

2020 Annual Report



DEDICATED TO IMPROVING THE HEALTH OF STREAMS
AND WATERSHEDS OF OREGON'S CENTRAL COAST



LETTER FROM THE CHAIR



Being close to the ground

has made this incredibly challenging year a bit easier for me personally - our trees are growing and I get to scope out salmon spawning on the gravel. It makes me hopeful to see the progress being made on watershed restoration and the growth of relationships, young and old. I am so pleased to have such an amazing group of talented, committed folks on our team.

We recently completed a short document "A Celebration - Over a quarter Century of Conservation on the Central Coast". Sharing the successes and partnership becomes even more real when one gets to see photos of friends and

the full scope of completed projects.

The leadership from the Administrative Committee, Technical Team, and the Council at large continues to provide clear direction for restoration. A number of big projects were completed in 2020, some of which are described in the following pages.

With Covid 19 hampering us throughout the year our 'Climate and Carbon' speaker series was not able to be completed because we want these events to be interactive. We plan on bringing the series back in mid-2021.

In late 2020 our staff ushered us into the new age of Zoom meetings and we were able to present information about our completed restoration projects. We have found that the reach has been impressive. This interest in restoration actions reinforces our efforts. How our community engagement and volunteer work sessions move forward this spring & summer is yet to be determined but I expect our momentum will carry on

into the future with smaller work sessions and social distancing the new norm.

MCWC efforts related to the full range of watershed health issues on the Central Coast including the Mid-Coast Water Planning Partnership for drinking water and storage for Newport and other communities, as well as the Siletz Business Plan for coho recovery were put on hold for the most part in 2020.

While there are many challenges to improving water quality and salmon recovery at a regional scale, our efforts—linked together in partnerships with focused strategies here on the Mid-Coast—can help maintain and restore habitats crucial to multiple species and ecological processes for decades to come.

Paul Engelmeyer
Ten Mile Sanctuary
Manager, Portland Audubon
Society & Central Coast
Preserve Manager, The
Wetlands Conservancy

**2020
BOARD OF
DIRECTORS**

Anne Sigleo, Bill Montgomery, Don Larsen, Elmer Osling,
Fran Recht, Jeff Feldner, Jennifer Beathe, Joe Rohleder,
Joe Steere, Mark Saelens, Mike Broili, Paul Engelmeyer

2020 BY THE NUMBERS

2 LARGE SCALE RESTORATION PROJECTS IMPLEMENTED

4 PREVIOUS RESTORATION PROJECTS MAINTAINED

8 NEW LANDOWNERS ENGAGED

22 ACRES OF RIPARIAN ZONE MAINTAINED

25 STREAM SITES IN THE ALSEA MONITORED FOR TEMPERATURE

47 SITES SAMPLED AND ANALYZED FOR ENVIRONMENTAL DNA

48 ACRES OF RIPARIAN ZONE PLANTED WITH NATIVE SPECIES

68 ACRES OF INCREASED FLOODPLAIN CONNECTIVITY

1,300 FEET OF DIKE LOWERED TO NATURAL TIDAL LEVEE ELEVATION

2,400 LINEAR FEET OF NEW TIDAL CHANNELS INITIATED

OVER **1,500** SALVAGED WOOD PIECES UTILIZED FOR RESTORATION

10,000 CUBIC YARDS OF NON-NATIVE FILL REMOVED FROM FLOODPLAIN AREAS



Freshwater mussels are filter feeders and help clean the stream. Many species in the US are thought to be imperiled. Mussels are one of the organisms the MCWC is helping map the distribution of through the use of eDNA technology.

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PHOTO CREDITS

Peter Vince,
MCWC Staff, Board
& Friends



2020 Project

Big Cr. Floodplain Restoration

This \$425,000 restoration project took place on the lower reaches of Big Creek, about 10 miles south of Yachats. It created 14 acres of floodplain habitat, restored wetlands, established 10 in-stream habitat structures along a half mile of stream, and placed over 200 logs on the floodplain. It was designed to benefit multiple fish species, including threatened coho salmon, as well as Chinook, steelhead trout, cutthroat trout, lamprey species, and eulachon. The project will also benefit numerous other wildlife species such as the endangered Oregon silverspot butterfly and beaver. In fact, several of the habitat structures were designed to act as beaver dam “anchors” to encourage dam building and long term residence. That way these “ecosystem engineers” will continue to create and maintain healthy stream habitat long after the crews and heavy equipment have moved out.

We used Trask Design and Construction, a family owned and operated business from Alesia/Corvallis, for this project. They are great to work with and have a real passion and expertise when it comes to this kind of work. We try to hire local contactors wherever possible to keep money flowing in the local community.

There were also two contractors hired to watch all the excavation work to ensure that no cultural resources were damaged. Tribal representatives of CTCLUSI were also on site before and during construction as the area is considered to be very important for Tribal groups. Bryan Gillooly, Restoration Projects Manager for the Tribe said of the project “the Tribe greatly appreciates the opportunity to partner on these aquatic restoration projects. The project at Big Creek demonstrates the hard work and inclusiveness of the Mid-Coast Watersheds Council and their partners as they endeavor to restore native fish for the next seven generations.”

A majority of the Big Creek basin is relatively undisturbed and in excellent condition.

Most of the watershed is publicly owned forest lands, and a subset is designated as Wilderness Area. This makes this project in the lower reaches of the watershed all the more important as it focuses on areas of degradation in an otherwise healthy watershed. These improvements will provide additional slow-water habitat for salmon juveniles during a critical stage of their life cycle.

Jeff Feldner, a former commercial fisherman who serves on the MCWC Board of Directors, emphasized the importance of this project: “We know that adult salmon will benefit from the protected pool habitat that the wood structures create in the stream and from the overhanging native vegetation. Even more important is the habitat we’ve created for the vulnerable young salmon that would otherwise be washed to sea. Now they’ll be able to shelter in the wetlands and on the floodplain when the stream spreads out its force during high flow events. It’s great to be a part of positive work like this.”



Project partners and funders: Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD), U.S. Forest Service (USFS), Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW), Siuslaw Soil and Water Conservation District (SSWCD), the Confederated Tribes of the Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians (CTCLUSI), Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB), Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) and the Northwest Oregon Restoration Partnership (NORP).

Highlights

Yaquina Tidal Wetland Restoration

Estuary Log – Do Not Remove!



Logs provide important habitat for salmon in this estuary.
Please help protect salmon habitat.



Lamprey feed on salmon as do salmon feed on lamprey. Healthy populations of one will help the other, and vice versa. This is another organism MCWC is helping track with eDNA

Over the summer MCWC and partners implemented the Yaquina Bay Tidal Wetland Restoration Project (known as Y-27) on the Yaquina River 1.2 miles upstream from Toledo on The Wetlands Conservancy (TWC) property.

Building on restoration work done in 2001, in this \$739,000 project over 45% of the perimeter dike that limited natural tidal inundation and sediment inputs was lowered to a natural levee elevation to match nearby reference sites. Linear drainage ditches were filled to force tidal flow into existing channels as well as into the 2,400 linear feet of new tidal channels that were excavated where limited tidal channel networks existed. Fill removed from perimeter dikes

was utilized on site to create ecotone slopes - creating elevation bands appropriate for high marsh, scrub-shrub, and spruce swamp vegetation types, which were then planted with a corresponding suite of native species. Over 200 pieces of large wood were installed to create habitat structure and function. Measures were also taken to protect the City of Toledo's source water pipe.

The project's goals were to restore ecological process and function and increase both the quantity and quality of tidal wetland habitats for multiple fish and wildlife species, including Oregon Coast coho, chum, and Chinook salmon, as well as restore forested and scrub-shrub vegetation communities.

Research has shown that young coho, chum and Chinook salmon benefit greatly from having tidal marshes they can rear in. On the Salmon River estuary near Lincoln City juvenile coho that spent extended periods of time in restored tidal wetland habitats accounted for a full 20–35% of the adults returning to spawn a few years later. Similarly, but to an even greater degree, more than 50% of the returning adult Chinook salmon had also spent more time as young salmon in the nutrient rich and protected waters of the estuary. We expect this tidal wetland site to provide similar benefits for the Yaquina for many years to come.

Project partners and funders: *The Wetlands Conservancy, the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Pacific Marine and Estuarine Fish Habitat Partnership, the Oregon Wildlife Foundation, and the City of Toledo*



COORDINATOR CORNER



What's left to say about 2020?

With so much disruption in everyone's daily life due to the outbreak of Covid-19, this has been a challenging year on many fronts. However, with challenges come opportunities, and the MCWC rolled with the punches of 2020, and learned how to better engage with our community remotely.

The most obvious change in 2020 was the cancellation of our monthly community meetings, and the postponement of our very popular Carbon Lecture series, "From Ridgetop to Reefs". Our community meetings, held the first Thursday of each month, were one of the best ways for us to connect with all of you. At the meetings, we offer council updates, a chance for folks to announce other community events, and usually have a

guest presenter so we can all learn something new about watersheds and the great work going on in our area. Some light snacks never hurt, but the real action is always in the small conversations when we can all convene together- "seeds" that can grow into restoration projects, community outreach efforts, or just a good laugh between some friends and partners. We will greatly welcome meeting again when it is safe to do so.

Another obvious change was the cancellation of most of our volunteer driven planting and nursery efforts. We were able to continue some small scale, work at the nursery towards the end of the year, but we were not able to invite the community to the events and increase our work force to get more work done. We also had to change up our planting plan, because it was designed with volunteer efforts in mind. Fortunately, we were able to complete our planting work, albeit with less donuts and less laughs!

Our work at the Beaver Creek Conservation Nursery was also greatly affected, when Oregon State Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) had to lay off their staff member who built

the nursery, and covered the nursery workload for OPRD, due to Covid-19 budget shortfalls. MCWC stepped in and worked out an agreement with OPRD in summer, 2020 to operate the nursery in the meantime.

Despite the challenges of the year, we were able to complete all the major projects we had planned for the summer implementation period, that work is highlighted elsewhere in this annual report. Both major projects were completed on time and within budget, no small task for projects with budgets that were created in a pre-covid-19 world!

As we enter 2021, we know all these challenges won't be gone immediately. We're as eager as all of you to get back to "normal", and we're counting the days until that happens. For now, we'll connect where we can, zoom meetings and phone calls, but we know, not too far down the road, we'll all be back together at least once a month, learning something new, and eating some great snacks!

Evan Hayduk
Council Coordinator

2020 FINANCIAL REPORT

Revenues:

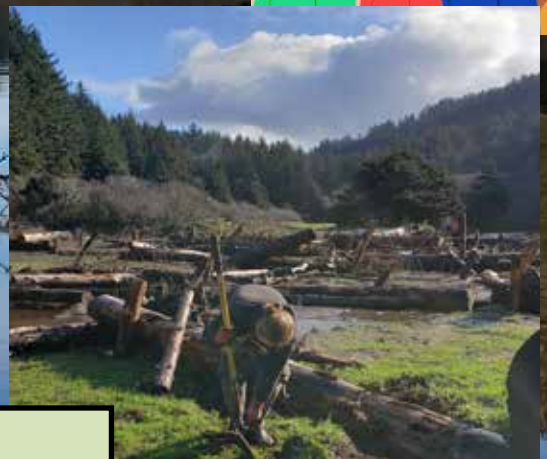
Federal Grant Receipts	\$416,282
State Grant Receipts	\$721,492
Administrative Receipts	\$72,948
Donations Receipts	\$3,450
Foundation Receipts	\$26,299
Interest Income	\$5
Other Receipts	\$207

Total Revenues **\$1,240,682**

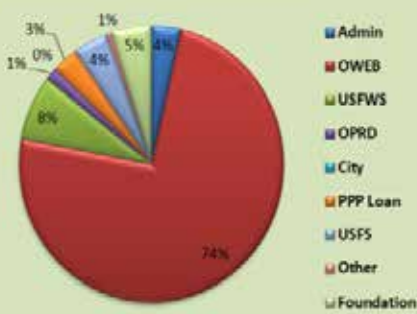
Revenues by Funding Sources



COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS



Expenditures by Funding Source



Expenditures:

Personal Services	\$118,493
Material and Supplies	\$29,004
Administration Expenses	\$72,948
Office Rent	\$9,750
Contract Services	\$840,045
Internet and Telephone Services	\$1,387
Travel and Conferences	\$9,176
Office Expenses	\$6,446
Permit Expenses	\$7,853
Total Expenditures	\$1,095,101

This financial report was prepared by our fantastic Fiscal Manager, Tanya Graham. Thanks Tanya!



Thank You!

**TO ALL OUR FUNDERS,
SUPPORTERS & VOLUNTEERS:**

Aaron, Katie, Leo, & Ona Duzik
Alicia Foster
Andy Doremus
Anne Sigleo
Anna Miller
Audubon Society of Portland
Barbara Lachenbuch
Barry McPherson
Benton County
Benton Soil and Water
Conservation District
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Bureau of Land Management
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Lincoln County Public Works
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