

Network of Oregon Watershed Councils 2007 Year End Update

(apologies for any double posts—we're still working out our distribution, thanks for your patience)

A busy, successful end of the year

As we head into winter and the slowly returning light, I'd just like to take a moment to reflect on our busy fall at the Network of Oregon Watershed Councils. Without a doubt, the defining event was the [2007 Watershed Council Gathering](#) in Hood River in November. The Gathering brought together watershed council staff, members and partners from throughout the state. Sincere thanks to our generous [sponsors](#) and extraordinary volunteers. If you missed the Gathering, but would like to hear the inspiring keynote addresses by former Governor [John Kitzhaber](#), Hood River County Commissioner [Les Perkins](#), [Charles Hudson](#) of the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission, or [Angus Duncan](#) of the Bonneville Environmental Foundation, just click on their names to link to an audio recording of their speeches.

2007 Network of Oregon Watershed Council Awards

State Representative Patti Smith and **Network Chair Liz Redon** presented the awards during the Hood River Gathering. The Network was pleased to honor four outstanding volunteers in three award categories for 2007. **Bud Baumgartner** of the Calapooia Watershed Council and **Rennie Ferris** of the MidCoast Watersheds Council shared the *Watershed Council Member of the Year Award* for their long term, outstanding work with each of their councils. **John Runyon** of Jones & Stokes was recognized for his strong, consistent support of our work with the *2007 Network Community Volunteer of the Year Award*. And Board Member **Jeff Oveson** was honored for his exemplary service as the *2007 Network Member Volunteer of the Year*. On behalf of councils and the Network, a hearty thank you and congratulations to each of these outstanding volunteers.

Network Pledge Drive launched at Gathering

Responding to a \$10,000 anonymous donation to the Network earlier in the year, participants from watershed councils and our partners launched a spontaneous matching pledge drive during this year's Gathering. In just two days, 20 watershed councils and several partners pledged over \$5,000 in support of the Network. Thanks to Pam Reber of the Coast Fork Watershed Council for sparking this effort (and coordinating the follow up), and a very special thank you to the following new individual, business and nonprofit donors to the Network:

Denise Lofman, Wheeler
Ken Bierly, Independence
Jason Dedrick, Eugene
DS Consulting, Portland
Jones & Stokes, Portland
Forest Park Conservancy, Portland

If you'd like to help us toward our \$10,000 goal, your tax deductible contribution may be mailed to:

Network of Oregon Watershed Councils
P.O. Box 40061
Eugene, OR 97404

Looking forward to 2008

We're anticipating a productive and exciting year in 2008.

New Coordinator Workshop

Planning is well underway for the New Coordinator Workshop in Spring 2008. Working with a terrific planning team composed of watershed council coordinators (who've been through the challenge), we're developing a two-day workshop geared toward orienting new and relatively new coordinators. We anticipate great sessions on Project Management (concept to implementation); Organizational Management (board development, meeting design, highly functioning committees); and Financial Management (managing budgets, reporting). Workshop leaders will include experienced watershed council staff, OWEB staff and other natural resource agency staff from different parts of the state. Watch the website (www.oregonwatersheds.org) in early 2008 for the details and the dates.

Watershed Support Network

Earlier this month, the Network of Oregon Watershed Councils was invited to join River Network's nationwide *Watershed Support Network*, dedicated to working with state level organizations around the country which support the work of local watershed groups. A particular focus of River Network's WSN support is directed toward fundraising and effective communication. We expect to be working closely with River Network to offer fundraising training to a number of councils during the next year. (Councils: Contact me if you're interested in discussing training possibilities.)

Partnerships

We look forward to continuing the communication and outreach with the Oregon Association of Conservation Districts that we developed together during 2006 and 2007. Our communication and message development work resulted in a better understanding of the importance of watershed councils and soil and water conservation districts as local leaders in citizen-based watershed restoration efforts throughout Oregon. Better understanding led to an increase in crucial financial support to these organizations for the current biennium.

Telling the story

The Network will be working with councils in all regions of the state to assist with the critical task of telling the story about the excellent work being accomplished on the ground through citizen, business, tribal and government partnerships at the local level. From dam removals [large](#) and [small](#) to [recreating stream channels](#) and [working with homeowners](#), watershed councils and their partners are making a difference on the ground.

Best wishes for a healthy and happy holiday season.