



TUALATIN RIVER  
WATERSHED COUNCIL



## **Annual Report 2009-2010**

*Engaging The Community To Sustain Our Watershed*

# Tualatin River Watershed Council

The Tualatin River Watershed Council (Council) is a locally organized group of volunteers, formally recognized in 1996 by the Washington County Commissioners. The Council is composed of a diverse group of stakeholders from the Tualatin basin. The Council coordinator salary and office support is funded through a grant from the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB). The Council promotes and improves the watershed conditions by connecting volunteers, groups and landowners with the resources needed to restore and protect the watershed. By providing stewardship, education, and information on watershed conditions, and doing restoration projects, the Council is ensuring continued improvement in watershed health. The Council's Strategic Plan focuses on four areas: education and outreach, restoration and enhancement, issues forum, and capacity building.

**For more information on the Council and the Tualatin Watershed, visit [www.trwc.org](http://www.trwc.org).**

The 712 square mile (454,000 acres) Tualatin River basin is located in the northwest corner of Oregon. The Tualatin River flows in a generally easterly direction from the Coast Range to its confluence with the Willamette River. The basin is almost entirely in Washington County. About 10% of the basin is in Yamhill, Multnomah, Clackamas, Columbia or Tillamook counties. The Tualatin River is 83 miles long and has a very flat gradient for most of its length. The five major tributaries to the Tualatin River are Scoggins Creek, Gales Creek, Dairy Creek (West Fork, East Fork, and McKay), Rock Creek, and Fanno Creek.

More than 500,000 people currently live in the Tualatin River basin and the population is expected to grow to over one million people by 2040. The land uses in the basin are 50% forestry, 30% agriculture, and 20% urban.



Agriculture Community
Farm Bureau: Washington County Farm Bureau Irrigation District : Tualatin Valley Irrigation District Nursery Industry: Fisher Farms, LLC Soil & Water Conservation Districts: Tualatin Soil and Water Conservation District

Urban Community
Parks & Recreation: City of Tigard Parks, City of Hillsboro Parks Sewer Districts: Clean Water Services Water Districts: Tualatin Valley Water District

Business/Industry Community
Business & Industry: Westside Economic Alliance Chambers of Commerce: Forest Grove Homebuilders & Development: Open

Forestry Community
Industrial Forestry: Stimson Lumber Co. Small Woodlands: Washington County Small Woodlands Association

Citizens
Citizens At Large: Greg White, Jena Lemke, Leah Johanson Organizations: Washington County CPO

Environmental/Education/Fisheries
Education Community: Pacific University Environmental Community: Tualatin Riverkeepers Fisheries: Open

Local Government
Cities: Cornelius, Banks Counties: Washington County

*Pictured on cover: Spawning behavior by coho salmon in Bateman Creek, a tributary of Gales Creek. Picture credit: Seth Chicas*

# Education & Outreach

## Children's Clean Water Festival



The Clean Water Festival is designed for 4th and 5th grade students to learn about water and how it relates to our world and explore water science and watershed ecology. Council member Jan Miller and Council staff April Olbrich worked with participating classes to build a watershed out of newspaper (mountains), foil (land surface), water (rainfall), cookie crumbs (dirt), and Jello powder (pollution).

## Restoration Project Tours



Two youth conservation corps groups that work at L.L. "Stub Stewart" State Park join Council staff to learn about and see the results of the West Fork Dairy Creek Restoration Project. The Council and partners routinely hold tours to inform Tualatin Basin residents about watershed issues and projects that address these issues.

## Tualatin Basin Weed Workshop



Tualatin Basin partners work together to provide training on the identification of new aggressive weeds, that require "early detection, rapid response" activities to avoid colonization in the Tualatin Basin. Participants learn about these plants, see plant specimens, and learn how to report plant sightings. Information on integrated pest management is also provided for dealing with more common invasive weeds.

## Student Watershed Research Project



The Council provides funding for Forest Grove High School students to participate in hands-on watershed educational activities. The students take water samples from Gales Creek and test it for dissolved oxygen, temperature, and pH. They also document the riparian conditions along the creek to help them better understand the test results. The Council uses this data to monitor trends that develop as a result of its restoration work in the Gales Creek sub-basin. The students share their data and observations with other students who participated in SWRP and environmental professionals at the SWRP Summit.

## Council Offers Fun And Educational Opportunities To Kids And Adults

Is your class, club or neighborhood group looking for a fun and educational way to improve the quality of the rivers and streams in your area? The Council offers many ways for you to help improve your watershed.

## North Fork Gales Creek Large Wood Placement Project



This one mile stream reach of North Fork Gales Creek is a prime spawning and rearing habitat for federally listed native winter steelhead, non-native Coho salmon, and native cutthroat trout. It lacked channel complexity, specifically deep pools and refuge that can be provided by large woody debris. To remedy this problem an excavator placed 20 structures composed of 3-8 logs in selected stream locations. The landowners provided the logs.

Large woody debris benefits streams by absorbing the force of high flows to reduce bank erosion; creating pool habitat for fish by concentrating flows resulting in scour around structures; and providing cover and food for salmon and other aquatic, terrestrial and avian species.

Students from Hillsboro High School Environmental Science and Natural Resources classes planted 1000 native trees in the ten areas along the creek. The trees will provide shade for the stream initially and large woody debris in the future.

## Dorman Pond



The Council, SOLV and community volunteers cleaned up the fishing pond located in the Gales Creek sub

## Establishing Native Plants At Rippling



Rippling Waters is a 19-acre site, where the Council is working on enhancing the riparian and upland areas along Gales Creek. Before the Council's restoration work, this site was overrun with invasive English ivy and littered with garbage. During 2009-10, community volunteers worked on removing invasive English ivy in preparation for planting native plants.

## Keeping Up With Nature

The Council connects landowners with resources such as plants, grant funds, community volunteers, and expertise. It also connects community volunteers or organizations with projects. Do you have an idea for a project and need help from the Council? Visit [www.trwc.org](http://www.trwc.org).

# Enhancement

## Litter Pick-up



Volunteers pick up litter and trash from this watershed.

## Restoring Waters



The Council is currently working on Gales Creek. Prior to the project, there were many invasive plants. Community volunteers are working on the riparian area for planting.

## Mt. Richmond Wetlands Enhancement Project



A private landowner, Pacific University staff and students, and the Council are using the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board small grant program to enhance a forested wetland area. The enhancement actions include mowing invasive plants, covering the area with shade cloth for several seasons, then removing the cloth and planting native plants.

## Lower Gales Creek Habitat Enhancement Plan Restoration Project



Local landowners, the Council and its partners are improving a five-mile area along Gales Creek. The long-term plan focuses on connecting floodplains and improving in-stream habitat to help native fish and wildlife.



During 2009-10, six habitat structures were added in the floodplain and stream, off-channel habitat areas were created, and a 2.5 acre riparian area was restored.

## Providing Resources For A Healthier Watershed

Council restoration projects start with the identification of a need, followed by an evaluation against criteria. If the criteria are met, a plan is developed. Projects need funding, designs and specifications, and permits before construction can begin. After construction, projects are monitored and maintained to ensure continued success.

# Issues Forum

## Tualatin Basin Water Supply Project and Title Transfer

The Council continues to serve as key stakeholder group for the technical aspects of these projects. The Water Supply Project is currently developing plans to meet the Tualatin Basin's need for an additional 50,000 acre-feet of water by the year 2050. Dependable fresh water resources will ensure the long term economic health and livability of the Tualatin Watershed. The Title Transfer Project is examining the feasibility of transferring ownership from the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation to a local governing body.

## Tualatin Basin Temperature Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Presentations

The Council continues to serve as a key stakeholder group to the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (ODEQ) as it revises the Tualatin Basin Temperature TMDL. Avis Newell, Tualatin Basin coordinator for ODEQ, meets with the Council periodically to familiarize the Council with current standards, provide summaries of water quality conditions in streams, and discuss the impacts the TMDL revisions may have on current management practices.

## Tualatin Basin Spawning Survey Results

Tom Murtagh, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife North Willamette Basin District Fisheries Biologist, provided a summary of the spawning surveys performed in the Tualatin Basin during the autumn of 2009.

## Campaign for Water, Parks and Wildlife

Measure sponsors The Nature Conservancy, Defenders of Wildlife and the Trust for Public Lands provided information about the measure to the Council. The Council provided a letter in support of the ballot measure.

## Wapato Lake Pumping

The Council received an update on the partnered activities to drain Wapato Lake prior to the summer deadline. Clean Water Services and its partners used portable pumps because the normal pump broke and couldn't be fixed in time to lower the lake level.

## Updates on Nursery Sustainability Practices

Council member Michael McMahan provided information on various sustainable practices being adopted by Willamette Valley nurseries.

## Washington County Urban and Rural Reserves Planning Process

Mike Dahlstrom, Washington County, presented updates on the county's urban and rural reserves planning process that determines which areas will be reserved for rural use and where urban growth will be allowed. This is the first time rural reserves have been established.

Other meeting topics included updates on the following: Valley & Vineyards scenic route; Farm Services Programs; Mt Richmond wetlands enhancement project; and the Chehalem Mountain monitoring project.

## Council Tours



Council members and Tualatin Basin residents participated in jointly sponsored sustainable watershed management tour that included stops at Blooming Nursery (Grace Dinsdale, owner of Blooming Nursery, in the foreground); Clean Water Services Stream Operations Center, Scoggins Dam/Hagg Lake and the Joint Water Commission water treatment plant.

## Engaging The Community

The Council provides a forum for groups to present projects that impact the citizens of the Tualatin Basin and obtain feedback from a diverse set of stakeholders.

# Council Capacity

## Strategic Planning



During 2009-10, Council committees implement the Council Strategic Plan's four focus areas: education and outreach, restoration and enhancement, issues forum, and capacity building. Each focus area has strategies, activities, intermediate outcomes and goals.

## Council Meetings

First Wednesday of every month  
 7 PM to 9 PM (Doors open at 6:30 PM)  
 Clean Water Services, Tualatin Rooms  
 2550 SW Hillsboro Highway  
 Hillsboro, OR

## Standing Committees

Steering  
 Restoration and Enhancement  
 Issues Forum  
 Education and Outreach

## Council Staff

Council coordinator: April Olbrich

## Council Officers (July 2009 - June 2010)

Chair: Michael McMahan  
 Vice-Chair: Ross Van Loo  
 Secretary: Jena Lemke  
 Treasurer: Jan Miller

## Expenses

**Council Operating Expenses: \$100,020**



64% Cash



36% In-Kind

**Council Project Expenses: \$144,925**



70% Cash



30% In-Kind

# Council Capacity

## Funding Sources

### Operating

#### Volunteer Hours

Council Members & Officers: 1,287

#### Cash

- Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB)
- Clean Water Services
- Tualatin Hills Park and Recreation District
- Tualatin Valley Water District

#### In-Kind

- Washington County
- Tualatin Valley Water District
- Clean Water Services

### Council Projects - Volunteers & Cash

#### Volunteer Hours

Council and Community: 949

#### Cash

- OWEB Small Grants
- OWEB Restoration Grant
- U.S. Bureau of Reclamation

### Council Projects - In Kind

- Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
- Oregon Department of Transportation
- Oregon Department of Forestry
- Stimson Lumber Co.
- The Sahnou Family
- Washington County Parks & Facilities Management
- Washington County Transportation Division
- Tualatin Soil and Water Conservation District
- Native Plant Co-op Nursery
- Northwest Invasive Weed Partnership
- Four County Cooperative Weed Management Area
- Association of Northwest Steelheaders Tualatin Valley Chapter
- Hillsboro High School Natural Resources and Environmental Science Classes
- Pacific University students
- Delta Chi Delta fraternity members (Pacific University)
- Pi Kappa Rho sorority members (Pacific University)
- Chris Wayland
- Portland State University, Student Watershed Research Project (SWRP)
- SOLV
- Oregon State University Extension Service
- Adelantes Mujeres

## Special Thanks To Everyone Who Assisted The Council



(503) 846-4810  
[www.trwc.org](http://www.trwc.org)  
[trwc@easystreet.net](mailto:trwc@easystreet.net)

Printed on recycled paper 