LONG TOM WATERSHED COUNCIL

June 2006

Outdoor Tour at Lower Long Tom sub-watershed:
Historic Coyote Creek
Directions on back page

www.longtom.org *Action Through Understanding* 541.683.6578

MEETING AGENDA

June 27th, 2006

5:45 **Welcome, Introductions, & Announcements**
Will Bondioli, Vice-Chair, Steering Committee

6:00 **City of Veneta Discharge Permit Application**
Kyle Schauer, City of Veneta
Julie Berndt, Dept. of Environmental Quality, tentative

6:10 **Council's Restoration Priorities for Wetland Habitats**
Cindy Thieman, Projects Coordinator

6:20 **Historic Coyote Creek Restoration Project OUTDOOR TOUR**
Art Johnson, Landowner,
Jock Beal, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Biologist

Next Month's Meeting
July 25th,
5:45 - 8:00 p.m.
Lower Long Tom sub-watershed: The Nobles' Property

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.

Council's Restoration Priorities

Wet Prairie

Focal species: dunlin, common yellowthroat, western meadowlark, common snipe, northern harrier, sora, water howellia, Bradshaw's lomatium, Nelson's checkermallow, Willamette Valley daisy, peacock larkspur.

Status and Priority:

Wetland prairie historically covered an estimated 34,500 acres in the Long Tom Watershed. Over the past 150 years these wetlands have been converted and filled, overgrown by wetland trees and shrubs due to fire suppression, or altered to other wetland types. Today there are approximately 1,000 acres, several hundred of which are in the West Eugene Wetlands. Significantly, the acreage in the southeast portion Long Tom probably represents more than half of what exists in the entire Willamette Valley today. This network of sites provides an important hub for restoring a connected matrix of wet prairie. This habitat is a top priority due to the listed plants and candidate-listed wildlife species it hosts and because of the degree to which the habitat has been reduced and altered compared to the historic extent.

Geographic Priorities:

Please also refer to the associated map for this habitat.

High priority areas are those within the 100-year floodplain and/or with hydric soils, combined with those in low fertility/capability class.

High priority areas are those shown highlighted on map

Medium priority areas are those not highlighted on map

Considerations for prioritization*:*

Other factors for prioritization include the size of the parcel, adjacency and connectivity with other high quality habitats, and sites with the presence or proximity of at-risk species.

This habitat type is fragmented and thus restoration should 1) expand the functionality of existing habitat by restoring areas of adjacent habitats and 2) connect existing concentrations or patches. Conservation measures should prioritize sites with concentrations of existing at-risk species, that are designated critical habitat, or that are identified in a Recovery Plan.

Possible Project Types:

Wetland Enhancement (WE), Excavation/removal of fill (ERF), Elimination of drainage structures (EDS), invasive species removal, native vegetation planting, woody species removal, controlled burning (CB).

Riparian/Emergent Marsh/Oxbow/Backwater Slough/Beaver Pond/Marsh

Riparian Focal species: red-legged frog, red-eyed vireo, willow flycatcher, green heron, yellow warbler, dusky-footed woodrat.

Emergent Marsh, etc. Focal species: red-legged frog, western pond turtle, American dipper, bald eagle, purple martin, wood duck, American beaver, river otter.

Status and Priority:

Significant limiting conditions to proper riparian zone function in the watershed include loss of large conifers in the upper reaches, loss of bottomland hardwood forest, replacement of trees and native shrubs with invasive species, grasses, or bare soil, and an overall reduction in the density and number of trees in riparian areas. In some cases, the loss of function is due to a streamside wetland or prairie area being overgrown by forest. Almost 60% of riparian areas have moderate to high loss of ecological function due to one or more of these causes. Many species depend wholly or in part on riparian habitat and have been negatively affected by this loss in function. In addition, loss of shade contributes to warmer stream temperatures, which has had a significant impact on cutthroat trout.

Perennial oxbow ponds and slow-moving backwaters were much more common in the watershed then they are today. Many of these oxbows were filled in to make way for farming, and the meandering paths of lowland streams were straightened to provide quicker evacuation of high flows. These development patterns have reduced habitat for Oregon chub (historically present in the watershed), western pond turtle, and red-legged frog, among other species.

Both these habitats are a priority due to neo-tropical migrants, amphibians, and the western pond turtle. Restoration conducted here will also address fish and water quality needs. Riparian areas are a priority throughout the watershed, especially in third-order and larger streams because this is when the hydrology creates a distinctive vegetation component and affects the tree canopy.

Considering a project with the Council? Please call Cindy at 683-2983

Council's Restoration Priorities cont.

Geographic Priorities:

Please also refer to the associated map for this habitat.

These habitats are a priority in all areas of the watershed;

Known opportunities exist in:

Coyote and Upper Long Tom floodplain areas

Lower Long Tom, lower reaches of Bear and Ferguson, Lower Amazon

This links the Long Tom and Willamette Rivers for key aquatic species (migratory fish, pond turtles, chub)

Fern Ridge wildlife area, Veneta complex, and the lower basins around the southern end of the reservoir.

Poodle Creek (in Elk Creek) and other areas

Considerations for prioritization*:*

Third-order and larger streams

The larger the site the better

Presence or proximity of at-risk species

Potential wildlife response

A small area of habitat in a disturbed area may be just as valuable to nearby individual animals as a large contiguous block is to sustain populations.

Seasonal streams can be just as important as perennial if they have rare or unusual species (e.g. Willow Creek within Amazon sub-watershed).

Possible Project Types:

See project types for Aquatic – Water Quality – Restore Riparian Area Function

Notes for Terrestrial Priorities

1. Federally listed threatened or endangered species are underlined.

2. At this point controlled burning and land acquisition are two project types the Council will not undertake.

3. "At-risk" species are those listed with some kind of concern for their status in the Natural Heritage Info. Center database. There is a specific list for the Long Tom River watershed. Each species is evaluated regarding their population and breeding population status and ranked in relation to their statewide, federal and global situations, as applicable.

Meeting Backgrounder

Historic Coyote Creek Restoration at Johnson's

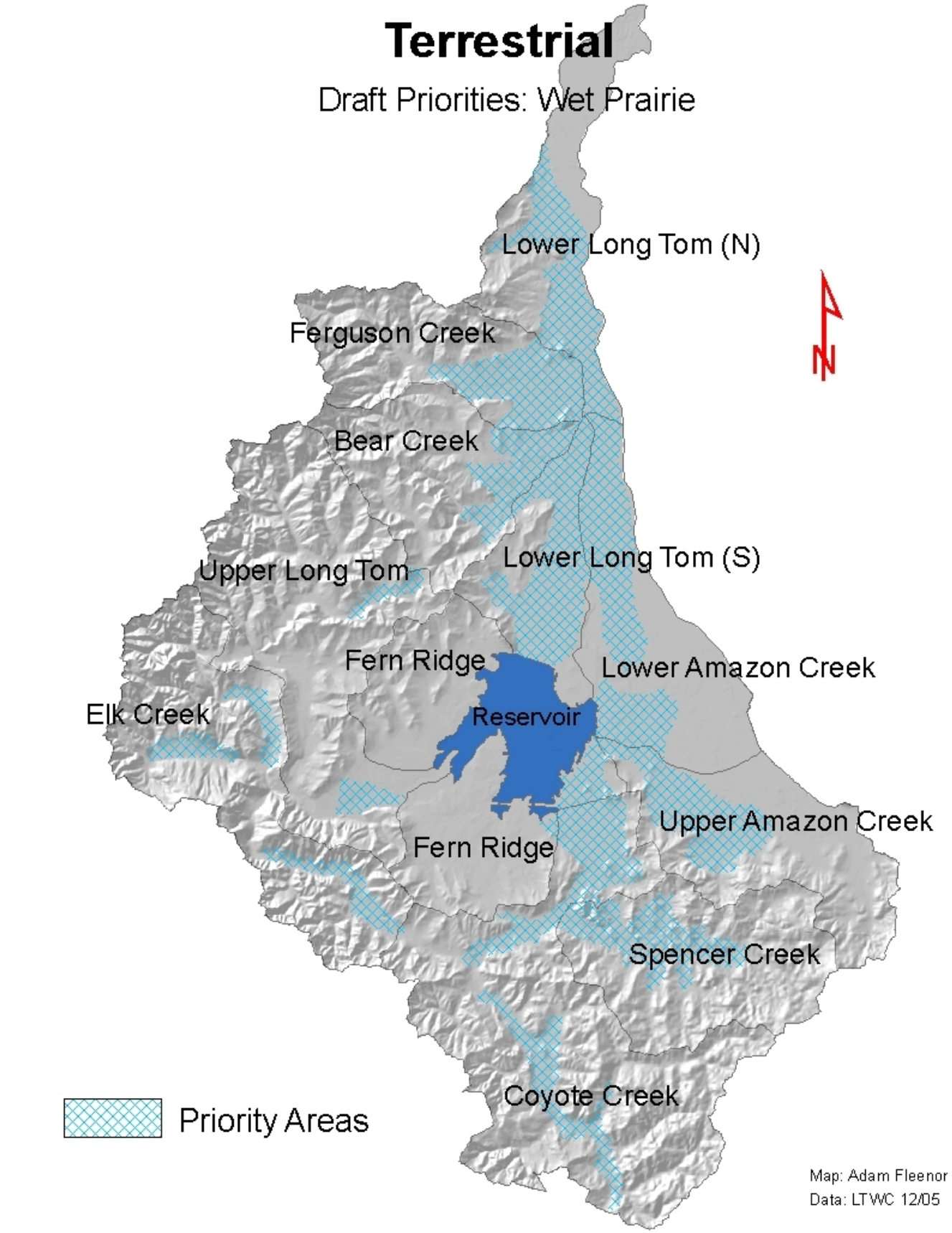
This month we will tour a riparian and prairie restoration site that the Council, landowner, and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service have been working on since 2001. This 115-acre property is located immediately south of Franklin Rd. and to the east of the Long Tom River. A historic branch of Coyote Creek meanders through the western half of the property, which we have been restoring by removing blackberry and planting native trees and shrubs. We have also begun restoring the farm fields to oak savannah/upland prairie, wet prairie, and oak woodland.

Photo of The Johnson property.

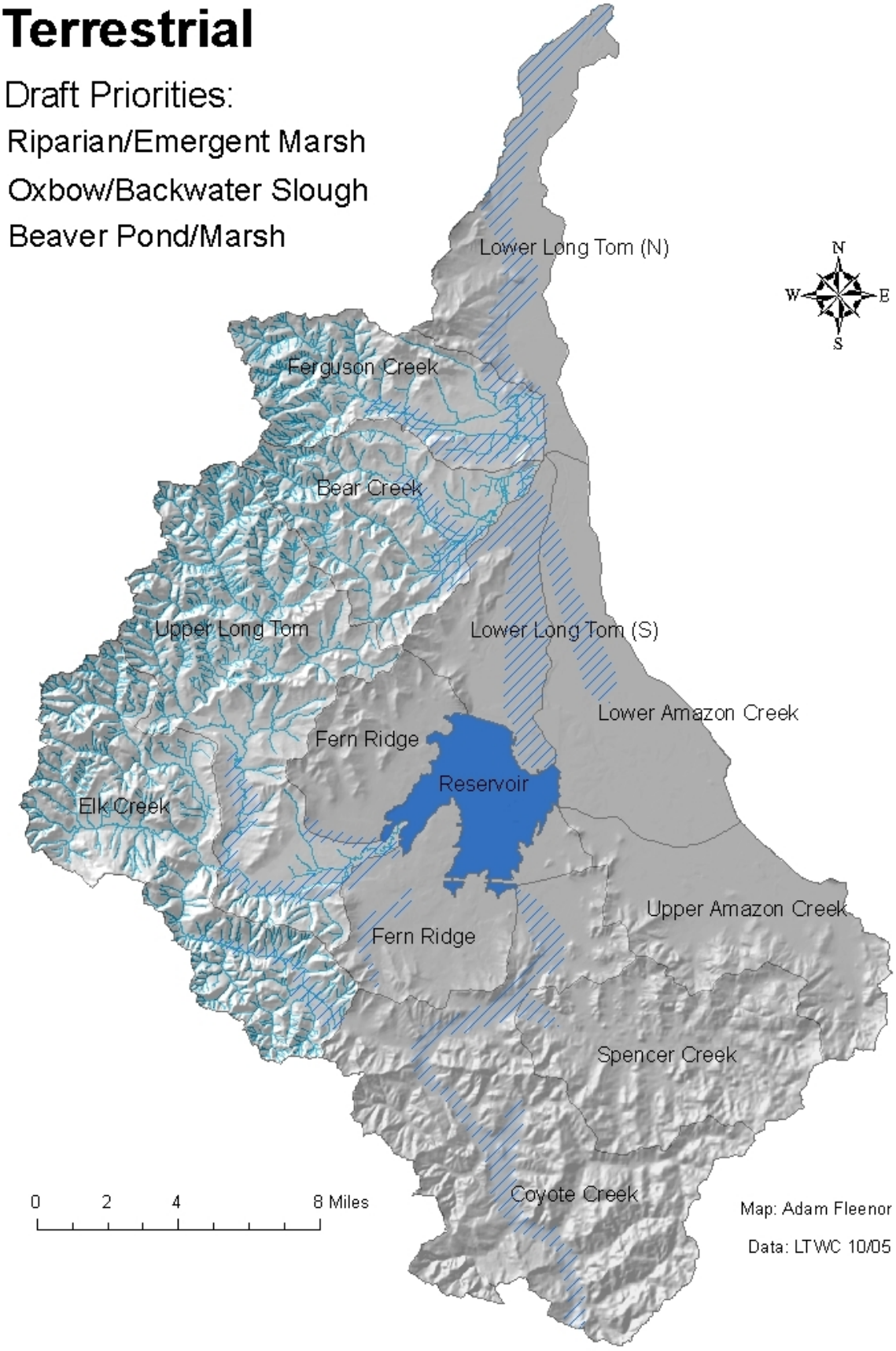
We are using the survey information collected at the site by the General Land Office in 1852 as our template for restoring the property to conditions similar to those 150 years ago. They described this site as "low level prairie intersected with numerous swales and sloughs... the timber (was) oak and (ponderosa) pine with little fir, (with) ash and thick undergrowth in the bottoms and along swales (Christy *et al*. 1998)." The map of this property shows a matrix of sloughs, mixed hardwood forest and open areas that would have been oak savanna on the dry sites and wet prairie on the wet sites.

Our tour will focus on the techniques we have used to restore both riparian area and prairie, and the wildlife use and response to restoration we have seen.

Council Priorities Map



Council Priorities Map



Council Business

Non Profit Development of the Long Tom Watershed Council

by Dana Erickson

Steering Committee has passed the draft version of our By-laws and Articles of incorporation. The comment period is now open through July 30th. We will have copies of the By-laws and take feedback at the June and July Council meetings.
Please send comments on the By-laws to the Council office by mail, phone, or email.
Steering will review, make changes, and finalize them for filing at their August 10th meeting.

Council Meeting Notes

May 25th, 2006
Amazon sub-watershed
Mariposa Woodland

Tour at Mariposa Woodland Oak-Pine Habitat Enhancement Project Area.
Presenter: Darin Stringer, Integrated Resource Management: 484-1217, darin@irmforestry.com

We began with a look at several stumps as a reference point of conditions. There is a tension zone here as there are Douglas fir on the East and North sides with Oak dominating the South and West slopes. What is the role of fire here? was a question put forth at this point. Because of fire, there was a Douglas fir 'savannah' evident in Government Land Office (GLO) surveys – do oak need that?

Habitat Mosaic Restoration Components: The **Pileated woodpecker** prefers older, dead conifer forest habitat as they prey on carpenter ants, and appreciate closed canopy species. One of the best ways to protect these bird species is to keep dogs on leash from spring through early summer since the woodpeckers are a ground-nesting and ground-foraging bird. Another species of note was the **Western Grey Squirrel** which the City is also managing for at this site. It is listed as 'Threatened' in Washington. The small brown squirrels we so frequently see are a non-native, fox squirrel from the East Coast. They are competitors of the Grey, and nest in pine trees using the winter cover for nest sites, eating the cone crops and the mycorrizae fungi fruiting bodies. Acorn woodpeckers use oaks as granary trees. These birds develop granary trees over multiple generations and they are colony nesting birds. None of the Oaks on this site may be large enough for such a use. Granary trees typically have very thickly crevassed bark.

Fire: Fire dominated the landscape in the past, and was created by humans around settlements as well as natural fires from lightening strikes. The Forest Service fire control agency documented 60,000 strikes in the path of one storm. Cheshire Mayerson (BLM) mentioned that she had a website link for more information on this subject. An example of a natural fire catalyst: a lightening strike hits a snag in April, burns the interior, two months later the snag falls to the ground, and ignites the forest duff.

Mark Your Calendars!

Our Annual Meeting will be held October 17th.

Look forward to good food, a great chance to meet your watershed neighbors, and special guest speakers.

Have you filled out our Membership Interest Form?

Please let us know about your interest - it's free, no hassle, and is a good way to connect into the many opportunities of the Council
http://www.longtom.org/volunteer.html

Council Business

Council Meeting Notes cont.

Pines, Oaks and Forest Management: The pines on this site are older, big Willamette Valley pines (known on east side as Ponderosa Pine). There are 300+ year old specimens on the Mariposa site. In the Metolius/Green Ridge area there are trees 700 years old. Crowded conditions for pines here as well as predation by bank beetle which is quick and deadly. Just one brief drought period and the beetles will come in. Drought stress intensified by density since all the roots around the area will be competing for moisture.

At the Mariposa sight you will see blue paint which is a marking of specific trees slated to be cut to release the viable oaks nearby. Viable is determined by at least 20% of its length in live crown. Anything less than 20% live crown could result in a wind thrown tree that was previously cradled by the surrounding firs. Black oak can be distinguished from White oak by its pointed leaf lobes, White oak has rounded leaf lobes. Interestingly, Black oaks are seen to bend toward light. Adam Novick noted that in the Willamette Valley they have also been susceptible to Anthracnose, a fungal pathogen. The
Black oaks found at the Mariposa site are at the northern range of their reach.

The restoration work at this site will entail hand falling trees, and burning small piles of debris. Large wood will be left as scattered wildlife piles. They will then re-seed for native understory species. Logging has been rejected as an alternative as it would involve lots of ground disturbance to get the 20+ tons of biomass/acre out of the site. In addition, laying the large logs down will create more Pileated woodpecker habitat. Further there are residents in Eugene that are opposed to pulling out some of the downed timber and selling it so that management approach is often forgone on City property, even though it could be sold and funds could pay for restoration. One of the considerations for the trees that are felled is the goal to feather the edge of the conifer-dominated forest with the a connected oak/pine/fir complex.

The stages of open to closed oak forest are: oak savannah – open oak woodland – closed oak woodland – oak forest. A good restoration strategy here would be to burn once then spray roundup (without the surfactant compound) alternately until the non-native grasses are gone.

Another interesting species of grass found at this sight is the California fescue, a very pretty ornamental which genetically interbreeds and has some variations such as pink stems. The private landowner, Jan Reeves, let Darin come in to mark saved oaks and pines for restoration. Darin also helped Jan obtain a small grant to do noxious weed control on non-native pear trees.

Council's Restoration Priorities: Terrestrial

Cindy presented a map by Adam Fleenor of the Draft Council Restoration Priorities for Upland Prairie and Oak Savannah Habitat. The priorities were detailed in the newsletter. Data for them comes from the Watershed Assessment, Council's Technical Team and the OR Natural Heritage Database. Council members thought the priorities looked good.

Riparian Restoration Monitoring – by Chris Massingill and UO student team Adam, Hilary and Skye.

Chris, Adam, Hilary and Skye presented the monitoring they did at the Long Tom Watershed Council restoration sites, which are 3 have the 16 sites they monitor in this and neighboring watersheds Mid Fork Willamette and McKenzie and Mohawk. Most of the sites are on private land (all but 3). They measure plots for survival, growth, damage, competition and are looking at them over longer term (5 years) and make recommendations after a few years of study. The Environmental Leadership Program (ELP) program at the UO has a service learning component – landowners have been grateful for that. They have 2 years of data on 1 LT site, and one year so far on the others. At the Poodle Creek site there are 122 trees planted. The growth this year was 6" for the pine, 9" cedar, 10" doug fir. The landowner mows to combat voles girdling the new trees. The students tinfoiled the tress to increase chance of survival. At the **Ferguson site** there had been a lot of high water but the plants looked good. The students picked up tress and cleaned up debris after this winter's flooding. At the Long Tom River site they had the most diversity in survival (first year).

Dana and the Council members thanked the student team and the UO for being engaged in learning with the council, about restoration on private lands. The students said it was the most valuable class they had taken due to that direct experience with a project and meeting the landowners.

Notes by Dana Erickson and Jules Gordon

Interested in other watershed councils in Oregon?
Network of Oregon Watershed Councils www.oregonwatersheds.org

Watershed Involvement Opportunities

Calendar of Events

Tuesday, July 25th
Long Tom Watershed Council Meeting
5:45 pm
OUTDOOR TOUR

July 13, Sept 7 Eugene 10a-2p
July 19 Corvallis 9am—1pm
Well Water Clinics
FREE Water Testing
Contact: 682-4243

Friday, August 11th
WREN Children's Dragonfly Walk
10:00am
FREE
Join dragonfly experts Steve Gordon and Cary Kerst for a walk to learn about the biology, ecology and behavior of the Dragonfly. Meet at the Wetland Project Office on the NE corner of W. 11th & Danebo.
Register: Holly McRae 683-6494.

Saturday, August 12th
WREN Dragonfly Walk
1:00pm
FREE
Meet local experts, and authors of "Dragonflies & Damselflies of the Willamette Valley: A Beginner's Guide" Steve Gordon and Cary Kerst for a walking tour.
Register: 683-6494 or email wew@wewetlands.org.

Ongoing Involvement

The Long Tom Watershed Council
Join us at our monthly Council meetings to find out more about us and how you could be involved. www.longtom.org/volunteer or call Jules at 683-6949.

StreamTeam
Help enhance the Amazon Creek Subbasin and the Willamette Watershed as well. Tuesday afternoons from 2:00 to 4:00 Stream Team needs volunteers to lend a hand at their native plant nurseries. We also have weekend work parties. To be added to the email notification list please contact Stream Team at 682-4850 or lorna.j.baldwin@ci.eugene.or.us

The Nature Conservancy
Saturday works parties :
2nd Saturday of each month
(February through November) 9:30-12:00. Meet on 18th at the pullouts 1/8 mile west of Bertlesen. Examples of projects include invasive species removal, native seed collection and nursery work. Please list our Saturday works parties : 2nd Saturday of each month (February through November) 9:30-12:00. Meet on 18th at the pullouts 1/8 mile west of Bertlesen. Examples of projects include invasive species removal, native seed collection and nursery work.

Oregon Trout would like to invite Council members to consider becoming Salmon Watch volunteers. Karen Wegner coordinates 33 field trips in the Eugene area and depends on volunteers to provide students with a great outdoor experience. Please check out their Web-site for more information, and to register for a training. Training in the Eugene area is Saturday August 12, 8-12 pm in Alton Baker Park. Questions? Please contact:
Karen Wegner
Regional Educational Coordinator
Healthy Waters Institute/Salmon Watch
Oregon Trout
230 S.W. 3rd Street
Corvallis, OR 97333-4692
541.753.4280

Opportunities on the Web!
www.longtom.org
www.wewetlands.org
www.ortrout.org

Our Watershed & Council

Action Through Understanding

Steering Committee

Lower Long Tom

Brent Skiles
John Reerslev
Eric Freepons
Co-Secretary

Upper Long Tom

Will Bondioli
Vice Chair
Dennis Capps
Gary Nolan

Amazon

Sarah Medary
Tina Fenley
Treasurer
Rich Margerum,
Chair

At Large

Ryan Collay
Desiree Tullos
Co-Secretary

Long Tom Watershed Ten Major Subbasins

Staff

Projects and Monitoring
Cindy Thieman
(541) 683-2983

Coordinator
Dana Erickson
(541) 683-6578

Assistant Coordinator
Jules Gordon
(541) 683-6949

Want to save your Council money on mailing costs?
Let us know you'd like an electronic version by emailing jules g at longtom.org.!

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

TOUR Tuesday!

DIRECTIONS FOR RESTORATION TOUR:

The site is on Franklin Road, South of Junction City.
From Hwy 99, go West on Meadowview Rd. (Meadowview Rd is North of the golf course and South of the storage place. It's also about 1.8 miles North of Airport Rd., and about 1.8 miles South of Milliron Rd. where the livestock auction is located.)
Travel West on Meadowview to the "T",
then turn right on Alvadore Rd., then left on Franklin.
~2 miles later, turn left onto the dirt road immediately before you would otherwise cross the Long Tom River. Plenty of parking.

Restoration Project Tour on this site at 5:45 p.m. Tuesday—June 27th