



Kelly Doerksen stands next to one of the two "bottomless" culverts in Agency Creek that were replaced in 1998. Notice how easily the water flows through the new arched design.

Saving our FISH

show respect, because their existence hinged on the fish's existence. These are the values we should be teaching our children. All animals, including us, are dependent on each other for life."

THE BIGGER PICTURE

Since last month's listing by the National Marine Fisheries Service, much attention has been paid to the urban dweller — and how much average citizens may have to change their way of living to protect these salmon and steelhead trout. For example, people living in Portland and surrounding suburbs, as well as other areas in the populated Willamette Valley, may now be limited in their use of water and may be facing an increase in taxes that will pay for water improvements. No other endangered species listing has ever had this kind of a potential impact on city residents.

And the Grand Ronde Tribe, lo-

cated in both Polk and Yamhill counties, has already played an important role in improving the rivers, and acknowledges the need to help improve all affected areas in Oregon.

Last year, the Tribe's Spirit Mountain Community Fund provided funding for a stream enhancement project on the South Fork of the Yamhill River. Working with the youth from the Salmon Corps, and volunteers from Stop Oregon Litter and Vandalism (SOLV), Doerksen and Feehan helped out on that project.

"When different groups come together like that," Doerksen said, "it really helps educate people. If everyone took responsibility for 50 or 100 yards of a river, we really would be repairing them."

Part of the Yamhill project included clearing away debris and planting trees along the river banks.

Last month, Council Chair Kathryn Harrison gave opening comments, following a blessing by Travis

Benoist, at the Willamette Mission State Park stream restoration project sponsored in part by the Tribe. At Willamette Mission, 300 volunteers planted more than 5,000 trees and shrubs along a one-mile riparian zone to reduce stream stiling and provide shade to a level needed by salmon and steelhead.

But the Tribe is about to do something even bigger. The Grand Ronde Tribe has recently announced it will join forces with local governments to restore salmon and steelhead runs throughout the Willamette Basin. This partnership includes the cities of Portland and Gresham, Washington and Clackamas counties, and private business partners such as Intel, Tektronix, the Port of Portland, Portland General Electric, and Weyerhaeuser. The Spirit Mountain

Community Fund has committed \$150,000 to this project, which has been named "Team Up! For Watershed Health," and will be carried out over a three-year period.

Although not part of the reservation as it exists today, these areas are still Grand Ronde ancestral homelands. June Olson said that this is why the Tribe has an interest in helping Oregon agencies improve fish populations in the Willamette and Columbia.

"Historically, Native people never had a concept of private property or boundary laws," she said. "They fished and hunted where food was plentiful. Today those laws exist. But our interest remains in protecting the whole length of the river, not just the part that flows through the reservation."

What you can do to help

Many of the things we do in our daily lives can affect our watersheds. We must be willing to do what we can to minimize degradation of waterways.

- ✓ Always use water wisely. Minimize water waste.
- ✓ Support riparian restoration projects.
- ✓ Work to protect existing wetlands.
- ✓ Avoid using or minimize the use of herbicides, fertilizer, and insecticides.
- ✓ Support the use of environmentally safe products.
- ✓ Involve yourself in local conservation efforts. A wide variety of organizations exist, and focus on different natural resource issues. Call one you are interested in and find out how you can help.

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SMOKE SIGNALS

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Questions?

Contact the Tribe's Natural Resources department by calling 800-422-0232 or 503-879-2381.

The Fish and Wildlife Committee meets the second Tuesday of every month. Tribal members are welcome. Call Lonnie Leno, Chair, at 879-2405.