LONG TOM WATERSHED COUNCIL

Bimonthly watershed news and meeting notice

MARCH 2008

Action Through Understanding

COUNCIL MEETING

Tuesday, March 25th, 2008
6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
Junction City - *Council Chambers*
(directions on back)

Weirs installed to make culverts passable to native cutthroat trout on Cox Butte Road

AGENDA

6:30 pm **Welcome and Roundtable Introductions**

6:40 pm **Restoration Project Slideshow - Cox Butte Road Culverts**
Overview of Council's recent Fish Passage Improvement Project

7:00 pm **Junction City TMDL Implementation Plan**
Draft plan and strategies the City of Junction City will use to address pollution sources that increase temperature, bacteria and mercury in the Willamette River. Comments welcome.
Denise Kalakay, *Lane Council of Governments*
Kay Bork & Jason Knopes, *Junction City*

7:40 pm **Drinking Water Protection in the Long Tom Watershed**
Source water assessments, potential contaminants, most common and highest threats. Discussion : What can we do?
Jacqueline Fern, *Department of Environmental Quality*

8:10 pm **Groundwater in Southern Willamette Basin**
Latest monitoring results on nitrates and other contaminants. Action items from the Groundwater Committee.
Audrey Eldridge, *Department of Environmental Quality*

8:20 pm **Announcements & Closing/Meeting Review**

Inside:

Save-the-date for the next Council Meeting:
Tues., May 27th 5:45 p.m.
Restoration Project Tour

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) 683-6578 · Fax: (541) 683-6993
www.longtom.org

Council Meeting Backgrounder

COUNCIL MEETING

Tuesday, March 25th, 6:30 p.m. Junction City - *Council Chambers*

Restoration Project Slideshow - Fish passage improvement at Cox Butte Road Culverts

Please see backgrounder from January 2008 Newsletter

Junction City Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Plan for local Water Quality Improvement

Denise Kalakay, *Lane Council of Governments*
Kay Bork & Jason Knopes, *Junction City*

TMDLs are documents written by the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) when specific pollutants in a water body exceed state standards. When the Willamette River TMDL was completed for local temperature, bacteria and mercury problems, many local towns were listed as Designated Management Agencies (DMAs) by the DEQ. Three of these DMAs are within the Long Tom Watershed – the cities of Veneta and Junction City, and Lane County. Lane Council of Governments has been working under two DEQ grants to assist these local governments in writing their TMDL Implementation Plans and has included the local watershed councils as part of the conversation and assistance. The Long Tom Watershed Council has played a small role in assisting the City of Junction City in creating a draft TMDL plan and matrix of actions — this plan will be presented for your review, questions and feedback.

Drinking Water Protection in the Long Tom Watershed

Jacqueline Fern, *Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)*

Overview of Higher Risk Potential Contaminant Risks Identified in Long Tom Watershed Drinking Water Source Areas: The summary information below is based on Source Water Assessment data compiled for drinking water source areas in the Long Tom Watershed. Source Water Assessment reports provide an important first look at potential risks to public drinking water.

<u>10 Highest Risks to Surface Water Sources:</u>

- Known Contamination Sites/Plumes/Spills
- Chemical/Petroleum Processing/Storage
- Wastewater Treatment Plants/Collection Stations
- Junk/Scrap/Salvage Yards
- Irrigated Crops
- Wood/Pulp/Paper Processing and Mills
- Landfill/Dumps
- Mining Activities - Gravel Mines/Gravel Pits
- Transportation - Stream Crossings
- Pesticide/Fertilizer/Petroleum Storage, Handling, or Mixing

<u>10 Highest Risks to Groundwater Sources:</u>

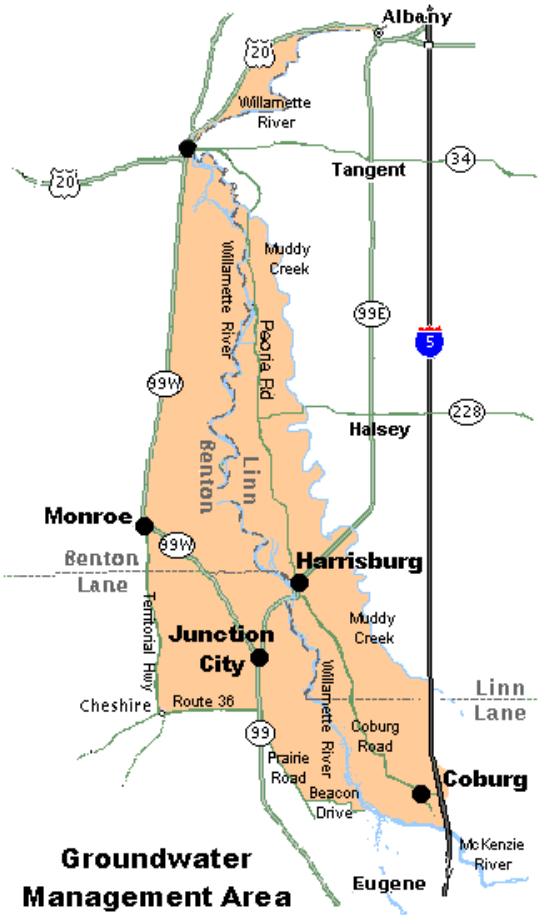
- Large Capacity Septic Systems (serving more than 20 people)
- Auto Repair Shops
- Residential/Commercial/Municipal Wells
- High Density Septic Systems
- Gas Stations (existing)
- Gas Stations (historic)
- Parking Lots
- Abandoned Wells
- Underground Storage Tanks
- Junk/Scrap/Salvage Yards

Council Meeting Backgrounder (continued)

Groundwater in the Southern Willamette Basin

Audrey Eldridge, *Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)*

The Willamette Valley is one of Oregon's fastest growing regions and depends heavily on groundwater for private wells, public drinking water, irrigation, industrial operations, and other beneficial uses. Over the last 20 years, many studies and sampling programs have focused on groundwater quality in the Southern Willamette Valley. The results have identified nitrate contamination of shallow groundwater in some parts of the Valley. In May 2004, the Department of Environmental Quality declared a portion of the Southern Willamette Valley a Groundwater Management Area (GWMA) because of elevated groundwater nitrate levels. Although low levels of nitrate are natural, a variety of human activities have caused high nitrate concentrations in the groundwater (DEQ, 2004).



The GWMA is comprised of approximately 230 square miles of land within the Southern Willamette Valley. The GWMA boundary begins on the northern edge of the Eugene/Springfield metropolitan area, the second largest in the state of Oregon, and extends 50 miles north just beyond the city of Corvallis. It encompasses the 100-year Willamette River floodplain and a number of tributaries that flow into the Willamette River. The area includes portions of Lane, Linn, and Benton counties and the cities of Harrisburg, Junction City, Coburg, Monroe, and a small portion of Corvallis.

In 2004, the DEQ formed a stakeholder group, known as the Groundwater Management Area Committee (GWMA Committee), to develop nitrate reduction strategy recommendations for a region-wide, DEQ-approved Action Plan. This plan was also to include strategies to address other potential risks to the 52 public water systems in the GWMA. The stakeholder group represents a cross-section of land use sectors in the region. Their Committee's vision is to foster efforts to reduce nitrate contributions and prevent further groundwater contamination through the implementation of the Action Plan.

The overarching goals of the Action Plan are to:

Reduce nitrate levels to less than 7 milligrams per liter (mg/L) throughout the region and sustain this reduction in order to rescind the declaration of the GWMA.

- Disseminate information about the area to solicit input and encourage actions that will protect the groundwater resource in order to engage and involve all groups and citizens concerned with, interested in and/or affected by GWMA plans or programs.
- Support efforts to reduce nitrate and protect the aquifer from other potential contaminants by encouraging both a short- and long-term commitment from federal, state, and local agencies.
- Preserve and enhance the health of the aquifer while maintaining traditional and/or locally appropriate land uses. Emphasis is on the development of specific voluntary strategies that avoid leaching nitrate to groundwater.

For more information, visit: http://groundwater.oregonstate.edu/willamette/index.html.

Giving Thanks

Our deepest thanks to our hard-working Stewardship Volunteers who helped us restore local creeks by planting native trees and shrubs this winter!

Volunteer Sarah Mazze helps plant native trees and shrubs along Ferguson Creek

Audrey Abbott
Michael Balk
Anna Bawn
Matt Biller
Jesse Blakely
Jeff Boehnke
Bryana Cesary
Matt Cleghorn
Cailan Collet
Braeden Cornelius
Tristan Cornelius
Sean Courtman
Patrick Decker
Jake Demming
Scott Demming
Charles Denson
Sean Dinno
Tanner Dunlea
Marvin Evanado
Thea Evenstad
Matt Fiore
Jacob Gordon
Zack Grogan
Katie Holding
Nathan Howard
Lauren Jow
Mychael Kidd
Steve Korin
Jeff Lane
Ian Loftis
Logan Loftis
Zachary Lyke
Katie MacKendrick
Sarah Mazze
Dylan Metzgar
Sammy Morey
Carri Morrison
Grace Neal
Stephanie Ostrander
Geo Pax
Duncan Robb
Molly Roman
Peter Ruffier
Gavin Russell
Jessie Schults
Melissa Sipe
Emily Smallwood
Lynnette Stetson
Conner Stevens
Del Stevens
Curtis Taylor
David Tholer
Sarah Thomas
Spencer Treffry
Charles Vokner Winn IV
Ranfis Vollatoro
Todd Waggoner
Cindy Watson
Cody Watson
Tabatha Waters
Steve West
Colony Weyrauch
Courtney Weyrauch
Kasey White
Joseph Wilken
Sarah Williams
Gregory Wobbe
Matthew Zemski
Kara Zwickey

Want to help host our party—the 2008 Annual Celebration?

Contact Jenna Garmon at:

(541) 683-6949 or

jgarmon at longtom.org

DONOR RECOGNITION

Our Gratitude To

Lane County Small Woodland Owners Association

For supporting the Council this year!

Would you like a presentation about the watershed and our Council?
Would your agency or organization like to talk about ideas for collaboration?

Please call Dana Erickson at 683-6578

Seeking Volunteers for Stream Surveys

Help Survey Fish Passage Barriers in the Long Tom Watershed!


Cutthroat Trout

Project Description: With grant funding from the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board, the Council is working to assess barriers to fish passage throughout the watershed. With information collected through field surveys June through September 2008, the Council will identify priority projects for removing migration barriers and restoring passage for cutthroat trout and other migratory fish in the Long Tom Watershed.

Benefits and Activities for each Volunteer:

1. Learn about problems cutthroat trout and other migratory fish face in the watershed; how culvert design and maintenance affect migratory fish species; and how individual landowners can play a role in helping restore fish passage and reconnect fish to important habitat areas up- and downstream through culvert improvements.
2. Receive training on field equipment (e.g., GPS, laser level, clinometer) and data collection techniques necessary to gather field data accurately and consistently.
3. Assist in collecting and recording data in the field on culverts or other types of barriers (e.g., barrier width, height, substrate type, gradient, water depth, habitat quality, etc.) at predetermined sites throughout the Long Tom Watershed.

Qualifications:

- Good attitude and ability to work as a team – volunteer stream surveyors will work with other volunteers and Council staff to complete barrier surveys.
- Ability to take measurements in and around streams; help carry equipment.
- Interest in stream restoration, migratory fish, freshwater ecology, water quality or related field.

Hours and pay: This is a volunteer position. Opportunities are available June-September 2008.

Time commitment: Ideally volunteers will commit to at least five days during the project period. However, we encourage all interested individuals to contact the Council so we may consider a time commitment that works for you. In **mid-May 2008**, we will hold a **volunteer training day** to welcome volunteers and introduce the project in more detail, including data collection, field equipment, and visits to survey sites. Interested volunteers are highly encouraged to attend the training day.

Application process: Please *send an e-mail or letter* to Jenna Garmon (jgarmon at longtom.org) briefly describing your interest in this project, related skills, and available time commitment. **Thanks for your interest!**

Do you have a dam or culvert on your property that we could survey? There are NO ramifications for any landowner that has a culvert or dam that blocks fish passage—simply an opportunity to let us work alongside you to address it, brining in grant funding and technical expertise. We can provide many references of satisfied landowners we have partnered with.

What habitats do you have and could you enhance them?
What can you do about the health of your stream and riparian area?

Call Cindy at 683-2983 to discuss project possibilities

Watershed Tips

Healthy Lawn Care, Healthy Creeks and Rivers
Lawn care tips from the Regional Coalition for Clean Rivers and Streams

A healthy lawn and garden is the best way to combat weeds, diseases and pests in your yard. Relying too much on fertilizers and pesticides may be a symptom of an underlying problem in your lawn and garden and can make problems worse. Fertilizers with high levels of quick-release phosphorus and nitrogen can pollute storm drains, streams, rivers and other waterways. This impacts the health and habitat of water-dwelling creatures like fish and amphibians. Pesticides - insecticides, herbicides and fungicides - are used to control weeds, diseases, insects and other pests such as slugs. These chemicals are toxic and can pose a threat to people and pets if overused or carelessly applied. They can also kill beneficial insects, earthworms, birds and other organisms, disrupting the ecological balance of your lawn and garden.

Here are eight easy steps for growing a healthy lawn without using pesticides or other chemicals.

1. Apply compost
Top dress your lawn with fine compost about a quarter-inch deep to provide a slow release of nitrogen. Compost improves the condition of the soil and allows for better water retention, thereby reducing water needs. Adding organic material improves drainage and provides food to the microscopic creatures that provide nutrients to your plants.

2. Grasscycle
Grasscycling is the practice of leaving grass clippings on the lawn. Regular grasscycling releases nutrients back into the lawn and reduces your fertilizer needs by up to 50 percent. You'll also save time by not needing to bag and dispose of the clippings. Importantly, please do not put clippings on sidewalk, street or gutter.

3. Use organic or slow-release fertilizer
Usually compost alone can't provide enough nutrients for plants, so use a complete organic fertilizer each year. A soil test is one way to determine your fertilizer needs or whether you even need to fertilize. Organic fertilizers are made from naturally occurring materials such as bone, seaweed and rocks, not chemicals.

Organic fertilizer releases nutrients over a longer period of time and won't run off your lawn into waterways after a rain. Organic fertilizer also supports the variety of soil organisms that improve fertility and combat diseases. Whether you decide to use organic or a synthetic fertilizer, it will work better with compost. Remember not to fertilize right before a heavy rain is predicted. Properly timed fertilizing is essential for a healthy lawn. You only need to fertilize your lawn once a year in late fall, especially if you grasscycle. If your lawn really needs it, you can also fertilize in late spring. Using too much fertilizer weakens the lawn and contributes to excess top growth.

A healthy lawn is a light meadow green color; a blue-green lawn indicates heavy nitrogen use. Heavy nitrogen leads to more growth on the top of grass at the expense of the roots, which can make your lawn more vulnerable to disease and pests. For additional fertilizing information, contact your local extension agent.

Do you have a neighbor or friend that might be interested in the Council?
Membership is as easy as expressing interest in watershed issues and Council activities.

Please call Jenna Garmon at 683-6949

Watershed Tips (continued)

4. Skip the weed and feed
Weed and feed is more than just fertilizer. It contains weed killers that may damage soil and lawn health, as well as pollute waterways. Evidence suggests that pesticides may also harm humans, pets and wildlife. Why use weed killer over the entire lawn, if you only need to get rid of a few weeds? Dispose of toxic lawn and garden chemicals safely at a Metro hazardous waste facility.

Weed and feed does nothing to prevent germination of new weed seeds. If your lawn is healthy, weeds will have less opportunity to take root. Accept some weeds, such as clover, and remove others by hand in spring and fall when the soil is damp. Clover actually fixes nitrogen in the soil and makes it available to your lawn. If necessary, spot spray problem weeds with the proper herbicide at the right time of the year. Mow regularly to keep seed heads from developing, or pull them off by hand.

5. Aerate and over seed with appropriate grass varieties
Older lawns can benefit from a little extra help in late spring or early fall. Aerate using a rented power aerator, or push a garden fork six inches deep every four inches into the lawn and work back and forth to loosen the soil. After aerating or raking to expose soil, over seed with a rye/fescue mix designed for Pacific Northwest conditions. Talk to a knowledgeable nursery person or contact the OSU Master Gardeners for seed recommendations.

6. Water deeply but infrequently
Over watering promotes diseases and excessive growth, leaches nutrients from the soil and wastes water. Don't water until you see the first signs of wilt. You can tell your lawn is wilted when footprints remain after you walk on it. About an inch of water a week is all your lawn needs. Let the lawn dry out between waterings to encourage deep roots that will withstand the stress of drought.

For lawns on heavy clay soils, water twice a week (or as needed) distributing 1/2 inch of water over the lawn at each watering so the soil can absorb it while avoiding surface runoff. Measure irrigation water by placing a can (a tuna can is good) on your lawn to catch the water. After one hour of watering, 1/2 inch should accumulate.

7. Know when to water
Save water and money by watering your lawn in the early morning or at night. The least amount of water will be lost to evaporation at that time. This type of watering schedule also reduces disease problems and poor water distribution caused by wind.

8. Have less lawn
Lawns require a lot of fertilizer and water, and large lawns limit plant diversity. Overall, less lawn can mean less work!

For more information Call Metro Recycling Information at (503) 234-3000.

Or visit: www.cleanriversandstreams.org; www.healthylawns.org OR www.conserveh2o.org/lawncare.html

Interested in other watershed councils in Oregon?

Contact the Network of Oregon Watershed Councils: www.oregonwatersheds.org

Opportunities & Calendar

Council Events

Council Meeting

Cox Butte Presentation, Junction City TMDL Plan, Drinking Water & Groundwater
Tuesday, March 25; 6:30 p.m.-8:30 p.m.
Junction City - *Council Chambers*
Contact: Jenna Garmon, 683-6949;
jgarmon at longtom.org

Volunteer to be a Stream Surveyor

Help us complete our Fish Barrier Assessment for the native trout of the Long Tom Watershed.
More details on page 5 of this newsletter.
Contact: Jenna Garmon at 683-6949 or
jgarmon at longtom.org.

Help us make our 2008 Annual Celebration a Success!

Volunteer with our Event Committee - help with program planning , food, advertising, whatever floats your boat!
Contact: Jenna Garmon at 683-6949 or
jgarmon at longtom.org.

Restoration Project Tour

Location and agenda TBD
Tuesday, May 27; 5:45 p.m.

Other Events

WREN Wednesday Wetland Wanders
Take casual walks through West Eugene Wetlands sites. Wanders will occur each second and fourth Wednesday of the month, from 9-10 a.m. WREN will provide binoculars. Wear shoes that can get muddy.
March 26 – W. End of Royal Ave.
April 9 - Willow Creek Natural Area
April 23 - Stewart Pond
Contact: 683-6494 or visit www.wewetlands.org.

Nearby Nature Volunteers Needed
Love nature? Enjoy kids? Lead school nature walks in Alton Baker Park this spring. No experience needed--free training provided in early April.
Contact: 687-9699; info@nearbynature.org; www.nearbynature.org.

Nearby Nature Spring Special Nature Walks
Animal Tracks & Traces-Search for park animal homes, tracks, and other signs with tracker extraordinaire, Dave Walp. Free for Nearby Nature guides-in-training, $3/public.
Friday, April 4: 9-11 a.m.
Meet outside the Alton Baker Park Host Residence.
Pre-register: 687-9699.

Volunteers in Parks - Park Stewardship
The program is ramping up for an exciting spring as community volunteers engage in much needed stewardship of their favorite parks. Activities include clean up and fix up items, mulching landscape beds, learning to prune, and planting annuals this spring and perennials this fall. Adopting a park or a landscape bed, attending a training, planting natives, and trail maintenance are just a few options.
Contact: Lorna Baldwin at 682-4845 or lorna.j.baldwin@ci.eugene.or.us.

Contacts for volunteer opportunities:

Nearby Nature: 687-9699
WREN: 683-6494
City of Eugene, Volunteers in Parks: 682-4845
City of Eugene, Stream Team: 682-4850

Our Watershed & Council

Action Through Understanding

Steering Committee

Lower Long Tom

Jim Pendergrass, *Chair*
Eric Freepons
Tony Stroda

Upper Long Tom

Ric Ingham, *Co-Vice Chair*
Tina Fenley, *Treasurer*
Patti Little

Amazon

Peg Boulay, *Co-Vice Chair*
Brad Taylor
Eric Wold

At Large

Kat Beal
Will Bondioli
Ryan Collay
Rich Reeves
Corey Johnson, *Recording Secretary*

Contact Us:

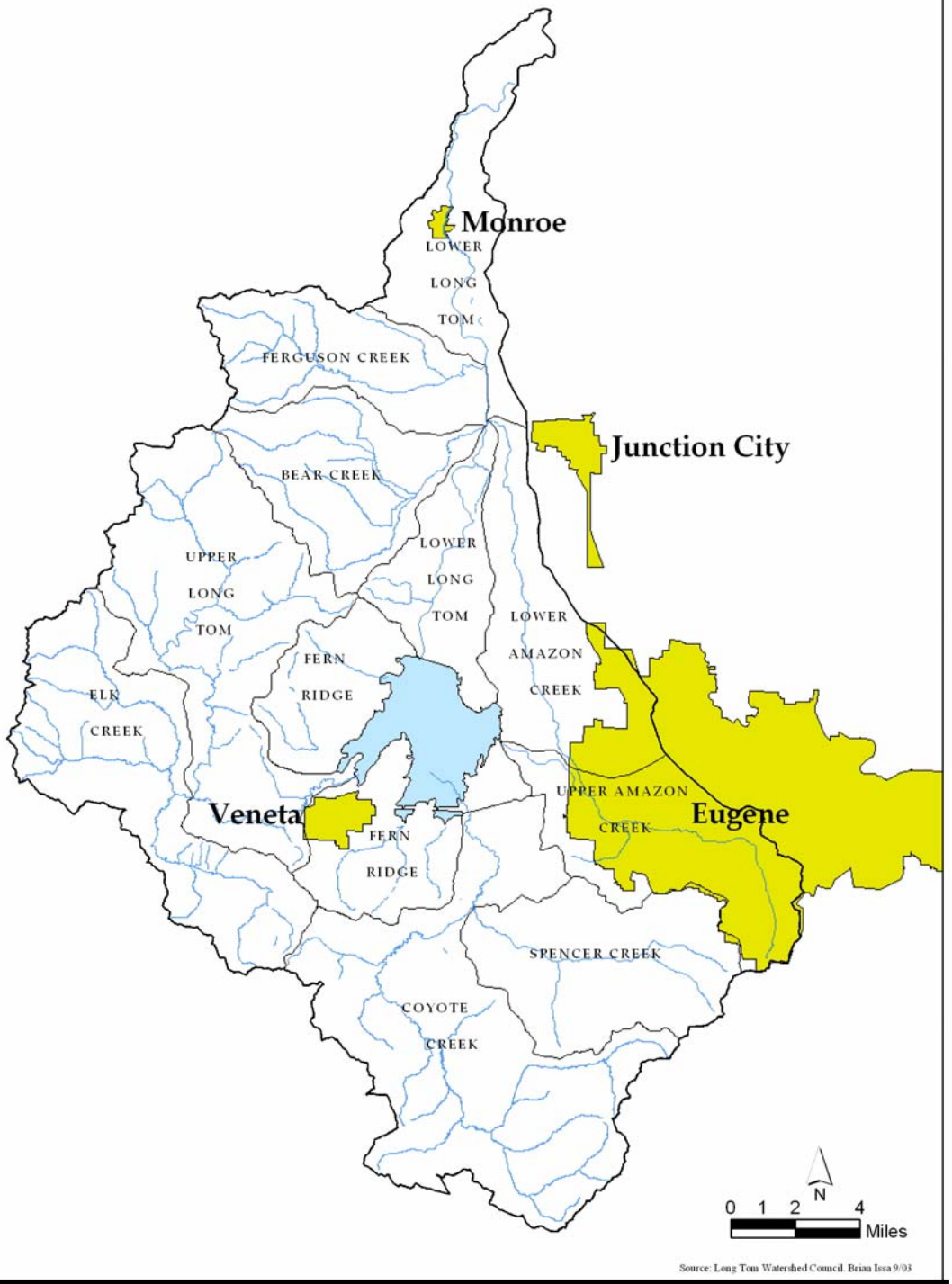
751 S. Danebo Ave.
Eugene, OR 97402

Phone: (541) 683-6578

Fax: (541) 683-6998

Web:
www.longtom.org

Long Tom Watershed Ten Major Subbasins



Staff

Projects and Monitoring	*Coordinator/E.D.*	*Stewardship & Outreach*
Cindy Thieman	Dana Erickson	Jenna Garmon
(541) 683-2983	(541) 683-6578	(541) 683-6949

Council Meeting Tuesday, March 25th in Junction City: Project Presentation on Cox Butte Fish Passage Project, Junction City TMDL Implementation Plan, Drinking Water Protection in the Long Tom Watershed, Groundwater in the Southern Willamette Basin

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

March Council Meeting
Tuesday, March 25th - 6:30 p.m.
Junction City - *Council Chambers*
680 Greenwood Street
Junction City

Directions:

Highway 99/Ivy Street is the main street through Junction City. The city building is located 2 blocks to the east off Ivy Street between 6th & 7th Streets. The building is named "City Hall".