

# How healthy is Whychus Creek?

By Jim Anderson  
Correspondent

Lauren Mork, monitoring coordinator for the Upper Deschutes Watershed Council, is looking for help to survey invertebrates (animals without backbones) in Whychus Creek on August 15, from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

This will be another opportunity to join the Upper Deschutes Watershed Council and Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation, to collect macroinvertebrates —the aquatic life stage of insects, such as mayflies, caddisflies, and stoneflies — in Whychus Creek.

Folks have been volunteering for the project since it began in 2005. Volunteers



PHOTO PROVIDED

Volunteers collected macroinvertebrate samples at Camp Polk Meadow on Whychus Creek in 2013.

have learned how to use the equipment, sampling protocols, and then visit rim-rock, meadow and flood-plain reaches of Whychus Creek to collect samples that

contribute to our understanding of how habitat restoration is changing stream conditions for native fish.

This event is an opportunity for community members to get involved as stewards of their local watershed, learn first-hand about one of the streams in our backyard and to become “citizen scientists.”

Everyone will meet at Creekside Park for the first part of the project to receive instructions from Celeste A. Mazzacano, staff scientist and aquatic conservation director for the Xerces Society.

Mazzacano will explain why the monitoring is so vital in providing data to the fish biologists who are attempting to return ocean-run salmon to Whychus to spawn.

After everyone is familiar with the tools of monitoring, she will take the volunteers to the creek and demonstrate

the techniques for collecting. After that, each group of volunteers is given specific stretches of the creek and the work begins.

This year, Whychus is undergoing a water shortage that hasn't been this severe since the old days when the creek went dry from irrigation demand. These conditions make this year's monitoring even more important.

Even with the higher waters of previous seasons, the monitoring since 2005 has not shown dramatic improvements in biological conditions in Whychus Creek, apart from a trend toward increased invertebrates among upstream-reach sampling sites.

For more information, or to sign up, contact Lauren Mork at 541-382-6013 x39 or [lmork@restorethedeschutes.org](mailto:lmork@restorethedeschutes.org).

# Cyclists will roll through Sisters Wednesday

Riders from the Cascade Cycling Classic will storm through Sisters on Wednesday, July 22 as part of the 125-mile first stage of the five-day event.

They will start in Madras, roll through Prineville and Redmond before heading west into Sisters for a finishing climb up McKenzie Pass. The stage is one of the longest in the history of the CCC.

Motorists are advised to keep an eye out for cyclists on the roads of Sisters Country. Roads will not be closed during the event. Motor officers escorting the riders will be directing drivers to pull to the side of the roadway as the riders pass through. A large group of riders will take up the majority of both travel lanes. If motorists find themselves affected by the event, it is imperative for the safety of everyone involved to follow the directions of the motor officers.

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PHOTO PROVIDED

Jodi Wilmoth collected macroinvertebrate samples at Camp Polk Meadow on Whychus Creek during Stream Sampling Day in 2013.

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