# Long Tom Watershed Council

Celebrating Twenty Years of Community Support

February 2017

**Action Through Understanding**

# Public Meeting Invitation

## Long Tom River Landowners - Come review the maps please!

### Thursday, February 16, 6 - 7:30 p.m.

### Monroe Community Center, 380 N. 5th St.

*Left: Forty or so community members attended our November public meeting in Monroe that introduced the Lower Long Tom Enhancement Plan Project. Right: Long Tom River looking downstream from Monroe.*

## Join us for the first public meeting in our 20th year!

### Meeting Topics

- Refresher of the overview, vision, and purpose of the project
- Presentation of technical maps to help us think about how the river currently flows, and thoughts from project leads
- Opportunity for stakeholders to comment and provide feedback—how do these maps align with your observations?
- How these maps and community conversations will help generate ideas for better habitat along and around the river

### From 5:30—6:00 p.m., meet Clinton Begley

***Clinton is LTWC's new Executive Director**. Join him for coffee, refreshments, and casual conversation before the meeting.*

**Refreshments provided**

**Free, and open to all**

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


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# *Long Tom River Landowners - Come review the maps please!*

***Long Tom River Habitat Enhancement Project - Public Meeting #2***

The maps are here! In November, the Council kicked off an outreach and engagement process to identify habitat enhancement opportunities for the Long Tom River downstream of Fern Ridge Reservoir. The Council's goals for this project are to find the best ideas to: 1) improve habitat, 2) address fish passage blockages, and 3) increase channel capacity via more natural processes and connections instead of only mechanical means. About 40 watershed stakeholders attended the first public meeting and heard presentations on past management practices applied to the river, and current river conditions. We also learned about the inundation mapping process that is providing the technical maps for us to think about how the river currently flows and spreads out on its floodplain.

The Council is convening a Project Steering Committee of local stakeholders along the river to participate with ideas and feedback that help guide the project and make the most of this grant opportunity and community effort. The Council is also collaborating with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers because they manage the river channel. The Corps is also interested in opportunities to increase the channel capacity where needed and get maintenance ideas.

## Speakers

**Pete Gruendike** is a Fisheries Biologist and GIS Specialist at River Design Group, which created the inundation maps for the project.

**Cam Bishop** is a Natural Resource Specialist for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Willamette Valley Project.

**Denise Hoffert** is a local consultant and project manager for developing the outreach and implementation plan.

**Jed Kaul** (Fish Biologist) is one of the LTWC staff lead for the project.

The Council is hosting a second public meeting on this project on **February 16**. This meeting will feature Pete Gruendike from River Design Group explaining the maps, thoughts from the project leads, partners and technical folks, and time for your review and comments. The inundation maps show where water is using its floodplain under a range of winter flow conditions. During 2017 these maps and conversations with landowners will be used to help us all generate ideas for future habitat enhancement projects that landowners could implement if they'd like, and the Council will help with technical components and grants as usual. We invite your participation at this meeting to learn more about the mapping process, tell us how these maps line up with water levels you observe on your property or elsewhere, and to generate and share ideas for better habitat along and around the Long Tom River.

The Council will be hosting two more public meetings in 2017 (likely April/May and November) to provide opportunities for watershed stakeholders to learn about the information and ideas generated by the project and contribute and review ideas for habitat enhancement opportunities. In the coming weeks, the Council will post information about this project to the website (longtom.org/science-projects) and we'll include how you can stay informed and participate. This project is in the early phases with many opportunities at hand. Please watch our newsletter or the website for updates!

Questions? Denise Hoffert, denise.confluence@peak.org or 541-619-5896. Or Dana, dana@longtom.org

**Public Meeting: Thursday February 16, 2017, 6:00 – 7:30 pm, Monroe Community Library.**

# Coordinator's Letter from Clinton Begley

Over Christmas I spent some time walking with my dad at our family farm in northeast Missouri. In the family since my grandfather purchased it in 1952, the remaining 34 acres of our farm sits on the banks of North River, a tributary to the Mississippi that is remarkably similar to the Long Tom. It had been a year since I'd walked the property, and the changes in that year were striking to anyone with knowledge of the land. The sycamore my father had planted by our cabin two years ago shot up from a skinny chest-high sapling to a 15-foot tall thriving tree. The spot on the river where we used to let the county excavate gravel has filled in with a wide sand bar; tracks of turkey and deer can be seen crisscrossing the beach and the ice shelves covering the shallows. The beginnings of a beaver dam are now visible on the far bank. And the "Bottom Patch," a small plot we took out of production six years ago, is now supporting several small eastern red cedars standing above the knee high grass, where remnant soggy corn stalks and thickets of invasive multiflora rose had battled our brush hog just a year or two before.

Talking with Dad about the work we've done, and the improvements we were now seeing on our land, reminded me a lot of the Council's work in the Long Tom. Whether it is an industrial partner in Eugene seeing the difference year-to-year in the water quality leaving their site, a rural resident watching the willow stakes become full trees at a riparian planting, or a donor watching an organization and community they've invested in grow to meet the needs of the watershed, the culture is the same. It is a culture of planting the seeds for a healthy and functional landscape and stewarding those investments as they grow. It is a culture of leaving the community and the land better than we found it for future generations. It is a culture of taking ownership for the health of our home right now.

*The North River in Missouri, lined with cottonwoods and willows, bears similarities to the Long Tom River.*

This year the Council will celebrate 20 years of community support. Families and neighbors have been stewarding the Long Tom Watershed for generations. Twenty years of a watershed community working through its council to build a collective practice that stewards our land and water - our home - is a remarkable and significant milestone. This community has built something special that is uniquely equipped to address its needs, and the strength and resilience in neighbors helping neighbors has never been more valuable.

My family and neighbors have been a part of stewarding the land and water on our farm long before I was born, so the changes we continue to see year-to-year are part of a collective memory. They are significant, and rewarding. I've only been with the Long Tom Watershed Council just shy of two years, but as I continue to grow into this new role as the Council's Executive Director, I am excited to continue learning from the collective memory of those who have been invested in the health of this watershed for a very long time.

It is an enriching opportunity to continue the work and vision into which so many have invested of themselves, and it is a responsibility that I intend to steward in the same way the Council has always approached stewardship, by doing it together. Thank you for your support of your community and your council, I look forward to working alongside you in stewardship of this incredible watershed in the years to come. - *Clinton*

# Ice Storms: Perspectives from Forestry and Forest Ecology

Winter has certainly grabbed our attention this year! In particular, December's ice storm was one of the most impactful ice events this watershed has seen in several decades. The effects of the storm are still prominently on our minds, especially for those folks continuing to clean up or deal with property damage. Thousands lost power and trees collapsed under incredible weight, crashing into homes, vehicles, barns, and anything else under their shadow. While the storm's impacts are readily apparent in our own neighborhoods and communities, the ecological and economic impacts on the watershed's forests are also significant.

From an ecological perspective, disturbance events that cause changes to the landscape, like ice storms, are a natural process of the forest cycle. Freezing rain, especially of the magnitude we saw in December, is rare and requires very particular weather conditions. Even less than one degree of temperature difference, either warmer or cooler, could have produced very different results. For forests, ice storms are similar to other brief but powerful types of disturbance like fire; years, decades, or even centuries of static conditions can be interrupted by a few hours of dynamic weather.

As much as humans rely on order, forest ecosystems depend on messiness. Fallen trees and branches from these kinds of storms provide openings that allow more sunlight into the forest floor and encourage a wider array of shrubs and deciduous trees to flourish, which by extension provide a variety of food for wildlife. Disturbance also increases habitat complexity by encouraging a diversity of tree and shrub species to grow in the newly created open areas and multiple canopy layers begin to take shape.

*Photos from Clinton Begley*

The dead trees themselves are also beneficial. An astounding 80% or so of native wildlife rely on dead wood in some capacity, which provides refuge in the form of hollows for nesting, areas for perching or roosting, and places to store and find food. Once a tree dies, many other species start to take up residence, including bacteria, fungi, insects, nematodes, and more; these species create a valuable food source for many animals. Dead wood on the ground is also used for shelter when animals are moving through the forest. Trees that fall into rivers and streams benefit aquatic species, like our local cutthroat trout, by encouraging the channel to meander, creating deep pools, and backing up gravel for spawning. The Council tries to mimic this process in some of our in-stream projects by placing large logs directly into the creek. So the next time you're looking for birds and wildlife, perhaps start in an area that has undergone some sort of disturbance.

For some who rely on timber for their livelihood, though, the storm often created additional economic and operational challenges, with many folks needing to adjust their harvest operations to salvage and recover merchantable logs sooner than expected. The ice storm's impacts were variable across the watershed. Parts of the

*Continued on next page*

Coyote Creek basin were hit particularly hard, and some folks are still working to clear roadways and fully assess damage. With the weight of the ice snapping off many trees – in some cases hundreds within a small area – one of the biggest impacts on timber owners is a reduction in the number of trees they'll be able to harvest at full rotation. If not harvested, fungus could infect wounds in the downed trees, causing the trees to rot from the inside, and further reducing the value of those trees. Beetles pose another problem. Emerging in spring, beetles will first feed on dead or damaged trees impacted by the storm before turning their attention to the rest of the stand. Added stress from the last three years of drought can exacerbate trees' susceptibility to beetles and reduce their resilience. In order to limit rot and beetle infestations, many woodland owners will need to send the broken trees to the mill this year to reduce the chance of localized outbreaks from fungus and beetle infestations.

*This old big leaf maple at LTWC's office was snapped off by December the ice storm.*

In addition to the randomness of localized weather conditions, the degree of impacts a given landowner faced depends in part on how a particular plantation is managed. According to Lane County Extension Forester Lauren Grand, younger and especially closely-spaced trees are more susceptible to damage. One technique that may minimize loss is to maintain a plantation that's not overcrowded. The growth of stronger, more vigorous trees with wider diameters can be stimulated by thinning trees with smaller diameters or smaller or unhealthy crowns, and by maintaining larger spaces between trees. Timber owners, like many folks who experienced property damage, are making the most of a challenging situation. While infrequent in our area, ice storms are one of the many natural processes that continue to shape our forests over time.

*Thank you to folks who contributed facts and ideas: Alan Dickman (University of Oregon), Lauren Grand (OSU Extension Service, Lane Co.), Cary Hart (Giustina Land & Timber), and Lindsay Reaves (Bauman Tree Farm)*

## Dana Dedrick recognized with Service Recognition Award!

In December, the Rivers to Ridges Partnership Executive Team met to share successes from the year and honor those who have made important contributions to the partnership and conservation efforts in the region. Dana Dedrick, the Council's Special Project Lead and former Executive Director, was honored for her 19 years of contributions to work in this region that foster community learning and voluntary action. Other awardees include Neil Bjorklund of the City of Eugene for his work, and Shawn Donnille of Mountain Rose Herbs for his leadership as a supporter of conservation organizations and initiatives in the region (including LTWC!). Rivers to Ridges is made up of 16 partner organizations locally, including NGOs like LTWC, state and federal agencies, and area municipalities.

*Dana Dedrick (center) is presented with the award by Joe Moll of McKenzie River Trust (left) and Eric Wold of Willamalane Park & Recreation District (right)*

# *Recent Gifts—Thank you for your support!*

Thank you for your holiday donations during our year-end campaign! Our work in the watershed depends upon community support and we are grateful for the many sustaining donors who continue to help us grow to meet community needs. We also excited for the numerous first time donors who are joining us in this important work! Thank you all for being generous stewards of your watershed!

***Business League:*** Bauman Tree Farm, Huntons' Family Farm, Transition Management, Inc.

***Individual Donors:*** Peder Allison, Ed Alverson, Rolf Anderson, Sharon & Jim Blick, Peg Boulay, Troy Brandt, Ted & Lindy Brown, Ryan Collay & Iris Tiedt, John & Marilyn Daniel, Dana Dedrick, Alan & Sue Dickman, Dennis & Sandra Faulhaber, Len Gillette & Pennie Spraggins-Gillette, Elliott & Kathryn Grey, Susan Hall, Glen & Genie Harden, Phyllis Helland & Ray Morse, Cliff & Kari Herbert, Sue Kacskos, Sarah & Robert Kaul, Anthony Knox, Kurt & Mary Koehler, Lane Forest Products, Liz Lawrence, Gary Lech, Pat McDowell, Linda Modrell, John Moriarty, Margo Murman, Bonnie Olin, Keli Osborn, Pacific Ag Systems, Inc., Nancy Pierce, Mike & Bonnie Quigley, Steve Sertic, Paul & Ann Simonds, Ron & Pamela Swisher, David & Suzanne Turner, Jabrila & David Wali Via, Mary Ellen West, Michael & Jan Whitty, Charles Zennache & Bonnie Henderson

# *Volunteers help steward Owens Creek project!*

Thanks to the nine volunteers who helped with project stewardship at our December 12 work party! Students from University of Oregon and Oregon State University, in cooperation with Trout Unlimited members and volunteers from the watershed community, assisted with the removal of invasive Scot's (or "Scotch") broom and the planting of native seeds at one of the Council's habitat enhancement sites at Owens Creek, a tributary of Bear Creek west of Junction City.

The Council planted native trees and shrubs at this project site in 2013 and 2014, and stewardship activities like these benefit the long-term viability of young plants, which can take 3-5 years before they're "free to grow." In the meantime, volunteer efforts help keep the regrowth and encroachment of invasive species like Scot's broom minimized and provide young native plants space to grow and become established. Thank you to this dedicated group for your work toward a healthy Long Tom Watershed!

# 2017 Public Meeting Calendar

## *Lower Long Tom River Enhancement Plan*

**Thurs., Feb. 16, 6 p.m., Monroe Community Library**

At this 2nd project meeting, we'll share new maps to generate and share ideas for better river habitat.

## *History of the Long Tom Watershed*

**Tues., March 28, (likely date) 6 p.m., Veneta Community Center**

Join board member David Turner and other contributors of his book, *Along the Long Tom* River, for a presentation on the watershed's cultural and anthropological history.

## *Oak Habitat Workshop*

**Outdoors, Saturday in late May / early June (date TBD)**

Workshop will provide opportunity for landowners interested in stewarding habitat to build knowledge on how to enhance oak habitat on working lands

## *Tour: Willamette River Improvement Projects*

**Tues, June 27, about 11 miles north of Harrisburg**

Don't miss our first public tour of the Snag Boat Bend & Sam Daws Landing projects along the Willamette River!

## *Annual Meeting & Celebration!*

**Outdoors in September (date & location TBD)**

We're celebrating our 20th year of community support and voluntary action as a watershed council!

## *Urban Waters & Wildlife Program Update*

**Tuesday, Oct. 24, location TBD**

Current activities and scope of urban program; summary of the drinking water picture for the watershed

## *Lower Long Tom Enhancement Plan Summary*

**Tuesday, Nov. 28, Monroe Public Library**

Key findings from community conversations. Presentation of Lower Long Tom River Enhancement Project Plan.

**** Dates and locations may be subject to change. Updates will be posted in future newsletters and at longtom.org.***

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 use the following disclaimer, 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!

# LTWC Board of Directors

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David Turner

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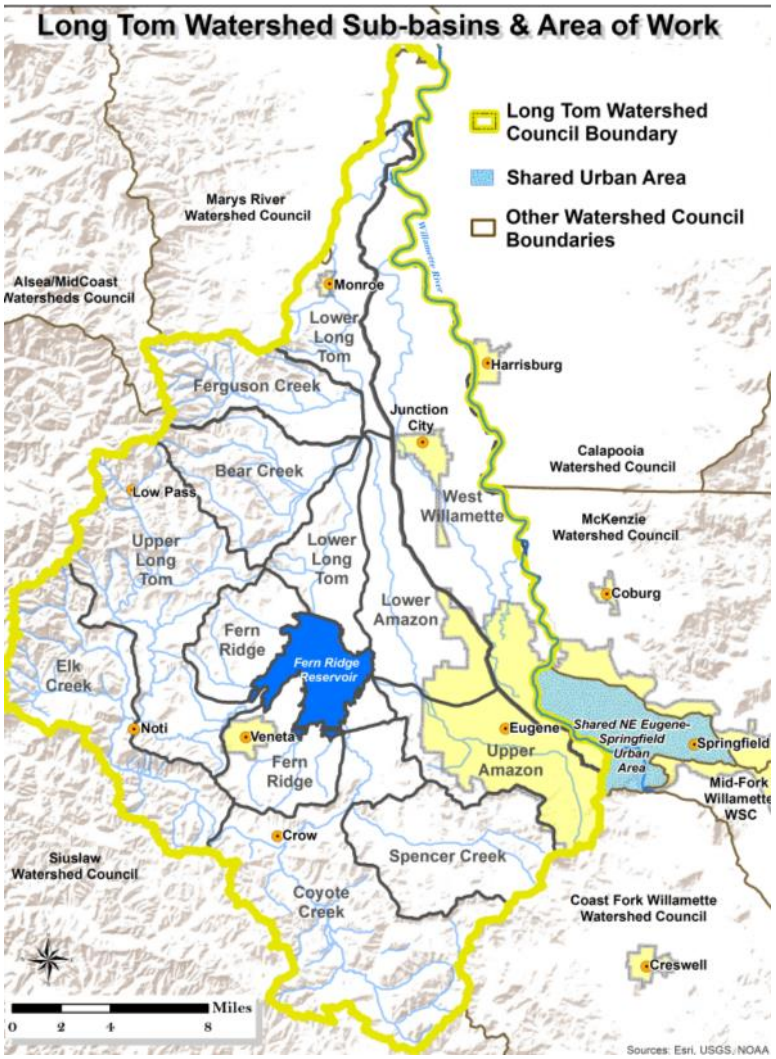


# Council Staff Contacts

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**Katie MacKendrick**, *Ecologist:* 338-7033

**Sarah Whitney**, *Urban Habitat & Stormwater:* 654-8965

**Amanda Reinholtz**, *Habitat & Water Quality Spc:* 338-7060

**Heidi Heisler**, *Fiscal Manager*: 338-7042

**Trisha Maxfield**, *Ops & Database Assistant:* 338-7055

# *Improving stream bank habitat with willows*

Over just a two-day stretch in January, LTWC Fish Biologist Jed Kaul and a crew from R. Franco Restoration Inc. **planted 18,000 willow stakes**! Five thousand stakes were planted along a project on Coyote Creek and the other 13,000 at Snag Boat Bend near the mainstem of the Willamette river.

There are several willow species native to the area, and a variety were planted at both sites. Willows are fast growing and can quickly revegetate streambanks; they also provide shade and habitat for wildlife. While Rosario Franco's crew are experts and extremely experienced in getting this type of work done quickly and effectively, willow stakes are an easy planting method for landowners to do themselves and are great for stabilizing banks. Stakes can be cut from live willows at 3-6 feet in length and then planted to at least half their depth and right side up. They need to be planted in areas where their roots can reach the water table during their first year of growth, and they grow best when planted in winter or early spring before buds appear. Willows are a great way for private landowners to create high quality streamside habitat on their properties, and they will put on impressive growth in areas close to creeks.


***Long Tom Watershed Council***
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**www.longtom.org**


## February 2017 Public Meeting

**Thurs, Feb 16, 6 - 7:30 p.m.**

**Monroe Community Library, 380 N. 5th St.**

Located across the street from the Monroe High School on main street through town

****Join us from 5:30 - 6:00 p.m.** *for conversation and refreshments with* **new Executive Director, Clinton Begley!***