



# NECANICUM WATERSHED COUNCIL

## 2021 ANNUAL REPORT

*The Necanicum Watershed Council is a non-profit organization of community volunteers whose mission is to ensure that the watershed is a healthy and functioning ecosystem for both the Necanicum basin's wildlife and human occupants. The NWC is a one-staff operation, supported by a diverse board and a passionate community. In turn, the council strives to be a resource to the public by offering many engaging outreach programs and education opportunities, along with landowner partnerships that support on-the-ground habitat development projects, all while ultimately working to further our understanding about the Necanicum Watershed, it's importance to the regions indigenous foundations and to make sure it has a sustainable future for all.*

*Like so many other organizations, 2020 brought substantial challenges for the Necanicum Watershed Council. Despite those challenges, the Council also had many accomplishments within the watershed.*

*Due to the pandemic, the Council was unable to implement many of our usual outreach activities. Our winter speaker series, called Listening to the Land, at the Seaside Public Library, had to be cancelled in light of COVID-19 safety precautions, and the 2021 series has been postponed until 2022. As the pandemic persisted, tabling at farmer's markets and other outdoor events were postponed or cancelled along with our annual Bird Discovery Day. While it has been difficult to remain isolated from the public, we are learning how to navigate in this new environment and adapting our projects and programs to fit this new reality. We believe the best has yet to come for the Necanicum Watershed.*

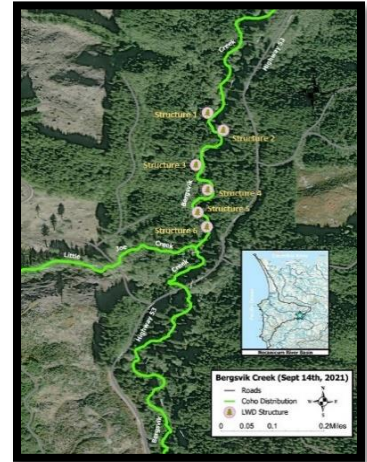
*We accomplished many things throughout the year despite the pandemic and we would like to share these accomplishments with you as we turn the calendars to 2022. The Necanicum Watershed Council currently has an Action Plan that identifies 5 key actions (in no particular order), and each biennium the council sets a number of goals and projects for each action. This report will detail many of the projects established for each action, as well as any identified future actions.*

**ACTION 1: ENHANCE FISH PASSAGE & HABITAT**

*Bergsvik Creek – In the summer of 2021 NWC, with the guidance of Oregon Department of Fish and*



*Wildlife, installed 6 new Large Woody Debris (LWD) structures in partnership with Weyerhaeuser, who generously donated whole trees, and cost share for contracted services from the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board North coast small grant Team. Bergsvik Creek is a 2nd order -"key" salmonid spawning/rearing tributary of the Upper Necanicum River that*

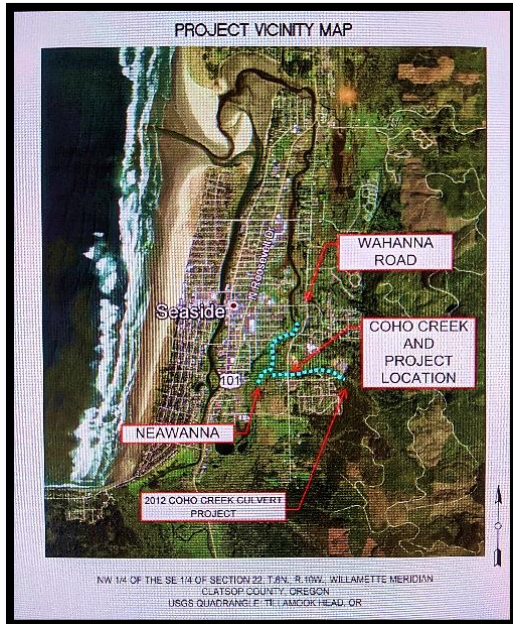


*confluences with the Necanicum River at Road mile 18. This stream supports ESA listed Coho, Fall Chinook, Winter Steelhead, Cutthroat Trout and two species of Lamprey (Brook and Pacific). As well as countless protected avian species.*

*The stream was initially assessed as deficient in large woody debris (LWD), lacking adequate materials that are essential for habitat complexity, streambed gravel retention, and floodplain/hyporheic connectivity as verified in a recent ODFW survey conducted in Fall 2016. We have previously completed two LWD placement projects on Bergsvik creek. This project completes the entire reach of Bergsvik creek that was identified as needing large woody debris.*



**Coho Creek – Fish Passage Improvement:**



*In 2021 the NWC has entered into a Memorandum Of Understanding with the City of Seaside to cooperatively implement a fish passage improvement project prompting the removal and replacement of an undersized culvert under Wahanna Road on Coho Creek, remove two upstream culverts and replace impacted public utility lines. Upon completion of project construction activities, disturbed areas will be revegetated with native grass and shrubs to better support long term natural stream ecology processes*

*NWC received a grant from the Oregon watershed Enhancement Board to provide funding for construction to compliment the city of Seaside’s substantial donation of engineering, labor and materials. The City plans to put the project out to bid in early spring of 2022 with implementation expected during the summer of 2022*

*The undersized culvert will be replaced with a metal plate open bottom arch designed to span 1.5 times the active channel width and will provide unconditional fish passage year around. Stream simulation will be included during construction to assure streambed equilibrium through the effected project reach. The project will substantially improve fish passage and habitat quality along 1.4 miles of Coho Creek.*



**ACTION 2: ENHANCE RIPARIAN CORRIDORS:**

*Scotch Broom Bustin’/Invasive Species Removal: This ongoing “guerilla-style” attack on the invasive started a number of years ago with a small group of devoted citizens who desired to make an impact on scotch broom in their neighborhood and continues to grow over the years. Our volunteer watershed steward works hard to control Scotch Broom at least a little every day. He is seeing a huge reduction of the plant in the areas that he treats by the water treatment plant, along the beach, the Prom, and up to the Cove. We are so thankful to have such a committed volunteer corps working so hard for the health of the watershed.*





### **ACTION 3: ENHANCE ESTUARY & WETLAND HABITAT.**

*Mill Ponds Trail Development: The Mill Ponds in southern Seaside are a unique feature in the community;*



*two ponds, separated by a narrow dike, with drastically different eco-systems. One pond is tidally influenced while the other is completely freshwater. These ponds are a popular stopover for migrating songbirds on the Pacific Flyway, and also a popular location for birders. The Necanicum Watershed Council in partnership with the Sunset Park & Recreation Foundation are helping support the Seaside Mill Ponds Natural History Project. The project organizers, with the help of many local artists and volunteers have put*

*together an amazing coloring book and educational short film featuring the diverse life and history that can be found in the Mill Ponds area. These materials can be found on our website at: <https://www.necanicumwatershed.org/millponds>*



### **ACTION 4: PROVIDE EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES TO THE COMMUNITY**



*Osprey Nest Camera: **Background:** At the end of 2019, we discovered that the osprey nest camera was damaged and inoperable. We tried everything we could think of to resurrect it, but it remained unusable. Unfortunately, that meant we were unable to view the nest for the entirety of the 2020 nesting season. That was a huge disappointment to not only us, but our loyal following of osprey fans. Despite that obstacle, our devoted local nest watchers shared personal photos and gave updates of the status of the osprey family, which we passed along through social media. This kept the public engaged through updates and photos on our Facebook page as we collectively shared in the successes in the nest. These are some of the pictures that were shared during this season.*

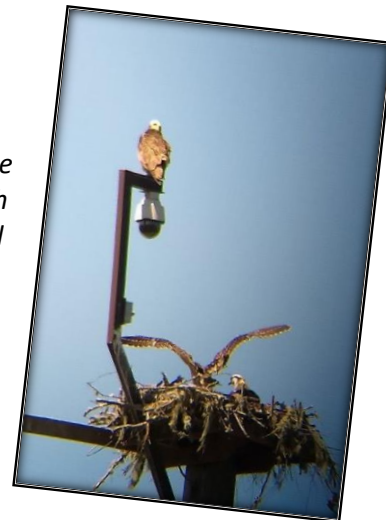


*In February of 2021 we received several donations from generous donors to replace the camera. The camera was replaced in March 2021 and the pair returned to the nest. Successfully hatched three chicks.*

***Update with status of nest for 2021** -This year, the pair successfully fledged two young, with the last one heading south at the beginning of October. We now look forward to the pair returning in March of 2021 to raise another clutch of chicks and the offspring from this season will likely return to the area in two years to raise families of their own. In addition, a second Osprey nest has been established near to our Osprey Cam which will undoubtedly produce avian dramatics for years to come.*

## **FUTURE ACTIVITIES AND PROJECTS**

2021 shaped up to be a decent year for the Necanicum Watershed given the challenges that COVID has presented for watershed restoration and outreach work all through the state of Oregon. As we move into 2022 the Council will continue to explore opportunities to partner with other entities and agencies to address habitat and water quality resource concerns in the watershed. We will continue to work to identify and prioritize potential sites and/or actions by reviewing existing information about watershed conditions and processes. In addition, we are exploring opportunities to include a citizen science program, pollinator habitat, invasive species control, native species plantings, reducing pollution, empowerment of north coast Indigenous communities and education and outreach for our wide range of activities.



**Update:** In September of 2021 the NWC hired Noah J. Dolinajec as our new Executive Director! Noah is a "...practical mathematician turned conservationist, I am dedicated to researching, protecting, preserving and communicating about the incredible beauty of the Oregon coast. I am passionate about both the ecological research side of Oregon coast conservation and about finding innovative ways to communicate conservation goals to varying demographics within coastal communities. I believe that conservation can be a powerful unifying tool that can address cross-discipline coastal management issues. Protecting, preserving and empowering the natural beauty, ecosystems, natural resource economies and indigenous voices of the north coast is what I plan to do".

**Meanwhile...**the NWC's previous Executive Director Angie Reseland has taken her dream job as a biologist for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife coordinating the Farm Bill program.

The Necanicum Watershed council appreciates the support of the community as we endeavor to work together to improve the local ecology and economy in sync with a well-informed and engaged society.

*All the Best in the New Year!*