

WATERSHED *from page 1A*

pounds of native plant seeds and gave away over 12,000 native plants to 150 different community members across the watershed who live along the river to help restore habitats for the future. The council also replaced an aging culvert — a tunnel carrying a stream under a road or railroad — so it could maintain access to 3.5 miles of critical Coho salmon habitat near Walton.

“One reason the Siuslaw is so interesting is because we were actually connected to the McKenzie River 20 million years ago, before the Coast Range uplifted. We used to drain the Paleo-Cascades and that’s why we have such a low gradient, and the valleys down in the Siuslaw. Sea levels were a lot lower 20 million years ago, so the river was cutting down, which is why we have such a deep, wide estuary too. That sets us up geologically to be basically salmon heaven,” Tome said. “If you would have been here in the 1800s, you would have seen a complicated stream system. There would have been an integrated system with islands throughout, with multiple channels coming through. There would have been beaver dams everywhere. During that time, it

was great for salmon. So that’s one reason why we had such high salmon numbers.”

According to Tome, now the Siuslaw Watershed Council is focusing its restoration projects to recreate those habitats of the past that have been essentially destroyed by human intervention.

“In the 1800s when Europeans first started pushing into the region, they had different practices than we have today, one of which was splash dam logging. They built a splash dam across the valley bottom, harvested all the wood on the hillslopes and put it in the lake behind it,” Tome said. “In winter high flows, they would dynamite out that damn and the flood wall would have rushed all the logs down to the middle.

“You can imagine what that would do to that complicated stream system. It simplified a lot of stuff. You might notice the Siuslaw is bedrock scoured in a lot of places and it wouldn’t have looked like that in the 1800s. It’s been scoured out by those flood flows and by logs being transported down the stream. At the same time, they were harvesting a lot of salmon.”

Based on cannery records from the late 1800s, the watershed council was able to

determine that as many as 462,000 salmon returned to the Siuslaw in 1896. They estimate about a 50 percent catch rate, which means as many as a million salmon were returning to the Siuslaw in any given year during that time. On average during the late 1800s, 256,000 salmon would be canned from the Siuslaw per year.

However, the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife reports that in 1997, as little as 500 salmon returned.

“Those two things together — the unsustainable timber practices and the unsustainable salmon catch — is why that number decreased so rapidly in the late 1800s and early 1900s. So we’re looking at those watershed processes that were impaired,” Tome said. “We’re trying to repair those processes so that the system can retain itself into the future and be resilient.”

The Siuslaw Watershed Council has also partnered with the U.S. Forest Service, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Siuslaw Soil and Water Conservation District, the Bureau of Land Management, Confederated Tribes of the Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians, The Confederated Tribes of the Siletz Indians, the Nation-

al Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Wild Salmon Center and the McKenzie River Trust to create the Siuslaw Coho Partnership that, so far, has spent three and a half years working on a plan to restore salmon habitats in the basin of the watershed.

“We are also working with local tribes to integrate their place-based knowledge, their traditional ecological knowledge about how they have managed and stewarded the watershed for thousands of years and how they are integrating that with the current state standards to teach a more holistic understanding of the watershed that is integrating the past knowledge of the past stewards of our watershed,” Tome added.

The Siuslaw Watershed Council focuses on salmon conservation because salmon are a keystone species, which means they are a more sensitive species in the environment.

“Salmon are an indicator of watershed functions, so if the habitat is good for salmon, then it’s good for many other species,” Tome said.

Salmon are also culturally important. From an ecosystem standpoint, salmon are the indicators species that

shows how healthy the watershed is.

“Funding tends to be Coho flavored, so that’s what we chase after. But it helps the whole watershed function,” Tome said.

The Siuslaw Watershed Council is working on a number of restoration projects in order to build back the habitat of the watershed that has been lost over the years, but it focuses its restoration efforts on areas that will be able to sustain itself through the impending environmental impacts of climate change.

“Everything we do is related to climate change in making sure we have a more resilient watershed in the future. That’s why all of our restoration projects are focused on restoring natural processes that create that salmon habitat instead of putting a Band-Aid on something,” Tome said. “If there is an area that is not set up to be resilient in the future, we’re not going to work in it.”

Looking to the future, the watershed council plans to partner more in education, where representatives can go into classrooms and bring youth to the restoration projects to show them what they are working on and teach them why.

“Today we need to be culti-

vating tomorrow’s stewards of our watershed, and education is a huge, important part of that,” Tome said.

The council has also offered the Watershed Exploration Camp for the past 17 years as a week-long youth camp where children learn about the watershed and its restoration efforts.

During the latter part of Tuesday’s EMAC meeting, a motion was unanimously passed for EMAC to adopt milepost 190 to 191 on Highway 101 in Florence. This mile stretches from the Goodwill to right across the bridge. EMAC would be required to pick garbage at least four times a year in order to maintain this stretch of highway. This highway adoption is pending approval from legal counsel at the City of Florence.

EMAC is also going forward with the launch of a campaign to adopt a street in town as well, but no street had been chosen as of Tuesday.

For more information on the Siuslaw Watershed Council’s restoration efforts, upcoming events and videos showcasing its work, visit www.siuslaw.org or follow the council on Facebook.

For more information about EMAC, go to www.ci.florence.or.us/bc-emac.

What’s happening in the Siuslaw region

Weekly

Florence Pickle-Ball Association

Monday, Wednesday and Friday — weather permitting
8:30 to 11 a.m.; Open to all ages and levels
Rolling Dunes Park, 35th St, Florence

Mondays

Sit-n-Knit or Crochet Drop-in

Noon to 6 p.m.; \$10
The Mustard Seed, 509 Kingwood St.
www.themustardseed1720.com

Suicide Survivors Support Group

Facilitated by SVFR/WLAD Community Support Team
5:30 to 7 p.m.; open to those who have lost a loved one to suicide
Siuslaw Valley Fire and Rescue, 2625 Highway 101

Tuesdays

Peace Harbor Farm Stand

Collaboration between PeaceHealth, Trillium Community Health Plan & FOOD for Lane County
Free fresh, seasonal vegetables and fruits to people who qualify for food assistance
PeaceHealth Peace Harbor Medical Center, 400 Ninth St.

Florence Rotary Club

Noon; lunch purchase available
Florence Events Center
theflorenceclub.org

Florence Farmers Market

From May 14 to Oct. 15
3 to 6 p.m.; open to public
Intersection of Bay and Kingwood streets in Historic Old Town Florence

Yoga At The Blue Warehouse

With instructor Tracy Markley
6 to 7:15 p.m. | \$10/session
The Blue Warehouse, 80 Harbor St.

WellMama Peer Support Group

Every second and fourth Tuesdays
6 to 7:30 p.m.; open to birthing parents and their support people
Peace Health Medical Center Women's Clinic, 340 Ninth St. | 541-999-4880

birthingmamas.jen@gmail.com
www.wellmamaoregon.com

Wednesdays

Fun Connections Playgroup

For parents and children 5 and under
9:30 to 11 a.m.
Open to families of young children
Pregnancy & Parenting Center, 1525 12th St., Suite G

Points of Grace Community Acupuncture

Experience relief from pain and stress
11 a.m. to 1 p.m.; donations appreciated
1845 Highway 126

Cape Perpetua Marine Reserve Education & Guided Hike

Through Aug. 28
11 a.m. to 3 p.m. — Tara DuBois will answer questions and share information and resources on the Cape Perpetua Marine Reserve, Oregon’s biggest marine reserve
3 p.m. — Marine Reserve Guided Hike — Captain Cook Trail
Cape Perpetua Visitor Center, 2400 Highway 101 in Yachats

Florence Kiwanis Club

Noon; lunch purchase available
Ocean Dunes Golf Links, 3345 Munsel Lake Road
www.florencekiwanis.org

Pilates At The Blue Warehouse

With instructor Tracy Markley
6 to 7:15 p.m. | \$10/session
The Blue Warehouse, 80 Harbor St.

Thursdays

Women’s Empowerment

A safe space for encouragement, life skills
4 to 6 p.m.; open to women
Siuslaw Outreach Services, 1576 12th St.
Call 541-997-2816

Yoga At The Blue Warehouse

With instructor Tracy Markley
6 to 7:15 p.m. | \$10/session
The Blue Warehouse, 80 Harbor St.

Fridays

Florence Boardwalk Market

10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Port of Siuslaw Boardwalk

Florence Testing for HIV and HepC — 2nd and 4th Fridays

Hosted by Alliance for Men’s Wellness and HIV Alliance
11 a.m. to 3 p.m.; Free to public
PeaceHealth Oregon Cardiology, 310 Ninth St.

Live Music at Three Rivers

7 to 11 p.m.; 21+
Blue Bills Sports Bar at Three Rivers Casino Resort

Saturdays

Florence Boardwalk Market

10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Port of Siuslaw Boardwalk

Live Music at Three Rivers

7 to 11 p.m.; 21+
Blue Bills Sports Bar at Three Rivers Casino Resort

Sundays

2019 Yachats Farmers Market

May to October | 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Yachats Commons
yachatsfarmersmarket.webs.com

Florence Boardwalk Market

10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Port of Siuslaw Boardwalk

Aug. 24

Florence Kiwanis Wood Splitting/Stacking Party

9 a.m. to noon; open to people who can help stack and lift wood
People are asked to bring sturdy gloves and drinking water
Florence Municipal Airport
www.florencekiwanis.org

Oregon Coast Military Museum Golf Tournament

9 a.m. to 3 p.m.; tickets required
Florence Golf Links
Oregoncoastmilitarymuseum.com

Habitat Home Ownership

Informational Meeting

Hosted by Florence Habitat for Humanity
10 to 11 a.m.; open to public
Siuslaw Public Library, 1460 Ninth St.

Aug. 25

Families Connected Woahink Lake BBQ Potluck

Florence Chapter of Families Connected, Florence Families Support Group, is hosting a BBQ and swim fest
1 to 4 p.m.; RSVP to nancy.berge@ardane.org or 541-606-9061
East Woahink Lake Day-Use Area

Florence Ukulele Club

“The Flukes” Does Not Meet in August
Contact janetwellington@gmail.com

Aug. 26

Habitat Home Ownership Informational Meeting

Hosted by Florence Habitat for Humanity
5:30 to 6:30 p.m.; open to public
Banner Bank, 777 Highway 101

Aug. 27

Deadline Extended for Everything Odd-umn Call for Art

Art & Application due between 9 and 11 a.m.
\$20 fee to enter community art exhibit
Florence Events Center
www.eventcenter.org/general/page/everything-odd-umn-call-artists-0

Mapleton Cribbage Club

5 p.m.; open to public
Mapleton Branch of Siuslaw Public Library, 88148 Riverview Ave.

Big Wave Poetry Workshop

Last Tuesday of the month
Bring paper copies of your poems
6:30 to 8:30 p.m.; open to public

WellMama Peer Support Group

6 to 7:30 p.m.; open to families, partners and support people
PeaceHealth Medical Center Women's Clinic, 340 Ninth St.
www.wellmamaoregon.com

Aug. 28

Scotch Broom Removal at Honeyman State Park

Hosted by Save the Oregon Dunes
Meet at the Parking Area for H Loop; bring tools and water
10 a.m. to noon; open to public
Jessie M. Honeyman Memorial State Park

“How does ODFW determine salmon fishing limits?”

Presented by Siuslaw Watershed Council with Research Fisheries Biologist Laurie Weitkamp and District Fish Biologist John Spangler
5:30 to 7:30 p.m.; open to public
Siuslaw Public Library, 1460 Ninth St.

Aug. 29

Community Chorus of Florence resumes

7 to 8:30 p.m.; open to new members
Presbyterian Church of the Siuslaw, 3996 Hwy 101 541 997-3469, www.communitychorus-florenceoregon.org

Aug. 30

Veteran’s Service Officer at Disabled American Veterans

Open to area veterans by appointment; 541-997-8060
Florence DAV Hall, 1715 21st St.

Aug. 31

Yachats Art Guild Fall Show

10 a.m. to 4 p.m.; open to public
Yachats Commons, 441 Highway 101 N in Yachats

Sept. 1

Yachats Art Guild Fall Show

10 a.m. to 4 p.m.; open to public
Yachats Commons, 441 Highway 101 N in Yachats

Sept. 2

Labor Day

Siuslaw Public Library and Lane Community College will be closed, along with other local businesses

Yachats Art Guild Fall Show

10 a.m. to 4 p.m.; open to public
Yachats Commons, 441 Highway 101 N in Yachats

A Weekly Listing of Community Events in the Florence Area

Submit all events information to PressReleases@TheSiuslawNews.com

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• Tuesday Evening Group (2nd Tuesday)
5-7 p.m. - Ichiban Chinese/Japanese Restaurant
• Urologist Dr. Bryan Mehlfaff attends.

• Tuesday Lunch Group (3rd Tuesday)
12 noon - 1:00 p.m. - Ichiban Chinese/Japanese Restaurant
• Urologist Dr. Roger McKimmy attends.

Contact Bob for more information:
(H) 541-997-6626 • (C) 541-999-4239
maribob@oregonfast.net

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