



LONG TOM WATERSHED COUNCIL FEBRUARY 2022 NEWSLETTER



Geese flying over Coyote Creek South (Photo from ODFW trail cam)

WINTER WATERFOWL WALK

Outdoor Public Meeting

Thurs, Feb. 24th, 3 - 5 p.m.

LTWC is excited to offer a limited attendance, RSVP-only guided walk on **Thursday, February 24th, 3 p.m., at the Fern Ridge Wildlife Area.** This walk is in cooperation with our partners at the Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife (ODFW) and Ducks Unlimited. As we have throughout the pandemic, we'll be limiting attendance through a lottery drawing. Up to 30 guests will be able to attend this event. You can register online at our website (longtom.org/waterfowlwalk). Continue reading for more information.

Winters in the Willamette Valley are often marked by the sound of geese honking overhead or the sight of them swimming alongside the bobbing shapes of ducks in our ponds and wetlands. Over 20 species of ducks and geese inhabit our area this time of year – from diminutive dabblers like the green-winged teal to the elegant and enormous tundra swans. The Fern Ridge Reservoir and surrounding area, in particular, provides important habitat for thousands of migrating winter waterfowl, as well as recreational opportunities for hunters and bird watchers.

This outdoor public meeting is a special opportunity

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to observe and learn about migrating waterfowl in the Long Tom Watershed at the Fern Ridge Wildlife Area (FRWA), just a few miles west of Eugene. FRWA is typically closed to the public after the close of regular duck season to minimize the impacts of repeated human disruption to migrating waterfowl. ODFW has granted LTWC special permission to host this walk. Speakers will include Kelly Warren (Ducks Unlimited), David Speten (ODFW), and Jed Kaul (LTWC).

Attendees will learn about waterfowl species, habitat, and conservation in the Willamette Valley and the Long Tom Watershed, and the importance of management at sites



*Kelly Warren,
Ducks Unlimited*

WINTER WATERFOWL WALK

Register for lottery drawing at longtom.org/waterfowlwalk by Feb 21st



Council Executive Director Clinton Begley at Fern Ridge Wildlife Area (Photo by Derek Johnson)

like the FRWA as well as on private properties through voluntary restoration projects to sustain waterfowl. Guests will also learn about rare species like the Dusky Canada Goose and how climate change is having impacts on waterfowl migration patterns and timing.

For many years, LTWC has partnered with ODFW, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Ducks Unlimited, the U.S.

Fish and Wildlife Service, and private landowners to steward and restore wetland and wet prairie habitat that support waterfowl and other migratory species throughout the Long Tom Watershed and the southern Willamette Valley. Many of these projects have been conducted with our public agency partners and are directly experienced by sportswomen and sportsmen throughout the duck hunting season each year. Others provide key anchors on private lands that support the health of waterfowl populations as they move throughout the Willamette Valley.

People of diverse ages and ambulatory abilities can enjoy this walk, less than a mile, on largely flat ground over a trail.



American wigeon pair (female on left, male on right). Photo from ODFW



A duck hunter at FRWA enjoying a morning rainbow on an early season hunt (Photo by LTWC Executive Director Clinton Begley)

Registration for Feb 24th Winter Waterfowl Walk

In order to ensure the safe distancing for all attendees, our maximum threshold for the guided walk is up to 30 people.

We will be choosing participants via a lottery system. Those interested in participating can fill out a form at longtom.org/waterfowlwalk.

You can also call our office (**541-654-8965 ext #1**) and leave a message with your name(s), phone #, and email address.

DEADLINE TO REGISTER: Monday, Feb 21st, at 5 p.m. If you are interested in attending the walk with someone, please submit one form with both of your names and contact information (limit one entry for a maximum of two people). Lottery winners will be chosen, and all who entered, will be notified on Tuesday, Feb. 22nd. Directions will provided to those folks who are randomly selected to attend.

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 distance between households. There will be another drawing for those not selected to win prizes, including an LTWC hat, steel pint glass, and otter!

RENEWING FIRE CULTURE IN THE WILLAMETTE VALLEY

For time immemorial, Indigenous people have tended the land, including oak and prairie habitats, using fire. Those Indigenous people include the Chelamela and Chemapho Kalaupuyan, whose homelands are in Lumtumbuff, or the place we now call the Long Tom Watershed. Controlled burning is frequent, low-intensity fire carried out to maintain open conditions and nurture habitats that support hundreds of native plant and animal species. Many of these species are deeply interwoven with Native culture, Traditional ways of knowing and being, and connections to the landscape that have co-evolved over thousands of years.

When this area was colonized, Indigenous people were forcibly removed and displaced from the landscape, uprooting lives and creating lasting trauma that has spanned generations. Colonization severely disrupted the relationship between Native peoples and the land, and the subsequent loss of cultural fire has resulted across the landscape, leaving habitats less healthy and incomplete without Indigenous perspectives and relationships to the landscape.

Efforts are underway to renew fire culture in the Willamette Valley. LTWC and a growing group of regional partners, are working in close collaboration with area Tribes and Tribal members in our communities to support Tribal interests in returning “good fire” to the landscape and reducing barriers to cultural burning.

This past October, LTWC and Ecostudies Institute, and many of the regional partners, organized an Indigenous Fire Practitioners training as part of a controlled burn in oak and prairie habitat south of Eugene. The training included a cohort of 15 Indigenous fire practitioners, their families, partners, and other community members invested in prioritizing and supporting increasing Tribal burning capacity. This event, and the important work of returning Indigenous fire, was spotlighted by Brian Bull in a fantastic KLCC



This and other photos to follow are from the October Indigenous Fire Practitioners Training

[article \(“Ancient Native American forest practices demonstrated in burn near Eugene” Oct 2021\)](#). For years, Brian Bull has participated in the Traditional Ecological Inquiry Program (TEIP), a holistic, place-based education program focused on empowering inquiry into Traditional knowledge for Native youth and their families. In November, families in TEIP were able to plant the burned areas, using plants from the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde’s native plant nursery. You can learn more about TEIP and some exciting new grants to fund the program on page 6.

The event was a small, but significant step for Indigenous practitioners to reconnect with the land and relate with fire. A member of the training cohort and TEIP alum, Jessica Douglas, shared her perspective on rekindling her relationship with fire in this [High Country News article written by Jessica \(“Rekindling with fire” Dec 2021\)](#).

LTWC, through TEIP and the Indigenous Fire Practitioners training, is committed to continuing to support alumni as they pursue more opportunities to work with fire, and grow into positions that contribute to much needed regional prescribed fire capacity.

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RENEWING FIRE CULTURE (CONTINUED)

In 2019, LTWC received Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB) funding to work in cooperation with partners across the region to understand gaps in and opportunities to build prescribed fire capacity. Since then, LTWC and Ecostudies Institute have had nearly 30 conversations with area Tribes and partner organizations, and are now working on solutions with partners. One of the strongest potential solutions is the formation of a dedicated, year-round prescribed burn crew. LTWC and Ecostudies Institute worked to put together a proposal for federal appropriations funding (included in the current federal budget bill under consideration by the United States Senate) to bring to life a dedicated prescribed fire crew in collaboration with area Tribes.

We and our partners share a vision for building prescribed fire capacity that prioritizes increasing Tribal burning capacity based on:

- A recognition of the integral and irreplaceable role of Tribes with fire in the Willamette Valley, both in shaping the historic fire regime as well as their rightful place within the current day processes of restoring the fire regime within associated oak-prairie habitats.
- A recognition of the ongoing impacts of colonialism and the mandate / values of many of the agencies and nonprofit partners to support the Tribes.
- A recognition of existing fire capacity among area Tribes and the acknowledgment of the role they could continue to grow with increased capacity.



- A desire to see Tribal leadership at the center of the emerging new prescribed fire paradigm in the Willamette Valley.
- A collective recognition that 80% of the world's remaining biodiversity is on Indigenous lands (Sobrevila, 2008), and that Tribal land stewardship / sovereignty (and by extension, fire stewardship / sovereignty) is a time-worn approach to land management, with benefits to ecological and human health.

LTWC just received OWEB funding support to work in collaboration with area Tribes to organize a regional prescribed fire training in 2023. The proposal, "Regenerating Native Plants with Cultural Fire," offers the opportunity to take more steps in support of Indigenous fire practitioners, Tribal fire capacity, and in turn renewing fire culture in Lumtumbuff and the region.

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LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Long Tom Watershed lies within the traditional homelands of the Tribes and Bands of the Kalapuyan peoples. Following treaties in the 1850s, the Kalapuya people were dispossessed of and forcibly removed from their Indigenous homeland by the United States government. Today, many descendants are citizens of the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde Community and the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians. We acknowledge that we are on occupied lands, and express our respect for Kalapuya and all Tribal Nations of Oregon, and the important contributions they continue to make to their communities, including to the stewardship of this watershed.



RENEWING FIRE CULTURE (CONTINUED)

While the 2021 Indigenous Fire Practitioners training represents an important, meaningful milestone, there is still tremendous work to be done and many barriers to overcome. Continued support from funders, partners, and the watershed community will be crucial to continuing this important work. Stay tuned for further updates!

We're grateful for the incredible support and collaboration of many partners, without which none of this work could happen – especially the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde and Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians.

The Council also would like to acknowledge our partners at Ecostudies Institute, Oregon Prescribed Fire Council, Lane Regional Air Protection Agency, Rivers to Ridges Partnership, the Oregon Department of Forestry, The Nature Conservancy in Oregon, Oregon State University Extension - Lane County, and landowners Doug and Linda Carnine. We also want to give a special thank you to McKenzie River Trust and their generous donors for supporting this work with proceeds from last year's Upstream event with Robin Wall Kimmerer. And, we're thankful to the watershed community for supporting this work and understanding its significance!



NEW GRANTS SUPPORTING TRADITIONAL ECOLOGICAL INQUIRY PROGRAM!

We're excited to announce that four private foundations – **Siletz Tribal Charitable Contribution Fund, Spirit Mountain Community Fund, Roundhouse Foundation, and Meyer Memorial Trust** – have all committed grant dollars in the last few months to the **Traditional Ecological Inquiry Program (TEIP)**. We want to extend our heartfelt gratitude to these grantors for recognizing the immense value and importance of this program, and also to our trusted local donors who have helped keep the program going since 2017! This collective support represents nearly \$450,000 since then.

The Traditional Ecological Inquiry Program (TEIP) is a holistic, place-based education program focused on empowering Indigenous youth and families through cultural and Traditional knowledge education. TEIP is seasonally-focused and taught by Native educators; it is designed to honor, preserve, and promote Tribal culture and Traditional Ways of Knowing, and in understanding self as inseparable from the landscape. The program employs an inquiry-driven, integrative curriculum model developed by Curriculum Director & Siletz Tribal Member Joe Scott.

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NEW GRANTS SUPPORTING TEIP (CONTINUED)

In a forthcoming program portfolio, Joe describes TEIP and its Traditional Ecological Inquiry process as one of “seeking answers to questions shaped by a curiosity about Traditional Ecological Practice. TEIP Interns come to the program with a natural curiosity about the ancestral knowledge that connects Native Americans to their places and a recognition of the importance of this ancestral knowledge to their personal growth. Intern, family, and community collaborate with the Program directly. Each TEIP Intern has an opportunity to work with practitioners, educators, and staff to develop personal learning goals and objectives - and this is how an Inquiry Project is developed. Learning opportunities arise as seasonal tending and gathering continues through Seasonal Rounds - tending places according to the cycles of season. Personal learning goals function to connect and integrate with other important life roles: school, career, and community. As seasons change, Interns may choose to develop new Inquiry Projects, or to continue with an existing one. The program also supports Interns who wish to explore a particular practice in the company of a Tribal culture bearer through an inquiry apprenticeship. TEIP partners with and supports Native American cultural ecological practitioners; culture bearers and Tribal experts who are guided by Indigenous Ways of Knowing and who are eager to share cultural knowledge. In doing so, TEIP prioritizes Tribal voices and supports the larger Tribal community.”

Numerous scientific studies have shown that the highest biodiversity in the world exists on Tribally-managed lands. Supporting the restoration of these human and cultural connections to the landscape is therefore an essential element to achieving a healthier, and more resilient, Long Tom Watershed. This work to support the present and future of Indigenous stewardship is aligned squarely with the core of the Council’s mission.

LTWC has hosted TEIP since its inception in 2017 when we hired a consultant, Valerie Goodness, to help explore ways we could best support Tribal interests in the watershed. One common area of interest that came out of those conversations with Tribes, Tribal staff, Elders, and educators was a need to support



Gathering of TEIP participants

Indigenous youth and empower families to reconnect with Tribal practices on the land. As you’ve read above, this youth program has led directly to increased capacity to return cultural fire to the landscape by supporting the next generation of Indigenous stewards and centering their emerging leadership in the work ahead.

The Council’s role continues to be to host the program in a way that’s useful and supportive to the Indigenous community, uplifts Indigenous heritage of stewardship and leadership, and centers the efforts and vision of Indigenous people.

Thank you Meyer Memorial Trust, Roundhouse Foundation, Siletz Tribal Charitable Contribution Fund, and Spirit Mountain Community Fund! We’re incredibly humbled and grateful to these four foundations, in addition to the donations from more than 40 local families and businesses and the contributions from McKenzie River Trust, Bonneville Environmental Foundation, Oregon Community Foundation, Collins Foundation, and Linda & Doug Carnine over the last four years. This, and the continued support from funders and the watershed community, is crucial to the continued growth of TEIP and realizing its long-term vision into the future in support of Indigenous families.

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Thank You for Giving to LTWC!

JANUARY & FEBRUARY 2022 DONATIONS

Paula Conn
John & Jennifer Giustina Family Fund
Earth Care Interfaith Fund
(multiple donors in split contribution with McKenzie River Trust)
Kali Kardas

Jeff Mroczkowski
One Tree Planted
Anika Parrot
Leo Poole
Sue & Hugh Prichard Fund
Anami Ridge
Vicki Smith Stave & Thomas Stave

Jodi Sommers & Jay Keister
In Honor of Iris M. Tiedt
Greg Van Vlack
Sarah Whitney
John & Patricia Winquist
Anonymous (1)

LTWC AWARDED MOUNTAIN DEW GRANT FOR CARP FEST!

We're excited to share big news! LTWC has been awarded a \$5,000 Outdoor Grant from Mountain Dew to support our first ever Carp Fest!

Fish Biologist Jed Kaul has had a vision for a carp derby in the Long Tom for years! We've tried to find the right fit for funding the last several years, and are thrilled to find this great fit with Mountain Dew as our cornerstone sponsor for this unique event. The festival will connect residents to our urban and rural waterways while providing opportunities to learn about their watershed and explore an underutilized recreational fishery.

Both Jed and River Scientist / GIS Specialist Amanda Reinholtz at the Council worked very hard to make this happen. We're proud of their vision and creativity to put a Carp Fest together. We'll need additional sponsors to make the dream for this multi-cultural event that brings together many different river users from all over the watershed. Stay tuned as this dream becomes a reality in the coming months!

The Long Tom Watershed Council is one of 40 nonprofits to receive a grant through the Mountain Dew DEW Outdoor Grants program, which is part of a long-term commitment to help community organizations across the U.S. who have faced funding



Council staff (from left): Rob Hoshaw, Jed Kaul, Amanda Reinholtz, and Jed's pup Atlas

and volunteer participation challenges due to the ongoing pandemic, and to provide outdoor enthusiasts with more access to the great outdoors by helping remove some of the key barriers. You can read the full press release on our website: [longtom.org/mountaindewaward2022](https://www.longtom.org/mountaindewaward2022). Thanks, Mountain Dew!

WATERSHED MAP & CONTACTS



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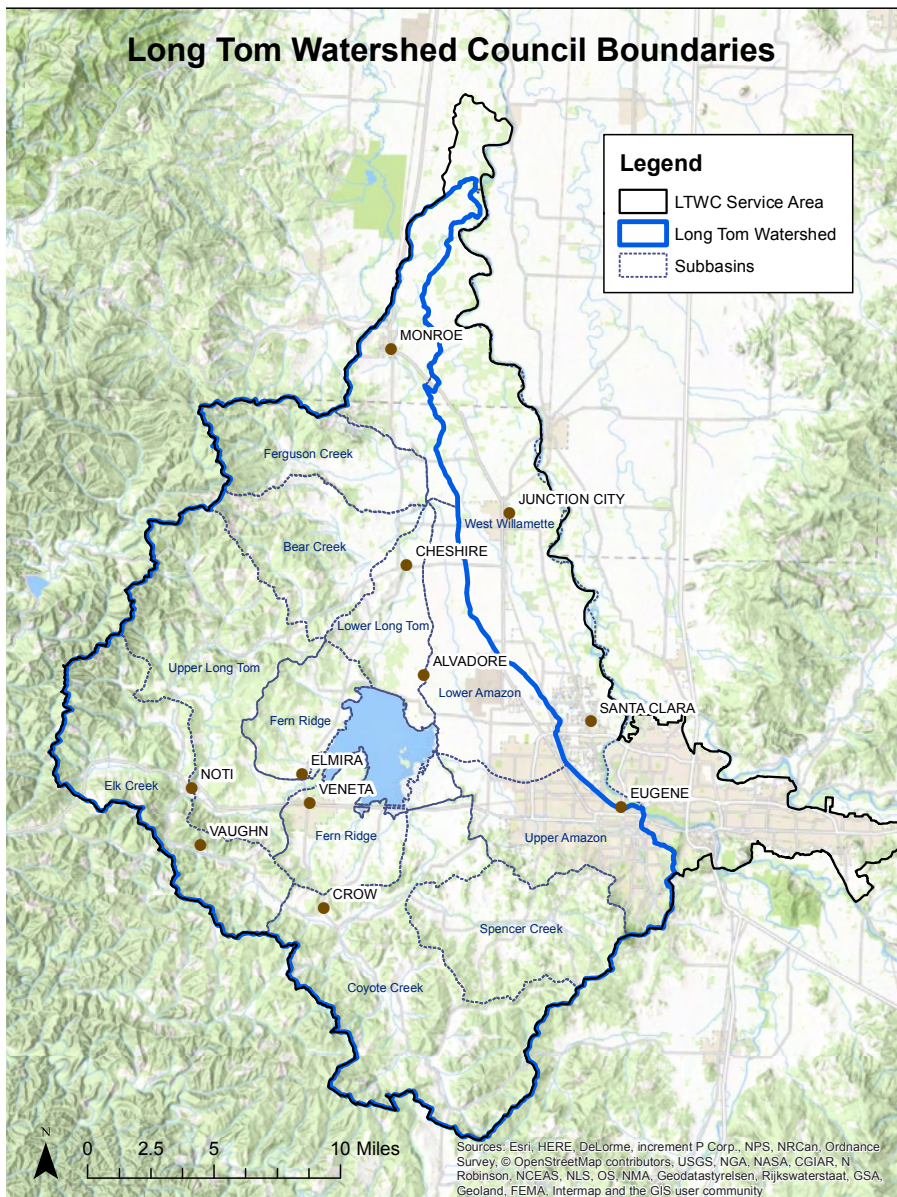
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Mission Statement

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.