

september19 2013

volume7 issue18

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UNWC Completes Massive Restoration Project

The Upper Nehalem Watershed Council (UNWC) has completed another very large salmon habitat improvement project in a local watershed. The latest project was phase two of a major collaborative restoration effort in the Pebble Creek sub basin of the upper Nehalem basin. The Nehalem basin is designated a high priority for native salmon population recovery under the Oregon Plan for Salmon and Watersheds.

This summer's project, completed in mid-July, took place on industrial forestland owned by Weyerhaeuser Company and included stream restoration at forty five sites within three miles of native salmon bearing streams. The project included the construction of large woody debris structures in Pebble Creek and West Pebble Creek. The structures were constructed within the active stream channel and adjacent floodplain to function in such a way as to mimic optimal natural stream conditions. Seasonal stream flows interacting with log structures create summer rearing and winter refuge habitat for juvenile salmon and spawning areas for adult salmon, as pools and riffles form and spawning gravels sort and redeposit. The strategic placement of structures also serves to capture winter flows increasing ground water holding capacity resulting in flood flow reduction during the winter months and cooler water releasing into the streams during summer months.

The project is another example of the UNWC working and synchronizing with local landowners, numerous natural resource agencies, consultants, funders and qualified contractors to make measurable improvements within the temperate rainforest ecosystem.

"This is the largest salmon habitat improvement project that UNWC has ever undertaken and one of the largest



in the north coast to date," said Maggie Peyton, Director of the UNWC. "It is a living laboratory up there as we work with Weyerhaeuser to improve watershed health conditions alongside active industrial timber operations."

This project offers a unique chance to re-evaluate the overall effectiveness of salmon restoration efforts and ask questions about whether enough effort is being made over-all to increase native salmon populations. "We have a golden opportunity here," says Peyton. "There are so many aspects of the Pebble Creek project that have cracked open doors and started many meaningful discussions. Are native Coho populations really recovering in the Nehalem? If we continue to manage the industrial timberland, agricultural and urban landscapes the way we do, will wild salmon populations really be able to increase to sustainable levels? Are we really doing enough to assess and repair the ecosystem damage, protect and secure the species future? Are the salmon species really going to be resilient to global warming? The discussions are ongoing

in the community concerning the Oregon Forest Practices Act, Endangered Species Act, Clean Air Act and the Clean Water Act and whether these acts of man are adequate enough to protect and restore forest health, salmon populations, air and water quality. The bottom-line truly being whether mankind is protecting the web of life and assuring that biodiversity is thriving and viable to sustain future generations of man and beast".

As part of the project the UNWC purchased 581 whole trees from Weyerhaeuser, which ranged in diameter from eighteen inches to over thirty inches. According to Peyton the trees were purchased at the lowest fair market value. The trees were chosen for size and convenience to the stream sites where they would be placed. Low value trees were especially targeted, since a tree doesn't need to be knot free or straight to make a good habitat log, in fact the knurlier the better. "Weyerhaeuser was not in a position to donate trees during phase two, but they gave us the best possible deal they

Farmer Resigns From WOEC

Has been offered the General Manager position at Clatskanie PUD

Marc Farmer, the General Manager of the West Oregon Electric Cooperative (WOEC), has resigned after being offered the full time General Manager position of Clatskanie PUD starting in January.

"I have notified my board that I will be resigning effective the end of December and the search for my replacement has already begun with the application deadline of November 1, 2013," said Farmer in a written response when asked about rumors that he was leaving WOEC. "I will continue serving here through the remainder of this year."

Farmer declined to comment when asked if he had accepted the position at Clatskanie PUD.

Farmer took the position as General Manager at WOEC in July of 2005.

could considering current market conditions," said Peyton. "In talking to other people in the industry, we know we got a very good deal". Scott Marlega – Land Use Manager for Weyerhaeuser was very supportive to UNWC throughout the process of developing and implementing this project. His forestry experience and consistent professional mannerism made the whole project go smoothly. Marlega has been involved in implementing salmon restoration projects on industrial forest land since the 1990's.

During phase one of the project Weyerhaeuser has able to donate trees for salmon habitat structures in Coal

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Garden Will Support Food Bank

Christie Brown Davis has a plan.

Davis, along with her husband Ben, intends to start a large garden this year that will provide fresh fruits and vegetables for clients of the Vernonia Cares Food Bank.

"The St. Helens Food Bank has a garden that helps supply it," says Davis. "I believe Scappoose has one and so does Hillsboro. The Oregon Food Bank has one. But Vernonia doesn't have one that is dedicated to supporting the local food bank."

Davis has made a good start towards organizing the garden she intends to have in the ground and growing next spring. She already has a large plot of land (6,000 square feet) that has been made available to her for use as garden space. She has already received a donation of all the seeds she needs from Home Depot. She has large ten foot wide farm gates to install at the garden. She

even has a great name for her project, "Dirty Hands, Green Thumbs," and a logo she designed herself, using her young son Ben's painted hands. Still on her check list of needs: fencing and posts to keep out the deer, gardening tools, and help with labor.

The project is a 501(c)(3) non-profit, operating as part of the Vernonia Cares Food Bank.

For help with the labor, Davis has a couple of options. First of all she hopes to involve high school students from the Vernonia School District. She will be talking to students this fall with the intention of getting some of them involved in the work. Students will be able to earn Community Service hours for their volunteer time, plus Davis intends to share some the harvest with any student who assists with the project. She also hopes to pass on some of her gardening knowledge about soil preparation, seed propagation, cuttings, and more to the next genera-



tion. "As a family we're trying to become more self-sustaining, and we want to be able to pass that knowledge on to the students," says Davis. "And in return get some help with some of the manual labor."

Davis says she also hopes to involve any graduates of the OSU Master Gardener program. The OSU Extension Service hosted a Master Gardener class in Vernonia in 2010

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