



Protecting Special Lands in Western Oregon

CURRENTS

Winter 2013

Big Earth Works for Little Fish

RESTORATION ON GREEN ISLAND

The downstream run for a juvenile Chinook salmon can be a gauntlet. Flushed from mountain headwaters, they ride high winter flows with logs and stones, avoiding predators, looking for food, seeking to grow before heading out to the ocean. Floodplains and side channels can provide a bounty and a respite, but as waters drop, can provide a bounty and a respite, but as waters drop, young fish can also be cut off and isolated, trapped in pools and then puddles that warm and make them vulnerable to hungry birds, bull frogs and non-native bass.

Since early September on Green Island we have brought in the heavy equipment – dump trucks, backhoes, loaders, and even cranes – to provide safer passage for such small fry.



RAPTOR VIEWS BY PHILIP BAYLES
TIM GRAUDIER - HEADWATERS PHOTOGRAPHIC

The “neck” of Green Island prior to restoration.

The next time you cross the old McKenzie channel or “the neck” near the property’s center, you’ll see the results of three major earthworks that will make it easier for young salmon to get in and to get out of the site. The low water crossing, our road access across the historic McKenzie River channel onto the property, has been

In 2012, researchers found Chinook salmon fry, just six centimeters long, in Green Island side channels.

completely retrofitted with a concrete span engineered to withstand significant winter flooding. Crews have also been hard at work on a side channel of the Willamette River, placing massive logs and root-wads there, creating pools that are perfect for young salmon.

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More Wetlands Protected!

YOUR DONATIONS HELP EXPAND THE COYOTE SPENCER WETLANDS



RAPTOR VIEWS BY PHILIP BAYLES

A total of 190 acres of forested wetlands, marsh, and meadows off Crow Road are now protected thanks to the support of people like you.

We’re excited to announce that in late October – thanks to the generous support of people like you – we added 29 acres to the Coyote Spencer Wetlands, a special place you helped us protect in 2012. The conservation area now totals 190 acres and includes several miles of Coyote and Spencer creeks surrounded by large swaths of forested wetlands, marshy emergent wetlands, and a small area of drier meadows.

Local nursery owner Glenda Bloomer sold the property to the McKenzie River Trust. In honor of her late husband, avid cyclist Jim Bloomer, and his devotion to the land, Ms. Bloomer said, “Jim loved this place. He would be so happy to know that it will be cared for forever.”

In recent years, the Trust and our partners at the Long Tom Watershed Council have focused

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Lasting Vision, Deliberate Support



TIM GIRAUDIER - HEADWATERS PHOTOGRAPHIC

Our annual appeal letter is coming to your mailbox soon. We rely on your generous donations, year after year, to pursue our mission of *protecting and caring for special lands and the rivers that flow through them in western Oregon*, so please give generously.

But in the spring of 2014 we will come back to you with an additional, new request: we'll ask you to become an inaugural **member** of the McKenzie River Trust.

After 24 years as a land trust, we're starting a membership program for two reasons. First, many of you have often asked, "How can I become a member of the Trust?" By offering memberships and expanding our tours and events program, we hope that you will see clearly the pivotal role you play in private lands conservation. And second, we'd like to give you the reassurance that our lasting vision to protect the special places of our region will be carried out by a lasting organization. By becoming a member, you will help us ensure the future of these places. Until then, enjoy the stories in this newsletter. As a supporter of the McKenzie River Trust, you have a hand in every one of them.

Sincerely,



Joe Moll, Executive Director

More Wetlands Protected! continued from page 1

more conservation efforts on Coyote and Spencer Creeks as we've learned more about their fish and wildlife habitat values. In the last issue of this newsletter, we told you of the purchase of 52-acre Spencer Swamp, just a few miles away from this latest acquisition on Spencer Creek.

Wetlands like these will provide a degree of resilience in the face of climate change. As we experience more intensive winter storms, hotter, drier summers, and the arrival of new species, wetlands can buffer and better hold water across seasons, while also filtering runoff from surrounding hard surfaces and developed lands. They can provide oases for wildlife during the hottest times of the summer. And because of the unique way that water moves through wetland soils, these places will continue to support only those species that are adapted to wetness, reducing the risk of warm climate invasive species becoming established.

A network of protected lands, like we are establishing along the Spencer and Coyote Creek corridors, can provide a meaningful buffer for surrounding lands and help ensure that native wildlife and working lands can continue to coexist, even in the



BOTH PHOTOS: RYAN RUGGIERO

MRT staff found rare red-legged frogs and delphinium on the newly protected parcel.

midst of climate change. And it's your donations that make all the difference! Thank you!

Like the Coyote Spencer Wetlands and nearby Spencer Swamp, this property was purchased with the support of people like you, and with grant funding from the North American Wetlands Conservation Act secured by our partners at Ducks Unlimited.

Big Earth Works for Little Fish continued from page 1



BRANDI FERGLISON

Heavy equipment at work on a Green Island side channel.

And a culvert thirteen feet in diameter will help connect side channels of the mainstem Willamette to the historic McKenzie channel for longer seasonal stretches.

These changes will provide more frequent floodplain connections, better passage for fish through the area, and better places for

native fish and wildlife to thrive. The project brought more than \$270,000 for local restoration contractors, including R.L. Reimers Company of Albany and the Corvallis-based River Design Group. Grants from the Natural Resources Conservation Service and the Bonneville Power Administration through the Willamette Biological Opinion Habitat Technical Team are funding the work.

In the coming years, we expect to be carrying out similar work around the CARP ponds – the gravel mining site that we added to Green Island in 2010 – so look forward to more big equipment and earth moving on behalf of some tiny little fish.

Board Update



EMILIE PHOTOGRAPHY

Bill Sheppard, *departing Board member*

A shower of thanks to Bill Sheppard, who recently stepped down from the Board of Directors after more than 10 years of service. Bill's thoughtful insights were a clear beacon during many a meeting. Though we'll miss his ability to cut straight to the heart of a problem, we know we'll see this dedicated river rat on the waters of western Oregon often. Thank you Bill!



MIKE HOLLANDER

Bev Hollander, *new Board member*

Bev has been the CFO of a successful horticultural corporation which she and her husband Mike established in 1989. A registered nurse for more than 30 years, Bev has dedicated her life to expressing her passion through service. When asked why she wanted to join the MRT Board, Bev said "I'm excited for the opportunity to honor and support planet Earth." Welcome Bev!

Growing Food and Protecting Drinking Water: Farming and Conservation Go Hand in Hand on MRT Properties

As you prepare for Thanksgiving dinner this year, know that there's a new place in town to get your turkey. The **Berggren Demonstration Farm** is concluding its second year of production this winter. The farm is located on lower McKenzie River property that MRT acquired in 2010, and it is managed by Cascade Pacific Resource Conservation & Development. This collaboration among the Trust, CPRCD, and EWEB is an effort to protect clean drinking water, integrate farming and conservation, and teach young people about growing food. Right now, the farm is growing chickens, ducks, turkeys, goats, rabbits, chicken eggs, and more. **For more information visit berggren-farm.org.**



JARED PRUCH

Pasture-raised turkeys on the Berggren Farm.

Looking for fresh food in Florence? Whiskey Creek Organics, a family farm on Duncan Island near Mapleton, grows tomatoes, broccoli, strawberries,

peppers, and much more. David and Joy Pippenger's mission is to grow the best food possible with the least amount of "off farm" inputs as possible. The Pippengers' property is protected under a conservation easement held by MRT. Framed by towering Sitka spruce, the estuary wetlands there provide tremendous nursery habitat for salmon and many marine animals. And MRT staff can personally vouch for the deliciousness of the farm's raspberries! **For more information visit whiskeycreekorganics.com.**

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WHISKEY CREEK ORGANICS

School classes visit Whiskey Creek Organics to learn about growing food.



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JAMES NORLIE



RAPTOR VIEWS BY PHILIP BAYLES

OUR MISSION

The McKenzie River Trust protects and cares for special lands and the rivers that flow through them in western Oregon.



TIM GRAAUDIER - HEADWATERS PHOTOGRAPHIC

Mark Your Calendars

Thursday, Dec 5th 5-8 pm: 1% for Watersheds Celebration! Oakshire is donating 1% of Southern Willamette Valley sales of Watershed IPA to MRT all year long. Celebrate at the Oakshire Brewing Public House, 207 Madison St in Eugene, with pints, Oregon Wood Fired Pizza, and more.

Weekend of Dec 7th & 8th: 10% of profits will be donated to MRT during a special fundraiser at the **Dancing Weasel Toy Store**, 30 East 17th Avenue in Eugene.



TIM GRAAUDIER - HEADWATERS PHOTOGRAPHIC

Thank you to...

The Caddis Fly Angling Shop. This year's Two Fly Tournament raised over \$5,000 for the McKenzie River Trust. Thank you to the anglers and guides who helped make the event happen, and to Chris and Shauna Daughters for hosting for the sixth year in a row.

McMenamins North Bank. Their Friends and Family Night on September 24th raised over \$3,000 for our mission! Great food, brew, and views of the Willamette River through the rain were enjoyed by all who attended. Thank you to all the friends of the Trust we saw that evening, and we welcome McMenamins to our *Business Supporter Program*.