fish passage, but it is usually temporary and may only be a barrier during certain stream flows. The habitat value and stream stability functions of the large wood far outweigh the vast majority of fish passage problems they might create. Simply put, messy creeks means a better place for trout!



Calendar & Announcements

LTWC Public Meetings & Tours

Public Meeting: Conservation and active farming along a large river

Tuesday, March 27

Outdoor tour of private property at 4:00 p.m.
Please RSVP for directions.

Slideshow & discussion at 6:00 p.m., Monroe High School Commons (agenda on page 1, directions on page 12)

- ◆ *Farming alongside a large river.*
- ◆ *Care and use of the floodplain.*
- ◆ *The values & benefits of conservation.*
- ◆ *Process of learning & adapting; lessons learned so far.*
- ◆ *Practical aspects: economics, logistics, and partnership.*
- ◆ *History & science.*

No cost, donations appreciated. Refreshments served.

Outdoor Project Tour of oak and prairie habitat restoration project.

Tuesday, May 29 at 5:30 p.m.

- ◆ *How thinning woody vegetation from around oaks improves habitat.*
- ◆ *How the Grassland Reserve Program works from a landowner's perspective.*

Info for all: Rob Hoshaw, 541-338-7060
operations@longtom.org

facebook

LTWC is on Facebook

Go to Facebook & search for "LTWC"

Community Announcements

WREN's Family Exploration Day at Golden Gardens Ponds

Saturday, April 14, 10:00 a.m.—2:00 p.m.

Early spring is an exciting time to explore the West Eugene Wetlands with your family. This FREE event offers an opportunity to enjoy experiential learning in nature. WREN staff and volunteers will be on hand to check-out nature exploration equipment and provide guidance for independent exploration of the wonders in the wetlands.

Meet at the pull-off located north of Barger Drive, at the intersection of Golden Gardens Street and Jessen Drive. Bring a lunch, water and wear sturdy shoes. FREE!

WREN info: 541.338.7047 or email
info@wewetlands.org

Oregon's Watershed Councils

Thursday, March 22, 6:30 p.m., at the Eugene Garden Club, 1645 High Street.

Join the Sierra Club Many Rivers Group for an **informative discussion of how Oregon's innovative watershed councils work** to restore and improve our land and water resources. Through cross-boundary collaboration, lottery funds are put to work for the benefit of our urban and rural communities, providing jobs and recreational opportunities. Presented by: Max Nielsen-Pincus from the Long Tom Watershed Council & Jared Weybright from the McKenzie River Watershed Council.

Contacts for volunteer opportunities:

Long Tom Watershed Council: 338-7060
WREN: 338-7047

Nearby Nature: 687-9699

City of Eugene, Parks Volunteers: 682-4845

Our Watershed & Council



Action
Through
Understanding

Board of Directors

Lower Long Tom

Jason Hunton
Jim Pendergrass, *Past Chair*
Chad Stroda, *Vice Chair*

Upper Long Tom

Sue Kacsos, *Co-Treasurer*
Lindsay Reaves
Charles Ruff

Amazon

Max Nielsen-Pincus, *Chair*
David Ponder
Therese Walch

At Large

Mike Brinkley,
Co-Treasurer
Steve Cole
Beth Krisko
David Turner, *Secretary*
Deborah Saunders Evans,
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www.longtom.org

Long Tom Watershed Ten Major Subbasins



Council Staff Contacts

Watershed Coordinator / Executive Director: Dana Dedrick 541-338-7055
Urban Watershed Restoration Specialist: Jason Schmidt 541-338-7042
Restoration & Monitoring: Cindy Thieman 338-7033; Jed Kaul 338-7058
Fiscal Manager: Amanda Wilson 338-7042; *Operations Manager:* Rob Hoshaw 338-7060

March 27th Event: Harkens Lake tour & discussion: an example of conservation and active farming alongside a large river.



Long Tom Watershed Council
Phone: 338-7055
e-mail: coordinator@longtom.org
www.longtom.org
751 S. Danebo Avenue
Eugene, OR 97402

March Public Meeting: Tuesday, March 27
6:00 p.m.—Monroe High School; Optional Tour at 4:00 p.m.



Directions to Monroe High School

Hwy 99, Monroe, north end of town

From Eugene

Head north on Hwy 99.

Continue on Hwy 99W by turning left after the Safeway in Junction City.

In Monroe, the high school is on the right, and the parking lot is on the north side. Meet in the Commons Room.

From Veneta

Head north on Territorial Rd.

Turn left onto Hwy 99W in Monroe.

Follow step 3 above.

For directions to the tour of private property at 4:00 p.m., please RSVP to Rob at 541-338-7060.

Space is limited to 20 people.