



THE WEST EUGENE WETLANDS

Wetland Word

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State Superintendent Susan Castillo announced as WEW Education Center Capital Campaign Chair
Campaign Committee looks to community for involvement and contributions and that will complete the campaign.

With support from this community, nearly 60 percent of the funds for Phase 1 of the West Eugene Wetlands Education Center have been raised! The momentum and community need for the center are both rapidly growing, now further demonstrated by endorsement from the state superintendent of public schools, Susan Castillo.

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West Eugene Wetlands Ethnobotany Project

by Eric Jones, Environmental Anthropologist

For many millennia the wetlands of the Willamette Valley have been important cultural and ecological places where Native American Indian traditions of management, subsistence harvesting, and spiritual practices have taken place. In the West Eugene Wetlands efforts are underway to restore tribal traditions. A primary objective is to create projects in areas where Native American people and others will be able to interact with culturally important plants such as camas, tar weed, and willow. Activities will include species identification, restoration and monitoring, and collecting and using plant resources. Educational activities will teach children about the historical and contemporary cultural uses of wetland plants, such as baskets, foods, and medicines.

An evolving working group of Native Americans, West Eugene Wetlands Partners, and expert consultants is working together to reach out to stakeholders for input, draft a strategic vision, expand inventories of culturally important plants, and raise awareness and funds. Look for upcoming presentations and opportunities to support the ethnobotany project at www.wewetlands.org. For more information or to share ideas contact Eric Jones at etjones@ifcae.org.



Camas bulbs (plant pictured above) were a main staple food for Native Americans of the southern Willamette Valley.
Photo: WREN



West Eugene Wetlands Education Center Planning and Design Update

A public meeting for the West Eugene Wetlands Education Center was held in September at the project site on S. Danebo Avenue. Beginning directly after a morning of stewardship activities in the West Eugene Wetlands for National Public Lands Day (see page 4 of this issue), the public meeting attracted more than 50 community members who were interested in reviewing and commenting on the draft master plan for the center. Rowell Brokaw Architects and the rest of the design team are now taking this project through the final cycle of planning and design, which will be completed this fall! Notes and documents from the meeting are posted at www.wewetlands.org/planning.asp. They include an overview of the September public meeting and comments from the public that were recorded, the differences between the 2001 project plan and current plans, a draft site scheme, and a summary of Phases 1 and 2. Updates will be posted regularly.

Capital Campaign, continued from page 1

The nonprofit organization Willamette Resources & Educational Network (WREN) is leading the capital campaign for the education center.

“We are very excited by Ms. Castillo’s initiative to lead this community effort and establish the West Eugene Wetlands Education Center,” said WREN President Mike Shippey. “Her commitment to education and appreciation of the Oregon environment make her particularly well-suited for the project’s campaign chair. WREN looks forward to her tenure and leadership.”

In order for WREN to keep to its aggressive fundraising timeline, the capital campaign committee must raise at least \$100,000 more by the end of 2007. WREN is actively seeking more members of the community who are excited about this project and its opportunities for education and citizen science research to join the capital campaign committee. Eager volunteers should contact Windy Hovey, Capital Campaign Manager for WREN, at 541-683-6413. For up-to-date information on the West Eugene Wetlands Education Center campaign, or to pledge your support to this world-class education center, visit www.wewetlands.org/ed_center.asp.

We want to hear from YOU!

We want to know how we can improve the newsletter of the West Eugene Wetlands for you. WREN is working to enhance the quality of this quarterly publication in content, design, and production. You can save WREN money by opting to have a free, full color issue emailed to you instead of mailed. Please send your name, requests, comments, and questions to windy@wewetlands.org.

The *Wetland Word* is published quarterly by the Willamette Resources & Educational Network. Its purpose is to inform the community of events and restoration projects, and to increase understanding and appreciation of our local natural ecosystems. If you would like to be removed from the mailing list, please contact WREN. Contributors to this issue were: Eric Jones, Holly McRae, Liz Myers and Jules Abbott. Editor: Windy Hovey.

This newsletter is printed on 100% recycled paper!

SUSAN CASTILLO
State Superintendent of Public Instruction



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September 2007

Mr. Mike Shippey, WREN President
Willamette Resources & Educational Network (WREN)
751 S. Danebo Avenue
Eugene, Oregon 97402

Dear Mr. Shippey:

As Oregon State Superintendent of Schools, I am pleased to express my full support for the West Eugene Wetlands Education Center project. This regional project of statewide significance will establish a lasting cornerstone of support for the very best in scientific, cultural, and inquiry-based education for children and adults alike.

It is essential for today's students to learn real problem solving skills. Our responsibility as educators is to create responsible and engaged citizens, prepared to address the challenges, adjustments, and opportunities that will characterize life and work in the 21st century. There is little doubt that our children will face threats to human health, economic development, biological diversity, and national security which arise from accumulating environmental stresses.

The West Eugene Wetlands Education Center project creates a permanent home for innovative and collaborative environmental education for our children. Its field science laboratory and hands-on learning centers will serve as a common resource for regional students and educators who otherwise would not have access to such tools and facilities.

Studies indicate that time spent out of the classroom for learning during the school day is critical to the intellectual, emotional, and physical health of children, and field and lab experiences especially foster the process of asking and answering questions as a way to understand the natural world. Environmental education opportunities provide students with direct experience of the natural world that can improve their overall academic performance, self-esteem, personal responsibility, community involvement, and even personal health including child obesity issues.

It is clear that upon completion, the Education Center will provide education opportunities for our children and community that will be unmatched, and otherwise unavailable, in this region.

Sincerely,

Susan Castillo
State Superintendent of Public Instruction



National Public Lands Day 2007

WREN, the BLM and West Eugene Wetlands Partners thank all the volunteers who made National Public Lands Day 2007 in the West Eugene Wetlands a HUGE success! A record 65 volunteers spent their first fall Saturday morning removing Armenian blackberry, English ivy, and non-native rose bushes, planting camas bulbs, and removing litter. Employees of Invitrogen-Molecular Probes pounded erosion control fabric along their newly adopted section of Amazon Creek west of Danebo Avenue. The success of our public lands relies on the collaboration of our community, working together to nurture our precious natural areas and improve them for future generations.



Photos: WREN



WEW Partnership celebrates successful season of prescribed burns

A season of prescribed burning in the West Eugene Wetlands officially ended in early October, closing a successful year. Implementing these prescribed burns is a year-long process that requires permits from Lane Regional Air Protection Agency and tremendous planning on the parts of the West Eugene Wetlands Partners.

Historically the prairies were burned regularly by the Kalapuya people to ensure stable populations of their most important food crops, primarily camas. Today, wetland scientists burn the prairies for a variety of reasons. Many of the native plants in this area have evolved with fire and are adapted to grow back quickly after a burn. Fire also helps to reduce cover of invasive plants, such as pennyroyal and reed canary grass. Managers will plant native nectar plants in one of the recently burned areas for the Great Copper Butterfly, a native butterfly that was recently re-discovered in the West Eugene Wetlands.

Approximately 100 acres at several sites in the West Eugene Wetlands and around Fern Ridge Reservoir were burned this season, including the west side of Greenhill Road, sections of Willow Creek Preserve, the West Fisher unit by Fern Ridge, and Meadowlark Prairie. This year's success was the result of collaboration and shared resources between the Army Corps of Engineers, The Nature Conservancy, City of Eugene, and BLM.




Photos: WREN



West Eugene Wetlands Discovery Page!



Wetland Bingo

Scope out some berries	Find a Great Blue Heron	Find 2 yellow or red leaves	Walk on a boardwalk	Hear a goose honk
Listen for tree frogs	See people walking	Find an animal track	Count clouds _____	Spot some cattails
Find 3 different seeds	Look for Beaver signs	Free 	Spot a bird in the water	Skip through a puddle
Spot a snail or slug	Find a mushroom	Hear a bird call	Find a person biking	Look for a bird of prey
Watch a creek run by	Find some animal scat	Watch geese fly	Listen to rain falling	Spy on an insect

Explore the West Eugene Wetlands this fall, and try to get a Wetland Bingo. Mark off boxes in a horizontal, vertical, or diagonal line, then send in this page and get a prize!

Send to:

WREN
751. S. Danebo
Eugene, OR 97402

Name: _____
Age: _____



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WREN welcomes new Education Assistant

We were sad to see one of our WRENs fly off to the big city in September. We wish Elvira Muniz, who worked with WREN as the Environmental Education Assistant for two school years, all the best in her new and exciting endeavors.

WREN is thrilled, however, to officially add Jules Abbott to our education team. Jules has volunteered with WREN for many years writing grants, developing curriculum, and leading programs. She will continue these duties now as a part time staff member. Jules splits her time between WREN and the Oregon Research Institute where she works on projects that study how communities can help to promote healthy and successful children. When not working, she can be found hiking, mushroom hunting, spending time with her cherished friends and loved ones, and playing with her Greenhill graduate, Emma. Jules is also a member of the infamous local musical group WRENaissance.



Jules Abbott, who volunteered with WREN for several years, joined the staff in August. Photo: WREN

Statewide network of nonprofits, foundations growing

by Windy Hovey, WREN Resource Development Specialist

Now more than 550 members strong after its launch in 2006, the Nonprofit Association of Oregon is rapidly growing as nonprofits discover the resources and networking opportunities NAO offers its members. Benefits include a 10 percent discount for TACS (Technical Assistance for Community Services) workshops, the biweekly Grantstation newsletter (free with membership dues), and easy access to online resources regarding public policy, financial management, IRS updates and more. Statewide nonprofit associations across the nation are giving a voice to nonprofits in public policy, and helping to demonstrate accountability of the nonprofit sector to the public, provide resources, build awareness of nonprofit work, recruit and retain volunteers and staff, manage risks, use technology, and more. WREN joined NAO in the summer and encourages other organizations who aren't already members to check out the benefits on the NAO website: www.ornonprofits.org.



Meet the WREN Board!

Mike Shippey
President

Allan Hughes
Vice President

Lauri Segel
Secretary

Bill Mason
Treasurer

Jim Anderson
Member

**Susanne Twight-
Alexander**
Member

Vicki Singer
Member

Eric Nill
Member

Become a WREN Volunteer!

Contact Liz Myers
at 683-6483 or
liz@wewetlands.org

No Child Left Inside Act of 2007 amends No Child Left Behind

National leaders are recognizing the need for a more holistic approach to education that allows for critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and hands-on learning. The pending No Child Left Inside Act would provide federal funding to state agencies to train teachers in environmental education and lead outdoor learning programs. Funding would also be reserved for a national environmental education grant program. Find out more about the No Child Left Inside Act at www.eenclb.org.

Volunteer Spotlight: Dave and Cindy Schroeder, West Eugene Wetlands Site Hosts

by Liz Myers, WREN Environmental Education Specialist



Anyone who hasn't been out to the West Eugene Wetlands Project Office in a while will notice the RV that is now parked just outside the Red House. We are excited to have Dave and Cindy Schroeder living out here, keeping a watchful eye on the wetlands. Dave and Cindy moved in on April 1, 2007, and quickly became an integral part of the community.

Originally from southern California, the Schroeders have been camp hosts at several locations since 2000. They worked and lived at Have A Nice Day Campground in Grants Pass, Oregon, worked security at BLM's Sprague Seed Orchard and, just before coming to Eugene, were campground hosts at Indian Mary Park in Merlin, Oregon. Dave's background as a firefighter and school bus driver and Cindy's career

training as a crossing guard have provided them with plenty of experience working with the public. They are truly an asset to the West Eugene Wetlands Partnership and community. Dave and Cindy are always ready to lend a helping hand with outdoor projects and have taken on some of the maintenance around the office grounds. They are usually available to greet visitors and provide information when the office is closed, so stop by this season for a wonderful walk in the wetlands and say hi!



Dave and Cindy Schroeder serve as a fountain of information as the West Eugene Wetlands site hosts. Photo: Liz Myers



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West Eugene Wetlands

Wetland Word Newsletter

Fall 2007 Issue



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Calendar of Events

WREN is now offering “Wednesday Wanders” for those who are interested in taking casual walks through different West Eugene Wetlands sites, just to get out and explore. Wanders will occur each second and fourth Wednesday of the month, from 9-10 a.m. WREN will provide binoculars. Wear shoes that can get wet and muddy.

Wednesday, November 14—Stewart Pond * Wednesday, November 28—Tsanchiiifin Walk *
Wednesday, December 12—Willow Creek Natural Area * Wednesday, January 9—Stewart Pond *
Wednesday, January 23—Meadowlark Prairie Overlook

Saturday, December 1, 10 a.m.-noon—“Build-a-Birdhouse” Family Program

Winter is a wonderful time to look for birds in the West Eugene Wetlands! Learn about some common birds and build a birdhouse to take home. Meet at the West Eugene Wetlands yurt. Suggested donation \$2 member, \$4 non-member. Space is limited, and registration required.

Saturday, December 8, 9 a.m.-noon—Amazon Creek Work Party

Give a gift that keeps on giving to Amazon Creek this holiday season, and plant a tree! Join us as we continue to plant native plants along WREN's adopted section of Amazon Creek. Meet at the West Eugene Wetland Project Office. Tools and gloves will be provided.

Saturday, January 12, 10 a.m.-noon—Cattail Investigation – Family Program

Join us as we collect, dissect, and discover what makes the cattail so incredible. Participants will then have the opportunity to build a cattail boat. Suggested donation \$2 member, \$4 non-member. Meet at the Wetland Project Office. Space is limited, registration is required.

The West Eugene Wetlands Project Office and the yurt are at 751 S. Danebo Ave. For more information and to register contact Holly McRae at hmcrac@wewetlands.org or 683-6494.