

Special Features of Courtney Creek/ Spoon Creek Watershed



Courtney Creek and Spoon Creek are key tributaries influencing the temperature and flows of the Calapooia River.

Historically, this watershed contained many wetlands made up of tufted hairgrass, roemers fescue, and native prairie flowers. Wetlands provide important benefits including flood control by storing and slowing down water, catching sediment, re-charging groundwater, and cleaning water. Today, the remaining wetlands provide important habitat for species in decline such as grassland birds (Western meadowlark & Horned lark), over-wintering shorebirds, the Western Pond turtle, and several native prairie plants. High quality oak savanna habitat can still be found in the upland areas, offering a home to many different plants and animals.






What About Fish?

Many landowners we have spoken to have asked about native fish using Courtney Creek and Spoon Creek. Long-time residents remember finding salmonids and other native fish in the stream. This past winter, Mark Running who lives along Sucker Creek, set up a fish trap with the help of Oregon Dept. of Fish and Wildlife. He and his children found cutthroat, dace, sculpin, and suckers. If landowners are willing to do restoration to improve streamside vegetation, water quality, and channel complexity (fish like large wood for cover), Mark's children can continue to see fish in the future!



Resource Concerns As Identified by Residents & Solutions

The Council is currently working with several voluntary landowners on project plans and on-the-ground implementation activities. The majority of the projects relate to establishing native plant buffers along the stream. A few landowners are doing wetland restoration on their more unproductive farmlands through USDA easement programs (Wetland Reserve Program and Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program) that offer financial incentives while continuing to farm on more productive lands. Off of Gap Road, extensive oak savanna and ponderosa pine habitat and upland prairie restoration is occurring in partnership with USFWS Partners Program and The Nature Conservancy. Contact us if you are interested in a project!

Concern	Solution
Lack of Streamside Buffers on Perennial and Seasonal Waterways	Remove invasive weeds and plant native trees and shrubs. Exclude livestock from grazing in this area. <i>Actions will help provide stream shading, decrease erosion and sedimentation, filter chemical runoff and provide fish and wildlife habitat.</i>
Invasive Weeds	Remove weeds through proper mechanical or chemical best management practices. <i>Weeds can decrease property values, out-compete native plants important for wildlife, etc.</i> Specific weeds of concern for this area are: <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: flex-start;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p>Italian Thistle</p>  </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p>Milk Thistle</p>  </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p>False Brome</p>  </div> </div>
Declining Native Habitats - Wetlands & Oak Savanna	Technical and financial assistance exists to help restore and enhance important habitats. <i>While the goal is to not restore the Willamette Valley to pre-settlement conditions, these habitats are important to retain diverse native plant and animal populations that contribute to a healthy watershed.</i>

UPCOMING EVENTS

May 4th - Pasture and Mud Management Workshop, 6 - 9 pm, Lebanon Library.
Contact OSU Extension to sign up @ 541-766-6750 or calapooia@peak.org.

May 7th - Watershed Tour of Projects, 9 am - Noon, Meet at Dairy Mart to carpool.
RSVP requested to Council. Come prepared for wet conditions and weather.

June 1st - Biology and Control of Invasive Weeds Workshop (learn about common weeds and Early Detection Rapid Response weeds to be aware of), **6 - 9 pm, Lebanon Library.** Contact OSU Extension to sign up @ 541-766-6750 or calapooia@peak.org.