

# Calapooia Watershed Council

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*Mission: Providing opportunities for membership to cooperate in promoting the health of the watershed and its communities.*

## Calapooia Watershed Council Meeting Minutes

Calapooia Watershed Council (CWC) Board of Directors and Council members held their monthly meeting at the Brownsville Library, Brownsville, Oregon, on December 9, 2009 beginning at 7:00 p.m.

Present at the meeting were the following members of the Board of Directors:

Bud Baumgartner	Dee Swayze
Frank Lamb	Matthew Fiorito
Mark Running	Roger Ruckert
Dave Furtwangler	

Absent from the meetings were the following members of the Board of Directors:

John Perry	Connie Burdick
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A quorum (6) was established for this informational meeting.

Cindy Anderson

Alice Smith

Dave Wran

Jim Wagner

Ed Lafayette

Mike Nehls

Bob Bostad

Andy Collan

Don Lyon

Sarah Kleeger

Andrew Still

Don Wehr

Julie Whalen

Don Hallard

Also present at the meeting were:

Erika Lang

Tara Davis

Sarah Dyrdaahl

Pamela Archer

On behalf of the CWC Secretary, contracted Program Assistant, Pamela Archer, recorded the minutes.

### **AGENDA ITEM: Introduction, Announcements**

### **AGENDA ITEM: Public Comment/Board of Directors Comment**

### **DISCUSSION:**

None.

### **AGENDA ITEM: Approve November 2009 meeting minutes**

Corrections:

- Meeting was held in the Community room
- Bill Marshall trip, Tara was not there, Sarah was there
- Change project meeting to council meeting

**Decision: Minutes approved as corrected**

**Presentation: Anne Kreager, Grassland Biologist, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife**

The strategic conservation plan for native grasslands includes wet and upland prairie, savanna, along with “surrogate” non-traditional habitats (i.e. Christmas tree farms, airports). The plan includes those birds which depend specifically on grasslands and those birds who may use those habitats intermittently. Target bird species are: Western meadowlark, grasshopper sparrow, common nighthawk, streaked horned lark, and the Oregon vesper sparrow.

Grasslands are the rarest Willamette Valley habitat type, due to land conversions, fire suppression, invasive species, and the fragmentation and isolation of habitats. The plan showcases the Courtney Creek subbasin, where most of these habitats exist and good populations of grassland birds exist. Courtney Creek resident species include the grasshopper sparrow, Oregon vesper sparrow, western meadowlark, and the streaked horned lark. Have seen decline in streaked horn lark, have mostly seen bird declines. For all of the southern Willamette valley Dramatic decrease in vesper sparrow, western meadowlark decreased, and horned lark increased.

- Western meadowlark. Oregon state bird, went from being a constant presence to rare. 50% decline from 1970’s to 1990’s for Christmas bird counts. Need 100 acres of space per pair. Like open space, plant diversity, habitat structure, perches, limited disturbance during breeding season.
- Vesper sparrow. Most abundant in southern Willamette valley. Can use atypical habitat that has some groundcover like Christmas tree plantations. Like short, dense grass. Ground nesters.
- Grasshopper sparrow. Southeastern Willamette valley, very rare now. Short and stubby bird, short neck, vocalization sounds like insect. Use a small territory, ground nesters.
- Streak horned lark. Located at airports like Corvallis airport. Small, scattered roadside populations. Like gravelly open areas
- Common nighthawk. Live in variety of habitats: grassland, agricultural fields to cities, clear cuts and burns. Pesticides (insectivorous) and habitat loss threaten them. Not related to hawks. Ground nesters.
- Short-eared owl. Nests on ground or prairie, savanna, or meadow habitats. Need concealed nests.
- Wilson’s snipe (common snipe). Defends a territory that shrinks from 50 acres to a few as breeding progresses. Use wet prairie eating small crustaceans in the mud. Also in receding vernal pools.
- Northern harrier. White rump, strong fliers, need lots of habitat 50-100 acres grassland. Ground nester.
- American kestrel, lazuli bunting (edge forest, meadow clearings or riparian area, forage in large grassy area, build nest on interface), western bluebird (do well with boxes in open grassland), chipping sparrow (nest in bush). All utilize grasslands along with other habitats, use for part of life cycle.
- See [www.allaboutbirds.org](http://www.allaboutbirds.org) for detailed information

Habitat types associated with grassland bird species: wet prairie, upland prairie, open savanna, savanna groves, and oak woodland. If you preserve enough acreage to support the western meadowlark, you will likely have enough acreage to support the additional birds as well. It is best to have more than 100 acres or several small tracts of 50 acres within ½ mile of each other.

Plan priorities: protect habitats in perpetuity. Acquire, restore, and enhance grasslands. The broader the habitat we set aside at varied elevations and latitudes will help birds acclimate to climate change, they will have alternative areas to go. Protecting insect populations is an important component of grassland viability, along with a diversity of flowering plant species to feed the insects and thus the birds.

Altering the following agricultural practices will help with bird conservation:

- Limit mowing/haying during breeding season (stay out of fields April 15-July 15)
- Mow at differing heights—create different structure with different grass heights and densities.
- Eliminate year round grazing, burn every 2-3 years (for restoration, can get done for free), limit/exclude pesticides/herbicides (all will have impact).

## **AGENDA ITEM: Willamette Model Watershed Program Update:**

Landowner recruitment program is finishing up work and projects within Brush Creek.

Program will begin working in Courtney Creek (tributary), performing education and outreach, which will eventually lead to a stream survey. The stream survey will be conducted in January, then the program will host a community meeting in February. At the community meeting, survey results will be presented and additional landowner knowledge added to the survey results. The survey will help the CWC identify which areas are functioning well on their own, areas where conservation practices could be implemented, and areas that could use restoration projects. Courtney Creek has high ecological value with many types of habitats.

The program anticipates work in Courtney Creek will be different than Brush Creek, as Courtney Creek is larger, has more landowners, more land use types, and more agriculture is present within Courtney Creek. Courtney Creek may have been more impacted than Brush Creek was because of a greater variety of land use practices employed in Courtney Creek.

## **AGENDA ITEM: Project Updates and Transition**

*Projects committee meeting last Tuesday, December 1, 2009*

The Council has been less active in hosting tours and trips, but the committee decided to schedule more trips/tours in 2010. Additionally, the fundraising event has been scheduled for the CWC at the Calapooia Brewery on June 11<sup>th</sup>, 2010. To avoid volunteer burnout, the CWC will downplay volunteer planting events and will have a maintenance crew in the future. Also, future plantings will include more bare root plants which need gentler handling.

*Sodom Dam Removal update: the last two major fish passage barriers along the Calapooia*

A technical team meeting was held last week on December 2, 2009. The meeting was well attended with about 25 agencies and landowners present. River Design Group presented their 25% project designs on the known structure locations and the basic footprint/scope of the project. The specific design aspects will be more clear at the 60% design meeting in January 2010. The FERC process, which addresses ESA issues, was also discussed, as OPRD has a legal responsibility to surrender their exemption as part of the project. Permits for the project will be submitted in February 2010.

On Tuesday, December 8, 2009, a successful landowner outreach meeting was held, with over 30 private landowners present, along with SWCD board members and staff, and members of the Boston Mill Society. Denise Hoffert-Hay presented the information from the 25% River Design Group plans and conducted the discussion very well. She reiterated that the preferred alternative will address potential increased flooding and excess sediment which may block Calapooia channel. The meeting made the Albany Democrat Herald front page, which was a good, straightforward article. Folks from the State Historic Preservation Office were present at the meeting to assure members of the Boston Mill Society that the project has been addressing the historical aspects of the mill. Landowners have been involved all along, but Linn SWCD recently starting attending meetings.

*Future CWC involvement in the Greater Albany area and the Muddy Creek Watershed*

The council recently explored the potential of providing increased technical assistance and outreach to great Albany area and Albany tributaries, along with the Muddy Creek watershed, which isn't represented by a watershed council. Including these areas would double the size of the area that we service. The projects committee discussed this, and decided to continue pursuing these areas in a passive way, and to start networking and having conversations with residents in these areas. Tara met with Albany Public Works director, the director of Greenbelt Land Trust, and the Albany Parks and Recreation Department on how to move forward with outreach. It became apparent that each organization utilized a different approach, but everyone agreed to work together and send landowners in appropriate direction. The City of Albany has requested our council pursue the bottom two miles of the Calapooia River at the confluence. The CWC would be able to perform outreach in Albany with demonstration projects at the site, and there is already a lot of landowner interest. Greenbelt Land Trust may fund this through a grant to do an assessment

of the lower two miles of the Calapooia. In the Muddy Creek, the CWC will make some connections over the winter. To conclude, the Watershed Council will slowly ramp up outreach.

**DISCUSSION:** none

**AGENDA ITEM: Policies and procedures manual passed out.**

**DISCUSSION:** none

**AGENDA ITEM: Management Committee Agenda**

- Project update from Denise/Sodom project discussion
- Review big contracts with engineers and construction firms with attorneys
- Tara's grant hours
- Check in on reporting
- Tara's mileage
- Health insurance

**DISCUSSION:** none

**OPEN DISCUSSION:**

New CWC office is open in City Hall, but CWC staff will not maintain official office hours.

Matthew Fiorito informed the council that Weyerhaeuser is willing to provide a tour for council members. It would most likely take place on a Saturday or Sunday to avoid log trucks. Tour will probably take place in spring 2010.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:45 p.m. The next Calapooia board meeting will be held on January 13<sup>th</sup>, 2010 at the Brownsville Community Room.

**READ AND APPROVED by the Board of Directors on \_\_\_\_\_, 2009**

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Secretary