

# WATERSHED STEWARDS

OF CLARK COUNTY  
A NEWSLETTER FOR COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS

VOLUME 6 ISSUE 3

FALL 2010

## INSIDE THIS EDITION:

FROM THE COORDINATOR ..... 2

CLARK COUNTY FAIR ..... 3

WATERSHED STEWARDS IN THE COMMUNITY .. 4

WINTERIZE YOUR RAIN BARREL..... 6

WETLAND MITIGATION BANKING ..... 7

BACK PAGE ..... 8

*Lake River*  
*Photo by Ben Dennis*

## FROM THE COORDINATOR

*By Jenifer Naas, Program Coordinator*

Summer has come and gone, but our work continues! We had a very successful Clark County Fair this year (see page 3). We look forward to meeting more new people and continuing education and outreach into next year. Watershed Stewards training starts in September and I expect a full class again this fall. Current Watershed Stewards are welcome join us any class evening. Finally, I need help with set-up at our three rain barrel workshops. I need two or three helpers during each workshop. It's a fun and easy way to pay back some volunteer hours.

On July 31, 23 people donned sunscreen, bug spray, and life jackets to paddle Lake River from the Ridgefield Boat Dock to the convergence with the Columbia River. Eleven Stewards participated with friends and family. Some of the group had never paddled before, but everyone made the three mile round trip without incident! Along the way, we saw bald eagles, ospreys, herons, and even a lone beaver munching on grass along the banks of the river. At the half-way point, we stopped for brownies and fruit, ready to take on the return trip. I know it was a successful trip judging by the smiles of people as they unloaded from their kayaks and headed home from our sunset trip. Thanks to everyone who came!

### Welcome Val Grosscup

WSU Clark County Extension welcomes Val Grosscup, a full-time Americorps LINKS member who will be working with the Watershed Stewards and Small Acreage programs until August 2011. Val has wonderful experience and we are happy to have her join us! You will meet Val at various events, so make sure you introduce yourself. Val will lead a rain garden campaign for the Stewards this fall and next spring, including recruiting interested volunteers to help design and construct rain gardens in the community. Let Val know you are interested in being involved ([Valerie.Grosscup@clark.wa.gov](mailto:Valerie.Grosscup@clark.wa.gov) or 360-397-6060 x 7704).

**Val writes:** My name is Valerie (Val) Grosscup and I am the LINKS Americorps volunteer for the WSU Clark County Extension. I was born and raised in Eugene, OR and graduated from Colorado College in Colorado Springs, CO, with a major in Biology. I have studied and worked in water conservation and purification in Ecuador, Bolivia, and Madagascar. After four years in Colorado, six months in Bolivia, and not enough rain, I decided it was time for me to come back to the great Northwest. I came back with a desire to help protect and conserve water and promote environmental stewardship. I am excited to be a part of the WSU Clark County Extension team and expand my knowledge and experience by working with the extension and its members.



*Stewards take a half-way break on the beach*

## CLARK COUNTY FAIR RECAP

*By Jenifer Naas with contributions from Dave Shehorn*

Watershed Stewards teamed up with Clark County Environmental Services and other environmental organizations again this year to continue the “river ramble” theme at the Clark County Fair. The floor, painted to resemble a river valley, created a cohesive display guiding fairgoers to each booth. The Watershed Stewards booth demonstrated permeable pavers and a small green roof comprised of succulents donated by Seley Natural Lawn and Garden.

Watershed Stewards Jac Arnal, Andrew Dean, Sonya Norton, Joe Seley and Dave Shehorn worked together to design and set up the booth this year. Each year, volunteers take an increasingly important role in the fair.

Thirty-four volunteers staffed the booth during the 10-day event.

Stewards talked with 1,963 people about rain barrels, permeable pavers, and green roofs. Dan Wilson, one of the newly trained Watershed Stewards staffing the booth. Like other Stewards, Dan staffed the booth to earn volunteer hours, but was pleased to discover he enjoyed the fair commenting, “Working the Fair was a lot of fun and really interesting. I enjoyed the people interaction a lot more than I thought I would.” About the newest addition to the booth, Joe Seley observed, “I heard multiple good comments on the roof and I think it created some interest for people to learn more about green roofs. Overall I think the green roof at the Fair will help support the upcoming classes by giving people a little visual of what they can do to their roof.”

Thank you! To all the Stewards who spent their time and effort to create a fun and interactive display. Ready for 2011?

### ***Permeable Paving Demonstration Display***

If you stopped by the Watershed Stewards Fair booth this year, you noticed the small permeable pavements demonstration. Jac Arnal, Sonya Norton, and Dave Shehorn designed the demonstration, which featured layers

of soil, gravel, and rock covered with a “concrete slab” on one side and “permeable pavements” on the other. The model demonstrated how water flows off the “slab” side and soaks through the cracks on the permeable paver side. Many kids stopped by the display to stick their hands under the sprinkling water during the hot weather, but they also learned something about stormwater runoff.

Dave and the other designers tried several iterations of design, simulations, and prototypes before constructing the final model. After scrounging a couple of days gathering materials, they met to refine techniques and build prototypes. After attempting several concepts and techniques, they decided that having one container and a physically divided display would be the easiest to manage, design, and build. They incorporated thick plastic sheets of acrylic glued together for the case. For the inside, they collected paver materials, rocks, gravel, concrete, landscape fabric, plastic pieces, a small water pump (table-top bubbler fountain size), some vinyl tubing, and drip watering micro-sprayers (for example, Orbit Irrigation).

Jac and Dave experimented with the acrylic sheets, cutting pieces to size and finalizing the layout design concepts. The techniques developed for building the display case and insert were learned the hard way: trial-and-error and cut-to-fit. It was an adventure that turned into an “Ah-ha” experience for both of them. Dave spent an estimated 30-40 hours on materials gathering, designing, prototyping and construction. Education is never cheap, but usually provides a good return on the investment. Dave will be using the newly learned paver planning concepts to finalize a paver sidewalk at the side of his house. Jac increased his skills working with plastics, a skill both Stewards enjoyed developing.



*Watershed Steward Andrew Dean talks to family about permeable pavements.*

## WATERSHED STEWARDS AT WORK

By Leslea Steffel-Dennis

### Christina Brittain – turning learning into a way of life

Driving the scenic Highway 14 on the way to meet Christina Brittain and Bud Quinn at Quinn Mountain, I was reminded that southwest Washington holds so many exquisite places just around the bend. As I drove up the narrow drive through the rustic red gates, I realized this would be one of those exquisite places; a home and grounds designed with sustainable design principles.



In 1990, Christina built a home on the Washougal River after many years of living in Eastern Washington. Living along the river made her realize the great differences between the flora and fauna of Eastern and Western Washington. She wanted to learn more about her surroundings, how to keep them natural, and improve habitat on her property.

Before she took the Watershed Stewards training in 2002, Christina organized a neighborhood meeting to develop cooperative relationships with local elected officials, including Skamania County Commissioner Bud Quinn. The two became a couple and took the Watershed Stewards training. Later, after selling her river home, she and Bud began planting native gardens on their 40 acre property in the Columbia Gorge, utilizing information they learned in training.

Quinn Mountain is now a Bed and Breakfast and event space. The couple host retreats, environmentally-themed talks, and free community events. Bud and Christina continue to maintain their 40 acres using principles learned in Watershed Stewards classes. Together, they demonstrate good stewardship through work on their land and education provided to others about our local environment.

### Ken and Laura Slye – raising alpacas on their “Compass Rose” farm

Ken grew up on a farm near Bellingham, but he and his wife Laura longed for a new adventure and began looking for farm property in Clark County. Ken is a man who likes to do things right the first time. They found their five acres on an almost deforested piece of land that had been bulldozed, with the clearing debris shoved toward adjacent creeks.

Ken needed information. He first took the “Living on the Land” workshop series offered through the Small Acreage Program at WSU Clark County Extension. He then trained with the Watershed Stewards program to further expand his knowledge, skills, and network.

Ken learned how to manage his property, including siting his home, barn, and pastures. He learned how to control noxious weeds without pesticides, how to avoid runoff, and what fencing would keep his animals contained and not harm those he wished to keep out. As a conscientious steward, Ken considered management practices effective for raising animals that do not compromise the land or water. Ken and Laura decided cattle were not a good option for their property and chose alpacas as they leave a smaller footprint on the land.

What began six years ago as an adventure into raising and breeding alpacas, took them to Peru to meet with a noted alpaca breeder. During years spent learning and breeding, they developed a network of alpaca lovers and others wishing to learn from Ken and his success. What started with their first alpaca in the summer of 2004 grew to their current herd of 29. Ken and Laura own some of the flock, board alpacas and host visiting breeding animals.

On the morning I joined Ken in the pasture with these placid and beautiful animals, a new mom was patiently introducing her just born wobbly cria (offspring) to his surroundings. As he gained strength, he was introduced to the rest of the herd. Watching them invite him in was amazing. Just before I left, a pregnant alpaca was getting

ready to add another youngster to the herd. Shortly afterward, Ken let me know, a new baby cria (girl) was born.

Ken is a leader within the alpaca community and advocates the practices he has learned and incorporated, with other alpaca breeders.



### Judy Bufford – volunteering becomes a career

Judy Bufford understands the best way to get to know a new community. She took advantage of her education and experience as a biologist with the Forest Service and her fisheries training to find local programs providing her the opportunity to explore and become a part of her local community.

Judy and her family moved to Vancouver from Corvallis some years ago. Initially a stay-at-home mom, relishing time spent with her two daughters, she became eager to involve herself in environmental programs and volunteer opportunities as her children grew older.

She decided on Watershed Steward Program when the program was new. Classmates quickly showed her the rewards of volunteering in the community.

Judy was ready to jump into volunteering, and over the next few years, she volunteered for many fairs, assisted in monitoring programs, and involved herself in just about everything else where there was an opportunity to network, volunteer, and instruct. What started with the Watershed Stewards programs blossomed into a career that has benefited our community's public school children.



In the fall of 2006, Judy was asked to become a part of the Water Resources Education Center's Watershed Monitoring Network, funded by the city of Vancouver and Clark County Environmental Services, Clean Water Program. Designed to get students outside into the natural world, the program allows students to do inquiry based, hands-on science and help them gain an appreciation of the watershed in which they live. Judy is one of three specially trained educators in the program. In 2009, 56 teachers in 23 Clark County schools participated in the program, reaching over 3,000 K-12 students.

Judy lights up when she speaks of introducing kindergartners to the vibrant life of a forest floor or critters, such as pollywogs. As students progress through the program, they become more confident and familiar with "their" outdoors.

Judy discovered becoming a Watershed Steward as an excellent way for stay-at-home moms to meet and volunteer with like-minded people. Ultimately, becoming a Watershed Steward led her to a very rewarding career.



# WINTERIZE YOUR RAIN BARREL

By Leslea Steffel-Dennis and Bob Scheer

Bob Scheer's artist's canvas is different.

Instead of time-honored mediums of canvas or paper, he chose something able to withstand the outdoors environment, something utilitarian. With his artist's eye, he found a new medium; a "blank canvas" waiting to convey something special. It all started with Bob attending Watershed Stewards' rain barrel workshops.

Bob loves to draw and paint. He especially likes depicting scenes that "have a clear message of the natural beauty of clean, pristine waters, forests, mountains and skies, in a natural, wild setting. My goal is to put you there". The idea of using a pristine, unadorned rain barrel was perfect. He painted one for Jen Naas for a demonstration. He then painted one for himself, then another and another. What started as Bob's attending rain barrel workshops led to his seeing an opportunity to turn valuable information learned there into an artist's "canvas".



A few of the painted rain barrels at the Clark County Fair

When the Clark County Clean Water Program offered an Artistic Rain Barrel contest to high schools, Bob volunteered to take barrels donated by Clark County and the Watershed Stewards Program to some of the participating classrooms. He talked with students about clean water and about how the rain barrels worked. Bob also explained how the barrels could become works of art created by students to illustrate their view of nature. Bob is optimistic that engaging high school students in the environment through art will bring concepts of stewardship and conservation to a more personal level and increase awareness and appreciation of the beauty of our natural environment.

The completed "art barrels" have been seen at several fairs. From this, Environmental Services devised a contest and invited the public to vote for their favorite. The painted barrels will eventually go to private homes where the young artists' work will have a permanent place in conserving rainwater.

For Bob, learning how to capture rainwater on his own property certainly turned into a very rewarding venture for him, while also educating teenagers about water conservation in a unique way.

## Here is Bob's list for winterizing your rain barrel:

- Step 1: Drain rain barrel completely. A good time of year to do it is before the rainy season, it will re-fill quickly once the rain begins.
- Step 2: Clean the inside of the rain barrel to remove any built-up sediment. Remove grate cover and screen. This can be done with the spigot in the open position. Use a garden hose with nozzle to spray the inside bottom of the barrel from the large opening at the top of the barrel.
- Step 3: Check Fittings, gutter downspout, and overflow spout for a tight fit. Repair anything loose.
- Step 4: Check the downspout from the house or building to make sure there is no blockage from the roof. This is easily done by spraying water on the roof area that drains to the barrel. Clear any leaves or obstruction that prevents or slows the flow of water into the rain barrel.
- Step 5: Clean grate screen. Lightly scrub both sides with a thick bristle or wire brush.
- Step 6: Re-caulk the spigot and overflow valves.

*Continued on Back Page*

# COLUMBIA RIVER WETLAND MITIGATION BANKING

*By Amanda Smeller*

Work is slated to begin next spring on Clark County's first multi-agency wetland mitigation bank. The Columbia River Wetland Mitigation Bank (CRWMB) is a 159.9 acre site situated on land owned by the Port of Vancouver located on the north side of SR501, northwest of the BPA right-of-way and adjacent to the Vancouver Lake Wildlife Refuge. The majority of the wetland bank site, 129.6 acres, is located within the City of Vancouver limits, and the remaining 29.3 acres is located in unincorporated Clark County. CRWMB will be the first bank in the Vancouver lowlands.

According to Clark County Mitigation Partners LLC (CCMP), the southwest Washington section of Habitat Bank consolidates mitigation projects onto larger sites. The consolidation creates sites with significant ecological value protected by conservation easements and have a high probability of success. They are also monitored and managed for 10 years, although third party stewardship is funded in perpetuity. Banks help offset inevitable wetland impacts as a result of development. The CRWMB will restore a variety of aquatic and terrestrial habitats including aquatic bed, emergent, shrub, and floodplain forested wetlands.

An interagency review team consisting of representatives from the Department of Ecology, the Army Corps

of Engineers, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Fish and Wildlife, the City of Vancouver, and Clark County will regulate the bank. The bank will be permanently protected through a conservation easement recorded on the property by the Port of Vancouver and held by Ducks Unlimited.

CCMP states that wetland mitigation banks provide cost effective quality mitigation for development projects, where mitigation liability can be transferred to the bank with the purchase of credits. Public agencies, utility companies, ports, and developers can use credits for projects where impacts to critical areas and wetlands cannot be avoided and must be mitigated. Credits may also be used to settle regulatory permit violations. Credits may only be used for impacts located in their respective service area.

The CRWMB will offer up to 54 credits, with each credit allowing for 2.9 acres of work on the ground that developers can use to counterbalance development impacts to wetlands in the mitigation bank's service area. CRWMB's service area is located partially in Cowlitz, Clark, and Skamania Counties, beginning at the Bonneville Dam and running downstream to the City of Longview. The rule was developed in September 2009 as an approval process. CRWMB is the second bank to be certified under new federal rules set out by the Army Corps of Engineers and the EPA.



*A view of a functioning wetland at the Carty Unit in Ridgefield Wildlife Refuge.  
Photo by Lynn Cornelius*

## BACK PAGE

*Winterize your rain barrel continued from Page 6.*

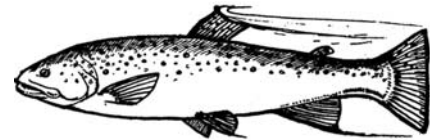
You can leave your rain barrel “open” or closed during the winter. If your barrels are protected from exposure, you may use your water all year-round. Be sure the overflow is directed well away from your house foundation and check the barrel in freezing weather. Several days of freezing weather might freeze the water in the barrel solid, so take precautions to avoid a frozen mass that might split the barrel’s joints. If you leave your barrel open, attach a garden hose to the spigot and direct the flow away from your home foundation.



*Jayne Studer's rain barrels under a pile of snow.*



*A new alpaca joins Ken Slye's herd.*



*" I came to where the river ran over stones.  
My ears knew an early joy.  
And all the waters in all the streams, sang in my veins that summer's day" ---Roethke*

*The views expressed in this newsletter reflect those of the author(s) and not necessarily those of the sponsoring institutions.*

### WATERSHED STEWARDS PROGRAM



WSU Clark County Extension and Clark County Environmental Services jointly sponsor the Watershed Stewards Program which is funded through Clark County Clean Water Fees.

Jenifer Naas

Program Coordinator

360-397-6060 x 7703

[Jenifer.Naas@Clark.wa.gov](mailto:Jenifer.Naas@Clark.wa.gov)

<http://clark.wsu.edu/volunteer/ws/>

WSU Extension programs and employment are available to all without discrimination. Evidence of noncompliance may be reported through WSU Extension Clark County Extension at 360-397- 6060 ext 0.

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY



CLARK COUNTY EXTENSION

<http://clark.wsu.edu>



Clean Water Program

[www.clark.wa.gov/water-resources](http://www.clark.wa.gov/water-resources)