



photo by Edie Moro

The Long Tom Watershed Council and Bennett Vineyards and Wine Company worked together to replace a smaller culvert with this bridge, improving water flow for fish in Bear Creek. The LTWC is celebrating 20 years of service with a buffet dinner, awards, and a panel discussion at Bennett's on Thursday, Sept. 14.

Long Tom Watershed Council celebrates two decades of work

by Edie Moro
The Tribune News

The Long Tom Watershed Council will mark its 20th year with a panel of speakers, volunteer awards, a buffet dinner and music by the 'Eugene City Barnstormers' at its general meeting Thursday, Sept. 14. The event will take place at Bennett Vineyards and Wine Company, 25974 Hwy 36 in Cheshire. Bennett's is one of many rural partners working with the Council to improve water quality and habitat along the Long Tom and its tributaries.

Operations Director for the Council, Rob Hoshaw, outlined the evening events. A five-member panel of speakers includes staff, board members and community partners who have been active in the Council. The point of bringing together the panel is that the Council would not have happened without the cooperation of the staff and our partners, explained Hoshaw.

The panelists span the time from the beginning to the present, and will share stories and thoughts about the organization, its formation and relationship-building period, and how the Council designed its approach to improving water quality and habitat. The panel members are Cindy Thieman, Doug Card, Jason Hunton, Ryan Collay, and Charles Ruff. The panel conversation will be facilitated by Council board member David Turner.

Cindy Thieman was on staff for 17 years and was the former restoration director. She and former Executive Director, Dana Dedrick, were the first staff on the Council and formed the earliest relationships with Council partners and land owners. Dedrick retired from her position last year, but still works part-time for the Council. Doug Card is a local historian who is knowledgeable about local geography.

Jason Hunton is a local farmer and co-owner of Sure Crop Farm Supplies. The Huntons have been important farmers and partners from the beginning, doing a project and helping to build relationships with other local farmers. Ryan Collay was on the initial steering committee that became the Council board. He helped to get the Council started. He was an academic at Oregon State University and is a local resident.

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The blue concrete stable. A new st

by Edie M
The Tribune

Harrisburg res complained about forever. It tastes dirty, and corrodes appliances. City has wrestled with this problem for s Currently, the af which comes fro not treated with t of chlorine added bacteria. The water i just not appealing.

A previous ana water made abou

Walton's

by Terah Van
The Tribune

Bobbi Jo Bond, and Thea Bell are the of Walton's Half-W July first. The trio



Step back in

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Charles Ruff is the outgoing board chair, having been on the Council board since 2010. He is the former general manager of the Oregon Country Fair.

The Long Tom Watershed Council is a non-governmental, non-regulatory agency. Their partners work with them on a completely voluntary basis. "This has been emphasized from the beginning, and is a major foundation of our approach," stated Hoshaw.

Since its inception, the Council has partnered with farmers and rural residents. It has grown to recently add an urban component, working with industrial and commercial business owners in the Eugene/Springfield metro area on storm water projects. "This is one of our biggest areas of growth," explained Hoshaw, adding that the same goals and tools are used as in rural areas to enhance water quality and habitat. These include building swales and rain gardens that remove toxins from rain water, and planting native trees and shrubs for animal habitat.

A typical rural project is solving fish passage problems created by small culverts that limit water flow. The Council works with local ranchers, winery owners, and other rural residents to install larger culverts or bridges to help increase water flow. Another typical project is to identify and help remove invasive plants along streams, and to plant native trees and shrubs in their place.

The Council conducts instream projects, as well, adding logs to streams to diversify water depth and habitat. This provides hiding places for fish and insects, and helps to make the stream more meandering.

In the last six to eight years, the Council has added an upland component that focuses on oak savannah and prairie restoration. There is only one to two percent of the original oak savannah/prairie remaining in the entire Willamette Valley, with a good part of it in our area, according to Hoshaw. This oak savannah/prairie is home to a wide variety of animals and plants.

Overgrown oak savannah/

prairie may be improved through removing invasive species and trees such as Doug fir and ash that grow too fast and outcompete the oaks. Then, native trees, shrubs and grasses typical of the oak savannah and prairie may be planted. Ideally, the Council would like to identify land owner partners with areas next to each other that can be improved. This would create 'stepping stones' for plants and animals to spread and repopulate this habitat.

The Long Tom Watershed Council funds its work through grants from state and federal agencies, as well as private foundations and community support. The Council holds a public meeting once a month on the last Tuesday of the month in either Veneta, Junction City, Monroe, or Eugene. To find out where the next meeting is to be held, or to register and pay to come to the Sept. 14 meeting and dinner, visit the Council's website, www.longtom.org, or call 541-338-7055. Registrations must be made by Sept. 11.