Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2012-2013 and Future Plans for the Tillamook Bay Watershed Council

A report prepared for the Tillamook County Board of Commissioners
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Tillamook Bay Watershed Council

Mission Statement:

The Tillamook Bay Watershed Council promotes healthy rivers and streams and a vibrant community through locally-directed education, stewardship, and restoration and enhancement activities within the Tillamook Bay Watershed. Working together, we believe our community can achieve clean water, abundant fish populations, and well-managed water resources.
Recently Completed Projects

Brown’s Powerline Road Fish Passage

This very recently completed project took place in the area of Brown’s Camp located in the Wilson River watershed. The project included the closure of an Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) trail that ran adjacent to a tributary of the Devil’s Fork and contributed fine sediment to the system. A culvert that was considered a significant barrier to fish passage was replaced with a fish-friendly one and another culvert was completely removed. The project opened up approximately 1 mile of quality overwintering habitat for salmonids in an area known for high fish presence. Partners on the project included the Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) and the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB). **Total Cost of Project: $16,742**

Loren’s Pond and Drift Enhancement Project

A couple short years ago, this site located approximately ½-mile downstream from the Trask River Hatchery consisted of a rustic boat ramp and a fishing pond surrounded by blackberry bushes. Today, visitors at this site can enjoy a family friendly setting. The blackberry surrounding the 3.5-acre pond has been removed and replanted with native vegetation. Approximately 1,200 feet of hiking trails have been formed and the pond now features fishing access for people with disabilities. The pond is regularly stocked with rainbow trout and recycled winter steelhead.
Invasive and non-native vegetation has been removed from the riparian area along the Trask River and replanted with native vegetation. The site’s parking lot and restrooms have been upgraded, and picnic tables and benches have been installed. The Loren’s Pond and Drift Enhancement Project was spearheaded and lead by ODFW’s North Coast STEP Biologist, Ron Rhen. This project could not have taken place without the generous donation from Mr. Loren Parks and strong support from Mr. Jerry Dove. The TBWC supported this project by providing volunteer, fiscal, and administrative assistance. The TBWC would like to thank the Tillamook Estuaries Partnership who took over that role while the watershed council went under transition. We would also like to thank the Tillamook County students and other volunteers who helped make this project possible.

Tillamook River Cleanup
TBWC was alerted by a local landowner that large amounts of plastic sheeting had blown from a nearby farmer’s field into the Tillamook River. TBWC enlisted the help of the Tillamook High School’s Key Club who put great effort into cleaning up the plastic and removing significant amounts of other debris from the river. The TBWC would like to thank the Key Club for all their hard work on this project.

Fawcett Creek Fish Passage and Screening Improvement
Fawcett Creek supports approximately 6 miles of habitat for threatened Oregon Coast coho salmon, and populations of Chinook, chum, cutthroat along with steelhead and lamprey. Approximately 2 miles from its confluence, the City of Tillamook operated an antiquated surface water diversion as a primary source for the City’s water supply. The diversion dam’s three foot jump blocked adult and juvenile fish passage. The City was eager to fix that and started working with the TBWC to improve the dam in 2009. TBWC helped obtain funding for the project,
contracted with design consultants and installation contractors. The TBWC would like to thank the TEP who actually implemented the project and brought it to completion while we underwent a change management. Today, the structure insures safe passage for fish, enabling them to access miles of quality habitat, while maintaining the creek as a key drinking water source for the City’s residents. Partners on the project included: the City of Tillamook, ODFW, OWEB, and the USFWS. **Total Cost of Project was approximately $630,000**
Future/Ongoing Projects

Killam Creek Habitat Enhancement Project- TBWC has plans to enhance 1.7 miles of Killam Creek to improve juvenile spawning and overwintering habitat. Some funds have already been acquired and matching funds are currently being sought. Project partners include: USFWS, ODFW, Stimson Lumber, NORP, and the OWEB. **Estimated Cost of Project: Approximately $55,000**

Mill-Bear Creek Fish Passage (culvert replacement)- TBWC has applied for funding to replace the culvert located on Brickyard Road which passes over an unnamed tributary (locally known as Bear Creek) to Mill Creek. The culvert is failing and a barrier to fish passage. Replacing the culvert will provide fish access to approximately 3 miles of good quality habitat. Funding has not been officially awarded for this project; however, things are looking pretty positive. Partners on the project include: Tillamook County Public Works Department, USFWS, ODFW, NORP, and OWEB. **Estimated Cost of Project: $184,000**

Mill Creek Habitat Enhancement Project
TBWC has identified an opportunity to enhance habitat in a section of Mill Creek. This project is in its preliminary stages and funding will be sought in October 2013. The project will likely be implemented in August 2014 and will improve approximately 1 mile of fish habitat. **Estimated Cost of Project: $35,000**
Northwest Oregon Restoration Partnership (NORP)

The NORP, located at Camp Tillamook, operates a greenhouse and nursery that produces approximately 75,000 thousand native plants each year. The plants are used to restore watersheds, primarily in Oregon’s North Coastal region. The Partnership enables incarcerated and at-risk youth to obtain job skills working with plants, in greenhouse management, and construction. The NORP is collaborative effort with approximately 30 different partners, including state and federal agencies and numerous non-profit watershed councils. The TBWC has played a key role in supporting NORP since it began and will continue to do so by providing fiscal, administrative, and volunteer assistance. In 2013 alone, over $120,000 has been acquired to fund this ongoing project in Tillamook County.

Boundary-Headquarters Creek Habitat Enhancement

This sub-basin in the Trask River system is noted for its critical coho spawning and rearing habitat. The TBWC is partnering with the Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) to enhance habitat in this sub-basin and replace two culverts that hinder fish passage. Funding for the project is currently being sought. TBWC hopes to implement the project in August 2014. Estimated cost of the project is $55,000.
Education / Outreach

**Clean Water Festival**
Each year, the TBWC supports TEP’s Clean Water Festival. The Clean Water Festival educates approximately 300 Tillamook County 4th grade students about the importance of clean water and healthy watersheds.

**Salmon Watch**
Each year, TBWC council members and staff support Salmon Watch. Salmon Watch is sponsored by Tillamook County School District #9. This last year, approximately 160 7th graders participated in Salmon Watch, learning about salmon biology, the importance of the good water quality and the preservation of salmon habitat.

![Students learning about macroinvertebrates at Salmon Watch.](image)

**Down by the Riverside**
Each year, TBWC council members and staff support TEP’s event, Down by the Riverside event which provides hands-on education about riparian areas, plants, and animals that call this place home.
Partners, Board Members, Volunteers: Thank You

The Tillamook Bay Watershed Council meets the last Tuesday of each month at the Tillamook County Library at 6:30 pm. At most meetings we have speakers who talk about local environmental issues that impact the citizens of the Tillamook Bay Watershed and the greater Tillamook County.

All members of the public are welcome to attend. If you are interested in becoming more involved in your community, the council currently has one board member opening and volunteers are always welcome and needed.

The TBWC would like to thank all its partners and volunteers for their continued support.