

WREN CONSERVATION NEWS

Marys River Watershed Council
Fall 2007

Summer and fall was a busy season as voluntary conservation projects got underway in Wren!

Riparian Planting

Most recently, 700 trees and shrubs were planted, invasive weeds were removed, and livestock fencing was installed along sections of Marys River and Reed Creek. You can see the Reed Creek planting on the Crisp farm as you pass by along Kings Valley Highway near Cardwell Hill Road. This Watershed Council project was funded by Oregon Trout with help from Philomath High School Ecology students and volunteers. Wren landowners, Crisp, Liddell, Percy-Schoener, and Dorothy Brown participated in this project.



Native Prairie Restoration

Early this fall, with funding from US Fish & Wildlife Service, about 100 acres of native prairie were mowed for nine Wren landowners as a first step in voluntary restoration of prairie habitat for Kincaid's lupine and Fender's blue butterflies. Wren is one of very few



locations where these rare species still exist. Research is being conducted in Wren by Washington State University to determine how Fender's blue butterflies disperse in a hilly landscape. Benton County is working on a Prairie Species Habitat Conservation Plan that will allow economic

development within the county to continue, while at the same time conserving several listed and



candidate upland and wet prairie species. Benton County is providing free botanical surveys of prairie lands to help landowners know if they have rare species on their land.

<http://www.co.benton.or.us/parks/hcp/> Over 35 private landowners in the Wren area have participated in these botanical surveys.



Wildlife Ponds

Two new ponds were built and four older ponds were improved this summer. These ponds will provide habitat for Western pond turtles and waterfowl. Mud at the edges of ponds provides moisture and minerals for butterflies in the summer. Five Wren landowners participated: Clark, M&S Brown, Percy-Schoener, Moore and Summers. This project is a partnership between Marys River Watershed Council, Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife and US Fish & Wildlife, with funding from the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board.

Oregon White Oak Habitat

Oak woodlands are habitat for over 200 species of vertebrates such as the acorn woodpecker, western gray squirrel, white-breasted nut-hatch, sharp-tailed snake, 10 species of bats, and a host of invertebrates. Few oak savannas and woodlands remain in Oregon and most are in need of management. Work got underway this fall in Wren with an oak restoration grant awarded to the Watershed Council from Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife Landowner Incentive Program. Doug firs and other competing vegetation are being removed from oak woodlands and savannas.



Invasive weeds have been treated on several sites in preparation for further work next summer. Nine landowners are participating in this oak restoration project. Several others in Wren have joined in the effort on their own, removing firs that are threatening their oaks.

Habitat Conservation Plans

Habitat conservation plans were completed for six Wren landowners last Spring. The Watershed Council will be working with eleven more landowners over this next year to develop conservation plans for land they wish to manage for wildlife habitat. This project is funded by the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board.

If you are interested in learning more about conservation opportunities in the Wren area, contact Karen Fleck Harding at Marys River Watershed Council 541-602-1649 or email outreach@mrwc.net