



Long Tom Watershed Council

September 2020 Newsletter

**Action
Through
Understanding**

Turtle Tales: A Story of Conservation

Two part turtle learning opportunity in partnership with WREN

** Sept 22 Tour at Golden Gardens Park * Oct 20 Virtual Videos*



Photos by Robin FitzClemen, robinfitzclemen.squarespace.com

We are hosting our first outdoor tour of 2020! This limited attendance tour will be held at Golden Gardens Ponds on Tuesday, September 22 from 9 - 11 a.m. If you're unable to join the tour, don't worry! A series of short virtual videos will follow on October 20. **Both the tour and video opportunities are being presented in partnership with the Willamette Resources & Educational Network (WREN).**

City of Eugene ecologist Lauri Holts will take participants on a guided tour to learn about northwestern pond turtle life history and conservation while walking this city park in northwest Eugene. Western pond turtles are one of two native turtle species in Oregon and can be found basking on logs or swimming in creeks, rivers, ponds, or wetlands. These reptiles are declining in numbers, though, in the Long Tom Watershed, the Willamette Valley, and across Oregon. Northwestern pond turtles have been identified as a species of concern in the Oregon Conservation Strategy.

Inside this Newsletter

- Turtle Tales Event Info*2
- Highlights of Planned Work* 3
- Annual Celebration Save the Date* ..6
- Openings to Join LTWC Board*6
- Volunteer Appreciation*7
- Lane Co Seeking Input*.....7
- Donor Appreciation*8
- Photos of New Office*.....8
- Watershed Map* 8
- Staff and Board Contacts* 8

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.

www.longtom.org  [Like us on Facebook](#)

11 East 27th Ave., Eugene, OR 97405

Phone: (541) 654-8954 Email: coordinator@longtom.org

Turtle Tales: A Story of Conservation

Both the tour and videos will highlight:

- Overview of native and non-native Oregon turtles and how to identify them.
- Northwestern pond turtle life history and the different habitats that supports each life history stage.
- Threats to pond turtles and how the loss of habitat has contributed to their decline.
- Point out the various habitat types present at the site and what features are important to keep in mind when looking for and helping to improve turtle habitat.
- Pond turtle conservation efforts to enhance habitat at Golden Gardens Park.
- What can people do to help turtles and where they can report turtle sightings, including
- An opportunity for the community to get involved in citizen science! People can help partners in Oregon enhance our collective understanding of the distribution of western pond turtles by reporting sightings and information through the iNaturalist app!



Northwestern pond turtle at Clear Lake (part of Amazon Creek system west of airport)

Sept 22 Tour Registration Info: Our priority is the safety and care of those joining us. In order to ensure the safe distancing for all attendees, **our maximum threshold for the Northwestern Pond Turtle Tour is 8 people.** To guarantee impartiality, will be choosing participants via the lottery system. Those interested in participating can **fill out the form on our website at longtom.org/turtletales with their name, email, and phone number by September 14.** If you are interested in attending the walk with someone, please submit one email with both of your names and contact information (limit one entry for a maximum of two people). Lottery winners will be chosen and **notified by September 16.** All tour attendees will be asked to wear masks for the duration of our exposure to one another and attendees are asked to maintain 6-foot physical distancing between households.

Oct 20 Virtual Video Info: For those unable to join the tour, you can watch the highlights online! **LTWC and WREN are collaborating to post a series of short video vignettes featuring tour highlights and a western pond turtle documentary created by University of Oregon master's student Robin FitzClemen** (robinfitzclemen.squarespace.com), who is generously giving us permission to share his short documentary with the community! We especially want to thank the interviewees in the documentary, which include Lauri Holts, ODFW wildlife biologist Chris Yee, and LTWC's Amanda Reinholtz.



City of Eugene ecologist Lauri Holts talks about northwestern pond turtle conservation at Golden Gardens Ponds (Photo by WREN)

Highlights of This Year's Planned Work

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected how our families and communities approach our work and day-to-day lives. This is no different at LTWC, where staff are still primarily working remotely and following protective safety protocols when in the field. However, what we said in April still rings true -- **while our work for a healthier watershed has taken on a new meaning, the work hasn't stopped!** There is so much incredible work happening at the council right now alongside landowners, Tribes, partner organizations, and many of you.

We wanted to highlight some of this exciting work happening across our programs. In July, our Board of Directors approved LTWC's annual Work Plan and budget for Fiscal Year 2021 (July 1 - June 30). You're welcome to check out **our full Annual Work Plan, available at longtom.org/about-ltwc/action-plan**. If you have any thoughts or questions about the work this year, please feel free to contact Clinton Begley: coordinator@longtom.org.

Community Engagement & Support for Diverse Communities

The collective wisdom of our community is at the core of our mission, and building lasting relationships with the community is a major focus of this year's activities. Grants from the Oregon Community Foundation and Collins Foundation are supporting work to **build relationships and explore partnership opportunities with Tribes with the goal of uplifting Indigenous voices while breaking down systemic barriers and forces of colonization.** This intersects with our organizational goal of **incorporating a lens of diversity, equity, and inclusion throughout all our work.**

LTWC is supporting staff and board members in learning and self-reflection on how we can do our part to undo the harm

and trauma systems of white supremacy and oppression inflict on Black, Indigenous, and People of Color.

We're also continuing to facilitate a Native youth education program, rebranded this year as Traditional Ecological Inquiry Program (TEIP), and we're also continuing our important work on the Lower Long Tom to analyze alternatives to the Monroe dam, and alongside partners like the City of Monroe, Army Corps, and Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, determine which of the potential solution is ideal for fish, habitat, drinking water, and community goals.

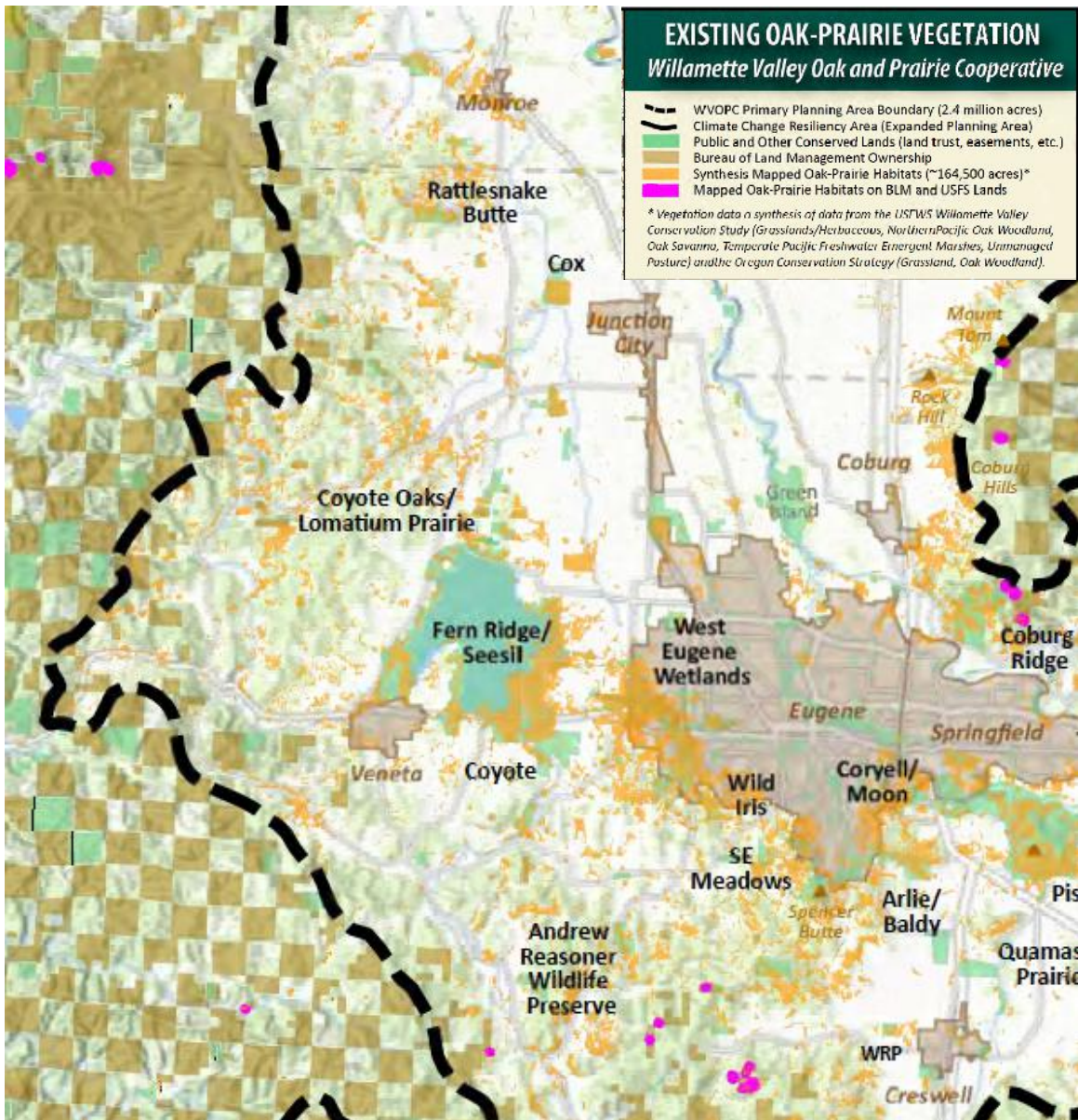


The watershed welcome sign on Highway 126

Upland Oak & Prairie Program

This area of work has diverse and broad partnerships, and our sphere of partners continues to grow. LTWC's Uplands Program overlaps considerably with our community engagement efforts, especially as we **seek to understand how Tribes want to manage their lands and lands within their historic territories, and consider how that translates to oak and prairie restoration in the Long Tom.** We're also working to broaden our knowledge and understanding of restoration techniques including building skills and **awareness of controlled burning as a tool and helping landowners learn about fire management; exploring the creation of biochar from restoration slash and its potential benefits; and deepening our understanding of**

grazing as a tool for enhancing upland habitats. **Upland restoration work is continuing on at least 10 sites** alongside private and public landowners to thin oak savanna and oak woodland, control invasive species, and seeding native prairie grasses and forbs.



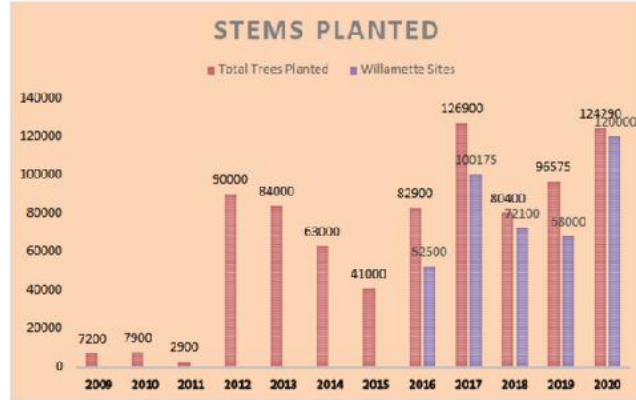
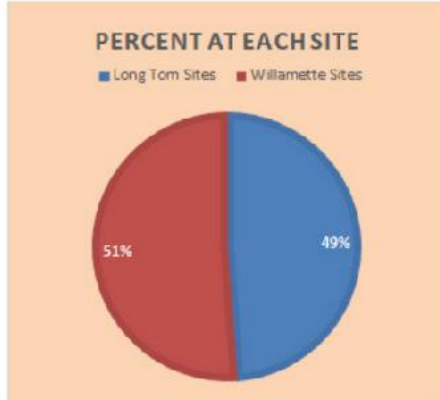
Map of remaining oak and prairie vegetation in the Willamette Valley, zoomed in to the Long Tom Watershed. Map prepared by Jeff Krueger under the guidance of the Willamette Valley Oak Prairie Cooperative.

Riparian & Willamette Mainstem Restoration

At Snag Boat Bend along the Willamette mainstem, we are **planting an additional 60+ acres of historic floodplain forest, thinning 14 acres of overcrowded cottonwood stands, and tending to hundreds of acres of plantings from the last few years.** We're also planning to **analyze design alternatives for removing or altering a large revetment that currently cuts off floodplain and side channel habitat for native fish.** After a decade of work and significant accomplishments in the Bear, Ferguson, and Coyote Creek basins as part of the Willamette Model Watershed Program, we're excited to shift some of our focus toward the **upper Long Tom and Elk Creek sub-watersheds, where we'll be prioritizing and developing new restoration projects alongside interested landowners.**

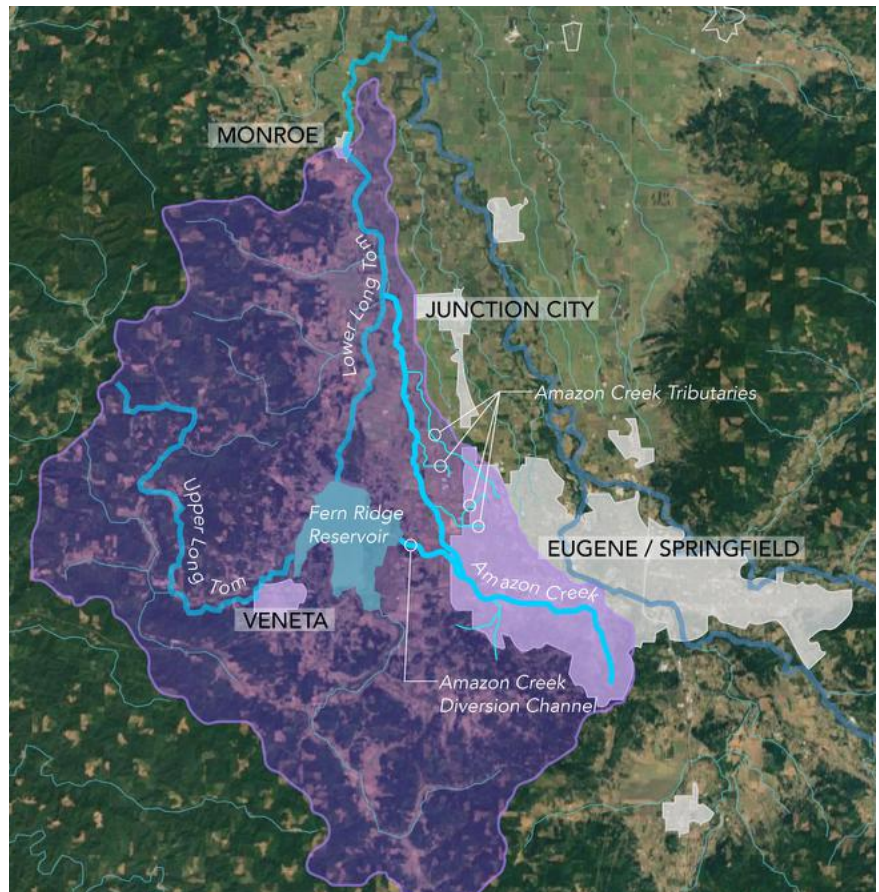


Long Tom Watershed Plants Trees



Urban Waters & Wildlife Program

This year, we're excited for the opportunity to "scale up" the successful partnership model in the City of Eugene and expand our outreach and stormwater project efforts into Springfield and the broader metro as we rebrand the program as the **Upper Willamette Urban Waters Program (UWUWP)**. This work is made possible by a substantial grant from the Environmental Protection Agency and considerable support from EWEB, Springfield Utility Board, the Cities of Eugene and Springfield, and our Upper Willamette Stewardship Network partners. Work also includes the completion of a planting incentive program for private businesses alongside the City of Eugene and the **design and implementation of "Trout Friendly Landscapes" stormwater projects, including those that will benefit Monroe's drinking water supply.**



The City of Monroe receives its water from the Long Tom River. Urban areas upstream have a significant impact on downstream drinking water quality.

Annual Celebration: Save the Date for November 12!

Mark your calendars for our virtual Annual Celebration on **Thursday, November 12 at 6 p.m.** While we will miss gathering and celebrating together in-person with you, we have a great program in store nonetheless! As usual, we will honor and celebrate the accomplishments of outstanding partners, volunteers, and community members with Watershed Awards. We will elect new volunteer board members and thank outgoing members for their service. This year's program will feature you, the watershed community, in a video produced by Cliff Etzel of CE Visuals. The video will highlight the connections several of you have to the watershed, what inspires you, and what your hope is for the future of the watershed and this council. You won't want to miss it! **More details will follow in October's newsletter.**



2019 Annual Celebration. Photos by Marcus Kauffman Photography

Interested in Joining LTWC's Board of Directors?

Do you care deeply for the health of the lands and waters of the Long Tom watershed? Are you interested in the human and social systems that support watershed health? We have openings on our Board of Directors!

We are seeking candidates who can meet 10 times a year for our general board meetings, participate in at least one sub-committee, and bring your lived experience and expertise to the table for the health of our watershed, and the diverse communities that depend on it.

If you are interested and would like to learn more about board service with the Long Tom, or let us know about someone you think we should reach out to, you can send a letter of interest to info@longtom.org (or mail to 11 East 27th Ave., Eugene, OR 97405) with your name, why you're interested in being on the Long Tom Board of Directors (or why someone we should reach out to might be a good fit), and a short bio about yourself and what you might bring to benefit the lands and waters we share.

We can bring board members on anytime throughout the year and currently have openings!

You can read our bylaws regarding board membership, and the most recent annual report on our website (longtom.org).



Slate of incoming board members at our 2018 Annual Celebration (Photo by Dave Thomas)

Thank You, Paddle & Pull Volunteers!

We'd like to extend a huge thank you to all the wonderful volunteers who showed up to our aquatic weed pull on the Long Tom River at Monroe. It was a perfect way to spend time appreciating our namesake river in the (socially-distanced) company of great people, including LTWC board member Lindsay Reaves and McKenzie River Trust volunteer coordinator Elizabeth Goward. And we were thrilled to find only one small patch of ludwigia on the entire paddle - a huge contrast to our first year hosting this event, when canoes were full and the work seemed endless!! We were able to spend much more time just appreciating the scenery including the small, idyllic Monroe waterfront and the many stately oaks lining this stretch of river.

Many thanks to the US Army Corps of Engineers and Oregon State Weed Board for their support of this project over the past five years, to the hard-working crew from Habitat Contracting to whom we can credit our on-the-ground success, and our incredible partners at the City of Eugene (especially Lauri Holts) for doing this work alongside us, mentoring us, and sharing resources including - crucially! - the kayaks for this pull-and-paddle event.



Lane County Wants to Hear From You!

Take the County's survey to share your priorities on their Climate Action Plan before September 30

Lane County is creating a Climate Action Plan (CAP) to better understand how the County and its residents can help prepare for and address climate change. The County seeks community input to help with this planning. They are at the beginning of this process and want feedback from county residents that will shape how they create this plan. **Their 5 minute survey opens September 9 and is available at <https://survey.participate.online/s3/lane-county-cap>.**

The survey will ask:

- How you want to participate in the process and provide feedback on the plan.
- What your priorities are for the types of actions that they can include in the plan.

More information is available at lanecounty.org/climateplan.

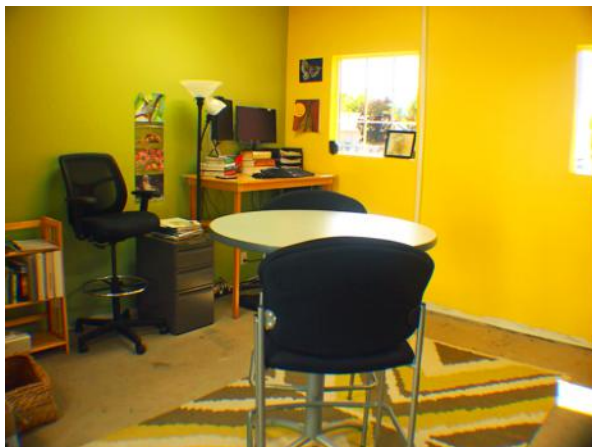
Thank You for Giving to LTWC!

July - August Giving

Linda Bovard, Paula Conn, Len & Pennie Gillette,
Kurt & Mary Koehler Fund of the
Oregon Community Foundation,
Anami Ridge

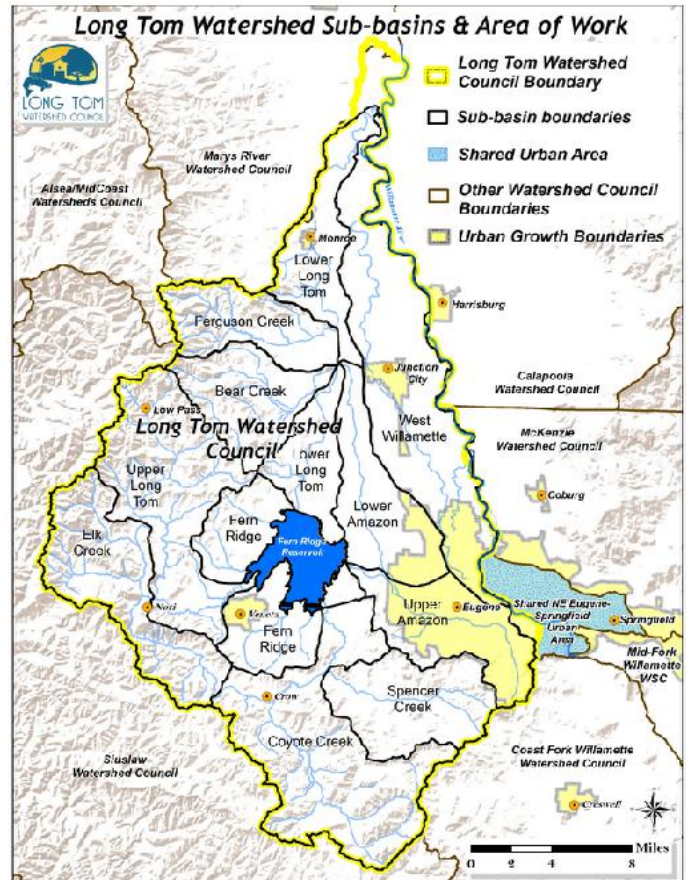
St. Mary's Episcopal Church (Faith Community Fund)

We're Settling into our New Office!



LTWC Board of Directors

Chair: Shelly Miller
Vice-Chairs: Pat McDowell and Alec Hrynyshyn
Treasurer: Taylor Evans
Secretary: Lindsay Reaves
Members: Jabrila Via, Jamie Newsome, Jodi Sommers



LTWC Staff: info@longtom.org

Abby Colehour, Restoration Projects Manager
Amanda Reinholtz, Habitat & Water Quality Spc.
Clinton Begley, Executive Director
Dana Dedrick, Special Projects Lead
Heidi Heisler, Fiscal Manager
Jed Kaul, Fish Biologist
Katie MacKendrick, Restoration Ecologist
Lorette Waggoner, Operations Coordinator
Miranda Hawkes, Stormwater Drafter & Designer
Rob Hoshaw, Operations Director
Sarah Whitney, Urban Stormwater
Sydney Nilan, UWSN Network Coordinator