

SIOUSLAW WATERSHED COUNCIL NEWS

JULY 2006

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• Community • Economy • Environment

Message from the Coordinator...



Landslides, timber harvesting, and watershed management came together through an extremely informative presentation forum hosted by the Siuslaw Watershed Council at the June 28 general council meeting. We are proud to have been the community meeting place for this event which bridged community environmental concerns with timber management and the forces of nature. Special thanks are owed to our invited guests, T. C. Hales, a geologist from the University of Oregon; Ole Buch, stewardship forester and Jason Hinkle, geotechnical specialist, both from the Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF); and Paul Chapman, area manager for The Campbell Group.

T. C. Hales presented information about the landslide-prone Oregon Coast Range in the Siuslaw River area and studies on how landslides have affected areas with varying forest covers, tree types, and timber harvest histories. Jason Hinkle described ODF's program for evaluating landslide risks and permitting of timber harvest plans based on those risks, including potential threat to public safety and property from debris flows. Ole Buch discussed how ODF works with timber managers to develop harvest plans within the context of landslide risk, including no harvest or partial thinning options. Paul Chapman exhibited pictures of timberlands in the Mapleton area under his management, including lands that are too steep to harvest, recent landslides, and an unharvestable area that Campbell Group planted with conifer to promote establishment of large trees in the landslide area, as well as examples of road management and decommissioning efforts.

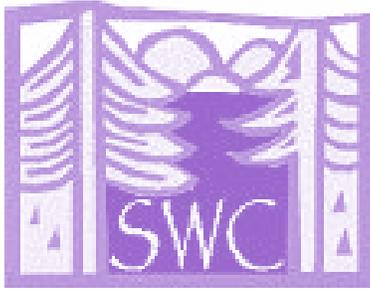
Despite this fabulous agenda, we did not have time for a broader look at the role of landslides in the context of the local geography, including geologic-timescale landslide processes and the role of debris flows and large wood in balance with Siuslaw stream ecosystems. Local stream ecologist Charley Dewberry has been researching the subject, including a current study on Knowles Creek of the formation and maintenance of complex stream channel structures for fish habitat. However, excessive landslides contribute to high stream

sediment input and pose risks to public safety and infrastructure.

The information shared was extremely valuable for our current understanding and planning of watershed stewardship. Some of the salient take-home knowledge included the following: Historic landslide areas are more prone to repeat landslides because recent accumulations of sediment on top of bare bedrock tend to be looser and persist at landslide-prone gradients. Some landslide prone areas attract construction of houses, barns and other structures because they exhibit flat valley bottoms and terraces where past debris flows and earth have accumulated. Small draws throughout the watershed exhibit this type of gentle slope. In relation to age of forest cover, landslides are more prevalent in recent clearcuts, followed by mature stands, than the age classes between. This age relationship is related to root density. Pioneering shrub and tree species create a dense network of roots that hold soil; the root network continues to improve strength as trees mature, until the point that older trees fall down, pulling up soil and bedrock in the rootwads and leaving decaying roots in the soil. Conifer stands are less prone to landslides than hardwood stands. This observation may be related to the fact that hardwoods are typically a disturbance species in the Coast Range, populating a forest after a fire, clearcut, or landslide.

Many of the past associations of landslides with timber harvest have been mitigated through improved road building and planning. The current standard is to build ridgetop roads that have minimal impact on watershed drainage. Decades ago, building roads in the valley bottoms, along and through streams, was the norm, of course having ill effect on riparian and aquatic ecosystems. Mid-slope roads tend to promote

Continued on next page



...Coordinator's Message *Continued from page 1*

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Vice Chair: Steve Elliot

Secretary: William Fleenor

Treasurer: Nancy Nichols

Representatives:

Barbara Beers

Dave Eisler

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Noland Huntington

damaging runoff patterns, especially if poor or no road drainage systems were constructed. Side-cast construction, in which high side slope material was excavated and emplaced on the low side to create a flat terrace for a road, added to landslide risks by exposing hillside fill directly to runoff. Saturated, loose material is a key ingredient for landslides, particularly debris flows. Road builders now avoid cutting into the hillslope and construct drainage ditches on the high side to divert runoff from the road base. Often, for timber harvest, temporary roads are built and are decommissioned after cutting.

For the audience, many questions ranged about the responsibility of ODF and timber companies when landslides do occur. Others also asked if timber cutting could be altered to allow for thinning only to avoid the risk status of a clearcut as well as to promote multiple species stands of trees. The panelists shared that a significant percentage of proposed harvest acreage is denied on the basis of landslide risk, and that timber companies do not waste time and effort on proposing harvest to ODF that the companies' own staff recognize as landslide risks. ODF may also demand that a proposed clearcut be designated for thinning only. Mr. Hinkle noted that no significant losses nor loss of life have occurred in ODF permitted lands since the landslide risk program went into effect after the 1996 floods, and that very few landslides occurred in the permitted lands during this winter's storm events. He noted that landslides did occur in unharvested areas designated as risks by ODF. Also, in regard to responsibility, Mr. Hinkle noted that as a geologist he has a license that could be revoked and a position that could be lost if he did not uphold the standards of his practice and the rules of the state.

This line of questioning led us to come full circle back to the opening remarks: we live in a landslide-prone environment. We cannot hope to achieve risk-free watershed management for slope stability. Mr. Hales informed us that the Oregon Coast Range is unique in that the rates of uplift (from ocean plate subduction) and erosion (from weathering and landslides) are equal, maintaining a stable elevation over time. In other words, we have to expect that sometimes landslides are just a part of nature in the Siuslaw. Equally important is the knowledge that extreme rates of landslides associated with timber harvest have been greatly reduced through improved road building (primarily) and better understanding and avoidance of landslide risks.

I closed the forum with an acknowledgement of the Watershed Council as the neutral meeting ground for all community members to come together to address issues related to health and security of our watershed. We aired a broad range of opinions, backgrounds, and sentiments at the June meeting, and we did so in a respectful, progressive, positive manner. Not everyone left feeling satisfied with the status of watershed management, but everyone left better informed on the topic and of perceptions and concerns in the community. The best way for us to achieve positive directions in our watershed is to inform ourselves and get together with our community members to find the common ground for directions and solutions. The concept for this meeting stemmed from questions posed to the Watershed Council from members of the Pitchfork Rebellion, the Lake Creek area group demanding changes in timber industry practices. The timber industry attended upon our invitation because they knew the Watershed Council would offer the respectful, constructive forum for an informational overview in a community setting. The Siuslaw Basin has been internationally recognized for excellence in partnerships. Let's keep up the effort and show the world how it is done.

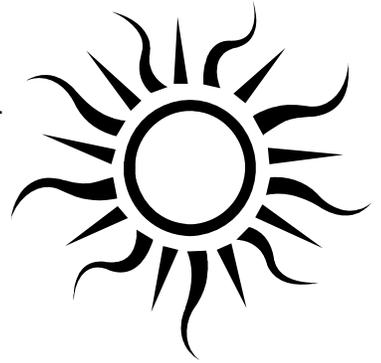
Todd Miller

Summer Camp Starts Monday July 24!

Our Summer Watershed Exploration Camp is back for its fourth consecutive year. Camp Director Jim Grano and Council staff have put together an impressive program for both the introductory camp during July 24 through July 28 and the advanced camp running from July 31 through August 4.

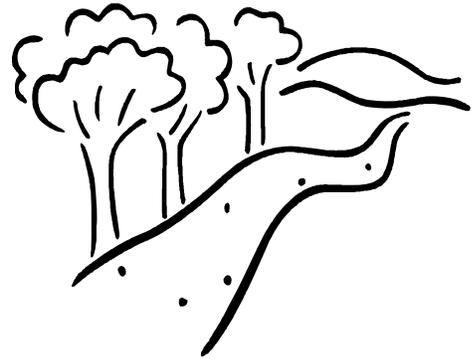
There may still be time to accept additional, qualified, high school students into the advanced camp program. Please see information and registration materials on our Web site, and call the office at 268-3044 to check availability. Students leave the Port of Siuslaw parking area in Old Town Florence at 8:30 am and return at 3:30 pm. Transportation to and from Mapleton may be available to limited students with prior arrangement.

A special Thank You to all who gave a donation to the summer camp during the June General Council meeting and to the people who mailed donations! On ongoing Thank You to the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board for awarding a grant to the program.



Siuslaw Road Sign Welcomes Motorists!

We finally erected the "Now Entering Siuslaw Watershed" road sign next to Highway 126 at Cougar Pass between Noti and Walton. The sign went up on Saturday, June 24. Kudos to Phil Adams from Roseburg Resources for hours of hard work as well as donation of materials. Roseburg Resources is hosting the sign on their land. Kudos also goes to Dave Eisler, David Webb, and Steve Elliot for their donation of time and tools, and to Brian Buhl for bringing much needed refreshments. Actual placement of the sign was limited by last year's road widening, varying rights-of-way, and good visibility. The sign is a nice addition to the pass and looks great.



Suggestions from Council Members

- Indian Creek landowner Dick Beers recommends the following commentary by former Forest Chief, Jack Ward Thomas, published in the Sacramento Bee:

Jack Ward Thomas: Sustaining Forests:

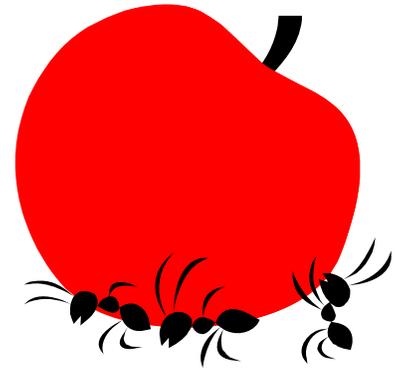
<http://www.sacbee.com/content/opinion/story/14276666p-15085993c.html>:

- Federal Agency Representative, Ralph Lampman, asks if the Council should consider partnering with the "National Fish Habitat Action Plan". For information go to www.fishhabitat.org
If you have any comments or concerns, please email Todd at coordinator@siuslaw.org.

Save the Date...

August 30

6:30 pm



Siuslaw Watershed Council

Student and Volunteer Picnic

The picnic venue is tentatively going to be at the Gazebo near the Mapleton Dock on Riverview Rd. in Mapleton.

There will be displays of accomplishments, presentations from summer camp participants, raffle and great food

Bring your favorite picnic dish, friends and family



Confirmed details will be in the August newsletter

Siuslaw Watershed Council Calendar

July 26—Siuslaw Watershed Council General Meeting: 6:30 pm, Mapleton Grange, E. Mapleton Road.

August 3—SWC Technical Team Meeting: 9:30 am, Upper Compound, Mapleton.

August 7—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.)*

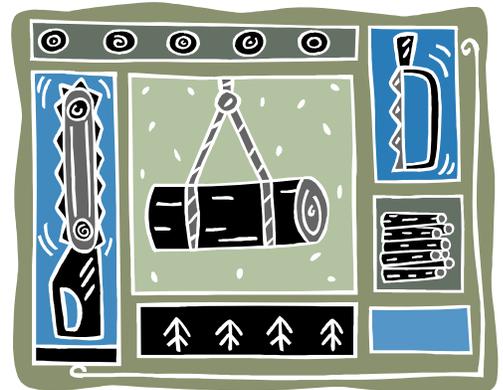
August 16—Monthly Siuslaw Volunteer Water Quality Monitoring Day

August 9—SWC Exec. Committee Meeting: 5:30 pm, Upper Compound, Mapleton.

August 30—Siuslaw Watershed Council Student and Volunteer Appreciation Picnic: 6:30 pm, Tentatively to be held at the Mapleton Gazebo near the Mapleton Dock on Riverview Avenue.

Western Oregon Timber Supply is Topic of July's Council Presentation

Phil Adams of Roseburg Resources will share information related to the supply of timber in Western Oregon and the Mid-Coast region. Mr. Adams has collected data and projections from a variety of sources to present the overall outlook for what to expect in terms of local harvest patterns. This presentation which touch on some of the economics of timber issues and will be a valuable follow-up to this year's earlier presentations on timber-related topics, including large wood placement for stream restoration, the Coordinated Resource Offering Protocol (CROP) for federal timberlands, and management for landslide risk in timberlands.



Attention Leadership Board Members:

We will adopt the proposed addition of the Coastal Lakes watersheds and revision of main-stem Siuslaw River representative areas. We will also adopt Bylaws revisions as additionally identified during last year's legal clarifications. Information on both is posted on the council Web site. Navigate by clicking on "For the Board" link in upper left area of our home page.

Siuslaw Watershed Council
General Meeting Agenda
July 26, 2006
Mapleton Grange Hall
6:30 p.m.

- 6:00-6:30** **Open for set-up**
- 6:30– 6:35** **Welcome and Introductions**
- 6:35-7:30** **Presentation:** Western Oregon Timber Supply—Phil Adams of Roseburg Resources
(see page 5 for complete description)
- 7:30-7:45** **Refreshment Break**
- 7:45-8:00** **Leadership Board Business:** 1) Sub-Basin Representative Area changes;
2) Bylaws revisions adoption. *(see page 5 for details.)*
- 8:00-8:10** **Coordinator Report:** Todd will share the brief slide show on culvert replacements proposed to the BLM's Resource Advisory Committee (RAC) he presented to the RAC on July 13 and share other news of the past month.
- 8:10-8:15** **Executive Committee Report**
- 8:15-8:25** **Open Mic** *(3-5 speakers, 3-5 minutes each)*
- 8:25-8:30** **Announcements and Raffle Drawing**
- 9:00** **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.

June 2006

Treasurer's Report *Nancy Nichols, Council Treasurer*

Beginning Cash	\$32,629.25	
	JUNE	YEAR TO DATE
INCOME		
Dues	\$270.00	\$650.00
Federal Grants		\$15,522.36
State Grants		\$42,156.73
Private Grants	\$225.00	\$6,624.61
Interest	\$174.08	\$451.39
Donations & Misc.	\$210.00	\$3,422.00
Administrative Funds		\$2,805.73
Project Management		
Other	\$34.08	\$80.14
TOTAL INCOME	\$913.16	\$71,712.96
EXPENSES		
Grant Expenses	\$8,099.46	\$74,380.69
Other	\$1,457.47	\$5,141.51
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$9,556.93	\$79,522.20
Ending Cash	\$24,001.83	

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

Siuslaw Watershed Council Membership Form

Type of Membership:

Landowner _____ Community Member _____ Industry _____

Government Agency: _____ Tribal: _____

Name: _____ Today's Date: _____

Address: _____

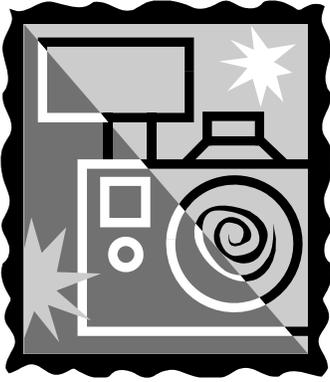
Telephone: _____ E-mail: _____

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

July 2006

Plant Pictures



Have the native riparian plants that you received from the SWC Native Plant Distribution succeeded? Take some pictures of your beautiful plants and email them to Liz Vollmer-Buhl at watershed@siuslaw.org. Thanks!

Also, thank you, to everyone who participated in the initial monitoring visits from Wesley Voth, the project's Monitoring Technician. We look forward to continuing our work together.

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?