

South Santiam Watershed Council

Action Plan

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Glossary

BEF	Bonneville Environmental Foundation
BLM	Bureau of Land Management
BPA	Bonneville Power Administration
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
FSA	Farm Service Area
SSWC	South Santiam Watershed Council
SWCD	Soil and Water Conservation District
NRCS	Natural Resources Conservation Service
MMT	Meyer Memorial Trust
ODF	Oregon Department of Forestry
ODFW	Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
ORDEQ	Oregon Department of Environmental Quality
OSU	Oregon State University
OWEB	Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board
UO	University of Oregon
USACE	US Army Corps of Engineers
USFS	US Forest Service
USGS	United States Geologic Survey

South Santiam Watershed Council Action Plan

Purpose and Goals 1-7 as adopted April 2015

Chapter One: Introduction

I. Purpose

1. Help establish guidelines for the productivity, character, function, and appearance of the South Santiam River.
2. Provide a framework for maintaining and enhancing the productivity, resiliency, diversity, and uniqueness of this watershed for its inhabitants.
3. Establish guidance for community involvement and for public outreach and education in the South Santiam watershed.
4. Provide a basis for assessment, restoration and enhancement activities, which consider the unique nature of the various sub-basins within the watershed.
5. The South Santiam Watershed Council will coordinate or assist coordination of habitat management activities in the South Santiam River Watershed.

II. Scope

The geographic scope of this Action Plan is the entire South Santiam River Watershed from ridgetop to ridgetop, headwaters to mouth. The scope of the issues to consider include all watershed processes and biological components with an emphasis on issues of critical concern. This includes all social, economic, and political realities. This document is intended to be flexible. Changes to the plan should be made when needed by the Watershed Council.

III. Current Conditions

1. An initial watershed assessment was completed in 2000.
2. Hamilton and McDowell Creeks
 - a. An assessment of McDowell and Hamilton Creek watersheds was completed in 2010.
 - b. Yearly stream temperature monitoring within McDowell and Hamilton Creek watersheds began in 2010.
 - c. Project effectiveness monitoring occurred in McDowell and Hamilton basins starting 2010.
 - d. A rapid bio-assessment in the McDowell and Hamilton Creek watersheds began in 2014.
3. A two year assessment of water quality conditions in Thomas, Crabtree, Hamilton, McDowell and Ames Creek basins was completed in November of 2014.

Chapter Two: Goals

(Not listed in order of priority)

Goal 1: Productivity and Diversity

Provide future inhabitants and users a watershed with undiminished diversity, productivity, and opportunity.

Goal 2: Education

Promote a sense of awareness and understanding among all watershed users and landowners as to how their land management practices and personal actions can positively or adversely impact the South Santiam watershed where they live, work, or play.

Goal 3: Water Quality

Maintain, enhance, or restore water quality suitable for all beneficial uses in watershed streams.

Goal 4: Fish and Wildlife Habitat

Maintain, enhance, and restore fish and wildlife habitat throughout the watershed.

Goal 5: Watershed Assessment

Complete and maintain an assessment of the entire watershed, emphasizing its major components. We recognize the complexity of this task, the need to establish priorities, and the ever-changing nature of the various natural systems that make up the watershed.

Goal 6: Citizen Involvement

Generate support and enthusiasm for the Council's activities by involving as many citizens as possible to take care of our watershed.

Goal 7: Cooperation and Coordination

Foster an atmosphere of cooperation and coordination with all landowners, citizens, organizations, and agencies with responsibilities and interests in the watershed.

Goal 8: On-The-Ground Projects

Implement on-the-ground projects which improve the health of the watershed.

Chapter Three: Strategies and Actions

Goal 1: Productivity and Diversity

Provide future inhabitants and users a watershed with undiminished diversity, productivity, and opportunity.

Strategy	Action	Priority	Status
Educate landowners on the functions of native plant species and diversity	Conduct landowner outreach	High	Ongoing
	Field assessment/information gathering from land owners	Medium	Ongoing
	Take actions to protect or increase sensitive, threatened, and endangered plant species	High	Ongoing
Restore native plants	Eliminate or reduce noxious non-native plant species and re-vegetate with native plant species. Target areas include the Model Watersheds (McDowell and Hamilton Creeks), Crabtree Creek, Thomas Creek, other tributaries supporting Endangered Species Act-listed species, and other tributaries identified by the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality as water quality impaired. (See Goal 8)	High	Ongoing
	Eliminate or reduce noxious non-native plant species and re-vegetate with native plant species in tributaries that do not support ESA-listed species and/or are water quality impaired.	Medium	Ongoing
For fish and wildlife diversity see Goal 4: Fish and Wildlife Habitat			
See Projects Goal 8 for strategies to implement on-the ground projects.			

Goal 2: Education

Promote a sense of awareness and understanding among all watershed users and landowners as to how their land management practices and personal actions can positively or adversely impact the South Santiam watershed where they live, work, or play.

Strategy	Action	Priority	Status
Education in public schools	Initiate Youth Watershed Councils in schools in Lebanon and Sweet Home. Youth Watershed Councils will engage high school students to meet regularly, and conduct restoration and enhancement activities that expand and reinforce their learning.	High	Ongoing
Outdoor School	Implement annual Outdoor School in partnership with the U.S. Forest Service for Sweet Home 5 th and 6 th grade students. Explore opportunities to include other schools in the program.	High	Ongoing
Watershed tours	Continue watershed tours to increase the Council's and the public's knowledge of watershed issues and current conditions. Council members, landowners, and other partners assist in hosting and organizing the tours.	Medium	Ongoing
Public workshops and classes	Provide workshops and classes as needed to meet the needs and interests of the public, council members, and other partners.	Low	Ongoing
	Cooperate with our partners (SWCD, NRCS, etc.) to hold streambank restoration workshops that will provide the technical knowledge to revegetate streambanks with plant species that assist in stabilizing the banks while providing for fish and wildlife habitat.	Low	As needed
	Build partnerships with City and County Parks Departments and local groups who are working on streambank issues.	Medium	Ongoing
Informational Opportunities	Prepare and provide informational materials and displays for use at public functions, presentations, conferences, meetings, and all other situations where there is an opportunity to inform and educate about the activities of the Council.	Low	Ongoing
	Make presentations to city and county governments and community groups. Involve and invite local media to attend presentations and project tours.	High	Ongoing

Web Page	Maintain web page and update monthly or as needed.	High	Ongoing
Annual Report	Publish an annual report of Council activities and send to members, partners, and friends of the SSWC.	High	Annually
Meeting Announcements	Submit SSWC meeting announcements to Albany, Lebanon, and Sweet Home papers. Email announcement to members, and place meeting notice on the website.	High	Monthly

Goal 3: Water Quality

Maintain, enhance, or restore water quality suitable for all beneficial uses in watershed streams.
(This section will be updated as information becomes available from monitoring and assessments.)

Strategy	Action	Priority	Status
Monitor and reduce fecal coliform bacteria in streams to meet DEQ standards	Cooperate and partner with ODEQ, Linn SWCD, NRCS, irrigation districts and other agencies and organizations to monitor and reduce fecal coliform bacteria in the watershed.	High-	Ongoing
	Work with landowners, the above-named organizations, and other interested parties on voluntary projects to reduce fecal coliform, with emphasis on Thomas, Crabtree, Hamilton, Ames, and McDowell Creeks, and in other locations as more information becomes available.	High-	Ongoing
	Educate landowners about land management practices and projects that can be used to reduce fecal coliform bacteria in streams, such as pasture and range best management practices, septic tanks, off-stream watering, and other livestock operations.	High-	Ongoing
	See Projects Goal 8 for strategies to implement on-the ground projects.		
Monitor and reduce stream temperatures to meet DEQ standards	Cooperate and partner with timber companies, farmers, rural landowners, Linn, SWCD, NRCS, ODA, USFS ODEQ, irrigation districts and other agencies and organizations to monitor and reduce water temperatures throughout the watershed.	High	Ongoing
	Work with landowners, the above-named organizations, and other interested parties on voluntary projects to reduce water temperatures throughout the watershed.	High	Ongoing
	Educate landowners about land management practices and projects that can be used to reduce water temperatures in streams, such riparian zone plantings for shade, placement of large wood structures in the stream channel, and restoration of natural hydrological cycles.	High	Ongoing
	Increase the scope of the temperature monitoring projects.	High	Ongoing
See Projects Goal 8 for strategies to implement on-the ground projects.			
Investigate dissolved oxygen levels	Analyze existing information, and develop and implement a monitoring plan to assess dissolved oxygen levels throughout the watershed.	Low	As needed

Monitor and reduce sediments and excessive nutrient loading	Cooperate and partner with ODEQ, Linn SWCD, NRCS, irrigation districts and other agencies and organizations to monitor and reduce sediment and excessive nutrient loading in the watershed.	High	Ongoing
	Work with landowners, the above-named organizations, and other interested parties on voluntary projects to reduce sediments and excessive nutrient loading.	High	Ongoing
	Educate landowners about land management practices and projects that can be used to reduce erosion and excessive nutrient loading in streams, such as pasture and range best management practices, septic tanks, off-stream stock watering, and fertilization and pesticide programs.	High	Ongoing
	See Projects Goal 8 for strategies to implement on-the ground projects.		
Assess stream flow conditions	Review current data; identify areas of concern where information is missing or inadequate regarding stream flow conditions that may impact or threaten aquatic populations. Investigate the utility of doing stream flow monitoring.	Low	As needed

Goal 4: Fish and Wildlife Habitat

Maintain, enhance, and restore fish and wildlife habitat throughout the watershed.

Strategy	Action	Priority	Status
Resolve problems of upstream and downstream passage of fish and other aquatic species	Survey culverts for fish passage problems. Priority will be given to areas with ESA-listed species.	High	Ongoing
	Coordinate with ODOT, ODFW, BLM, USFS, timber companies, and landowners about culvert replacements or enhancements.	High	Ongoing
	Work with partners to secure funding and coordination to correct fish passage barriers.	High	Ongoing
Identify critical spawning and juvenile rearing areas for all native fish species	Identify strategies for restoring natural production levels, including potential sites for habitat improvement. Enhance critical areas limiting native species reproduction, with emphasis on winter steelhead and spring chinook. Use watershed assessment and monitoring data to identify critical areas.	High	Ongoing
	Plan and implement restoration project to protect and enhance in-stream structures, rearing habitats, spawning gravels in critical areas.	High	Ongoing
	See Projects Goal 8 for strategies to implement on-the ground projects.		

Goal 5: Watershed Assessment

Complete and maintain an assessment of the entire watershed, emphasizing its major components, recognizing the complexity of the task, the need to establish priorities, and the ever-changing nature of the natural systems that make up the South Santiam Watershed.

Strategy	Action	Priority	Status
Maintain all data critical to watershed health and diversity	Initial comprehensive Watershed Assessment was completed in 2000 and monitoring projects are ongoing. Additional monitoring and updating of assessments will be done as funding and resources are available.	High	Ongoing
Share data with all partners and other organizations	When practical, data is made available to DEQ and other organizations as requested.	Medium	Ongoing

Goal 6: Involve Citizens

Generate support and enthusiasm for the Council’s activities by involving as many citizens as possible to join the Council in taking care of the South Santiam River watershed.

Strategy	Action	Priority	Status
Maintain a diverse, robust, and active membership	Reach out to and include the public in Council activities as individuals, organizations, agencies, and businesses. Welcome information and participation from all sectors of the watershed inhabitants and visitors.	High	Ongoing
	Perform all Council operations with transparency and public accountability, and in accordance with Oregon laws and policies. Meet all standards of a 501(c)3 non-profit corporation.	High	Ongoing
	Ensure that the Board of Directors is representative of the community.	High	Ongoing

Goal 7: Cooperation and Coordination

Foster an atmosphere of cooperation and coordination with all landowners, organizations, agencies, cities, and businesses with responsibilities in the South Santiam Watershed.

Strategy	Action	Priority	Status
Link with other groups that are active in the So. Santiam watershed	Establish and maintain links of communication with existing programs in the watershed.	High	Ongoing
	Investigate and pursue opportunities to work cooperatively with other groups and individuals working toward goals shared with the Council.	High	Ongoing
	Offer information and support to others as requested.	Medium	Ongoing
Partner with other Watershed Councils	Establish and maintain partnerships with other local watershed councils, especially the North Santiam WSC and the Calapooia WSC.	High	Ongoing
	Establish and maintain connections with other groups focused on long-term sustainability of environmental values and land use issues.	Medium	Ongoing
Partner with Federal Agencies and Cities	Establish and maintain relationships with the USFS and the BLM and work together on projects in their areas of responsibility.	High	Ongoing
	Participate in the Sweet Home All Lands Collaboration.	High	Ongoing
	Work with the cities of Sweet Home, Lebanon, and Scio on watershed issues that they identify and prioritize.	Medium	Ongoing
Partner with Businesses	Establish and maintain relationships with businesses that are working in the critical areas of the watershed. Take advantage of opportunities to combine business practices with restoration and enhancement projects.	Medium	Ongoing

Goal 8: On-The-Ground Projects

Recruit landowner participation, develop funding, design, implement, and manage on-the-ground projects which improve the health of the watershed.

Strategy	Action	Priority	Status
Focus on projects that restore riparian areas to provide shade, protect water quality, and provide habitat	Lower Crabtree Creek riparian restoration project (20+ acres)	High	Completed 2013
	Middle Crabtree Creek riparian restoration project (40+ acres)	High	Starts 2015
	Continue Japanese Knotweed control projects on Thomas and Crabtree Creek as funds are available.	High	Ongoing
	Maintain existing revegetation projects in McDowell and Hamilton Creeks (94+ acres)	High	Ongoing
Focus on projects that restore in-stream habitat conditions, floodplain connectivity, and off-channel habitat	Moose Creek steelhead enhancement project Phase I	High	Completed 2011
	Moose Creek steelhead enhancement project Phase II	High	Grant pending
	Soda Fork steelhead enhancement project	High	Completed 2013
	Canyon-Owl Creek steelhead enhancement project	High	Completed 2014
	McDowell Creek in-stream restoration project – Knebel site	High	Completed 2009
	McDowell Creek in-stream restoration project – Swink/Bates site	High	Completed 2011
	Jack Creek large wood placement project Phase I	High	Completed 2012
	Jack Creek large wood placement project Phase II	High	Completed 2014
	Morgan and Johnson Creek large wood placement project	High	Grant pending
Lower Crabtree Creek restoration planning project	High	Completed 2009	
Focus on projects that restore fish passage for ESA-listed salmon and steelhead	Continue implementation of Santiam Basin Fish Passage Barrier Inventory project.	High	Ongoing
	Replace or retrofit identified barriers in order to ensure salmon and steelhead passage.	High	Ongoing
	Jack Creek Fish Passage project correcting 3 fish passage barriers	High	Completed 2013
	Ames Creek fish passage barrier removal (at the creek mouth)	High	Completed 2012
	Upper Crabtree Creek fish passage project (culvert replacement and	High	Grant pending

restoration of side channel around waterfall)

Monitor Wiley Creek fish passage improvement project

Medium Completed
2012

Focus on non-ESA
listed fish species

Identify opportunities for habitat enhancement and replacement of fish passage barriers. Recruit landowners, obtain funding, and implement projects.

Medium Ongoing

Focus on threatened
native upland habitats

Identify opportunities for habitat enhancement, with oak savannahs and wet prairies as priorities.

Medium Ongoing

Recruit landowners
for restoration
projects

Inform landowners about incentive programs offered by the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) and Farm Service Agency, (FSA), and encourage them to participate in programs that align with the programs and activities of the SSWC.

High Ongoing

Inform landowners about OWEB's Small Grant program, and about Other grants that could assist them in restoration projects.

High Ongoing