



LONG TOM WATERSHED COUNCIL APRIL 2022 NEWSLETTER

ACTION THROUGH UNDERSTANDING



Indigenous Fire Practitioners Training south of Eugene, October 2021

ELDER FIRE: HISTORY & IMPORTANCE OF CULTURAL BURNING

Outdoor Public Meeting

Thurs, April 21st, 6 - 8 p.m.

REGISTER: longtom.org/elderfiremeeting

LTWC is offering an RSVP-only public meeting on **Thursday, April 21st at Winter Green Farm (Registration details on Page 3)**. We're honored to host a special presentation by Siletz Tribal Elder Joe Scott. Joe will talk about the history and importance of Cultural Burning by Indigenous people on the landscape. He'll tell the story of how he went to the Yurok Reservation in northern California to learn about becoming a Cultural Fire Practitioner as part of the Training Exchange (TRES) program hosted by the Culture Fire Management Council. Joe will discuss Indigenous history in the context of ecological practice, settler-society fire suppression, climate change, and food sovereignty. He'll share how Cultural Fire can serve to mitigate the risks of catastrophic wildfire, fix carbon, and enhance the health and well-being of Tribal people.

Joe is recognized by his Tribe as a Culture and Language Bearer, and you've likely heard his name associated with the Traditional Ecological Inquiry

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Program (TEIP), as he is the program's Teaching & Learning Coordinator. TEIP is a holistic, place-based education program focused on empowering Indigenous youth and their families through cultural and Traditional knowledge education. This program is deeply interwoven with efforts to reconnect Indigenous people with Tribal practices on the land, including Cultural Fire.



Joe Scott at Yurok TRES Training

ELDER FIRE: HISTORY & IMPORTANCE OF CULTURAL BURNING

Public Meeting Introduction by Joe Scott

“In the first of a series of Elder Talks, I will share a story of Tribal history, culture – and fire.

Since time immemorial, Native American people have lived here in what is now known as the Long Tom Watershed. The history of Oregon’s First People describes a long and sustained time of the Human Beings living with and among the gifts of Creator. It is a history that also describes the catastrophic consequences of an introduced settler society. Understanding of the Long Indigenous Existence and the changes brought to us by colonists helps frame an understanding of what it means to dispossess a people of their places of creation.

Forcibly removing us from our homes in the watersheds across what is now western Oregon meant removing us from our history, our culture, and our intricate relationships with the places we cherish. Despite this removal, our people, our traditions, our values, and our ties to the land endure. Through allies like the Long Tom Watershed Council and other land stewards, we are returning to tend a compromised landscape. To put our hands in the earth, feel our homelands, and feed our people in spirit, mind, and body. Our ties to our places are written in the fundamental elements that make all living things – earth, air, water, and fire.

When settlers reached our homelands nearly two hundred years ago, most failed to recognize the critical role Native people played in shaping the landscape they came to occupy. The open savannah park-like paradise they first saw was far from pristine. It was the result of fire-dependent Indigenous land management and agricultural practices refined over countless generations. Here in what is now called the Long Tom Watershed, our ancestors carefully burned to maintain the black and white oak groves for acorns and used mindful fire in meadows for camas, yampah, and other foods. Our traditional Seasonal Rounds – the ongoing cycle of tending and gathering - depend on the use of fire. These Seasonal Rounds and the good fire that defines them

are returning to the watershed.

A legacy of fire suppression has led us to a time of collective reckoning – a time of reflecting on failed practice, re-thinking ties to place, and recognizing the insight of Indigenous ways of knowing. These ways of knowing and understanding a place have come to us from generations of careful exploration, experimentation, and observation. In this time of catastrophic wildfires, climate change, and extinction, the importance of centering Indigenous approaches to land management cannot be overstated.

Please join me for stories and conversation on Thursday, April 21st!”



*In this video produced by **Vesper Meadow Education program**, Joe Scott and others discuss the importance of “good fire” like cultural burning that is practiced and informed by Traditional Ecological Knowledge.*

Watch at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dq3objj3w5w>

Registration information on next page

ELDER FIRE: REGISTRATION INFORMATION

REGISTRATION: This event will be limited to 75 people. We will be choosing participants via a lottery system. Register at longtom.org/elderfiremeeting.

DATE & TIME: Thursday, April 21st, 6 - 8 p.m.

LOCATION: Hosted at **Winter Green Farm** (approximately 22 miles west of Eugene, 8 miles from Veneta, and 22 miles south of Monroe)

VENUE & COVID-19 INFO: This will be a seated outdoor event held beneath the cover of a large workshop / garage and pop-up canopies. LTWC's approach throughout the pandemic has been to follow or exceed CDC and state/local guidelines. Oregon's mask mandate has been lifted, and at this time, we will not be requiring masks. However, we recognize the pandemic is an ever-evolving situation, and the particulars for this event (e.g. number of people, masks) may change depending on the current situation and expert guidance.

LOTTERY DRAWING: We are accepting up to 75 guests for an approximately 1400 square foot open-

air meeting area. Deadline to register for lottery drawing is Thursday, April 14. Lottery winners will be announced on Friday, April 15th. **Anyone else who registered will be put on a "wait list" drawing the following week to be contacted for any cancellation.**

Those interested in attending can RSVP for the lottery at: longtom.org/elderfiremeeting.

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: Thursday, April 14th, at 5 p.m. If you are interested in attending the event 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 **Fri, April 15th**.

WELCOME, JESSE KIDD!

(she/her pronouns)

We're excited to welcome Jesse Kidd as our newest staff member of the Long Tom Watershed Council team! She began working for us as an Ecocultural Restoration Specialist this spring. Her work seeks to expand regional cultural burning capacity by centering Tribal values and priorities. She works also to support Native youth and families through her involvement in the Traditional Ecological Inquiry Program. She grew up in the Long Tom Watershed, swimming and fishing in the Willamette river. She is a member of the Chinook Indian Nation and a third generation resident of Eugene. Jesse became an intern of our Traditional Ecological Inquiry Program in the summer of 2018. More recently Jesse worked for Willamette Riverkeeper as their 2021 Community Engagement Intern. Jesse spends her time hiking, swimming and foraging for her traditional foods and medicines in the outdoors of Western Oregon. She enjoys gardening, cooking and spending time with her family.



\$500,000 FUNDS AWARDED IN FEDERAL BUDGET THANKS TO SENATORS WYDEN & MERKLEY

The forests, prairies, and savannas of the Willamette Valley that are now home to millions of Oregonians were shaped by Indigenous people using good fire for tens of thousands of years. Today, in the absence of that cultural burning and in the presence of a changing climate, it is the people here whose lives are increasingly shaped by fires that are beyond our control. We are grateful for Senators Merkley and Wyden's bold support to increase good fire on the landscape and in-turn support the Willamette Valley's first stewards to lead this work. With this catalytic \$500,000 in funding approved through the Interior, Environment & Related Agencies committee Chaired by Oregon Senator Merkley, and signed into law by President Biden as part of the 2022 federal spending bill, a coalition of Tribal and non-Tribal partners will be able to nurture existing partnerships, engage the public on this important issue, buy necessary equipment, train personnel, and support green jobs to scale up the use of good fire. We are excited to support our partners with this funding and together create a more equitable, climate-resilient, future for all the human and non-human communities who call this valley home.



Hillside fire as part of a controlled training burn. Photo by Joe Scott

KOCF AIRING LTWC'S JANUARY PUBLIC MEETING

Can't make it to our April 21st in-person public meeting? **Fern Ridge Community Radio (KOCF 92.7 FM)** is graciously airing the audio from our **January public meeting featuring John Deck of Deck Family Farm** that same day on **Thursday, April 21st at 6 p.m.** This presentation focused on the impacts of climate change on local agriculture. John shared insights on challenges, adaptive strategies, and opportunities for farmers as they are impacted by changes in climate patterns. You can also find this broadcast on our YouTube page (youtube.com/longtomwsc). Thanks to KOCF for airing this important conversation!

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.



VOLUNTEERS PARTICIPATE IN PROJECT STEWARDSHIP

Thank you to the 13 volunteers who participated in planting native shrubs along a tributary of Coyote Creek at Little Fox Farm!

Botanist and Educator Heron Brae provided an educational introduction, including a land acknowledgement, background on how rivers and their ecosystems have changed over the course of history, winter twig identification, and cultural and medicinal uses of the shrubs to be planted. Landowner Dan Casares and his three kids helped prepare the area by mowing, and removing teasel stalks and blackberry canes from the planting area. We planted 30 red-osier dogwood, 100 sitka willow, 50 spirea, 25 ninebark, and 25 red elderberry. The newly planted shrubs will grow up to shade the waterway, filter runoff from the road, provide valuable food and shelter for birds and other wildlife, and offer a colorful natural aesthetic for neighbors and people driving by.

This site is part of an ongoing restoration project to enhance upland and wet prairie and oak savanna habitat on a working farm near Crow Road, and has been funded by a grant from the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board.

Thank you, volunteers, the Casares family, and to Heron for leading the effort!



Thanks to Sarah Pearson for talking these awesome shots of birds in flight from our February Winter Waterfowl Walk at Coyote Creek Northeast. (Left photo: mallard ducks; right photo: Canada geese)

SNAG BOAT BEND: A TALE OF RESTORATION & REFUGE

Willamette Riverkeeper recently produced a short, documentary on the restoration work at Snag Boat Bend along the Willamette River. Snag Boat Bend is part of the Finley National Wildlife Refuge located between Eugene and Corvallis on the floodplain of the Willamette River.

[This nine-minute video \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AtymmW1Rn9o\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AtymmW1Rn9o) highlights the history, habitat importance, and restoration activities recently implemented in the area, as well as efforts to contain aquatic invasive weeds, and how individuals can help make a difference in protecting floodplain habitats for salmon, turtles, songbirds, and other wildlife species in the Willamette basin.

The video features LTWC's fish biologist Jed Kaul, who has been the project manager since we started work at the site in 2013. You can catch Jed at the 2:48 mark, where he summarizes the totality of LTWC's restoration efforts at the site and talks about the next, and final, phase of work to reconnect flow through historic Lake Creek – a side channel of the mainstem Willamette.

The video also features Samantha Bartling, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Manager for the Willamette Valley National Wildlife Refuge Complex, who provides context for the site's history, geography, and wildlife. Richard Dickinson, the Restoration Manager with Willamette Riverkeeper, talks about two aquatic invasive weeds in yellow floating heart and ludwigia, and the work being done to reduce their presence.

The video is produced by Willamette Riverkeeper in partnership with Long Tom Watershed Council and Friends of the Willamette Valley National Wildlife Refuge Complex, with special thanks to River Design Group and Freshwaters Illustrated. Thanks to everyone involved for their efforts on this video!



Uppermost: Jed Kaul talks about LTWC's restoration work at Snag Boat Bend. Above: Aerial view of Snag Boat Bend. Below: Lake Creek, an historic side channel of the Willamette River at Snag Boat Bend, and the site of a planned reconnection project to the mainstem.



Thank You for Giving to LTWC!

FEBRUARY & MARCH 2022 DONATIONS

Ross Bonduant & Catherine Harris

Paula Conn

Matt & Sandie Longtin

Patricia & George Miller

Shelly Miller

Anami Ridge

Michael Whitty

Thank you to **Green Theory Naturals** and owner Tim Schley, who are contributing 10% of their profits from the first quarter of 2022 to LTWC!



In addition Green Theory is also extending a 10% discount to the Long Tom Watershed Council community!

Enter the code **GTLTWC10** when you shop online at gogreentheory.com.

WELCOMING KURT KOEHLER TO THE BOARD!

We're excited to welcome Kurt Koehler (pronounced "Court Curler") to the LTWC Board of Directors! Kurt is stepping in to fill a mid-year vacancy and will be standing for election by the Council membership at this year's Annual Celebration.

Kurt and his wife Mary own Star Farms, a 116 acre forest at the headwaters of Owens Creek where the LTWC did a fish passage restoration project in 2011.

Kurt is a 5th generation Oregonian. He graduated from Jesuit High School, received a BA from Stanford and an MBA from Wharton. He brings extensive expertise in financial and business management to the board, including in service on other nonprofit boards. Kurt retired as CFO of Enli Health Intelligence Corporation, a company he cofounded in 2002 and sold in Dec 2020. Prior to Enli, Kurt held a variety of leadership positions during 20 years at Intel including those in finance, product marketing, general manager, plant

manager, and director of internal software application development, where he received two Intel Achievement awards for his contributions.

Kurt has served as a board member and President of 1000 Friends of Oregon, member and Executive Committee Member of the Hillsboro Chamber of Commerce and Founding Board Member and President of Hillsboro Schools Foundation. He received CFO of the Year award from the Portland Business Journal and Philanthropy Leadership award from the Hillsboro Chamber of Commerce.



VOLUNTEER RIVER CLEAN UP EVENT! MAY 5, 2022



Willamette Riverkeeper is hosting “Spring for Your River” Event

More info: <https://conta.cc/37PHGqo>

Volunteers wanted for river clean up event! Join Willamette Riverkeeper, Long Tom Watershed Council, and the Friends of Willamette Valley National Wildlife Refuge Complex to Spring For Your River with a cleanup and restoration effort by land at the beautiful Snag Boat Bend / William K. Finley National Wildlife Refuge.

WHEN & WHERE: Thursday, May 5th, 9 a.m. - 12 p.m. at Snag Boat Bend, just off Peoria Road. The local National Wildlife Refuge ranger will be on site to welcome folks and usher cars to the access road from the public parking area.

DETAILS: Please arrive on time – the gated access to the area will be guided and we won't be able to let vehicles in after we leave the gated road entrance. Please dress for the weather and bring water, work gloves (if you have them) and sturdy closed-toe shoes. Willamette Riverkeeper will provide trash bags, gloves, liners, and trash grabbers. For planting or invasive weed removal activities, the Wildlife Refuge will provide tools. Coffee and snacks too!

QUESTIONS? Reach out to Riverkeepers' event coordinator, Michelle Emmons at michelle@willametteriverkeeper.org.

PLEASE REGISTER IF INTERESTED! (<https://conta.cc/37PHGq0>)

The logo for Long Tom Watershed Council features a stylized house, a tree, and a fish within a circular frame. Below the logo, the text 'LONG TOM WATERSHED COUNCIL' is written in a sans-serif font.

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*Coordinator for Upper Willamette
Stewardship Network*

A detailed illustration of a rainbow trout, showing its characteristic spots and colors.

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.