

SIUSLAW WATERSHED COUNCIL NEWS

MAY 2006

www.siuslaw.org
watershed@siuslaw.org

P.O. Box 422 • Mapleton, Oregon 97453 • 541-268-3044

• Community • Economy • Environment

Message from the Coordinator...



In the temperate rainforest environment here in the Oregon Coast Range, water supply issues are seldom at the forefront of watershed planning goals. Unlike our dry eastern counterparts on the other side of the Cascades, our strategies for watershed health focus largely on habitat and water quality, not water quantity. This is primarily so because we have not reached a crisis stage of balancing our thirst with that of a healthy watershed. However, the dramatic variation between our wet winters and dry summers is common knowledge and reflected in stream flows. Our flashy stream systems and the lack of extensive aquifers in the basin to store and meter perennial flow are recognized in fisheries and riparian management. Yet whereas wildlife have adapted to these extremes of nature, our local need for water is inversely weighted for more demand during the dry months.

The issues of community impacts on water resources have been of rising concern in various places throughout the Siuslaw area. The current debates and concerns in Dunes City over the water quality of Woahink Lake is probably premier in this arena. There, development and wastewater appear to be contributing to the decades long decline in water quality, yet current needs and future development place a demand for good quality water from the lake. The political nature of this quandary indicates that the issue has already reached a crisis stage.

A crisis, however, does not preclude the non-political, local, voluntary, cooperative effort model of watershed management. Watershed councils were espoused and endorsed by the State of Oregon as a critical component in the answer to the salmon crisis. Great strides have been made in watershed health, community consciousness, and cross-entity cooperation in the past ten years. This puts us in a much better position to take on issues as a watershed community to ensure we don't reach a crisis potential.

Several recent articles in the Register-Guard

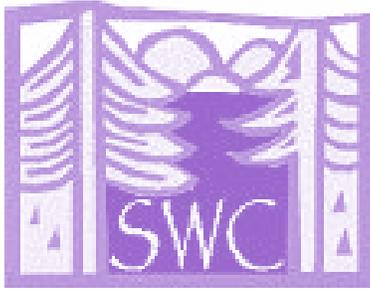
have highlighted that Oregon's water resources are not an endless supply.

Here in the Siuslaw, wells have gone dry in Lorane, water rights holders have been shut off when Lake Creek runs too low, and the City of Florence strives to maintain a clean, protected aquifer to serve the very growing population that encroaches upon it. In rural areas, water supply is often an issue seemingly isolated to the landowner struggling to maintain it. However, water is a public good, and good stewardship of your water supply benefits the greater community.

Besides the popularity of low-flow household devices to conserve water, there is growing interest in the old-fashioned technique of rainwater harvesting. Unlike surface or groundwater, rainwater requires no rights of first use. That means you are free to collect your roof runoff for your use. Modern technology allows an ample flow of pure, clean water from wells, so rainwater collection has greatly decreased. In Lane County, there is grassroots momentum to increase the permissible usage of non-potable water for things like flushing toilets as well as irrigation (while rainwater collection is unregulated, domestic water supply uses must meet code).

It is easy to take for granted our personal water supply. It was also easy to take for granted the annual return of river-choking salmon runs. Like salmon populations, which were affected by a host of local and regional limitations, our local rainfall is affected by local and regional climate. Predictions of 21st century climate change portend drier years in the decades ahead. In order to protect the investment we have made in enhancing the health of our watershed, let's be diligent in thinking about our relationship with our water supplies. After all, this is an issue that affects community, economy, and environment.

Todd Miller



Siuslaw Watershed Council

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2006 Executive Committee

Chair: Paula Crowder

Vice Chair: Steve Elliot

Secretary: William Fleenor

Treasurer: Nancy Nichols

Representatives:

- Barbara Beers
- Dave Eisler
- Jim Grano
- Noland Huntington

SWC Road Sign Work Party

We have selected Saturday, June 24 as the tentative date for a work party to help put up the “Now Entering Siuslaw Watershed” sign at Cougar Pass along Highway 126. Volunteers to help place sign posts, bolt the sign, and hoist it into place are needed. Those with tools and construction skills will be especially helpful. Please check our Web site for upcoming announcements and details.



Forest Field Day in the Siuslaw

On May 19, approximately 100 sixth graders from Siuslaw Middle School participated in a Forest Field Day that was staged on Noland and Maureen Huntington’s forest land. Dave and Diane Rankin stepped up as area coordinators to orchestrate this event, bringing it to the Siuslaw for the first time.

Dave has been involved with this event through his involvement with the Oregon Small Woodlands Association. He felt that students in the Siuslaw would benefit from the field day and corresponding curriculum.

When he was considering the recruitment of activity leaders, people that he knew from the Council came to mind. He knew that they were associated with interests and careers that relate to the four activity stations that are featured at Forest Field Day: Wildlife, Forestry, Recreation, and Soil and Water. Council Members that participated as activity leaders are as follows: Lori Robertson, Jeff Jones, Liz Vollmer-Buhl, Dick Beers, Cindy Burns, Paul Burns, Kevin Carroll, Cricket Crowder, Gus Gates and Link Smith.

Forest Field Days are held around the state and are coordinated by Forests Today & Forever.

Request for Volunteers

We’re on the lookout for volunteers to file, sort, enter data, label, and more during typical office hours at the SWC office in Mapleton. Call or email Liz Vollmer-Buhl, at 541-268-3044 or watershed@siuslaw.org, if you are interested. Thank you.



Upcoming Council Presentations...

Join us for the monthly Siuslaw Watershed Council General Meeting. The meetings start at 6:30 pm (doors open at 6:00) at the Mapleton Grange Hall on East Mapleton Road (just past Mapleton Schools). The presentations are interesting and informative; listed below are a few that are coming up. Hope to see you there!



May 31—Siuslaw Water Trail:

Jordan Sectar, landscape architect and Siuslaw water trail designer, will present information about water trails in the US and the Pacific Northwest and inform us about current directions and status of the Siuslaw Water Trail. A must see for kayak and recreational river enthusiasts.

June 28—Timber Management and Geomorphology in the Siuslaw Watershed:

A special forum with guest presenters from the University of Oregon Geology Department, Oregon Department of Forestry, and industrial timber companies, we will explore the landscape of the Siuslaw basin, including landslides, floodplains, and land use decisions and hazards, present current state forest rules affecting timber harvest, and discuss how those issues relate to watershed understanding and management. A question and answer session with select panelists will close the forum.

April General Meeting Highlights

Presentations were given by Beth Myers-Shenai of the Oregon Department of Agriculture about curtailing the spread of invasive ornamental plants, and by Liz Vollmer-Buhl, field technician for the council-sponsored Nutrient Criteria Development study, on data results from studies of nutrients and diatomaceous algae communities in two estuary tributaries.

Todd Miller presented a map of the proposed Leadership Board representative areas that include the newly defined North Coastal Lakes, South Coastal Lakes, Lower Siuslaw, Middle Siuslaw, and Upper Siuslaw areas. The map is available in PDF format via our Web site. The biggest question raised was determining whether the boundary between the Lakes regions and the Lower Siuslaw should be through the lower estuary (Siuslaw Bay), or if that area of the river, including Glenada, should be part of either the North Lakes (with the rest of Florence) or the Lower Siuslaw. Todd suggests keeping the Siuslaw Bay and North Coastal Lakes as one representative area that would include all of the greater Florence area downstream of the North Fork.

Culvert and Bridge Contractors Needed

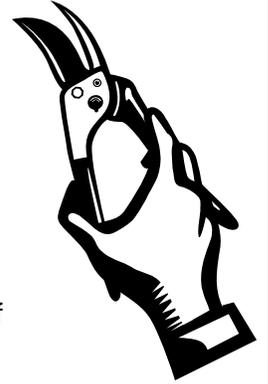
The Siuslaw Watershed Council is currently scoping projects to improve fish passage and stream dynamics by replacing priority, undersized culverts underlying county roads, forest roads, and driveways. We are seeking a list of qualified local contractors to contact to help us complete the work. If you work for a business or know of a business that we should contact when these opportunities arise, please contact us with your information.

We have needs for both bids and estimates. We expect to issue RFPs (*Request For Proposals*) for 2006 projects, and are currently developing proposals for funding requiring detailed cost estimates for work to be accomplished. Bridge designs are low-bearing wooden structures; culverts are open bottom pipe arches.

Go Native Plants! Decreasing Their Competition

With grass and weeds growing by leaps and bounds, it is time to think about “releasing” your native plants to grow strong (trimming away surrounding and overhanging grass/weeds). The success of your native plants depends greatly on their access to sun, water, and nutrients. By removing the surrounding weeds you are getting rid of the native plants’ competition.

If you are unable to release the native plants yourself, please contact Liz Vollmer-Buhl. Once again we are contracting with the USFS and others for Release Crews for our Native Plant Distribution participants. Contact Liz at monitoring@siuslaw.org, or the SWC office at 541-268-3044, or her home office at 541-683-8340. Funding for the Release Crews comes from Siuslaw Stewardship funds and the generous donations of community members.



Leadership Board News

The Executive Committee has finalized proposed changes to the bylaws that came up initially during last year’s legal clarifications. At that time, the Executive Committee wished to keep legal clarifications that did not impact business conduct separate from other housekeeping issues related to the bylaws. Proposed revisions are available on the Web site and will be available at the May 31 meeting. We plan to vote to adopt the changes upon three full meetings in either August or September.

Leadership Board Position Vacancies and Changes

The following board positions have recently changed or are proposed for changes, and will be discussed at the May meeting...

- **Small Woodlots:** Vernon Van Curler will step down to the Alternate position due to his current unavailability to attend regularly. Dave Rankin wishes to take to the primary position.
- **Lower Siuslaw:** Dave Rankin will vacate this position for Small Woodlot, if agreed to by the board.
- **Upper Siuslaw:** Matt Coen is vacating his post on the Wolf Creek position which he held while awaiting formal adoption of the revised Upper Siuslaw representative area. He no longer has ongoing ties in Lorane. Steve Elliot currently serves as Upper Siuslaw rep but will move into the Middle Siuslaw position when formally adopted, leaving Upper Siuslaw vacant.
- **Ecosystem Workforce:** Eric Nusbaum has left the Siuslaw SWCD and is working out of the area, leaving Alternate Lori Robertson, who presumably will take the primary position.
- **South Coastal Lakes (proposed):** Johan Hogervorst is holding the position as At Large, Alternate, in the interim.
- **North Lakes & Siuslaw Bay (tentative, proposed):** no nominees to date.
- **Environment:** Andy Reasoner of McKenzie River Trust (nominated)
- **Federal Agency:** no formal nominees to date.

Siuslaw Watershed Council Calendar

May 31—Estuary Planning Team: 1:00 pm, SWC office, Upper Compound, Mapleton.

May 31—Siuslaw Watershed Council General Meeting: 6:30 pm, Mapleton Grange, E. Mapleton Road.

June 1—SWC Technical Team Meeting: 9:30 am, Upper Compound, Mapleton.

June 5—Siuslaw Soil and Water Conservation District Meeting: 7:30 pm, SWCD office, Florence Business Center, 1525 12th Street, Florence *(Use main entrance, please call 997-1272 before coming so that the main door can be opened for you.)*

June 14—SWC Exec. Committee Meeting: 5:30 pm, Upper Compound, Mapleton.

June 24—SWC Road Sign Placement Work Party (tentative): *see page 2 for details.*

June 28—Siuslaw Watershed Council General Meeting: 6:30 pm, Mapleton Grange, E. Mapleton Road.

Siuslaw Watershed Exploration Camp to be Offered Again this Summer!

Session 1: Introductory Camp—July 24-28, 2006

Session 2: Advanced Camp (for returning participants)—July 31-August 4, 2006

If you are entering grades 6-12, join us as we explore the Siuslaw Basin and Coastal Lakes! Sign-up for a week or just a couple of days.

The camp is offered at no cost to participants through an education grant from the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB).

Descriptions of activities and registration information will be posted to the website, www.siuslaw.org, in June or call 541-268-3044 after June 6.



Voluntzers, Have you been filling out your time & milrage logs?

**Siuslaw Watershed Council
General Meeting Agenda
May 31, 2006
Mapleton Grange Hall
6:30 p.m.**



6:00-6:30 Open for set-up

6:30– 6:40 Welcome and Introductions

6:40-7:30 **Presentation: Siuslaw Water Trail**

Jordan Sector, landscape architect and Siuslaw water trail designer, will present information about water trails in the US and the Pacific Northwest and inform us about current directions and status of the Siuslaw Water Trail. A must see for kayak and recreational river enthusiasts.

7:30-7:45 Refreshment Break

7:45-7:55 **Leadership Board Rep Discussion**

(see page 4 for details)

7:55-8:10 **Coordinator Report**
Executive Committee Report
Tech Team Report

8:10-8:25 **Open Mic** *(3-5 speakers, 3-5 minutes each)*

8:25-8:30 **Announcements and Raffle Drawing**

8:30 **Adjourn**

Monthly Raffle

To help raise funds for the Council, we are holding a raffle of donated items at each General Council meeting. Tickets are \$1 each or 6 for \$5. The winner will get to choose from available items.

BYOM

To encourage reduction in waste, we are requesting that folks bring their own coffee mug to the meeting.

Envisioning the Siuslaw Water Trail a Reality

The following is an excerpt from Jordan Sector's proposal for the Siuslaw Water Trail...

The Siuslaw Estuary Water Trail is an adventure experience where cultural elements and ecological features are celebrated through the historical and ecological landscape processes, that are significant to the Siuslaw Estuary.

Together The Port of Siuslaw and the Siuslaw Watershed Council view a water trail as a recreational opportunity that has direct economic and educational outcomes for the communities of the Lower Siuslaw River.

The Water Trail experience is successful because it capitalizes on the layers of cultural and ecological history that exist within the complex frame of the estuary resources. A variety of users will visit the area to participate in a diverse set of estuarine experiences. These experiences will range from primitive multiple day adventure excursions, afternoon sunset paddles, to sitting and viewing the estuary from the shore.

A map of the proposed trail is available on the SWC website: www.siuslaw.org.

April 2006

Treasurer's Report *Nancy Nichols, Council Treasurer*

Beginning Cash	\$41,568.02*		
	APRIL		YEAR TO DATE
INCOME			
Dues	\$80.00		\$380.00
Federal Grants			\$15,522.36
State Grants			\$42,156.73
Private Grants	\$1,569.94		\$5,609.61
Interest			\$277.31
Donations & Misc.	\$3,018.00		\$3,212.00
Administrative Funds			\$2,805.73
Project Management			
Other			\$46.05
TOTAL INCOME	\$4,667.94		\$70,009.79
EXPENSES			
Grant Expenses		\$9,451.86	\$62,685.42
Other		\$1,018.13	\$3,353.13
TOTAL EXPENSES		\$10,469.99	\$66,038.55
 Ending Cash		 \$35,765.97	

The Siuslaw Watershed Council is a non-profit , 501c3, organization .
 All donations are tax deductible to the full extent of the law.

*adjusted for March interest

Siuslaw Watershed Council Membership Form

Type of Membership:

Landowner _____ Community Member _____ Industry _____

Government Agency: _____ Tribal: _____

Name: _____ **Today's Date:** _____

Address: _____

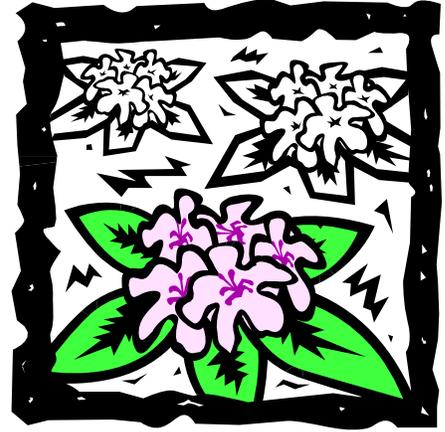
Telephone: _____ **E-mail:** _____

Please choose any of the following:

- Tax-deductible membership enclosed (\$10 regular, \$0 students).
- Additional tax-deductible donation enclosed. Amount \$ _____
- I am interested in volunteer opportunities with the Siuslaw Watershed Council

Council Web Site Gets a Fresh Look

Check out the new organization of www.siuslaw.org. We have revised the Web site to provide a better platform to provide the community with information about the Siuslaw Watershed and the watershed council. The new platform allows us to more easily update and post information to the site, and the new organization should make it easier for users to navigate to the information they need. We are open to constructive feedback and suggestions. Please e-mail comments to gis@siuslaw.org with the subject: Web site feedback.



Siuslaw Watershed Council Mission Statement

The Siuslaw Watershed Council supports sound economic, social and environmental uses of natural and human resources in the Siuslaw River Basin. The Council encourages cooperation among public and private watershed entities to promote awareness and understanding of watershed functions by adopting and implementing a total watershed approach to natural resource management and production.

• Community • Economy • Environment

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What's Happening In Your Watershed?