May marks American Wetlands Month, a time to recognize and celebrate the multitude of ways wetlands contribute to our quality of life. This winter we asked a lot of our wetlands and they met the challenge. We depended on them to soak up, hold and slowly release the deluge of water after each storm.

Our spring newsletter is full of stories and suggestions of how to learn more about wetlands and get involved conserving our state treasures. Join us in saying thank you to our wetlands!!

“As we struggle to adapt to the vagaries of climate change, water stewardship may prove to be the beaver’s greatest gift to us.”

Once They Were Hats
Frances Backhouse
Wetlands are complex ecosystems that provide a wide variety of services and benefits for people and nature. Beyond their biological role, wetlands play a key part in water storage, groundwater recharge, carbon sequestration and providing habitat for a variety of species. Fernhill Wetlands is a key stop-over location for migrating birds along the Pacific Flyway. In response to increasing growth in the Tualatin Basin, Clean Water Services (CWS) chose a nature based solution to expand wastewater treatment capacity that also provides additional ecological benefit. Fernhill Wetlands, part of more than 700 acres in Forest Grove owned by CWS and managed in partnership with the City of Forest Grove and Fernhill Wetlands Council, improves water quality by removing nutrients, cooling, and naturalizing the water after conventional treatment. Since 2012, CWS has been working with Portland Audubon and the local birding community to monitor the bird response. So far more than 165 bird species, from tiny hummingbirds to enormous white pelicans, secretive marsh birds, and wintering waterfowl have been counted at this Oregon’s Greatest Wetland and Important Bird Area.

Before construction in 2014, the former sewage lagoons at Fernhill Wetlands provided open water habitat for a variety of wintering waterfowl but habitat for other types of bird species was limited.

In 2014, construction on the south wetlands at Fernhill began with the draining and then re-shaping of the ponds in order to support a diverse assemblage of wetland habitats.

Over 180 logs and snags were anchored in-place to provide habitat for a variety of cavity nesting birds, turtles, and amphibians.
Thousands of native seeds and wetland plants on the south wetland provided food and cover for a variety of insects, amphibians, reptiles, as well as resident and migratory birds.

By spring of 2015, the native wetland plant communities really took off and the birds responded by flocking to Fernhill to utilize the extensive wetland habitats that today support a wide variety of wetland bird species.

Wapato – one of the many native wetland plants now thriving at Fernhill Wetlands.

www.fernhillnts.org

Photos courtesy of Clean Water Services
The Wetlands Conservancy launched the Beaver Tales Art Exhibit to educate citizens about the importance of beaver. In order to increase resilience to drought and climate change and improve water supply for the environment and humans, TWC is incorporating a statewide beaver conservation vision into our mission of conserving Oregon’s greatest wetlands. Our goal is to learn more about how we can work with beaver to conserve and restore our natural aquatic systems.

2017 Beaver Tales Art Exhibit and Sale

Join us on the dates and at the venues shown below to celebrate beaver and understand the role and benefits wetlands play in Oregon and your community. Check www.wetlandsconservancy.org for updates on exhibits and other beaver and wetland activities.

**February**
Exhibit opened at
Oregon State University
Corvallis, OR

**April 7, 2017 5:00-7:00 pm**
International Beaver Day and Beaver Tales Exhibit Reception
April 7-28, 11 am – 4 pm
Exhibit open Tuesday–Saturday
510 Museum and ARTspace, Lake Oswego

**May 6, 2017 5:00-7:00 pm**
Seaside Evening Art Walk
May 6–31 Exhibit open
Fairweather Gallery and Beach Books
612, 608, & 616 Broadway
Seaside, OR

**May 7, 2017 1:00-3:00 pm**
Frances Backhouse Reading
Oregon Zoo Education Center
Portland OR

**June 10, 2017 1:00-4:00 pm**
Astoria Art Loft – Art Walk
106 3rd St., Astoria, OR

**August 4, 2017, 6:00-8:00 pm**
Opening Reception
Display and Sale of Beaver-Themed Art through August 31
North County Recreation District
Recreation Center, Nehalem, OR

**September 2017**
Opening Reception (date to be announced)
Art Display through September 30
Oregon Zoo Education Center
Portland, OR

**Beaver Tales Participating Artists**
Thank you to our “beaver ambassadors.”
Follow these artists throughout the state for continued inspiration.

Mary K Adams  Mark Allison  Theresa Andreas-O’Leary  Mike Bergen  Darla Boljat  Paul Brent  Mike Brown  Mary Burgess  Carol Cassidy  Eldon Conder  Jeannine Crolley

Susan Curington  Deb Curtis  Linda & Dan Damario  Jeanett Davis  Dave & Boni Deal  Rene Eisenbart  Agnes Field  Jean Gale  Linda Gerrard  Anthony Gordon  Angela Grainger

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Join the Wetlands Conservancy and artists Jan Rimerman and Dave Haslett in celebrating National Wetlands Month 2017

An exhibition of painting and sculpture benefitting TWC

Photographer Larry Olson and Ceramicist Candace Wilson are also exhibiting work.
25% of each sale goes directly to TWC for the TWC Nyberg Preserve Western Pond Turtle project.

May 6 & 7, 11 am–5 pm, May 8, 5–8 pm
Neptune Studios
3151 Cottonwood Court West Linn, Oregon

Western Pond Turtle
Once common from Baja California to Puget Sound, the small long-lived western pond turtle (Actinemys marmorata) is listed as a threatened species in Oregon. Western pond turtles occur in both permanent and intermittent waters, including wetlands, streams, rivers, ponds, and lakes. They favor habitats with large numbers of emergent logs or boulders, where they gather to bask.

This spring will kick off the Western Pond Turtle habitat project at our Nyberg Wetland Preserve in Tualatin. The project will enhance the current habitat for turtles by creating a disconnected pond, turtle basking sites, nesting substrate, and a greater linkage between other upstream and downstream turtle habitat sites.

Beaver Tales participating artists continued
Margo Greeve
Kimberly Hale
Nadia Heinrich
Marcella Henkels
Laura Hopper
Bruce Horne
Patti Isaacs
Joanne Jambor
Jana Johnson
Teresa Knight
Sue Kramer
Cynthia Kranich
Karen Lewis
Mariana Mace
Neal Maine
Bill Marshall
Mike Mason
Judi McElroy
Kate McGee
Jane McGeehan
Dawning McGinnis
Dave McIntire
Emily Miller
Mary Moffat
JoAnn Pari-Mueller
Hilary Pfeifer
Jo Pomeroy-Crockett
Jennifer Richmond
Greg Robins
Dee Rommel
Larry & Sharon Rosenkoetter
Yelena Roslaya
Loretta Sampson
Judy Sanders Wood
Sandra Sarff - Aleman
June Shaub
Judy Shaw
Nora Sherwood
William Shumway
Linda Sprau
Barbara Thacker
Timothy Turenne
Sandy Visse
Liz Walker
Judy Weber
Jude Welter
Lisa Wiser
Marnie Zoa
Wetlands are full of wildlife and flowers in Spring. May is the perfect time to head out and explore, with a group or on your own.

Spring has sprung, birds are singing, frogs are croaking and each day offers the blooming of a new flower or the unfurling of a new leaf. It's time to head outside and soak in the bounties of spring. In celebration of National Wetlands Month grab your kayak, canoe paddle, binoculars, rubber boots, plant book, fishing rod, paintbrush or sketch pad and explore a wetland. In addition to being indescribably beautiful, they provide rich habitat for thousands of species of birds, fish and mammals.

Our Oregon’s Greatest Wetlands map can help you plan your adventure http://wetlandsconservancy.org/conservation/oregons-greatest-wetlands.

For current events, tours and ways to celebrate National Wetlands Month, visit www.wetlandsconservancy.org/stewardship/mywetland.

Wetland Photo Contest

What do you love about wetlands?

Starting May 1st, our second annual National Wetlands Photo contest will begin. We want to see what you love about wetlands. Send us a photo of your favorite wetland landscape, a close-up, wildlife, native plants, your feet in the mud, your favorite bird watching spot and more.

You can enter the photo contest on our website or by tagging your photos on Facebook and Twitter with our hashtag #mywetland. For more information please go to: http://wetlandsconservancy.org/photocontest/

Share your photos with us on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram. Tag us!

@oregonwetlands

@wetlandsconservancy

@thewetlandsconservancy

Use our hashtag #mywetland

For current events, tours and ways to celebrate National Wetlands Month, visit www.wetlandsconservancy.org/stewardship/mywetland.
Mayfly Festival

In honor of National Wetlands month, the Coos Watershed Association will be hosting the first-ever Mayfly Festival in Coos Bay. The goal is to shed light on the intricate connections between community, the environment, and, of course, water! The festival will draw together two of their brightest hopes for the future: local youth and the incredible watershed in which they live. Local students will lead the way, sharing their own watershed expertise with the public through interactive displays, games, art, and music. This family-friendly event will feature food, a silent auction, hands-on activities, and live music from youth performers throughout the day. The event is free; proceeds from silent auction and student art sale will directly support community youth art, science, and music programs.

Mingus Park, Coos Bay, 10:00 am – 4:00 pm, May 13, 2017

In Gratitude of Wetlands

Wetland ecosystems are often underappreciated. Few people realize the range of benefits provided and the products derived from freshwater wetlands. During our past winter’s continued heavy rainfall events, wetlands provided a safe place for all the excess water to go. From Harney County to the Willamette Valley to the Yaquina estuary small and large wetlands were catching and slowing down the flow of surface water then slowly releasing the water, significantly reducing the amount of flooding downstream. Wetlands also remove pollutants from surface water, absorbing chemicals, filtering pollutants and sediments, breaking down suspended solids and neutralizing harmful bacteria. Wetlands are so good at this they are used to treat wastewater, like the bioswales in our parking lots and neighborhoods and the Fernhill Wetland. They are also the most biologically diverse ecosystems on Earth. It has been estimated that freshwater wetlands hold more than 40% of all the world’s species and 12% of all animal species. Individual wetlands can be extremely important in supporting high numbers of endemic species.

“'I may not be able to do much in this world right now, but I do have a choice. I can watch as the world is harmed, or choose to be one who does something. I choose to do something good.”

“'I need to preserve my watershed so that the life that is around me, above me, and underneath me can keep growing and living and providing even more life.”

— Coos Bay Student Organizers

Bring your family and friends to hear Canadian author Frances Backhouse’s stories about humanity’s 15,000-year relationship with the American Beaver.

Sunday, May 7
1:00 – 3:00 pm
Event is free
Oregon Zoo Education Center

Free tickets at: https://secure.lglforms.com/form_engine/s/YPvyWspinT8x1C9pBX-ScxEQ
What can I do?

■ Learn about wetlands. This is a great time to better understand what a wetland is, where wetlands can be found, and the importance of wetlands.

■ Explore a wetland near you. Grab your rubber boots, binoculars, cameras, canoes or kayaks and discover a local wetland. Notice the seasonal changes in water levels, plants, wildlife and fish.

■ Take action to protect or restore wetlands. Volunteer with TWC or another local group to restore, monitor or protect a wetland.

■ Share your interest. Be a wetland ambassador! Help others understand the huge benefits that wetlands provide locally and globally.

■ Become a TWC donor or volunteer! Help support the conservation, restoration and research of Oregon’s greatest wetlands.