A Natural Area Emerging! CILOS Update:

By: Nicole Smedegaard

What exactly is a Natural Area, you may ask? The City of Eugene Parks and Open Space maintains certain public lands as natural areas because “These areas support a wide diversity of plants and wildlife, including many endangered and rare species. These areas also provide valuable ecosystem services such as water quality enhancement, flood control, soil stabilization, and many other important functions that benefit our community.” (“Natural Areas in Eugene”) Want to discover all the Natural Areas in Eugene? Find out more at www.eugene-or.gov/1098/Natural-Areas.

The Whilamut Natural Area began in 1996 with the formation of a master plan by the Citizen Planning Committee in coordination with Willamalane and the City of Eugene. The name Whilamut “was chosen in collaboration with the Kommemma Cultural Protection Association of the Kalapuya Tribe. Whilamut is a Kalapuya word which means ‘where the river ripples and runs fast.’” (“Whilamut Natural Area”) The new interstate 5 bridge over the Willamette River, known as Whilamut Passage Bridge, put a temporary hold on the master plan to support plants and wildlife while the equipment used for construction was staged in the nearby area. The bridge was completed in 2013 and our restoration efforts began in earnest in 2014 with the application of shade fabric as a control method for exotic vegetation. This fall, the shade fabric will be slowly pulled back to reveal a blank slate for the installation of native plant communities.

Current plans for plant communities in the Whilamut Passage area are based on historic populations that are now rare to find in the valley. The distribution of this mosaic of habitat types through the Whilamut Natural Area is dependent upon the amount of standing water and existing soil conditions in each area. Areas that will be submerged first with the winter rains and form standing pools will receive plants starting in October. The Vernal pools will be seeded with species such as fragrant popcornflower (Plagiobothrys figuratus) and curvepod yellowcress (Rorippa curvisiliqua). Vernal pools create spectacular habitat capable of supporting a variety of wildlife like Pacific chorus frogs, salamanders and dragonflies as well as the creatures that predate them.

Emergent wetland sedges including several species of Carex are being planted from gallon-sized and four inch pots by school kids working with the From Seed to Habitat program in areas that receive seasonal flooding of standing water in the winter but that are subject to drying out in early summer. The native sedges are adapted to go dormant in the hot dry summer months and their dormant root systems aid in holding moisture in the soil until fall rains can bring life back to their foliage!

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Fall 2016 Restoration Update

By Kris Elsbree

This summer started with hand weeding Penny Royal at Quamish prairie. Working with students Walama crew cleared out all the emergent wetland areas that penny royal has shown to dominate. These actions have reduced the amount of herbicide used on site by keeping all the wet areas clear of herbicide. After letting the prairie rest this summer the crew is back to collect seed for casting this Fall. Recent rains have also prepared the ground for more Camas and Saxifrage planting.

Walama has begun working on riparian restoration on Organic farms in kings Valley. The Luckiamut Watershed Council has been planting riparian corridors and removing Japanese knotweed since 2010. Walama is helping work with residents that have chosen not to use Herbicides. The crew manually cut grass and invasive vegetation around tree plantings to replace herbicides as a maintenance scheme. On a Biodynamic farm on the upper Luckiamut the crew cut Knotweed and fed it to cows. By cutting the Knotweed now we are preventing the river taking it out and spreading it down river this winter. This will also bring more light in for native riparian ground cover that is being out competed by the Knotweed. The Knotweed is also a good source of green vegetation for the cows after grass has turned brown in the summer.

In the far southern edges of the Willamette valley fire is making a return. Dorena Prairie on the west side of Bake Stewart Park outside Cottage Grove hosts a bountiful array of wildlife diversity. The Oak Savannas in this area were historically burnt and have been without a fire in 15 years. The Walama crew cleared out over grown areas to prevent canopy fires in the open grown Douglas Firs and heritage apple trees. Oaks are plentiful at Bake Stewart but there are few growing in Dorena Prairie. While Clearing brush the crew work diligently to save any Oak saplings and were astounded at the multitude that were discovered giving rise to the next generation of Oaks. Bake Stewart and Dorena Prairie are managed by the US Army Corps of Engineers and they plan to have a prescribed burn this fall. The young Oaks will be preserved and fire enriched wild flowers will be in bloom next spring. This area is one of the highest quality of remnant prairie left in the Southern Willamette Valley. The rare Thin leafed pea vine, Lathyrus holochlorus, grows here. The site is also worthy of further expansion of Golden Paint Brush, Castilleja levisecta. You can Visit Bake Stewart Park on Row river Rd, or by enjoying a nice bike ride on the Row River Trail which goes through Dorena Prairie and has a connection trail to Bake Stewart Park.

Every Nickel Counts: Mention WRP at Sequential Biofuels!

SeQuential Biofuels Station on McVay Highway in Eugene will donate 5 cents for every gallon you pump into your vehicle and 5% of store purchases to Walama Restoration Project. You must mention WRP when you make your purchase!
The Village School Funds Environmental Restoration by... Walking!

By Nicole Smedegaard

WRP would like to extend a big Thank You to the 5th graders at The Village School for choosing WRP as the beneficiary of their part of this year’s Walk A Thon proceeds! We are so appreciative for your support and your hard work. The Village School’s annual Walk A Thon, held October 7th, gives each class the opportunity to support an ecologically-minded non-profit organization of their choice. We are honored to be the recipients of the 5th-graders' portion of the proceeds for the 6th consecutive year! (That’s quite the track record!) WRP Education Coordinator Nicole Smedegaard has been working with Matthew Bigongiari’s 5th graders this year at their new school site on Willamette Street to propagate native wildflowers through the From Seed to Habitat Program. Nice work 5th graders!

Become a Walama Board Member!

The board of directors plays an invaluable role at Walama Restoration Project; we hold the future of this organization and our community’s involvement in non-chemical native habitat restoration in our hands. We put our best ideas, our sweat and love into each new project to see it through. We support each other and strive to protect what we believe in! Do you want to see the next generation of youth become stewards of the environment, of the places we value and go to for play, peace and pleasure? Or are we going to let Nature Deficit Disorder become the norm? Do you want to help WRP make a positive impact in our community, in your favorite natural area, in your grandkids’ school or your own backyard? Become a board member and let your voice be heard. We want community input on all our exciting new projects, and that means you. Contact President Taylor Zeigler at taylorzeigler@yahoo.com

Grass dominant wetlands in the Whilamut Passage area, characterized by species like tufted hair grass, (Deschampsia caespitosa), are being spread across the flatter areas of low lying ground by broadcasting seed. The upland counterpart to these low lying areas is located across the ridges of rolling prairie: the grass dominant upland prairie. Both grass dominant prairie plant communities aid in forming a buffer between the sensitive forb dominated upland prairie habitat being installed and the sea of exotic species competing for resources along the edges of the restoration site.

Upland prairie is one of the most unique and imperiled habitat types left in the valley, it hosts several plant species listed under the endangered species act as endangered or threatened including the Willamette Valley daisy (Erigeron decumbens) and Kincaid’s Lupine (Lupinus sulphureus spp. kincaidii). One of our most famous local natives, the Camas Lily, is once again going to play a lead role on our (previous) I-5 staging area. A planned 7,000 bulbs of common camas (Camassia quamash) in the wetland plant communities and another 7,000 great camas (Camassia leichtlinii) in the upland plant communities will provide an important source of herbicide-free pollen for our native bees like bumble bees, sweat bees, mason bees and more. The camas will be accompanied in upland prairie by other beautiful pollinator friendly perennial forbs grown and planted by local students such as Western columbine (Aquilegia formosa), fernleaf biscuitroot (Lomatium dissectum), and Western buttercup (Ranunculus occidentalis)!

The Community Involvement and Longterm Ownership Strategy (CILOS) revegetation efforts at the Whilamut Natural Area will help expand populations for some of the valley’s most fragmented plant communities and provide nectar sources for declining species of native pollinators. As members of the Eugene-Springfield community we all have a stake and can play a part in the restoration of historic Willamette Valley prairie habitat. Natural areas allow us to glimpse into the past in terms of the plant communities present in the valley prior to Euro-American settlements. We strongly encourage you to join us as we march forward into the future while continuing to remember the past that shaped this special region we call home.

Continued: A Natural Area Emerging! CILOS Update:

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Our Mission:

Walama Restoration Project is a Non-Profit Organization Dedicated to Environmental Stewardship & Biological Diversity through Education & Habitat Restoration.

FSH Students Break Ground at Whilamut Passage

By Nicole Smedegaard

The 2016/2017 school year is shaping up to be pretty exciting because WRP’s From Seed to Habitat education program (FSH) will be breaking new ground in many ways. Most literally, we will plant the very first forbes and sedges at the new restoration site, Whilamut Passage of Alton Baker Park. This is a project now 2 years in the making, but up until now school groups have only engaged in site preparation, i.e. the application of shade fabric and the hand removal of invasive species. So now the fun begins!

Our hard work is paying off now that the October FSH filed trips will be seeing this bare ground transformed into a natural area by their hard work and dedication. Each FSH classroom has the opportunity to grow an entire hoop house of starts with WRP over the spring and summer, and then those plants are transported by WRP staff out to the restoration site for installation. FSH classrooms take a school bus into Alton Baker for an hour long immersion in native habitat restoration. Students learn about the specific plant community they will be working on that day, as well as receiving directions and safety instructions on planting methods.

The fall planting field trip is one of the very first activities FSH students do with WRP when they pick up the program in the fall and somehow it always seems to turn into a competition; who can get the dirtiest? At WRP we feel like it’s a job well done when today’s youth is covered in mud and loving it. The plants would thank you if they could, so nice work From Seed to Habitat kids!

Willamette National Forest: Santiam Pass

By Kris Elsbree

Work is continuing at Santiam Pass this Fall. Walama received a grant from Mazamas to collect seed for propagation. Beginning in 2012 Walama worked with the Forest Service to revegetate an area that was over used by off highway vehicles, OHV. Experimental plots were set up to see what methods and species could best survive in the bare volcanic sand. Directing seeding showed limited success while planting propagated plugs had over 50% success. Now four years later other species have voluntarily showed up and hard to get going species like Penstemon can be seen flowering into late September. Less and less bare ground can be seen but there are still areas that need to be revegetated. In areas that were planted two years ago we are seeing 90% success rates with Jarrow and Lomatium. Forest Service also helped by placing woody debris from thinning projects through the first planting site. This organic matter slows wind erosion, helps retain water, and provides some shade for the young plants. The crew has been collecting seed in the area recently and will be back up next summer for planting.

Species Spotlight: Thin Leaved Pea-Vine (Lathyrus holochlorus)

By Kris Elsbree

Thin leaved pea-vine, Lathyrus Holochlorus, is one of Willamette Valley’s rare plant species. There are 100 known historic sites and the last time they were surveyed about half still existed. Multiple efforts are being made to boost the amount at known sites and bring back populations that have recently vanished. The Willamette national Forest has one known population and will be releasing Oaks at the site from conifer encroachment and allow light through to favor the rare pea.
Hamlin Middle School has joined our restoration efforts this year by partnering up with Education Director Nicole Smedegaard for the From Seed to Habitat Program. Principal Kevin Wright fully supports Hamlin students’ community involvement and wants to see his students have opportunities to participate in field trips like the ones hosted by WRP! Educators participating in FSH this year are Paul Cesmat and Wakerobin Gendel. Gendel’s class is full of 29 future stewards of the environment; she teaches an 8th grade leadership course where students are self-starters! Cesmat’s 6th grade students look forward to working in the garden with us and will be utilizing the amazing space at Hamlin that includes the infrastructure for a greenhouse! Many of the garden installations at Hamlin have been completed by Cesmat in years past. Next year Hamlin’s new school site is expected to reach completion in the winter of 2017, so it will be a great future opportunity to create a new garden space with the help of dedicated and skilled educators like Cesmat.

**From Seed to Habitat 2016/2017 School Year:**
- Adams Elementary
- Agnes Stewart Middle
- Cesar Chavez Elementary
- Edgewood Elementary
- Hamlin Middle
- Network Charter
- Rachel Carson School (Churchill High)
- South Eugene High
- Territorial Elementary
- The Village School

**Lomatium dissectum attracts pollinators at the Butterfly Meadow in Alton Baker**

**Purchase Native Plant Greeting Cards to Support WRP**
Now online as well as at these local shops!

Walama Restoration Project has designed six native plant greeting cards that we are selling as a fundraiser for our organization. 100 percent of the proceeds goes directly towards WRP’s From Seed to Habitat education program and to the expansion of declining rare native plant species of the PNW. If you would like to purchase greeting cards, you can do so on our website at walamarestoration.org or at the following local businesses. You can also contact us at (541) 484-3939 or via email: info@walamarestoration.org.

**WRP Native Plant Greeting Cards can be found at:**
- Down To Earth
- Friendly Street Market
- Greater Goods
- Kiva Grocery
- First Alternative Cooperative (Corvallis)
- New Frontier Market
- Sundance Natural Foods
- Smith Family Bookstore (downtown)
- Sequential Bio-fuels
- Kalapuya Books (Cottage Grove)

Thank you to all of these fantastic local businesses for your support!

Thank you, Members, for your continued support of Walama Restoration Project!
Walama Restoration Project relies on community support to facilitate our education programs. If you would like to make a tax deductible contribution or would like to volunteer with WRP, please fill out this form & send it to:

Walama Restoration Project
PO Box 894
Eugene, OR 97440

Yes! I would like to be a supporter!

___ Limited Income $15
___ Individual $35
___ Family $50
___ Sustaining Member $100
___ Sponsor $500
___ Other Amount _____

**You can also donate on our website www.walamarestoration.org

___ Yes! I am interested in volunteering!
My interests include _______________________

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