



**CSWCD**

Columbia Soil & Water  
Conservation District

2021 - 2022

# ANNUAL REPORT

Every day we work with a mission to sustain local natural resources by offering targeted support and assistance to the people of our community.





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# WHO WE ARE

CSWCD & NRCS

“OFFERING PEOPLE OF OUR COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE TO SUSTAIN LOCAL NATURAL RESOURCES”

The Columbia Soil and Water Conservation District is a special district that offers free services to the residents and landowners in Columbia County.

Our focus is to help you with land and water issues you may have on your property or simply help you prevent potential issues. We do this through free technical assistance and sometimes cost-share may be available for certain practices.

The Columbia SWCD was created in 1946 and has been serving the citizens of Columbia County ever since. The SWCDs of Oregon were created gradually starting in 1939. To date, there are 45 districts serving Oregon. They are considered subdivisions of state government, but function as local units led by a locally elected board of directors. District directors are elected on Oregon's general election ballot and serve terms of four years without pay.

## Interested in issues involving restoration, land management, and conservation?

- Consider running for one of our Board positions. More information is available on our website: [www.columbiaswcd.com](http://www.columbiaswcd.com)
- Volunteer or be an Associate Director. Whether you have a special skill set to offer, are studying to go into the field of natural resources, or are just generally looking to help out, volunteers are always greatly appreciated.
- Implement conservation practices on your land. Call our office or the NRCS to get more information about what you can do to improve soil health, water quality, and habitat on your land.
- Start a community work group. Identify common interests or concerns among friends/neighbors and rally for the cause. Check out SOLVE's website for volunteer opportunities across the state and to learn how to become an Event Coordinator.

Thanks for 10 years!



**NATHAN HERR**  
DISTRICT MANAGER  
UNTIL APRIL 2022



**MALYSSA LEGG**  
DISTRICT MANAGER  
CURRENT



**JENNIFER CHAVEZ**  
OPERATIONS  
COORDINATOR



**SELENE KEENEY**  
SENIOR RESOURCE  
CONSERVATIONIST



**CRYSTALYN BUSH**  
RESOURCE  
CONSERVATIONIST



**AMBER KESTER**  
RESOURCE  
CONSERVATIONIST



**HANNAH ISAACS**  
NRCS DISTRICT  
CONSERVATIONIST



**DEE ROBINSON**  
NRCS PROGRAM  
SUPPORT TECHNICIAN



**KACEY MYERS**  
NRCS SMALL FARM AND  
ORGANIC SPECIALIST

The Columbia SWCD office is shared with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), an agency of the United States Department of Agriculture.

# CSWCD BOARD

OF DIRECTORS

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEET THE 3RD WEDNESDAY OF EVERY MONTH AT 4:00 PM IN THE COLUMBIA SWCD MEETING ROOM



**BILL EAGLE**

SECRETARY, AT LARGE 1



**DEBI BRIMACOMBE**

VICE CHAIR, AT LARGE 2



**SONIA REAGAN**

DIRECTOR, ZONE 1



**JASON BUSCH**

CHAIRMAN, ZONE 2



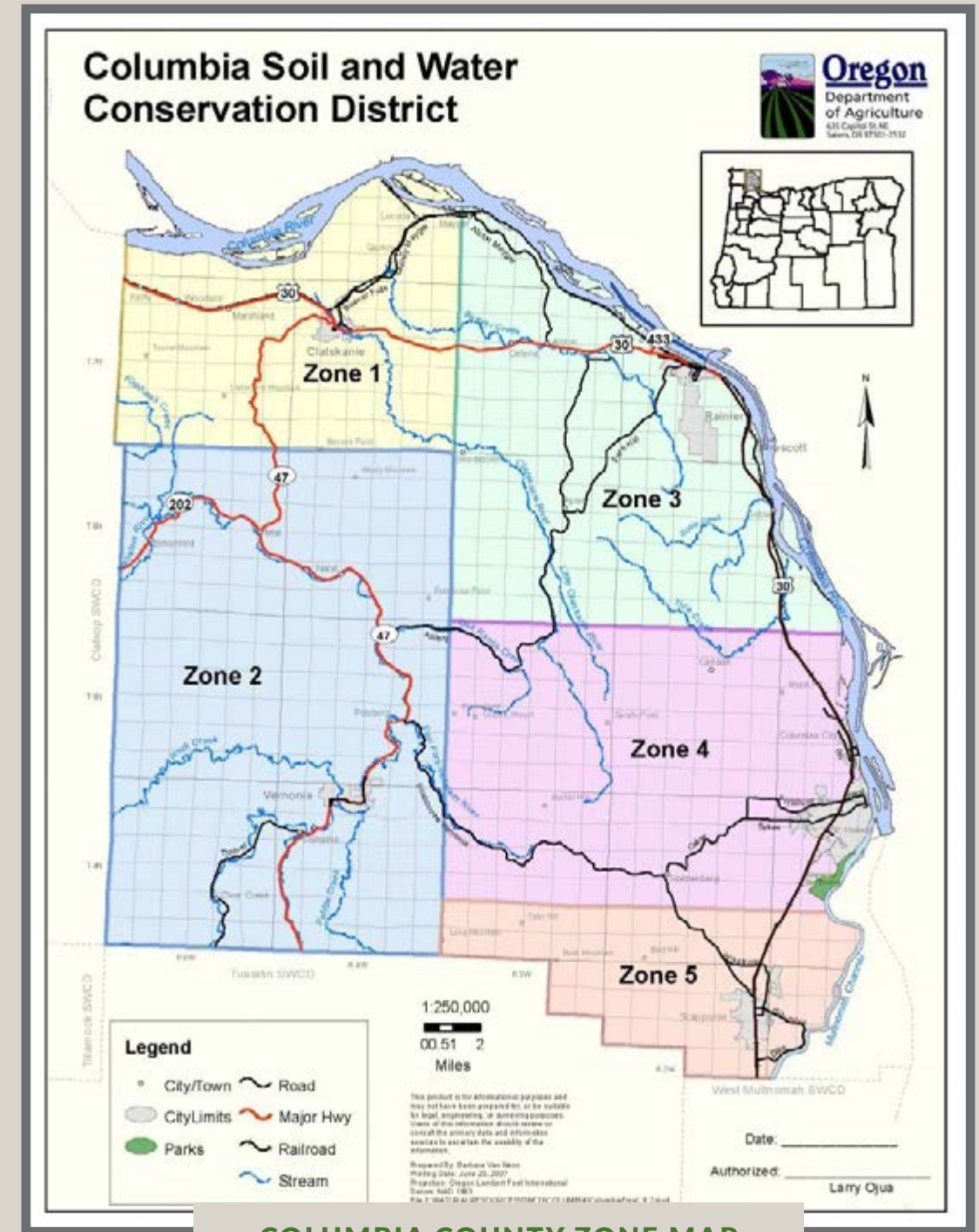
**JEFF VANNATTA**

TREASURER, ZONE 3



**DAVE FREYTAG**

DIRECTOR, ZONE 4



The Columbia SWCD Board of Directors is made up of citizens and landowners within Columbia County who are members of business, professional and agricultural communities who understand the ecological relationships of soil, water, plant, and animals. The county is broken up into five zones, of which there are representatives for each. Directors serve four-year terms and are elected just like any other governmental official. Our Zone 5 position is currently vacant. If you are interested in becoming a CSWCD Director please visit our website for more information or email [information@columbiaswcd.com](mailto:information@columbiaswcd.com)

# FINANCIAL REPORT

## BREAKDOWN

### FINANCIAL STATEMENT OF THE COLUMBIA SWCD

Consolidated Balance Sheet	2022	2021	2020
<b>Current Assets</b>			
Checking/Savings	431,048.04	204,228.56	143,478.26
Accounts Receivable	111,121.31	23,932.53	6,399.24
Other Current Assets	23,693.05	23,468.44	39,524.91
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>565,862.40</b>	<b>251,629.53</b>	<b>189,402.41</b>
Fixed Assets	1,163,547.26	1,163,547.26	1,198,560.26
Other Assets	8,618.48	6,669.95	7,785.52
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>1,738,028.14</b>	<b>1,421,846.74</b>	<b>1,395,748.19</b>
<b>Current Liabilities</b>			
Accounts Payable	82,553.11	89,836.70	11,084.48
Credit Cards	6,470.32	2,644.71	3,251.85
Other Current Liabilities	78,555.13	88,513.04	76,867.89
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	<b>167,578.56</b>	<b>180,994.45</b>	<b>91,204.22</b>
Long Term Liabilities		51,042.75	149,137.70
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>167,578.56</b>	<b>232,037.20</b>	<b>240,341.92</b>
Equity	1,570,449.58	1,189,809.54	1,155,406.27
<b>Total Liabilities &amp; Equity</b>	<b>1,738,028.14</b>	<b>1,421,846.74</b>	<b>1,395,748.19</b>

Balance sheets presented for the fiscal years ended June 30, 2022, 2021, and 2020.  
 Audit for fiscal year ending June 30, 2022 available for review at the District office after 12/31/2022.

Your tax dollars have allowed the Columbia Soil and Water Conservation District to address client inquiries, conduct numerous site visits, develop projects, and provide technical assistance to the citizens of Columbia County. The CSWCD has also had the ability to develop comprehensive restoration plans and partnerships, as well as focus more on our noxious weed, small grant and education programs, outreach, and building our volunteer program. If you're interested in volunteering with us, please call our office or email [information@columbiaswcd.com](mailto:information@columbiaswcd.com).



PUBLIC TAX  
**DOLLARS \$589,203**

GRANT  
**DOLLARS \$1,264,905**

OTHER  
**DOLLARS \$182,476**

#### OUR SERVICES

- Project Implementation
- Permitting Assistance
- Site Visits
- Conservation Planning
- Pasture Management
- Erosion Issues
- Small Market Gardens
- Rainwater Harvesting & Rain Gardens
- Community Outreach & Presentations
- Fish & Wildlife Habitat Assistance
- Mud & Manure Management
- Noxious Weeds & Native Plantings
- Soil Information
- Stormwater Management
- Water Quality
- Much more! Call for more information: 503-433-3205





# RESTORING THE RIVERBANK

## STAFF REPORT

In 2021 the Columbia Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) implemented a riparian restoration project in Clatskanie, Oregon, at the confluence of the Clatskanie River and Conyers Creek on property owned by the Clatskanie People's Utility District (PUD). Project funding was provided by the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) under a Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) awarded to the Columbia SWCD to address degraded habitat conditions and water quality limiting the recovery of native salmon. Populations of Chinook, Coho, and Chum salmon, listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and other significant species such as a district population of non-ESA listed steelhead, occur within the Clatskanie River-Conyers Creek watersheds.

Prior to the project, the riparian habitat along approximately 400-feet of the Clatskanie River and 200- feet of Conyers Creek was comprised of incised, over-steepened, slumping banks with lawn grass and Himalayan blackberry growing amongst some scattered small trees along the top of the riverbanks. To address the eroding riverbanks and degraded riparian habitat, the project involved the excavation of the unstable over-steepened banks to more gradual slope angles and installation of biological

structural elements such as large pieces of wood and plantings of native vegetation. To reduce erosive water flows and increase aquatic habitat cover and complexity, large pieces of wood comprised of logs and logs with rootwads were installed along channel margins. Native trees, shrubs, grasses, and forbs were installed throughout the slopes excavated to more gradual angles and within the installed large wood. Overtime the planted native vegetation will establish dense riparian habitat that will shade the channel and help to decrease water temperatures. Dense riparian habitat also filters out pollutants and sediment transported to aquatic habitats through erosion and stabilizes river bank soils as planted native trees and shrubs establish extensive root networks.

The Columbia SWCD would like to thank the citizens of Clatskanie for being patient with the closure of the public access path that runs through the project area and would like to thank the Clatskanie PUD for being a great project partner. The path is open now, please feel free to check out the project. Maybe we'll see you out there sometime as we monitor the establishment of the native vegetation. We are very excited about how this project turned out and we are looking forward to seeing how things progress over time!



Summer 2021 Project Start: Eroded riverbank along the Clatskanie River that was slumping into the channel



Top: Fall 2021, Bottom: Summer 2022  
After Project - Restored riverbank along the Clatskanie River, banks were excavated and native vegetation was installed

**SELENE KEENEY**

CSWCD  
SENIOR RESOURCE  
CONSERVATIONIST

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# TESTING THE WATERS FOR eDNA

STAFF REPORT

In the summer of 2021, the Columbia SWCD collected water samples throughout the County to be tested for the presence of Pacific lamprey eDNA (environmental DNA). Samples were sent to a US Forest Service lab in Montana for analysis. The lab fees and all of the materials needed to collect the samples were paid for by a grant to the National Genomics Center for Wildlife and Fish Conservation, a department of the US Forest Service. The goal of this program was to learn more about Pacific lamprey habitat and distribution. Lamprey are native to our region and, like salmon, were an important part of Native American diets and culture. They are a vital part of our aquatic ecosystems and food webs. Like salmon, Pacific lamprey are anadromous, starting their lives in streams and rivers and migrating to the ocean as adults. Also, like salmon, they return to freshwater systems to spawn. Despite the similarities, they differ from salmon in some key ways. They are weaker swimmers and can be hindered by strong flow velocities. They use their sucker mouth to attach to structures and rocks to keep them from being carried downstream. They also have slightly different habitat needs from salmon. After hatching, young lamprey burrow into fine sediments where they live as filter feeders for a number of years. We are learning a lot about Pacific lamprey these days, however, there is still a lot we don't know. This program is just one of the ways in which scientists are trying to fill in the gaps.

eDNA testing relies on the PCR (Polymerase Chain Reactions) lab technique to amplify certain genetic sequences found in the sample which are used to detect the presence of a certain organism. This technology is still relatively new but is rapidly evolving. It has many exciting and useful applications in the field of conservation. For now, the testing can reveal if a target species is present or has been present in a waterbody within the recent past. In addition, the strength of a positive result provides a general sense of whether many or few individuals were likely present.

In order to qualify for the grant funding, the program required comprehensive collection throughout sampled watersheds. There are 3 main watersheds within Columbia County: the Nehalem, the Lower Columbia – Clatskanie River, and the Lower Willamette. These watersheds cross multiple jurisdictions and county lines. In order to cover these areas and collect all of the samples required, the Columbia SWCD engaged with partners throughout the region to create a multi-agency effort. In the end, 5 agencies (the Columbia SWCD, Lower Nehalem Watershed Council, Upper Nehalem Watershed Council, Clark County Conservation District, and Cowlitz Indian Tribe) actively participated in collecting samples and 1 agency (W. Multnomah SWCD) consulted on sampling sites. Sites were strategically selected based

Crystalyn Bush preparing to collect a water sample



Photo of Pacific lamprey by Amber Kester, Riparian Specialist

on a number of factors including access, tidal influence, locations of previous surveys, potential passage barriers, and thorough coverage of the watershed.

Results from testing became available in January 2022, much to the excitement of SWCD staff. In addition to obtaining results for Lamprey, the SWCD paid to have tests run for several other species as well. After consulting with staff from ODFW, we requested tests for invasive smallmouth bass in the Nehalem River. Happily, those results were negative. We also requested tests for Chinook at a number of sites. Perhaps most exciting were the positive test results for Chinook on Conyers Creek and S. Scappoose Creek. Lamprey were detected in many of our waterbodies. Some results suggested potential issues with physical barriers, while some showed us that lamprey were using much more of a watershed than previously thought. These results will help inform and support future restoration efforts.

One other positive result of this work is that it sparked the interest of the new ODFW Chum Reintroduction Coordinator. Since speaking with our staff about sampling efforts last year, she has now organized an eDNA monitoring program for Chum and solicited the help of local partners, including the Columbia SWCD, to facilitate sample collection. We look forward to assisting in those efforts and learning more about the status of Chum in our local watersheds.



**CRYSTALYN BUSH**

CSWCD RESOURCE  
CONSERVATIONIST

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# SMALL GRANTS GO BIG!

## STAFF REPORT

This past year has been really exciting for our small grant program. As of the end of the 2021 fiscal year, we had 6 active small grant projects. This is the most ever in Columbia SWCD history! Perhaps even more satisfying than the number of projects is that each one has very different conservation goals. The 6 projects can be generally described as follows: 1) riparian weed removal and native planting on McNulty Creek, 2) upland commercial holly stand removal and restoration in Yankton, 3) forest understory diversification planting in Rainier, 4) culvert replacement on Page Creek, 5) manure compost facility and planting in Deer Island, and 6) riparian planting after a culvert replacement on McBride Creek. More exciting and diverse projects are in the works, so stay tuned!

As the Riparian Specialist for the SWCD, my job is to assist these landowners with projects that enhance water quality, soil health, and wildlife habitat. One of the things I enjoy most about my position is that I get to work directly with landowners to develop and execute restoration plans that meet their needs and benefit the local environment. Every project is an opportunity to learn something new and help a landowner achieve a vision for their land. This year I had the pleasure of working with John and Nan Womack. John's deep sense of stewardship for their forested home, and the wildlife that share it, was apparent in our first meeting. He was kind enough to share his experience with our small grant program in his own words below:

### AMBER KESTER

CSWCD RESOURCE  
CONSERVATIONIST

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*"My wife and I have just under 20 acres of forestland that drain into the Fox Creek watershed in Rainier. I bought the property from my grandparents back in the 1970s. My sister and I went to visit my grandparents every summer when we were young children. My grandmother always had a lined drawer full of fresh baked cookies when we arrived. We would sometimes roast chestnuts from the property in the fireplace. My grandfather built us a treehouse with a rope ladder out in the woods. We would spend all day exploring and playing outside. My grandmother would yell, "Yoo Hoo!" when she wanted us to come in. Visiting was kind of like going to an enchanted kingdom for us. When my grandparents offered to sell it to my wife and I, I jumped at the chance. We were both raised in cities, but we love the rural setting, living in a log house, having wildlife on our doorstep, and still being close enough to town for work and shopping.*

After logging in 2012, we replanted with 5,500 trees consisting of Douglas Fir, Grand Fir, Western Ponderosa Pine, Western Cedar, and Sequoia. We also have many long-established Chestnut, Apple, and Cherry Plum trees that have been here since at least the 1950s. The biggest challenge was keeping the invasive plants from choking out the saplings. We were struggling to keep invasive species like Himalayan blackberry, Scotch broom, and thistles from taking over.

I found out about the small grant program from an article in the St. Helen's Chronicle that I found while reading Google News on my phone. I called the Columbia SWCD and scheduled a site visit with Crystalyn. We walked the property and discussed our vision for it. We wanted to:

- Eliminate invasive flora and replant with native varieties
- Reestablish an understory with maximum benefit to local and migrating wildlife and pollinators
- Expand native flora diversity and create unique habitats
- Minimize erosion
- Use a minimum amount of herbicides

Crystalyn thought our goals and engagement level were well suited to a small grant project so she agreed to apply on our behalf. The grant work targeted 2 main areas on the property. The first was located at our spring-fed water system. The work in this area focused on removing invasive blackberries and replanting with willows and other live stake plants. We also planted low-growing natives like sedges and rushes to help filter the water before entering our holding tank. The rest of the work was focused on restoring a native understory community and providing better forage for wildlife in a section of the property that had fewer trees on it. The openness of this area called for plants that would attract pollinators and be good browse for large mammals.

Our experience with the small grant program has been very positive. Everyone we've worked with has been friendly, informative, and a joy to work with - all the way from the initial application process through to the end of the grant work. SWCD staff involved us in all of the decisions regarding the removal and treatment of weeds, site prep, species selection, etc... Crystalyn helped me with the application process that resulted in the grant award and planning logistics. Later Amber took over and assisted me with my first order from the



Scappoose Bay native plant sale. Amber coordinated with the restoration crew and organized the clearing, treatment, and planting of the two project areas. She spent a full day transporting hundreds of plants to the project areas in preparation for the planting crew. I asked Amber to mark a few of each type of plant to give me an idea of what I was looking at. She was kind enough to do this for me. I can't thank SWCD staff enough for their hard work and dedication to the project.

We have always had a lot of Deer, Elk, and Coyote that use our property. Since we've replanted, we have had new Bobcat, Mountain Lion, bees, butterflies, frogs, and even Mallard Duck sightings. I am really excited about the increase in habitat diversity we're creating and the added food and shelter it will provide to wildlife. My wife and I have been back twice to the Native Plant Sale in Scappoose to add more diversity to our native flora. Some of the smaller plants I put in the raised beds in our fenced garden area. I have been collecting seeds from each to spread around our property in order to continue the good work that has been done."

- John Womack

If you have questions about our small grant program or would like to schedule a site visit, please contact Amber at 503-433-3205 x 109 or email [amber.kester@columbiaswcd.com](mailto:amber.kester@columbiaswcd.com).



# CSWCD PARTICIPATES IN EMERALD ASH BORER MONITORING

CSWCD REPORT

Emerald ash borer D-shaped holes in ash tree. Photo By: Debbie Miller, USDA Forest Service, Bugwood.org

Conservationists with the Columbia Soil and Water Conservation District have been participating in early detection trapping and monitoring for the presence of the Emerald Ash Borer in Columbia County since 2019. We became aware of the beetle as a threat to our native ash trees after it was identified in Michigan in 2002. As of June 2022, the beetle has infested trees in 36 states and is often only found after infesting a tree for a number of years. It is important to identify them early in order to stop or contain the spread of this beetle which has already killed over 100 million ash trees within the United States.

Emerald Ash Borer (EAB), *Agrilus planipennis* Fairmaire, was detected in Forest Grove, Oregon on June 30, 2022. It is very likely we will see the insects at some point in the future, but knowing as

soon as it arrives will hopefully give us the ability to deal with it before it has the chance to become widespread. EAB is only interested in ash trees and prefers our native Oregon ash, which is an important member of wetland

habitats. Losing them will lead to a loss of shade, changes in water quality, and increased stress on some of our threatened and endangered species of wildlife. The beetles are attracted to distressed ash trees first, but will also infest healthy trees. High-risk areas have been identified in Columbia County, especially along the Columbia River.

The traps we monitor attract adult beetles that are only active between mid-May through mid-August. Adults are slim metallic green beetles that are approximately half an inch long. They chew on leaves in the canopy and are rarely noticed below, but females are busy feeding and laying eggs in the crevices of bark. Within a couple of weeks, the eggs hatch, and the larva chew their way into the bark where they do the real damage by tunneling under the bark, consuming the phloem, cambium, and outer xylem. As larva feed and mature they create serpentine tunnels that damage the vascular system of the tree, causing trees to wilt and die back. They spend winter under the bark in small chambers. Early in the spring, they pupate for a couple of weeks before maturing into a new generation of adults. When they are ready to enter the world as adults they chew 'D' shaped holes and emerge to start the cycle again. Depending on the health of the tree, the beetles may take one or two years to complete their life cycle.



Emerald Ash Borer adult in tunnel. Photo Credit: Eric R. Day, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Bugwood.org

Photo Left: Crystalyn and Amber checking EAB traps summer 2022

Photo Right: Nathan installing EAB prism trap summer 2019

Photo Bottom: Stressed Ash tree canopy



CSWCD began monitoring in 2019. You may see funnel traps or large purple sticky traps hanging in ash tree canopies. To date, our traps have been empty of Emerald Ash Borers, but we have noticed many familiar common pests such as paper wasps and yellow jackets, especially on the banks of the Columbia River. In 2021 we did see one green bark beetle, too small and darker than EAB, that did cause us a little distress until we identified it and were able to put our concerns to rest.

Part of our monitoring process is to watch for trees showing signs of stress. You can help. Watch for wilting ash trees where the crown or top third of the tree is dying. Especially notice if they are sprouting new growth near the base of the tree. You may also notice that woodpeckers have been attracted to the tree and have scraped the bark to expose feeding larva. If this is the case, you may be able to see the signature 'S' curves of the burrowing larvae. It is also possible to see the small D-shaped emergence holes on the trunk of a tree. Round holes generally indicate woodpecker activity and are generally nothing to worry about. If you do suspect a tree is suffering from EAB damage, report it to the Oregon Invasives Hotline at 1-866-Invader, or <https://oregoninvasiveshotline.org/>.



**DEBI BRIMACOMBE**  
CSWCD BOARD DIRECTOR



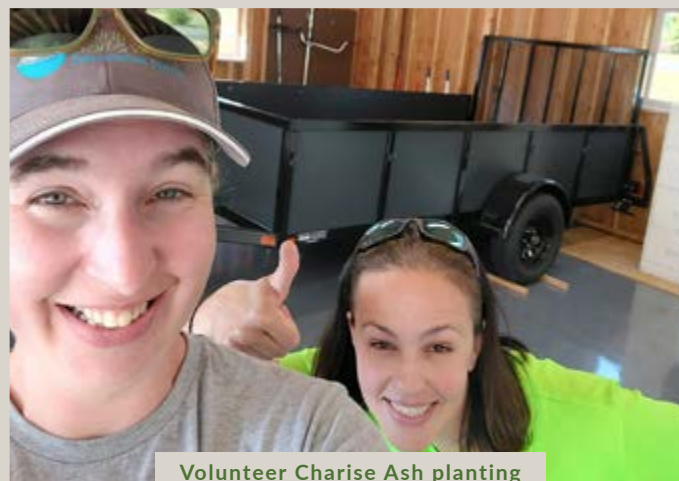


## TOOLS OF THE TRADE

WEED BUSTING TO THE  
NEXT LEVEL

This year the Columbia SWCD once again set a new personal record for the amount of grant funding obtained to address noxious weeds. The SWCD was awarded 2 grants from the Oregon State Weed Board. The first one, in the amount of \$38,473, is for the ongoing treatment of Garlic mustard along Scappoose Creek. This grant also provides funds to begin seeding and restoring historically infested areas along N. Scappoose Creek with native plants. The second grant from OSWB, in the amount of \$38,126, provides funds to treat priority invasive species on public lands. Species covered in this grant include Meadow knapweed, Spurge laurel, Milk thistle, and Lesser celandine. This grant also provides significant funding for the purchase of native seed mixes and a pyroweeder, which the SWCD can use in the coming years to help restore sites and prevent further spread of noxious weeds. This project is also heavily focused on strengthening local agency partnerships to create long term plans for control and restoration.

For the first time this year, a funding opportunity was made available through the Oregon Department of Agriculture. The purpose of this opportunity was to provide additional funds for noxious weed treatments and equipment purchases related to this type of work. The Columbia SWCD was awarded \$16,099 to conduct treatment and removal of Policemen's helmet along Conyers Creek in Clatskanie. Additional funds covered the purchase of a new utility trailer, weedwhackers, field carts, and other small tools useful for vegetation management. We have spent several fun days cleaning out the shop in preparation for all these cool new tools and cannot wait to put them to good use!



Volunteer Charise Ash planting  
in a city flood lot in March

## LOWER COLUMBIA RIVER

WATERSHED COUNCIL

The Lower Columbia River Watershed Council continues to expand its capacity and functionality due to increased capacity funding and a new President and Coordinator.

The newly rejuvenated council has reinvigorated its outreach toward local landowners and stakeholders, which has already led to new opportunities for habitat restoration.

This year the Council saw the completion of a project: Conyers Creek Confluence Restoration Project Existing Conditions and Basis of Design for 60% Plans, which provided three options for the design of a Conyers Creek Restoration Project. This project involves wetlands enhancement and the placement of large wood.

The three design options for the Conyers Creek Confluence Restoration Project varied by expense and footprint on the landscape. The mid-cost option has been selected for three reasons: 1) the landowner prefers it, 2) the most expensive option created too much spoilage, and 3) the least expensive option did not have the best chance of success. The council is currently exploring funding opportunities to enable this project to reach a satisfactory completion. Chum, Chinook, Steelhead, Coho, and Pacific Lamprey

have been documented in the project area in the past decade.

The Council continues to lead a regional effort to prioritize barrier removal opportunities that benefit the needs of culturally important Pacific Lamprey. A lamprey barrier survey has been contracted out and is due to be completed in the spring of 2023. Although this survey is focused on barriers for Pacific Lamprey, River Lamprey and Western Brook Lamprey will be included if encountered.

The council continues to work with local landowners and constituents to identify opportunities for habitat restoration in the watershed. The council is working towards resuming regular in-person monthly meetings, the council recently resumed regular monthly Zoom meetings until that time comes.

COVID 19 has impacted the council and revised its membership, reminding us of the ties that bind us in our watershed community. The current board is composed of survivors and is lean and mean and will get the job done while looking to expand membership. For updates, please see our website at: <https://LowerColumbiaRiver.org>.

**HENRY J. FRANZONI**

LCRWC COUNCIL  
COORDINATOR





# UPPER NEHALEM

WATERSHED COUNCIL

This last year the Upper Nehalem Watershed Council has seen encouraging movement of partnerships, projects, funding, and volunteer momentum as we recover from the challenges of the pandemic. Organizational operation is steady with the implementation of several projects this fall, finances are in good order thanks to incoming grants and our ever-vigilant Office Administrator, Susan Spicer Pond, and our Board Members are working hard on the newly-formed Fundraising Committee.

Through the fall and winter, we continued work on the Nehalem Basin Partnership, a three-year partnership and project planning process focused on implementing the Nehalem Strategic Action Plan, which will help partners in the Nehalem basin to collaborate and share resources towards mutual goals. OWEB has funded the request for a Partnership Facilitator, a position that will benefit all partners and is funded for the three-year duration. The timing is perfect, as the final draft of the NSAP is out for review and we will soon be ready for the next stage of planning.

More vital partnerships were solidified this year with increased collaboration between the Upper and Lower Nehalem councils, the Necanicum council, the Nestucca Neskowin Sand Lake council, the North Coast

Watershed Association, and the Tillamook Estuary Partnership. This North Coast alliance has worked to share funds and people in a truly collaborative way that inspires and invigorates all who participate. The LNWC shares in partnership building with us through weekly Zoom meetings and recently received OWEB funding to support increased north coast collaboration. The NCWA has received OWEB support for GIS story mapping. GIS mapping experts will build story maps to highlight key habitat restoration projects in basins across the whole Oregon North Coast, including the Nehalem watershed, building a powerful educational resource to be shared far and wide. The NNSLWC received OWEB funding to hire a grant writer to help write grants for organizations and councils throughout the North Coast and we have already received the benefit of a grant written for us! The UNWC's work is undoubtedly elevated through this teamwork and sharing.

In the fall and spring planting seasons we began work at Fishhawk Lake with two community service workers and our riparian reforestation crew who planted native trees and shrubs on private land upstream, downstream and around the lake. We also held a volunteer tree planting on a city flood lot where a handful of local volunteers joined the UNWC planting crew to begin converting the lot back to forest. This fall we will continue at Fishhawk Lake and hope to host another volunteer event.

The Nehalem Native Nursery is still going strong. We were so excited to have the Vernonia Forestry Class with us once again, assisting in the nursery and working in the soil. Mark Hall and the planting crew kept busy organizing, prepping, and planting donated trees and plant materials throughout the year. Their excellent work and dedication has kept the NNN a comfortable, functional space. BLM RAC funding once again came through, supporting the crew and the operation.



Volunteer Charise Ash planting in a city flood lot in March



Northrup LWD - Before



Northrup LWD - After

In January we faced an unexpected project after the UNWC website crashed. Without extra funds to rebuild the site, we were unsure how to proceed. After about a month of looking into template options we stumbled on a serendipitous offer: a local man with years of coding experience was looking to take on a couple pro bono website projects to enhance his skills and portfolio. We reached out and he accepted our project. Over the last eight months he has worked quickly and diligently to custom build a website that fits our needs and vision and we are nearly ready to launch the new site. A huge thank you to David Strickland for his amazing work and a storybook rescue!

As summer comes to a close we are in full implementation mode. Our Anchor Habitat Improvement, Tweedle Meander Restoration, and Warner Creek Restoration projects are simultaneously in play before the close of the in-stream work window, followed closely by the Galassi Wetland Improvement project. In mid- to late-August we installed 15 large wood structures along Northrup for Anchor Habitat. Then we turned around and began the Tweedle Meander project after 14 years of planning and preparation on an exciting project that will re-route the stream, reconnecting it with the floodplain and creating beautiful off-channel habitat for wild coho and lamprey. The Warner Creek LWD and BDA installations begin in mid-September and, after pandemic-related delays, construction on the Galassi Wetland project is slated to begin in September.

Finally, this fall we will stay busy with projects and community. We will continue riparian plantings at Fishhawk Lake and other local sites through the fall into spring as part of our Shade Our Streams campaign.

We plan to return to our pilot BDA project to weave and re-weave some of the structures. A few structures had hardwood and vine maple material woven between the posts, which did not effectively impound the water and eventually washed out. Those will be re-woven with conifer branches which work well to collect debris, creating a nice impoundment. Other structures were left un-woven in an attempt to encourage the beaver to build on the structure, and while some were adopted, others were not. Those un-adopted, un-woven structures will receive the basket treatment with conifer materials as well. We plan to continue to monitor the project for up to 10 years to gather data on the effectiveness of the BDA strategy in a coastal watershed.

We feel so privileged to still be here, going strong, after 26 years of ebbs and flows. Our beautiful watershed is resilient and we will continue working hard to restore and improve.

- Corrie Aiuto

**MAGGIE PEYTON**

UNWC COUNCIL  
COORDINATOR  
MAGGIE@NEHALEM.ORG





# SCAPPOOSE BAY

WATERSHED COUNCIL

The SBWC took the time this year to revisit our long-range planning efforts from 2018. The board of directors and Council staff held a strategic planning retreat in April, at which we reviewed our strategic action plan and met with community partners to assess our progress and set goals for the next 5 years. Some of the items we identified were reestablishing a regular connection with our community partners by forming an advisory committee; assessing the existing monitoring data and current monitoring efforts within the watershed and finding ways to engage citizen scientists to help round out the data; and hosting community conversations around watershed health to promote watershed literacy and advocacy.



A family pauses for a smile during the Earth Day Celebration Clean Up Event at Chapmans Landing

This June we held our first community conversation on land use planning and its impacts on watershed health in collaboration with the City of Scappoose's 50-year planning efforts. In September we held our second conversation on the state of water quality within the Scappoose Bay Watershed. Our community partners at the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality and the Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership discussed their monitoring efforts within the watershed and how it fits into the larger work they are doing in the region.

In our Water Quality program, we continue to work with our partners at Columbia SWCD and Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership to monitor levels of E.coli, stream temperature, and turbidity. As a result of these efforts, we are working with the City of Scappoose to plant trees along City-owned and managed stream frontage to improve water quality for both wildlife and people in the watershed.

For the past couple of years we have built formal partnerships with the City of Scappoose and City of St. Helens to help them manage and maintain their natural resources. This involves training staff and volunteers to identify invasive plants, assisting in the removal of the invasive species, as well as planting native species.

As part of our invasive species program, our watershed technician, Emily Martin, has been busy creating video resources for the community. One video was created to help train the City of St. Helens maintenance staff and community volunteers in



Heather Cashmore from Ash Creek Forest Management volunteers to help plant trees at Brush Creek



Former Board Member Tom Myers pauses for a smile at McCormick Park as he removes shining geranium

effective removal of ivy. Another video is Emily's presentation at the Scappoose Public Library reviewing weed identification and management. As opportunities arise we will continue to add to this resource. These videos are available through the Council's new YouTube channel the 'Scappoose Bay Watershed Council Video Network'.

Emily is also doing a fantastic job managing the SBWC Native Plant Nursery and coordinating our volunteers. The spring and fall plant sales were well attended and got even more native plants out into the community. We love seeing all of the folks who return year after year to

continue infilling their backyard habitats. Many of our plants also went to support local restoration and habitat enhancement projects, including Veterans Park in Scappoose and Nob Hill Nature Park in St Helens.

For more information please visit our website at <http://www.scappoosebay-wc.org>

- Nicole Ferreira, Board President

## EMILY MARTIN

SBWC RESTORATION  
PROJECT MANAGER  
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# NATURAL RESOURCES

CONSERVATION SERVICE



With the office opening back up and life returning to normal, we at the NRCS can now offer more options to better assist our clients and partners. Stacey Cooper, our prior Small Farms and Organics Specialist, has left to pursue other career opportunities near her family in the East Coast. Stacey is an incredible hard worker and will be missed by those who had the privilege of working with her. The Small Farms and Organics Specialist position will be filled by the end of September 2022. This will allow us to better serve our community quickly and efficiently.

The Oregon NRCS structures our programs in a way that focuses on primary areas of concern to address community needs more efficiently. In 2022 our financial assistance concentrated on forest health, livestock needs, water quality along the Nehalem River, soil health in small farms, and comprehensive forest plans.

The Forest Resiliency in the Face of Climate Change program assists with activities that

improve the health of Columbia County forests and reduce the risk of wildfires or other climatic events. The goal of this program is to plant and improve the health of desired trees, remove trees with disease, thin vegetation that impedes the growth of the forests, and make the forest more resilient to climatic events.

The Forest Management Planning program gives forest landowners the option to receive a comprehensive plan developed by a registered Technical Service Provider. The plan describes in detail the current condition of the forest and gives recommendations on future activities based on the landowners' goals. The plan allows the landowner to proceed with forest activities and follow Oregon's forestry regulations.

The Lower Willamette North Coast Animal Feeding Operations improves water quality along livestock operations by diverting clean water away from the operation and preventing nutrients and other pollutants from entering

waterbodies. Sustainable livestock activities are planned to keep livestock out of waterways, improving grazing systems, and enhancing the productivity of pastures.

The Columbia County Soil Health Corridor supports commonly used best management practices on smaller farms that improves the soils and sustainability of the farming operations. These practices include high tunnels, water

catchment tanks, pollinator and wildlife plantings, and crop rotation plans. The goal of the program is to improve the function and health of the farming system to improve crop and ecological health in the Columbia County community.

The Upper Nehalem Floodplain Recovery improves water quality and the aquatic habitat of the Nehalem River by preventing erosion, reducing water temperatures, increasing plant health and diversity, and removing livestock access to the river. Landowners can enhance their habitat and improve the conditions of their river access.

Other programs that are available in the County but were not utilized this year include the High Tunnel Initiative, Organic Initiative, Energy Initiative, Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plans, The Conservative Stewardship Program, Easements, and EQIP CIC.

## PRACTICES CONTRACTED

- High Tunnel
- Tree and Shrub Establishment
- Brush Management
- Forest Stand Improvement/ Precommercial Thinning
- Tree and Shrub Site Preparation
- Herbaceous Weed Management
- Forest Management Plan
- Mulching
- Cover Crop
- Hedgerow Planting
- Woody Residue Treatment
- Fencing
- Gutters and Downspouts
- Water tanks
- Pipelines and underground outlets
- Waste Storage Facility
- Roofs and Covers
- Heavy Use Area Protection
- Nutrient Management

**HANNAH ISAACS**

NRCS DISTRICT  
CONSERVATIONIST  
HANNAH.ISAACS@USDA.GOV



Program	Number of Contracts	Total Funds
Columbia Soil Health Corridor	3	33,167
Upper Nehalem Recovery	1	20,424
Forest Resiliency	2	10,901
Forest Management Plan	1	2,338
AFO/Livestock	1	270,663
<b>Totals</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>337,493</b>





# COLUMBIA COUNTY, PARTNERS, & CONTRACTORS

THANK YOU

**Our achievements have been made possible thanks to the many partners we have worked with over the last year. As we look forward to the year ahead, we would like to thank everyone who has been part of our journey so far.**

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|--|---|--|
| Aquatic Contracting, LLC               | Hancock Forest Management                       | Oregon State University Extension Service  |
| Army Corps. of Engineers               | Local Cities and Municipalities                 | Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board   |
| Ash Creek Forest Management            | Local School Districts                          | Port of Columbia County  |
| Bemis Printing                         | Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership              | Portland General Electric  |
| Bureau of Land Management              | Lower Columbia River Watershed Council          | Scappoose Bay Watershed Council  |
| Clatskanie PUD                         | National Fish and Wildlife Foundation           | Special Districts Association of Oregon  |
| Columbia County                        | National Marine Fisheries Service               | Upper Nehalem Watershed Council  |
| Columbia County Corrections            | National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration | United States Department of Agriculture Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service |
| Columbia County Fairgrounds            | Native Plantscapes NW                           | United States Fish and Wildlife Service  |
| Columbia River Estuary Study Taskforce | Natural Resources Conservation Service          | Waterways Consulting, Inc.   |
| Deer Island Nursery                    | North Coast Cooperative Weed Management Area    | Weyerhaeuser   |
| Department of Environmental Quality    | Oregon Department of Agriculture                | Wild Salmon Center   |
| Department of State Lands              | Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife          | Wolf Water Resources, Inc.   |
| Evenson Logging Co.                    | Oregon Department of Forestry                   |  |



