South Santiam Watershed Council
Meeting Minutes
May 16, 2017

Present: Eric Andersen, Susan Barnes, Lee Peterman, Nancy MacHugh, Diane Kaldahl, Norm Kaldahl, Sandy Nelson, Nancy Gilmore, Katie Kohl, Steve Gray, Kathryn Gray, Tyler Pedersen.

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

(Notes heavily borrowed from Susan's presentation) Susan Barnes, wildlife biologist with ODFW was the featured speaker. Susan's talk was on the western pond turtle (*Actinemys marmorata*), one of our two native turtles. Our other native is the western painted turtle. Western pond turtles (WPT) were found from Baha Mexico into southern British Columbia. The northern extent of their range is limited and they are declining in numbers. In Oregon WPT are found in the Willamette Valley and in south western part of the state. The turtles are considered semi-aquatic freshwater species, are a sensitive-critical listed species by the state. WPT have dark brown to olive colored shell, with the carapace (e.g. belly) being a creamy yellow with dark streaks. The head as a similar color to the shell. Western painted turtles by contrast have orange markings on the carapace and the head has yellow and green stripes. The red eared slider (not native) has a red patch on the side of its head.

WPT are reptiles and, like all reptiles, are ectotherms, which regulate their body temperature through behavior. For example, they bask in sunshine to warm up. The turtles are long lived and take approximately 10 years to reach sexual maturity.
The turtles can be found in water and in terrestrial habitats. Their behavior changes with age and through the course of the seasons. In spring turtles emerge from hibernation, bask and breed. Prime nesting season is in June. During summer turtles can move into upland terrestrial habitat. In fall turtles are in upland habitats moving to hibernation area. They hibernate in upland forest over the winter, hiding under duff and in mud. In spring turtles emerge from hibernation and move towards water.

There are eight essential habitat components: sunlight, nesting habitat, aquatic habitat, basking structures, aestivation habitat, overwintering habitat, close proximity of T&A (e.g. terrestrial and aquatic) and safe movement corridors between T&A. Nesting habitat must have ample exposure to sunlight, exposed bare ground, few trees and be in proximity to aquatic habitat.

More information on best management practices can be found at: Guidance for Conserving Oregon's Native Turtles Including Best Management Practices, published by ODFW.

The board approved the April minutes.

Tyler Pedersen gave an update on projects for the spring and summer 2017. The primary instream projects are Soltau stream crossing, Scott Creek instream and Thomas creek side channel. Moose creek is entering phase 2. New riparian reforestation sites include locations along middle Crabtree Creek and Upper Thomas Creek. Existing sites range from 1-2 years old and in full plant establishment stage through older 5 year old sites that are essentially complete and at the free to grow stage. New sites in grant development stage are along One Horse Slough and lower Hamilton creek.

Eric presented the board with a list of all grants and or projects that the SSWC is involved with. There are 29 different grants that Council staff or contractors are charging too. Grants range from implementation with heavy activity through the monitoring stage which has infrequent activity.

Eric gave an update on strategic plan. The next meeting will be June 28 from 1pm to 5pm. We will be joined by the North Santiam watershed council. A primary goal is identifying areas of organizational overlap. Eric will send the 4 year work plan for additional board comments.

Angie provided an education handout. She will be giving an education update at the June meeting.

The next Council meeting is Tuesday, June 20 from 3 - 5 pm in the community meeting room of the Lebanon Public Library. The speaker will be Duncan Thomas from Washington State University speaking about pollinators.