

Summer 2022

SIUSLAW

WATERSHED COUNCIL NEWS

What's Happening in Your Watershed?

Watershed Camp Returns!

Late June saw the return of Watershed Camp, a weeklong adventure exploring watershed science, recreational opportunities, and art throughout the Siuslaw Basin. This year's program, realized through a revived partnership between Siuslaw Watershed Council (SWC) and Siuslaw School District, hosted 50 youth campers from grades four through ten. A variety of activities took place from the headwaters to the Pacific shore.



To begin the week, Monday's theme was "estuary and tides." Campers were introduced to clamming at the Port of Siuslaw in Florence. Led by Mike Bones, a few had a successful enough harvest to take home a full gallon bag of clams to their families. Camp journals were distributed and inaugural entries were made with watercolor paints. The first day's activities concluded with ice cream on Bay Street.

A different place-based curriculum was explored each day through Friday. Tuesday, with the theme "tributaries and wildlife," found campers all the way upriver at Hult Reservoir in Blachly. First, a stop at the Triangle Grange allowed for three different education stations. This day being the summer solstice, the campers learned why our planet has solstices and seasons. They also learned about mammals from Blachly's Dr. Mentzer, whose large collection of salvaged animal skins provided excellent visual and tactile interaction.





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Thanks to grant funds received from the Mapleton Community Foundation, each camper had the opportunity to tie their own fishing jigs under the expert direction of Spin-X Design's Evan Moso and SWC's Caleb Mentzer. Later at Hult Reservoir, the campers learned about native and invasive crayfish and tested the various paddlecraft of SWC's growing floatilla, including kayaks, canoes, and stand-up paddleboards.

On Wednesday, we were joined at Honeyman State Park's Cleowox Lake by volunteers from the Florence Salmon

and Trout Enhancement Program (STEP), rangers from the USFS, and retired educator Jim Grano, who also serves as vice president of the SWC Board of Directors. With the theme "dunes ecosystems," campers were guided by rangers on a dunes ecology walking tour, participated in invasive species removal, and used sandboards to slide on the dunes. A few hours were set aside for fishing, and many were able to catch a rainbow trout or two from the lake.

Thursday's theme was "riparian health and watershed science." In the morning, campers visited a restoration project site on the Siuslaw River in Mapleton. There were stations for them to test water quality, investigate the stream's aquatic macroinvertebrates, contribute to riparian tree planting and invasive species removal, roast marshmallows around a campfire, and make charcoal sketches in their camp journals. In the afternoon, there were various field games at the Mapleton School District, including a water balloon fight.





The Camp week concluded on Friday with the theme “coast and shoreline.” Most of the day was spent on the beaches of South Jetty Road, with games and a beach cleanup competition. Watershed Camp’s grand finale was a giant dune buggy ride at Sandland Adventures. The successful return of Watershed Camp comes thanks to SWC’s partners, funders, and camp staff: Lisa Crader, Parker Griffin, Kate Harnedy, and Caleb Mentzer. We would also like to thank this year’s campers and their parents/guardians for their participation and support!

Contributed by Tim Moffett, Project Manager & Camp Director

Watershed Stewards

Native Plant Distribution (NPD) is one of Siuslaw Watershed Council (SWC)'s longest-running restoration programs. The NPD program began in 1999 when a handful of dedicated Council members wrote a grant application to fund a tree giveaway for local landowners interested in restoring their streambanks on their own terms. The program has grown a lot in the last 23 years and now gives away 9,000-10,000 plants annually. Participants in the NPD program can begin placing plant orders in late November, and the distribution event is typically held in February. Plant availability is on a first come, first served basis, and stock is claimed fairly quickly. We recommend placing your order before the second week of December to help ensure stock availability. Our staff is available to help with this process at any point along the way.

The longstanding success of the NPD program is driven by our community members who enthusiastically steward stream banks across the Siuslaw Watershed by planting and maintaining native riparian vegetation. We are grateful to all those who have participated over the years and want to take a moment to highlight two of the many amazing stewards that have made this program a success. George and Alice Uriona moved to Misery Creek in Deadwood back in 2005 and joined our NPD program in 2007. George and Alice own a 90-acre parcel of mostly riparian forest along Misery Creek, directly adjacent to National Forest lands. For the past 16 years, George and Alice have been intensely implementing restoration projects in a coordinated effort with the USFS, ODFW, SSWCD, and SWC. To date, several thousand trees—mostly mixed conifer species with a focus on Western Red Cedar seedlings—have been planted on their property along with hundreds of other native plants, such as Pacific ninebark (*Physocarpus capitatus*), snowberry (*Symphoricarpos albus*), and Douglas spiraea (*Spiraea douglasii*). The SWC looks forward to continuing to help bring the restoration goals of community members, like George and Alice, to fruition. We would like to offer a special thanks to George and Alice for working so hard in their restoration efforts and allowing SWC to be a part of their success!

Thanks to the support from our local community we have been able to not only continue, but to grow this valuable program. The SWC's NPD program is supported entirely through donations and grant funding. Plant stock and the associated assistance of our crew is provided free to landowners and will help increase the ecological value of their property. On a larger scale, these projects generate improvements to fish habitat throughout the basin, such as shade and erosion control, which can promote increased fish survival throughout the Siuslaw Watershed. The NPD's continued success is a testament to the commitment Siuslaw Watershed residents make to habitat stewardship and enhancement. We would like to thank everyone who has participated in NPD for their contribution to restoring native riparian habitat in the Siuslaw Watershed! To learn more or get involved, visit our website at www.siuslaw.org/npd.



George and Alice Uriona in front of a 15' Pacific ninebark and next to two large western red cedars that were planted as a part of the NPD program back in 2007

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.

Citizen Science in the Siuslaw Watershed: Counting Crawdads

The Siuslaw Watershed is calling all volunteer citizen scientists to help The River Mile Network (TRM) Crayfish Population Study characterize and quantify the crawdad population in the Siuslaw watershed and other waterbodies across the region! This might sound like a challenging task, but with resources provided by TRM it is actually very easy and fun. All you need to do to participate in this survey effort is to navigate to The River Mile Network website at <https://therivermile.org/network-projects/the-river-mile-crayfish-study/> where you can join the TRM community and take a quick “Crayfish Observation Training” module that will not only get you up to speed on how to submit crayfish observation data but will also provide a wealth of knowledge on crayfish biology and ecology. A common question is, “do I need any formal training or education to be a citizen scientist” and the answer is, “no,” anyone and everyone with an interest in nature and a computer is capable and encouraged to become a citizen scientist! After watching The River Mile crayfish training module, you will have all the skills you need to join in on the effort.



In the Siuslaw Watershed, our native crawdad species is the signal crayfish, *Pacifistacus Lenisculus*, which can be identified by the “light colored patch at the hinge of their chelae (claws); the patch or spot can be white, greenish or bluish” (The River Mile Network). The presumed native range of the signal crayfish is found within the Columbia River basin and extends south along Oregon’s coast to the Klamath River and its many tributaries. Outside of this native range, the signal crayfish is considered to be invasive and, unfortunately for those ecosystems, has been quite successful at establishing itself and outcompeting native species. The spawning cycle of signal crayfish is similar to most “temperate zone crayfish...breeding occurs in the autumn months and the female incubates the eggs throughout the winter. Eggs then typically hatch in March and April as the water warms” (<https://nas.er.usgs.gov/queries/FactSheet.aspx?speciesID=200>). Crayfish are scavengers that typically patrol the stream at night, searching for prey such as macroinvertebrates and other small stream denizens. During the day, particularly when the sun is high overhead, crawdads will be found hiding in rocky crevices and woody debris where they are safe from other larger predators that might make them a meal. Amazingly, signal crayfish have been observed to survive up to nine years in their native ranges!

A goal of The River Mile Network crayfish observation is to inform scientists about the movement of (crayfish) species and to detect the presence of invasive species before they have a chance to gain a strong foothold. In “North America there are nearly 400 species of crayfish; however, 65 species are listed as endangered and nearly half are in need of protection...major reasons for crayfish decline include habitat loss, invasive crayfish that increase competition and spread disease, and degraded water quality” (The River Mile Network). As Siuslaw Watershed citizen scientists, let’s all pitch in to help The River Mile Network with their awesome effort of collecting data about crayfish populations and helping to control the spread of invasive species!

Contributed by Caleb “Crawdad” Mentzer, Project Manager



Save the Date:

Fall Gathering

Saturday, September 24th

1:00pm – 4:30pm

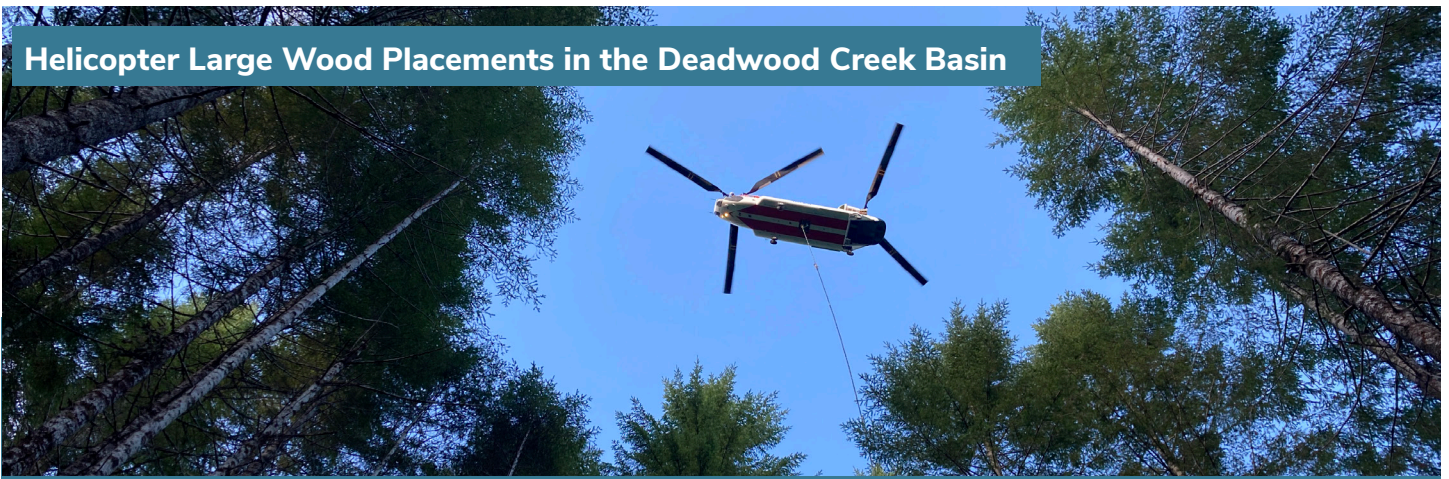
At a private farm in Deadwood

We invite you to join us for an afternoon outside with our watershed neighbors and supporters! Activities of the afternoon will include a gentle stroll through the orchard, learning about SWC's recent projects, and gathering in the garden! Light appetizers will be provided.

Join Us!

More information coming soon. RSVP will be required. Please feel free to reach out anytime! Contact the Siuslaw Watershed Council at 541-268-3044 or e-mail watershed@siuslaw.org or visit www.siuslaw.org.

Helicopter Large Wood Placements in the Deadwood Creek Basin



Beginning in late September and continuing into October, the Siuslaw Watershed Council (SWC), in strong partnership with the United States Forest Service, will once again be contracting with Columbia Helicopters, based in Aurora, Oregon, to utilize a chinook helicopter to place mature and plantation trees with rootwads into select stream reaches in Deadwood and Fawn creeks. The logs placed into the stream increase the quantity and quality of coho spawning and rearing habitat and improve the ecosystem for many other native aquatic and terrestrial species. “This is a very similar project to what you saw in the Upper Deadwood Creek basin last fall (2021) and the logistics and temporary road closures along the ridges will be about the same,” claims SWC Project Manager Caleb Mentzer.

It is a great joy for the Siuslaw Watershed Council to get to work in a region such as Deadwood Creek, where the local landowners and residents continually show strong support for stream restoration, and we want to extend a “thank you” for caring about your rivers and forests! This project was funded by the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board through an open-solicitation grant process with additional financial support from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association.

For more information about the Deadwood Creek helicopter large wood project, reach out to SWC Project Manager, Caleb Mentzer, at projects@siuslaw.org or by phone at 541-513-2604.



Welcome, Kayla Tidmore!

Kayla Tidmore joined the SWC staff as a restoration technician in early June. Kayla originally hails from the South but has lived in the Pacific Northwest for nearly 10 years.

She received her BS in Natural Resources from Oregon State University and has thoroughly enjoyed learning about and exploring the unique ecosystems of the Coast Range Mountains. She is excited to help steward the land and waters of the Siuslaw Basin and hopes to see you out there!





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Community - Economy - Environment

Inside the Summer 2022 Newsletter

Page 1 - 3
Watershed Camp Returns

Page 4
Watershed Stewards

Page 5
**Citizen Science in the
Siuslaw Watershed:
Counting Crawdads**

Page 6
**Save the Date:
Fall Gathering**

Page 7
**Helicopter Large Wood Placement in the
Deadwood Creek Basin
& Welcome New Staff**

