

South Santiam Watershed Council
Approved Meeting Minutes
Tuesday May 21, 2019

Attendance: Eric Andersen, Ken Crouse, Lee Peterman, Shirley Tolliff, Ann Leschen, Katie Kohl, Mike Vernon, Amy Kaiser, Nancy Gilmore, Nancy MacHugh, Lori Kuster, Eric Kuster

The meeting started at 3 pm with welcome and introductions.

Thomas Stokely, post-doctoral researcher from Oregon State University, gave a guest talk on his research into the effect of ungulate grazing and herbicide treatment on plant communities in the Oregon coast range. Thomas talked about the inherent conflict between natural variability in forest development (long-term via disturbance) vs. the human desire for short-term economic returns through forest management (limiting disturbance).

For his research, Thomas built wildlife exclosures in experimental blocks treated with varying intensities of herbicide application following timber harvest. Sites were monitored for 6 years and a range of data was collected (plant community, crop tree growth, game cam, bird and insect surveys). Select results: deer/elk negatively affected crop tree growth in light and no spray treatments, deer/elk positively impact crop tree growth in moderate and heavy spray treatments. The combination of herbicide and browsing promotes non-native cover. Moth diversity increased with increasing plant diversity. The board had great questions which stimulated a discussion about the use of herbicides, early seral habitat and alternative forest management practices (utilize hardwoods that are eradicated as 'competition'). Future work by Thomas will look at trade-offs between economic returns and ecosystem services.

The board approved the April meeting minutes.

Mike Vernon gave an update on the SSWC education program. He gave a brief rundown of his experience at the TRES prescribed fire training. He also outlined some of the challenges in coordinating Outdoor School (government shutdown, USFS schedule conflicts, weather (snow)). During the 2019 Outdoor School sessions, the SSWC served 281 6th grade students from the Sweet Home and Lebanon school districts. He thanked the various ODS partners and Lauren Smith, the temporary SSWC hire who did an outstanding job and is now in a Master's program at UBC. Next year's ODS will take place 4/13-4/17, with school groups temporarily overlapping on Wednesday. Mike also highlighted the Sweet Home Arbor Day event which prominently featured the Youth Watershed Council. Upcoming events include: Youth Snorkeling (6/5/19), Barsideous Dine Out for Salmon Watch (5/23), and a Science Pub featuring Vanessa Petro from OSU (Barsideous, 6/20) speaking about beaver activity/research in Oregon.

Eric then initiated a discussion about board elections (next board meeting) and presented a draft application. He suggested that new board members should be prepared to build relationships with potential funders within the community (Weyerhaeuser, Samaritan). Other organizational suggestions included expanding the Education Committee to include partners (USFS) and local teachers, recruiting representatives of the agricultural community, increasing partnerships with Build Lebanon Trails, NRCS, and Alex Paul (local journalist). Board members suggested promoting the SSWC newspapers, local businesses, VOFW, and Steelhead Fitness. Members also suggested having a virtual board meeting to accommodate professionals who cannot attend at 3 pm. For interested parties who cannot attend meetings but want to help, it was suggested that they could be sent meeting notes and a specific task to

address. Others suggested that a growing societal concern about climate change should be viewed as an opportunity to recruit the help of citizens.

Other upcoming events: Foster Dam fish collection facility tour June 6 (9:00-12:00), Science Pub at Barsideous (6/20) and the Willamette River Initiative picnic (6/19 4-7pm, Rogue Hop Farm, Independence, OR).

Katie Kohl will be absent from the June board meeting due travels in Ecuador.