

Fall 2021

SIUSLAW

WATERSHED COUNCIL NEWS

What's Happening in Your Watershed?

Fall Fishing on the Siuslaw River

Fall fishing is off to a great start on the Siuslaw River! Patient anglers, who are usually on the river at first light, are being rewarded with big, chrome bright fall Chinook in addition to a beautiful morning sunrise. Despite the ongoing drought and unseasonably warm water conditions, anglers are reporting success in popular trolling zones in the Siuslaw estuary. Fall Chinook fishing on the Siuslaw, and elsewhere up and down the Oregon coast, is typically a waiting game with many hours spent on the tiller handle with the hope that an anadromous salmonid on its migration back to its spawning grounds will decide to bite your well-presented herring or artificial bait. Herring, or alternatively anchovies, make an excellent offering because the chinook entering the bay during this time of year are kings who are actively feeding and trying to pack on as much oil-rich lipids as possible before they begin their upstream spawning migration. Once the fall rains start in earnest, the chinook will exit the food-rich estuary and enter the freshwater system and almost immediately stop actively feeding. From this point on, to entice a fish to bite requires a different set of tactics. Dead drifting or floating cured roe under a bobber is a very popular choice among experienced Siuslaw anglers and every angler “worth their salt” will covet their secret egg cure.

As the king salmon make their way to headwater spawning grounds in tributaries off of the mainstem Siuslaw and Lake Creek, they will begin a physiological and morphological change that prepares them for their spawning mission but also leaves them physically exhausted to the point of mortality. In a final act of giving, the salmon carcasses decompose in the stream system where they spawned and provide immediate food sources for iconic predators such as bald eagles and black bears, as well as many other critters like raccoons and coyotes. What is remaining after the keystone carnivores have had their share is left to decompose and provide large amounts of vital nutrients to the stream system and riparian zone food webs. Amazingly enough, the marine-derived nutrients (MDN) provided by salmon have been found to nourish trees and shrubs in upland areas some distance from the stream, as carnivores transport the carcasses away from the stream matrix.





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NEWSLETTER DESIGNER

Kate Harnedy

Okay, back to fishing! For the rest of September, and until the heavy fall rains show, an angler's best bet at hooking into a Siuslaw Chinook salmon, worthy of any king's table, is to target estuary zones near the Siuslaw River jetties, the sand flats around the Port of Siuslaw, and from Cushman upstream to the "dairy hole" near Waite Ranch. A great early season strategy is to troll closer to the mouth during the low tide phases and move upriver towards Cushman with the flooding tide. Baitfish, such as herring and anchovy, will enter the river mouth with the incoming tide and feeding fall Chinook are frequently hot on their tails, trying to grab a protein-rich bite. To duplicate this feeding pattern, you will want to fish a whole or plug-cut herring (or anchovy) on a 3'-4' mooching rig on a fishing pole and reel powerful enough to handle your quarry: a graphite pole in the 15-25lb rating with a strong level-wind will fit the bill. Oftentimes, a flasher or dodger will also be utilized to provide additional flash and attraction.

If you don't have access to a suitable boat for trolling the Siuslaw River, don't fret, the "Garbage Hole" located on Rhododendron Drive near the Lane County Waste Management facility is an excellent choice for bank-bound anglers. Many different tactics work when casting from the rip-rap at the Garbage Hole (named for its proximity to the waste management facility), but perhaps the easiest and most cost-effective method is to cast squid-spinners, which can found at The Sportsman in Florence. Before going spinner fishing at the Garbage Hole, it is always a good idea to stop by the local sporting goods store and ask the locals which colors are working best for any given day (chartreuse and pink are the author's preferred colors). As the season progresses later into fall, many Siuslaw-bound fish will begin to stage farther up the estuary in popular fishing zones around Tiernan boat launch, the mouth of Sweet Creek, and the town of Mapleton. The same tactic of trolling bait will still work, but many savvy anglers will switch to a bright metal spinner, such as a Blue Fox, to attract a salmon to bite. Wherever you end up fishing and whichever tactic you decide to employ, patience and persistence is the key to being rewarded with a Siuslaw River salmon!



Coho retention will be made available in four coastal river basins (Tillamook, Nestucca, Siletz, and Coos) September 15th through mid-October, but no wild coho will be available for harvest in the Siuslaw basin. Wild coho will open in the Siltcoos, Tahkenitch, and Tenmile lakes starting October 1st under permanent regulations. For in-season updates to fishing regulations, review the MyODFW Recreation Report. If you happen to encounter a native coho while fishing in the Siuslaw River this fall, it is best to quickly release the fish with a pair of long-handled pliers without netting it. When an ocean-fresh coho is netted it quickly loses a large amount of its protective scales and greatly increases the chance of post-release mortality.

Have a great time fishing, and if you are one of the lucky anglers to catch a big Chinook salmon, please post it to Facebook or Instagram and tag the Siuslaw Watershed Council!

Contributed by Caleb Mentzer, Project Manager

Message from the Outgoing Executive Director



Happy Fall! I hope that yours is full of all things wonderful and cozy, and that it is full of gratitude. I know, I know, gratitude may have been a bit difficult to focus on over the last year, which might be why it feels important at this moment. Here are some of the things that I am celebrating:

- Here at the SWC, we had to say goodbye to some fabulous staff members, as they moved on to other jobs or to retire. While we hated to see them go, they are leaving a legacy through their work here, including tangible and intangible positive impacts on the entire physical and cultural landscape of the Siuslaw Watershed. Our sincere thanks to them!
- The rest of the SWC staff have been able to continue working throughout the pandemic, caring for thousands of plants in restoration projects and on private land, planning stream restoration projects, and keeping the business side of the organization functioning. You will be able to see the good work of Jesse Jones (Project Manager–Riparian Projects), Britnee Church (SWC Restoration Technician), and Christina Ward (Financial Manager) throughout the watershed.
- Our Board of Directors has worked diligently in their volunteer capacity to guide the organization through the uncertainty and change we have all been experiencing, resulting in stability that has been essential to our work. Thank you, SWC Board members!
- Several new staff members have recently joined the SWC, and we couldn't be happier to have them here! You'll see more about each of them on Page 4-5 of this newsletter. Kevin Whittaker (SWC Restoration Technician), Tim Moffett (Project Manager–Education and Outreach), and Caleb Mentzer (Project Manager–Habitat Restoration) are each already hard at work.
- We have a new Executive Director! I have enjoyed helping to steward the SWC through the last year and a half, but—wow!—am I ever excited to be welcoming Rosemary Pazdral as SWC's Executive Director, beginning full-time in October. You can read more about Rosemary's considerable talents on page 4. I remain devoted to working for a good life for all here in the Siuslaw Watershed. I believe that the SWC's mission and work help contribute to that, and I have no doubt that Rosemary will help the SWC succeed in its work. Please help us welcome Rosemary over the coming months!

And finally, the star of a show for me is often the set, and that is true here. Lifting my eyes from my computer to the creeks and forests around me never fails to fill me with a deep and aching gratitude. I hope that is an experience that I share with each of you.

*Contributed by Mizu Burruss, Project Manager
Photo by Kate Harnedy, katephoto.com*

Projects Update

In late 2020 and the first half of 2021, we began the last phase of planting at the Fivemile-Bell landscape restoration project, prepared the Waite Ranch site for restoration by stockpiling fill, completed large woody debris (LWD) placement in Indian Creek and the North Fork Siuslaw River, hosted our Native Plant Distribution event, and performed riparian planting for various projects.

We have a project currently underway in Upper Deadwood Creek placing logs instream to restore native salmon habitat as part of the Siuslaw Coho Partnership Strategic Action Plan. In preparation for winter, the field crew is protecting native plantings by removing the surrounding vegetation and building or maintaining exclosures. The field crew is also surveying tide gates on the Siuslaw and assisting with lamprey surveys at the Fivemile-Bell site. They are preparing for the next planting season by maintaining potted native plants and collecting seeds. Back at the office, we are coordinating the upcoming year of community events, including the summer 2022 Exploration Camp! The camp incorporates education, restoration, and recreation for fourth through twelfth graders throughout the watershed.

Contributed by Rosemary Pazdral, Executive Director



Welcome New SWC Staff!



Rosemary Pazdral, Executive Director

Rosemary Pazdral is delighted to join the Siuslaw Watershed Council as the new Executive Director. Rosemary grew up on the headwaters of the Siuslaw and recently completed a PhD studying the hydrology of Oregon coastal watersheds. She is dedicated to stewarding land and water in the Oregon Coast Range through community partnership and science-informed management. Rosemary has previously worked on multi-stakeholder projects to restore floodplain hydrologic connectivity, collect field data in remote streams across the Pacific Northwest, and bring together academic, tribal, and state and federal agencies to synthesize climate impacts on stream permanence. She holds a certificate in GIS and a PhD in Water Resources Science from Oregon State University, and a Master's degree in Landscape Ecology from the University of Washington. Rosemary is very much looking forward to leading the Council to continued success. She is also looking forward to getting to know the larger Siuslaw community, hopefully somewhere on a kayak, log jam, or dock!

Photo courtesy of Rosemary Pazdral

Tim Moffett, Project Manager

Tim Moffett, a Hoosier and Indiana University graduate, arrived in the Siuslaw River Watershed in 2016 via Southwest Florida and Downeast Maine. He and his family live in Mapleton and enjoy gardening, outdoor recreation, and travel. Tim joined our staff in August and will lend his skills and experience to a project manager position focused on outreach and education. We encourage you to contact him regarding special events, recreational opportunities, and free equipment rentals for members.

Photo by Scott Johnson



Caleb Mentzer, Project Manager

Caleb Mentzer joined our team as a project manager in late August. His initial work will center around culvert replacement, large wood placement, and contract development and management. Caleb is a native Oregonian from the small coastal town of Triangle Lake. He achieved an MS in Biology from the University of Oregon in 2009 while also attaining a minor in organic chemistry. A love of Pacific Northwest ecosystems and salmonid bearing streams has led Caleb to work in watershed restoration planning, management, and implementation in many of Oregon's watershed councils. Apart from work, he spends his time steelhead fishing from his Koffler drift boat, rafting in the deep canyons, and playing guitar.

Photo by Jon Warren



Kevin Whittaker, Restoration Technician

Kevin Whittaker was born and raised in Oregon and currently resides in Coos Bay with his wife and cat. He joined our crew back in July. In his free time, Kevin enjoys paddleboard fishing, disc golf, and mountain biking. He aspires to learn and grow in his role as a restoration technician, and to make a difference in our watershed.

Photo courtesy of Kevin Whittaker



Siuslaw Watershed Council Mission Statement

SWC 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.



Looking Forward: 2022 Native Plant Distribution

The 23rd Annual Native Plant Distribution (NPD) is just around the corner. The Siuslaw Watershed Council (SWC) will once again provide free native plants for waterside riparian planting in the Siuslaw Basin and Coastal Lakes areas. Trees planted along streams help provide bank stability, filter nutrients, and provide shade, which helps keep our waters cool for salmon and trout. Increasing the abundance of native species will also help the local flora outcompete unwanted invasive plant species.

Planting native species within our local riparian zones is important to us and we understand it can be a lot of work. If you're needing help, don't hesitate to ask for assistance with site prepping, planting, or even upkeep. Assistance is available for free from SWC on a limited basis. Call our office or email nativeplants@siuslaw.org to request help from the SWC Habitat Restoration Technicians.

Photos : Private Landowner's Property Before & After

Site Preparation/Planting of Native Plants from NPD



NPD is open for all riparian landowners and offers a way to help improve habitat without having to engage in a formal restoration project. Below is a general outline of when things will be happening. More detailed information will emerge as we get closer to the event times.

October

Begin our NPD outreach.

November

Media release detailing the event times and event resources. Plant ordering begins.

January

Volunteer outreach. (Want to volunteer? Please contact nativeplants@siuslaw.org.)

February

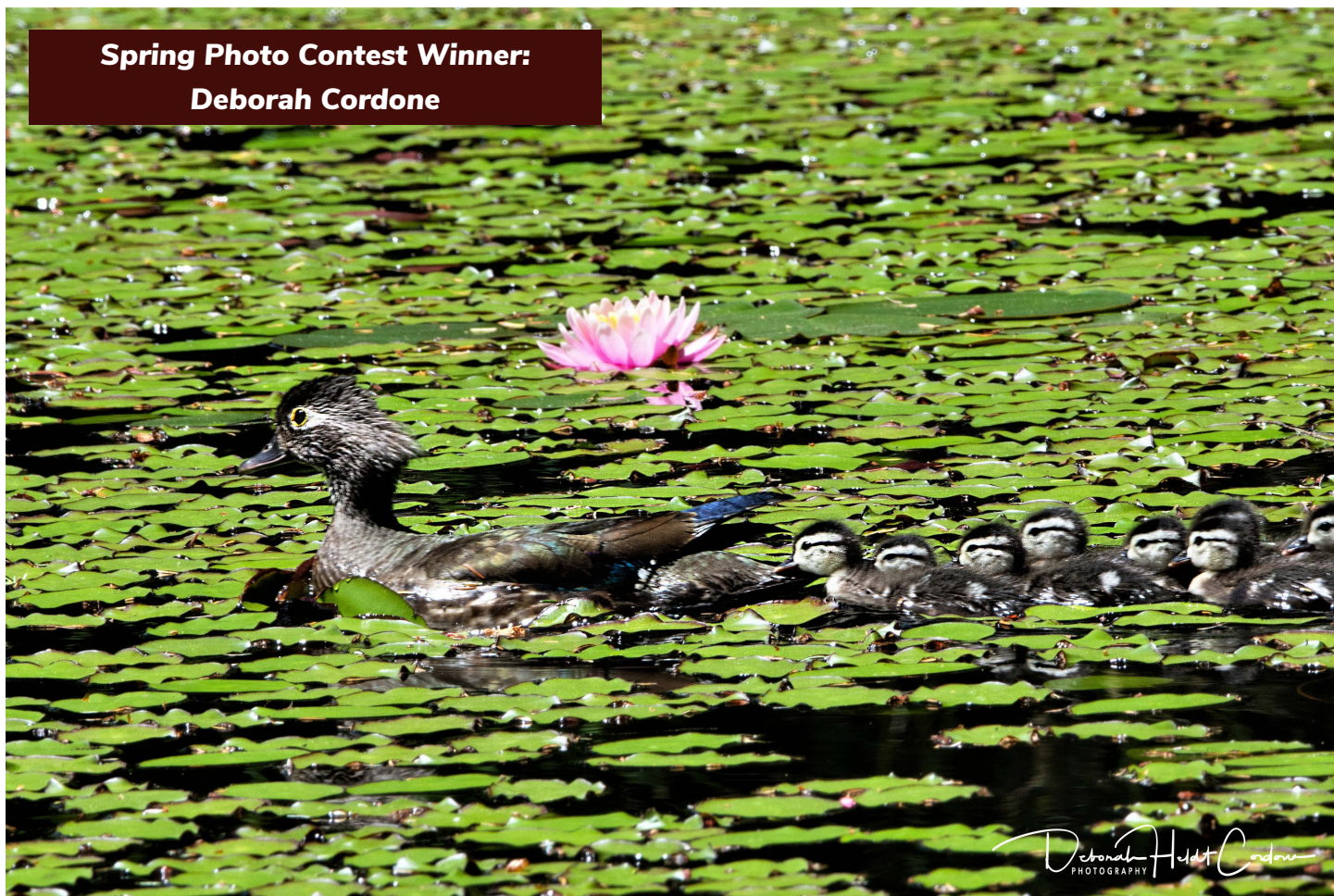
Distribution.

Plant requests will be accepted starting in late November. Here is a look ahead at our 2022 plant list:

Western red cedar (*Thuja plicata*)
 Grand fir (*Abies grandis*)
 Douglas fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*)
 Western hemlock (*Tsuga heterophylla*)
 Bigleaf maple (*Acer macrophyllum*)
 Vine maple (*Acer circinatum*)
 Black cottonwood (*Populus trichocarpa*)
 Oregon ash (*Fraxinus laFolia*)
 Pacific ninebark (*Physocarpus capitatus*)
 Red osier dogwood (*Cornus sericea* ssp. *sericea*)

Red elderberry (*Sambucus racemosa*)
 Serviceberry (*Amelanchier alnifolia*)
 Salmonberry (*Rubus spectabilis*)
 Chokecherry (*Prunus virginiana*)
 Cascara (*Rhamnus purshiana*)
 Red flowering currant (*Ribes sanguineum*)
 Snowberry (*Symphoricarpos albus*)
 Twinberry (*Lonicera involucrata*)
 Nootka rose (*Rosa nutkana*)
 Willow (*Salix* spp.)

**Spring Photo Contest Winner:
Deborah Cordone**



Free Equipment Rental for Members

Thanks to funds provided by The Ford Family Foundation, The BOGS Impact Fund, and Western Lane Community Foundation, we have kayaks, standup paddleboards (SUPs), and bikes available as free rentals for SWC members. Now we want to see them in action! Contact our office to make rental arrangements.

**Availability may be limited during SWC community outreach, recreation, and education events*





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Community - Economy - Environment

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