

Mainstream

News from the Surface Water Management Agency of Clackamas County

WINTER 2002-03



The Watershed Stewardship Program

provides funding, technical assistance, tools and volunteers for the restoration, enhancement and maintenance of riparian zones along streams and wetlands within the Lower Tualatin River Watershed.

A riparian zone is the strip of land alongside a stream, river, lake, spring or wetland area. Proper maintenance of riparian zones benefits water quality through:

- filtration of pollutants from surface runoff;
- bank stabilization, which reduces erosion and stream bank scour;
- the protection and/or reestablishment of native trees and shrubs that help shade the water, keeping water temperatures cool and dissolved oxygen levels high, which are both extremely important for aquatic life; and
- providing a flood and meander zone for the stream, river, or wetland.

The Watershed Stewardship Program is available to property owners within the boundaries of the Surface Water Management Agency of Clackamas County (SWMACC). For more information about the program and how to apply, please contact Karen Streeter, 503-353-4597.



Update on Fish Distribution in the Lower Tualatin River Watershed

Water Environment Services was awarded a grant from the US Fish and Wildlife Service to conduct a fish distribution study in the 12 tributary streams of the Tualatin River that are located within SWMACC. WES has contracted with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife to conduct the study. The project began in Summer 2002 and will continue with seasonal sampling through Summer 2003. So far, ODFW

reports that 10 of the streams have native fish in them and that cutthroat trout were present in seven of the streams (Fields Creek, Pecan Creek, Saum Creek, Tate Creek, Wilson Creek, and an unnamed tributary of the Tualatin). The final report for this study will be available in the fall of 2003, and will be posted on the WES webpage at www.co.clackamas.or.us/wes.

REPORT PROBLEMS!

Reports from our customers enable us to respond to and correct more water pollution, spill, erosion and drainage issues. Call Surface Water Management at 503-353-4567.



MANAGING PAINT WASTE WISELY

Why is paint waste a problem? All painting jobs create wastes that can harm humans, waterways, fish and other wildlife if handled or disposed of improperly. Paints and paint waste can enter storm drains from runoff or improper disposal. Storm drains then carry the untreated pollutants directly into our streams and rivers, adversely impacting water quality for humans and wildlife.

What is paint waste? Paint wastes include solvents, oil-based paint, and latex paint, as well as rags, containers and paint chips and dust.

Clean up "do's"

- Allow paint solids in used solvents to settle so the clear portion can be poured off and reused.
- Dispose of spent solvents at a permitted hazardous waste management facility. After separating solids, pour latex clean-up water from brushes, rollers and buckets down the sink or down a drain that is connected to the public sanitary sewer system.

- Use the least toxic cleanup solvent available. Dispose of unused paint and other paint wastes properly. Call Metro Recycling, 503-234-3000 for hazardous waste disposal locations.

Clean up “don’ts”

- *Don’t* pour oil-based or latex waste paint or clean-up materials onto the ground.
 - *Don’t* pour any paint or clean-up materials into storm drains, ditches, gutters, catch basins, dry wells, creeks or other surface drainageways.
 - *Don’t* put liquid paint, solvent or clean-up waste in garbage cans or dumpsters.

Common Sense Tips

- Purchase only the amount of paint needed for each job.
 - Use latex paint whenever possible.
 - Use tarps and drip pans to collect paint and solvent spills.
 - Avoid contaminating ground surfaces with paint chips and dust.
 - Make sure the contractor you hire knows how to handle paint waste property.

This story highlights a new brochure, **Managing Paint Waste Wisely**, which was developed by WES in coordination with area cities and agencies. To request a copy of the brochure, please call us at 503-353-4567 or via email at andream@co.clackamas.or.us.

The Value of Protecting Water Quality in Our Communities

Everyone lives in a watershed, the region where all land drains to a particular body of water, with its own unique set of water quality issues. Problems vary in communities that are large or small, rural or urban, wet or dry climate. When it comes to pollution, what comes around, goes around (and around and around) your watershed. In a watershed, a creek that’s clean at one end could be polluted at the other end by drainage from other waters.

Instead of focusing resources on one particular water quality problem, Water Environment Services and other agencies and jurisdictions are

taking a more holistic approach. We’re working with countywide partners to integrate programs to preserve the quality of our streams, rivers and groundwater in both urban and rural areas, so we can provide a strong framework for future watershed protection.

As WES manages water quality programs, other agencies are also working with local landowners in other areas of Clackamas County to raise awareness about pollution reduction practices. For instance, the Clackamas County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD), a non-regulatory agency, provides programs to assist landowners in managing rural lands, small farms and livestock waste. By developing partnerships with local landowners, the SWCD provides technical assistance and cost sharing for conservation and water quality practices.

WES and SWCD are partnering on several urban programs, such as *Naturescaping* classes that teach homeowners how to garden in an environmentally-friendly manner. The workshops explore ways to minimize the use of pesticides and herbicides to reduce the pollution flowing into our waterways. [a Naturescaping workshop is planned for early May 2003.](#) For more information call Andrea McCullough at 503-353-4561 or email at andream@co.clackamas.or.us.

There are many ways to reduce the pollution in our waterways. By providing stormwater management programs in the Lower Tualatin River watershed and partnering with other agencies and local groups such as the SWCD, a well-built foundation for future watershed protection can be constructed, which will result in improved water quality for communities throughout Clackamas County.



