

South Santiam Watershed Council
Meeting Minutes
March 21, 2017

Present: Eric Andersen, Scott Marlega, Lee Peterman, Stan Van deWetering, Nancy MacHugh, Diane Kaldahl, Norm Kaldahl, Nancy Gilmore, Ken Crouse, Tyler Pedersen, Sandy Nelson, Megan Zarzycki, Randy Haley, Kim Dowe

Meeting started at 3 pm with welcome and introductions. Meeting was held at Lebanon Public Library community meeting room.

Megan Zarzycki was the featured speaker. Megan is Wildlife Program Biologist for the Confederated Tribes of the Siletz (CTS). The CTS has a strong interest in the natural resources issues in the area because the Willamette valley is the ancestral homelands of the CTS. CTS aboriginal lands extended from West of the cascades to the Coast. The CTS has tribal populations living in the Willamette as well as in Linn County. CTS natural resource program involves forestry, environmental planning and biological programs. The group is planning to add staff biologists in the future. The program undertakes forest management as well as restoration (coastal oysters and instream habitat), surveys and monitoring of territorial (red tree vole) and aquatic species (salmon, lamprey). The perform outreach to tribal mmebrs also.

The use of Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) is an important guiding framework for projects and recognizes the unique perspective of indigenous peoples. TEK is based on a long oral history and has been used to date large events (tsunamis), identify the timing of harvest of different foods and land management practices (fire). Fire in Willamette valley was a widely used tool for encouraging better forage production for deer and elk, as well tribal uses. The CTS Strategies for Tomorrow framework is composed of TEK, Policy, Science and Community. Taken together the framework emphasizes a landscape approach as opposed to one plant/animal over another. There are many culturally important plant and animal species, each having their particular use(s). A partial list includes “deer, elk, salmon, cedar, pileated wood pecker, eagles, hawks, cascara, salal, tarweed, bear grass, mountain tea, hazel, tule, junkus, maiden hair fern, lamprey, steelhead, crwdad, water fowl, woodwardia, berries (huckleberry), moss/lichens, mushrooms, wood sorel, northern flicker, willow, and cattails.”

The CTS is involved with the Willamette Wildlife Mitigation Program. In the Willamette the focus is on oak woodlands, and prairies, which have seen significant reductions in habitat over the last century and a half. The tribes partner and collaborate with different groups through grant writing, letters of support and work crews. For example, Youth Corps programs provide youth with work experiences. Land acquisition is another area of interest to CTS that would preserve habitat and provide a location for tribal activities, such as first foods gathering.

The board approved the February minutes.

There was brief update on Council projects, grants and the strategic planning process. The Council will be participating in 3 instream fish habitat enhancement projects this summer. There are three new revegetation projects starting after CREP paper work is signed. The CREP process is taking a significant amount of time from the project managers for planning efforts, field trips and repeated meetings with landowners. The Council will most likely be using CREP less as a leverage tool for restoration projects going forward because the Linn County Farm Service Agency is stepping away from local Watershed Councils, including SSWC, being able to take on the assignment of payment for CREP cost share programs. Also, the FSA state office representative has indicated the FSA and Council programs don't align. This raises questions about the SSWC role in promoting the CREP program or participating in CREP TA grants going forward. For example, the SSWC was instrumental in securing the first of multiple OWEB CREP TA grants used to provide capacity to the program.

The Council discussed partnering with the Confederated Tribes of the Siletz (CTS) and what that would entail. The first step is to learn more about the CTS and see where our missions and / or programs overlap. The CTS is interested in land acquisition in the Willamette Valley, and possibly within the South Santiam watershed. Partnering could involve sharing technical expertise or the Council being contracted to perform some management of local lands.

The next Council meeting is Tuesday, April 18 from 6 - 8 pm in the community meeting room of the Lebanon Public Library. Speaker will be Youth watershed council presentation.