



# SOUTH MARSH PRAIRIE RESTORATION & WILLAMETTE DAISY REINTRODUCTION

## PROJECT BACKGROUND & DESCRIPTION

South Marsh Prairie is U.S. Army Corps of Engineers land located west of Eugene just south of Fern Ridge Reservoir along Highway 126. The 200-acre site is part of the 5,000-acre Fern Ridge Wildlife Area and is adjacent to more than 3,000 acres of rare wet prairie, upland prairie, and oak habitat managed by the BLM, Nature Conservancy, and City of Eugene. Collectively, these lands are one of the largest remaining areas of rare prairie, oak, and wetland habitat in the southern Willamette Valley.

This project is an opportunity for the Council to improve rare habitat in this important wildlife corridor for native insects, migrating waterfowl and songbirds, and other wildlife. It is also an opportunity to reintroduce federally listed endangered Willamette Daisy to the site.

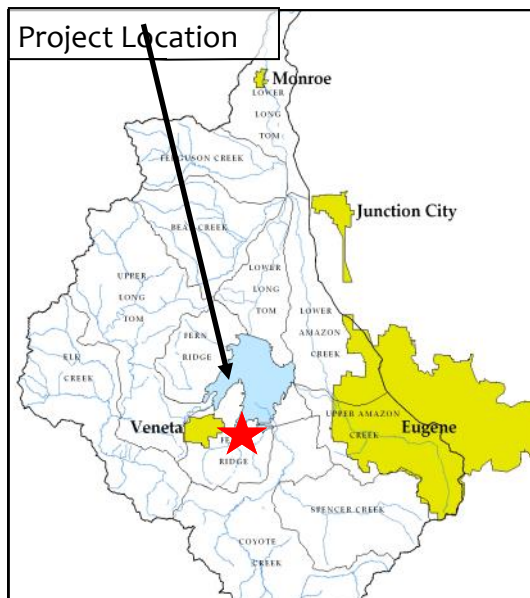
The project will improve habitat quality and increase diversity of native plant species available for native wildlife across the site. In the prairie, the project will reduce the cover of non-native grasses and encroaching woody vegetation and replace with planted native grasses and forbs. In the oak woodland, encroaching species such as Douglas fir, holly, and cherry will be removed. In the reed canarygrass monoculture, a three acre pilot area of native floodplain forest will be replanted (at right).



**Before the Project:** Wet & upland prairie were dominated by non-native grass species. The photo illustrates the scale of the site, which will create a large area of improved habitat connected to thousands of acres of adjacent habitat.



**Before the project:** Reed canarygrass (brown stalks on shore) invaded 55 acres of the former floodplain forest, greatly reducing the habitat quality and usability for wildlife. This photo shows the west fork of Coyote Creek, which is used by western pond turtles.



## PROJECT FUNDING & PARTNERS

**Total Project Cost:** **\$202,606**

### Funding & Partners:

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (landowner & partial funder)  
Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB)  
Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife (ODFW)



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**Before the project:** Areas of the oak woodland were invaded by English holly (dark green in the middle) and other woody shrubs.

## RESTORATION TECHNIQUES

### **Restoration of 69 acres of wet & upland prairie**

- Treatment of invasive grasses and forbs with herbicide on 46 acres of upland prairie and 23 acres of wet prairie
- Reseeding of both wet and upland prairie sites with a mix of native forbs and grasses
- Thinning of 8 acres of Douglas-fir from upland prairie
- Planting of ~ 10,000 plugs of rare Willamette Daisy into the restored wet prairie

### **Planting of 3 acres of floodplain forest**

- Conversion of 3 acres of reed canarygrass monoculture to forested wetland using water-tolerant, native, woody species such as willow, spirea, ash, and cottonwood

### **Enhancement of 15 acres of oak woodland**

- Felling of encroaching woody shrubs and trees and treatment of stumps with herbicide
- Hand removal of an old barbed-wire fence bisecting the oak woodland



**Before the project:** Fast-growing Douglas-fir (background) encroached on the oak woodland (trees in front of darker conifers). Some of these oaks are mature trees and will have the ability to spread its crown and produce more acorns, cover, and nesting habitat once encroaching trees are removed.

## PROJECT BENEFITS

- Improved quality of the prairie, wetland, and oak woodland areas will provide habitat continuity through an important wildlife corridor between the West Eugene Wetlands and Fern Ridge Wildlife Area.
- Benefits to native grassland birds, migrating birds, insects, and many other wildlife species that depend on these habitats.
- Reintroduction of a rare prairie plant, Willamette Daisy, which has a very small remaining population.
- Removal of woody species from the oak woodland will help the growth of native ground cover plants and increase the health of oak trees.
- Removal of fence from the oak woodland will allow wildlife to move through the area without getting injured on the barbed wire.

The Long Tom Watershed Council thanks our partners and funders!