

**LOWER SPRAGUE-LOWER WILLIAMSON
WATERSHED ASSESSMENT MEETING
Wednesday, May 27, 2009**

Topic: Wildlife in the Lower Sprague-Lower Williamson

- **Chapter 12 of the Watershed Assessment – Terrestrial Wildlife & Habitat**
- **Trisha Roninger, US Fish and Wildlife Service**

- Habitats in the Lower Sprague-Lower Williamson Assessment area:
 - Forest & Woodlands
 - Shrubs & Western Juniper
 - Riparian Areas & Wetlands
- Some species are Generalists, found in many places, and others are "Indicator species," found only in narrow ranges, specific types of places
- Big game: Mule deer, Elk, Black Bear, Cougar (Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife considers them migratory)
- Species with special status of concern listed in the document
 - Seem to be many fewer mussels – because of water quality?
- Copperfield Draw—who was testing the water quality there?
 - Mike Lawrence (US Forest Service) will look into it & follow up with us
- Multiple researchers – Are they communicating?
 - Sometimes not! But sometimes information gathered at one point can't be assumed to be true in the future, especially with living things. Also methods develop and improve over time.
 - Monitoring before and after a project can give you information about how successful it was.
 - OSU has a program called Oregon Explorer, which develops web portals for areas around the state; they're interested in expanding to include the Klamath, and they would probably be able to put all existing data in one place
 - Humboldt State has initiated a Basin-wide water quality monitoring group, they will be meeting in Klamath Falls in October
- Fire suppression has also created unintended problems:
 - Denser forests, hotter fires when they do occur
 - Fewer large pines because lodge pole overtakes the forest
 - Less meadows and more lodgepole right up to the river
 - More juniper encroaching into the shrub-steppe

- At 3%/year current growth rate, juniper will double in 70 years

Action Planning

- Protect aspen stands
- Promote ponderosa pines
- Put snags and large downed wood near streams
 - Slows water, traps sediment and creates fish habitat
- Reduce fuel loading by thinning forests
- Increase diversity of plants, especially in wetlands & riparian areas stream bank
- Control invasive plants
- Control lodge pole encroachment

Topic: Williamson River Delta

➤ Heather Hendrixson, The Nature Conservancy

- Hatfield Committee recommended the purchase of Tulana and Goose Bay Farms in 1996
 - Originally wetlands, peat soils
 - In the 1940s & 50s, levees were built around the property and water was pumped off in the spring, back on in the summer, run through canals
 - Had been 7400 acres of potatoes, alfalfa, barley
- Partners: USFWS, BOR, TKT, PacifiCorp, OWEB
- 2007 – removed levees
- 2008 – opened up Goose Bay side
- Still have several hundred acres leased to alfalfa farmer
 - Revenue from alfalfa pays the county taxes
- Planting willows, tules and cattails
- 5500 acres flooded now
- Planting native grasses in uplands
- Earth-moving finished
- Goal – increase in Lost River and shortnose suckers' habitat
- Water quality monitoring

US Forest Service, Chiloquin Ranger District

- **Missy Anderson, Botanist**
- **Mike Lawrence, Chiloquin District Ranger**
- Logging roads cause erosion, contribute sediment to streams & reduce water quality – now have standards to minimize erosion

- Three projects have been proposed to the RAC (citizen-based Resource Advisory Committee) for funding
 - Showed map with planned projects
 - Thinning
 - Reduce fuel load
 - Protect Wildland–Urban Interface (WUI) area (near homes)
 - 450,000 acres in District – treating 3-7,000 acres a year
 - Would need to treat 28,000 acres per year to just control current levels of growth
 - Activities on the ground include
 - Under-burning, slash busting (mechanical removal)
 - Pre-commercial thinning
 - Commercial timber sales
 - Include some biomass sold for power
 - Inventorying logging roads
- *Request: Invite Rob Roninger, Manager of the BLM's Wood River Wetlands, to attend a meeting and talk about why they're pumping water off the wetlands.*

NEXT MEETING

**Tuesday, June 23
5:00 – 8:00 PM
Chiloquin Community Center**

Topics to be presented:

- **Hydrology & Water Use (Chapter 5)**
 - **Sue Mattenberger, US Fish & Wildlife Service**
- **Stream Channel Characteristics (Chapter 9)**
 - **Sue Mattenberger, US Fish & Wildlife Service**
- **Water Quality (Chapter 10)**
 - **Steve Kirk, Oregon Department of Environmental Quality**