



Nestucca, Neskowin & Sand Lake Watersheds Council

The Flow

Winter 2011

Nestucca-Neskowin and Sand Lake Watersheds Council

NNWC is a non-profit, non-regulatory organization. Our mission is to provide a forum for public participation and education regarding decisions that affect those who live, work and recreate in the watersheds, now and in the future.

NNWC receives state and federal grants to fund watershed restoration activities. NNWC then awards contracts to and purchases supplies from local businesses. NNWC encourages participation from women and minority-owned businesses.

From September through June, the Council meets the third Tuesday of each month from 6:00-8:00 pm. at its offices in the Kiawanda Community Center in Pacific City. The public is welcome to attend.

Council Board

Pres.: Guy Holzworth

V-Pres.: Mike Walsh

Treasurer: Guy Holzworth

Secretary: Sherry Vick

Mike Wynands

Stephanie Starostka Welch

Guy Sievert

Contact Information

Council Coordinator
Alex Sifford

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FEATURED WATERSHED - NESTUCCA BAY

The Nestucca Bay estuary, located south of Pacific City, covers approximately 1,176 acres. Undiked tidelands comprise about 58% of the estuary while tidal marsh occupies about 16% and submerged lands the rest. From the air, Nestucca Bay appears as two large bodies of water positioned side by side. The two lobes of the Bay are nearly separated by Cannery Hill jutting in from the south. The east arm of the bay is primarily fed by the Little Nestucca River, but receives some water from the Big Nestucca River that flows into the bay's west lobe. Both sides of the Bay are generally shallow. Mud flats in the bay are often exposed during periods of low tide.

Crabbing is popular in the lower bay and soft-shell clams are found in mudflats of the Little Nestucca River arm. Recreational uses of the Bay include salmon and steelhead fishing; kayaking and paddle-boarding; and bird-watching. Continual shoaling and shifting of sandbars makes the entrance to Nestucca Bay extremely dangerous and not advised.



Nestucca Bay provides habitat for many species of waterfowl, shorebirds, raptors, amphibians, and marine mammals. Groups of harbor seals can often be seen resting on the north spit where the Bay empties into the Pacific Ocean. The eastern lobe of the Bay borders Nestucca Bay National Wildlife Refuge lands. The Refuge currently supports 10% of the world population of Dusky Canada Geese and provides habitat for wintering many Aleutian Canada Geese.

A beautiful birds-eye view of the Bay can be seen from the Wildlife Refuge. Drive 6 miles south of Pacific City on Highway 101, turn right on Christensen Road, proceed a half-mile to the parking lot. *Cont'd on page 2*

Coastal Chinook Monitoring Program

In recent years, Oregon's chinook salmon stocks have declined in many coastal river basins. The Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife (ODFW) responded with a Fall 2010 study of coastal Chinook in the Nehalem, Nestucca, and Siletz River basins. Funding for the study came *Continued on p. 2*

Nestucca Bay (cont'd)

Despite its scenic beauty, water quality in the Nestucca Bay is impaired according to Oregon Department of Environmental Quality standards. Rivers feeding the Bay are the primary source of fecal coliform bacteria and high temperatures. Sources of fecal bacteria in the bay originate from runoff from livestock operations, urban areas, rural residential areas, failing septic systems, and wastewater treatment plant discharges. Due to the relative area under livestock management, this use has a larger impact on water quality.



High water temperatures also inhibit the bay. High temperatures reduce the much needed dissolved oxygen levels required for salmon and other aquatic species. The primary cause of high temperature is warming of the Nestucca River and tributaries leading into the Bay. Since 2002, the Watersheds Council has remedied high temperatures by planting over **32 stream miles** in the watershed with over **44,000 native trees and shrubs**. Shade provided by these plantings helps keep waters in both the rivers and bay cooler.

Cannery

More on the cultural history of the Bay is in Nestucca River Country by local author Sally Rissel.

To help maintain water quality, habitat, and aesthetic beauty of the Bay, the NNWC conducts clean-ups in the Bay every other year. The next cleanup is scheduled for Saturday, March 12, 2011. Volunteers are needed, so **MARK YOUR CALENDARS!**

Chinook Study (cont'd)

from the Pacific Salmon Commission. Study purposes were to develop a more reliable and cost effective method to estimate the adult return, and gain quality chinook population estimates, approximate age ranges, and to evaluate escapement rates within each basin. The data supports Oregon's role in the Pacific Salmon Treaty process and helps fisheries managers and the public better understand chinook salmon populations on the Oregon coast .

ODFW crews captured chinook salmon at two sites in the mainstem of the Nestucca River. Crews recorded biological data including species, fork length, sex and age based on scale samples. Afterwards, each chinook was marked and released. Crews emphasize the health of the fish at all stages of capture, holding, and release. Later in the season, crews conducted spawning surveys, counting the number of live fish, carcasses, and redds (nests) in the upper mainstem and tributaries. Thirty-two stream reaches were surveyed regularly, 15 sites in the mainstem Nestucca and 17 reaches on tributaries.

Preliminary results indicated that a total of 197 chinook salmon were captured and marked within the Nestucca basin in 2010. Of these, 74 were jacks. Of the total captured and marked, 165 were wild fish while 32 were of hatchery origin. Other fish encountered during the study included 56 Coho salmon, 3 Pink salmon, and 1 White Sturgeon.

Creel technicians interviewed 1,887 anglers in the Nestucca basin during the chinook salmon fishing season. The creel technicians observed a total of 314 chinook salmon, including 40 jacks. About 16% of the observed chinook were of hatchery origin. Based on the number of fish observed, ODFW estimates that approximately 2,000 chinook salmon were harvested from the Nestucca basin in 2010. The ODFW is still analyzing these data along with the data collected in the creel to generate an estimate of size of the spawner population that returned in 2010.

The study is estimated to take 5 years to complete, while funding is firm for 2 years, through 2011. For more information please contact Project Leader, Shelly Miller at: shellymiller@oregonstate.edu.
Source: Chinook Progress Report. ODFW, 2010.

Board Chair Report by Guy Holzworth

The Nestucca, Neskowin & Sand Lake Watershed Council and its Volunteers celebrated many accomplishments during 2010. Starting in January, the Council worked with five landowners to plant 16 acres along 2.7 miles of streams within the basin. The plantings took place primarily on Powder Creek, the Little Nestucca, and the Big Nestucca Rivers. Many of the plants used were propagated by students at our Native Plant Nurseries located at Nestucca Valley Elementary and Neskowin Valley schools. Currently, students have 200 plants ready for use in 2011 and 600 more started for 2012 restoration efforts. In March, 55 Council volunteers removed over 52 cubic yards of invasive Scotch Broom located along McPhillips Road near Pacific City. During July and August, the Council restored a section of Fall Creek, located in the Neskowin watershed. The project removed barriers to fish passage in the channel. Finally, in October, the Council completed and submitted preliminary designs for a dam removal project on Farmer Creek. During 2010, the Council's restoration projects brought in over \$271,000 of work to Tillamook County.

Terrific Job !!! Great to see, or not see, all that darn weed gone. You really had a good turn out. 55 people to pull scotch broom is wonderful. Congrats, Larry and Ielean Rouse

Current projects for 2011 include streamside planting of 12 acres along 2.5 miles of streams in the watershed and if funded, removing a small dam on Farmer Creek. Additional future work on Farmer Cr. includes placing wood in the stream and replacing a large road culvert.

The Council elected two new Board members in 2010: welcome Stephanie Starostka Welch and Guy Sievert! Special thanks this year to Tillamook Soil & Water Conservation District for partnering at Powder Creek, along with ranch owner Bev Johnson and contractors Steve Williams and Tom McDermott. The Council replaced a small culvert and planted trees while the District fenced the two miles of riparian area. Way to go Ray Monroe! We thank all Council Volunteers for their support in restoring the Nestucca, Neskowin and Sand Lake Watersheds.

Participation at our council meetings, riparian plantings, educational workshops, and cleanups is always welcome. To learn more about our work, or for the date of our next event, please visit the Council website at <http://www.oregoncoast.com/nnwc>.

Cascade Head Marine Reserves Community Team

The Council was one of eight groups on the Cascade Head Marine Reserves Community Team. Council Coordinator Alex Sifford Co-Chaired the team with Captain Bob Eder of Newport. After meeting for a year, the Team made its recommendations to the Ocean Policy Advisory Council in December 2010.

Cascade Head Community Team members voted 12-4 for a 34-square-mile mix of reserves and protected areas. It covers about 12 percent of the productive Siletz Reef near Lincoln City, a key spot for charter fishermen. The four dissenters favored a larger reserve area covering the northern third of the reef. That option received a 9-7 vote and was also forwarded to ODFW. That agency then forwarded the 12-4 recommendation to the legislature.

To see a map & for more information: oregonocean.info

This process continues in Salem at the Capitol. The Coastal Caucus, with local legislators Sen. Betsy Johnson and Rep. Deborah Boone, is leading the issue.

For the latest:
www.leg.state.or.us

**NESTUCCA, NESKOWIN & SAND LAKE
WATERSHEDS COUNCIL**

PO Box 86
Pacific City, OR 97135

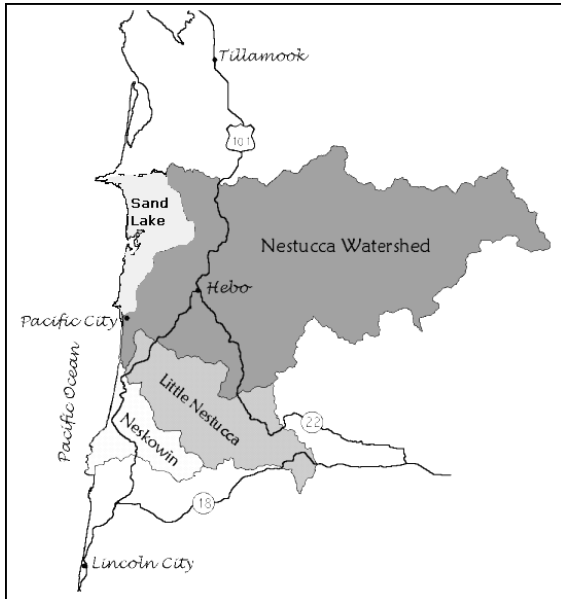
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NESTUCCA BAY CLEAN UP MARCH 12, 2011

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

On Saturday March 12 we will clean up **Nestucca Bay**. We'll meet at **Pacific City** boat launch near Bob Straub State Park at 8:30 a.m. Let's have a large group of volunteers. Boat owners are most welcome too!

We'll have juice, coffee & local treats to get you going. Gloves and trash bags will be provided. Remember how much fun it is and how good it feels when done! Bring your tall boots and dress for the weather. Grab your neighbors and friends and **come on down**.

Thanks to Tillamook County Parks & Public Works, Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board, SOLV and local businesses Stimulus Café, Grateful Bread Bakery & Sportsman's Pub & Grub.

For more information, please contact the Council office at 503-965-2200. See you there!

JOIN US AT OUR NEXT MEETING

MARCH 15, 2011 AT 6:00 P.M.

KIAWANDA COMMUNITY CENTER

SPRINGTIME IS A GREAT TIME TO

CUT BLACKBERRY, PULL IVY UP AND PULL OR CUT SCOTCH BROOM BEFORE IT BLOOMS.