

MONITORING PROGRAM

Monitoring of our restoration efforts is important to ensure the success of individual projects as well as to guide future restoration priorities and project designs. Through this program we are developing monitoring protocols and tools as well as disseminating the monitoring results in peer-reviewed reports. Some recent highlights of the monitoring program include:

Life-Cycle Monitoring

The Coos Watershed Association completed the fifth consecutive year of the Life Cycle Monitoring Project in 2008. This project is focused in Larson and Palouse Creeks and studies adult coho salmon spawner abundance and outmigrant coho smolt population size in order to calculate freshwater and marine survival rates.



CoosWA staff in association with Oregon State University capture and tag juvenile coho with uniquely identified passive integrated transponder (PIT) tags to monitor distribution and movement of the fish in lowland tide-gated streams. We are proud to report that a tagged coho smolt tagged in 2007 was recorded returning to Palouse Creek as a jack in 2008.

Stream Temperature Monitoring

Various restoration projects (both riparian, fish passage, and in-stream habitat) have been done in Willanch Creek since 1995. Stream temperatures in the creek have been monitored since 1997 showing a greater than 10°F decrease in the average maximum stream temperature in that ten-year period. 2008 was the third year in a row that maximum stream temperatures have decreased and the second year in a row that all three restoration areas on Willanch Creek have had maximum stream temperatures below 64°F, the state standard for coho salmon.

Model Watershed Program

In 2008, the Coos Watershed Association was selected as the Bonneville Environmental Foundation's sixth model watershed. We were chosen for our commitment to the scientific evaluation of our restoration program. The 10-year plan for this Model Watershed Program involves assessment and monitoring, watershed restoration, and socio-economic goals in four focus sub-basins within the Coos watershed.

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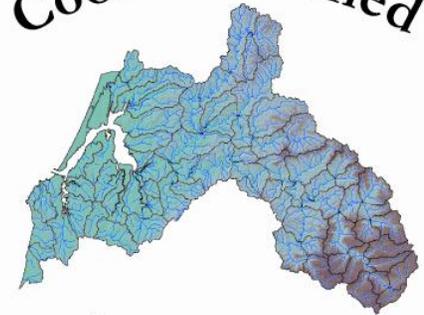
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Coos Watershed



Association

supporting environmental integrity and economic stability within the Coos watershed

ASSESSMENT & OUTREACH



RESTORATION



MONITORING



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Phone: 541-888-5922

ABOUT THE COOS WATERSHED ASSOCIATION

What is the Coos watershed?

A “watershed” is the area of land, from ridge to ridge, that ultimately drains to a particular body of water. The “Coos watershed” is the area of land that drains through Coos Bay, Oregon into the Pacific Ocean. It includes all forks and tributaries of the Coos and Millicoma Rivers, and all of the sloughs and creeks that drain into the Coos estuary.



What is the Coos Watershed Association?

The Coos Watershed Association is a local non-profit organization formed in late 1993. It's a way for people with a wide range of interests to get together and develop the “big picture” of the conditions in the Coos watershed, and it helps landowners to decide how to manage and restore the watershed's natural systems.

How does the Association make decisions?

The Association's Board of Directors is focused on the watershed's future. They reach decisions by discussion and consensus - not a majority vote. A decision is final when no Directors object to it. The Association's Board of Directors includes representatives of local ranching and agriculture, small woodland owners, industrial timber operators, commercial fisheries, environmental groups, and state, and federal land managers.

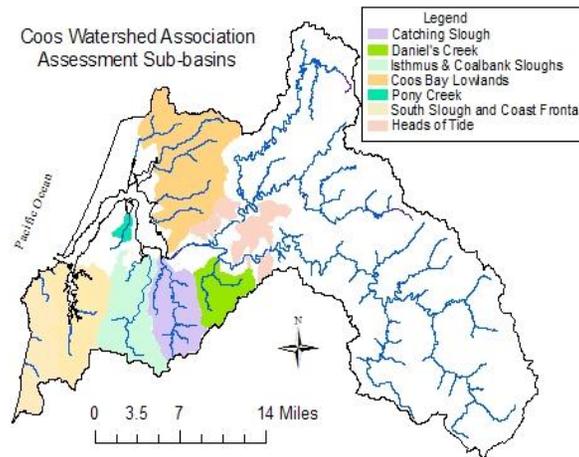
Mission Statement

To provide a framework to coordinate and implement proven management practices, and test promising new management practices, designed to promote environmental integrity and economic stability for communities of the Coos watershed.

ASSESSMENT & OUTREACH PROGRAM

What is a watershed assessment?

The goal of an assessment is to identify and prioritize sites or stream segments where watershed restoration activities will be most effective. CoosWA technical staff conduct water quality studies (stream flow and temperature), spawning and fish use surveys, aquatic habitat inventories, and road and landing surveys on each sub-basin of the watershed. This data is used to identify and describe watershed conditions. Full assessment documents can be found on the CoosWA website for many of the sub-basins.



How are landowners involved?

Many landowners have already been a critical part of the assessment process by allowing CoosWA staff to collect data on their property and nearby waterways. Now, landowners have the opportunity to be involved in the restoration process by sharing their concerns, land management objectives and visions for the future through our “coffee klatch” process in their sub-basin.

How can you be involved?

Become a *Friend of the Coos Watershed* today to start receiving the Association's quarterly newsletter, get invitations to workshops, participate in outreach and restoration projects and know that your donation is helping to protect the Coos watershed. The *Friends of the Coos Watershed* is the relatively young community involvement group of the Coos Watershed Association. The more *Friends* we have, the more fun we can have and the more good we can accomplish.

RESTORATION PROGRAM

The cumulative impacts of land use practices over time, have altered natural conditions in the Coos watershed. These impacts have affected salmon habitat, water quality, and hydrology in the local area. Healthy, functioning stream systems are a highly-valued feature of living in the Coos Bay area for biological, recreational, economical, and aesthetic reasons. Fact sheets on each of the restoration project areas are available on our website.



In-stream Habitat

Large wood debris, root wads, and boulders benefit streams and salmon habitat by creating or enhancing stream complexity and spawning gravel beds. Historically, large wood would

be brought into streams naturally. Today, watershed engineers at CoosWA design and install large wood and boulders and allow them to interact naturally with the stream.

Fish Passage

A seemingly simple passage problem such as a perched or undersized culvert can block an entire local population of anadromous fish from accessing their habitat, therefore interrupting the life cycle. Common fish passage improvements are culvert replacements or upgrades to bridges

Riparian Areas

Healthy riparian areas stabilize stream banks, filter sediment from runoff, shade the water, and provide essential habitat for many species. CoosWA is involved in native planting, bioengineered bank stabilization, invasive weed clearing and control, and fencing of stream banks.

Road-Related Erosion Control

Roads can be a significant source of erosion and sediment runoff, and unneeded roads should be decommissioned. CoosWA is involved in projects to upgrade stream crossings, and maintain proper ditch lengths and other road drainage features. CoosWA is also involved in road decommission projects to help speed their transition back to natural, stable ecosystems.

