



Winter 2001

Volume 9, Number 1

# Within Your Reach

A publication of the Johnson Creek Watershed Council

reach: a: a portion of a stream or river b: an extent, esp. of knowledge or comprehension

## Draft of Creek Restoration Plan Revealed

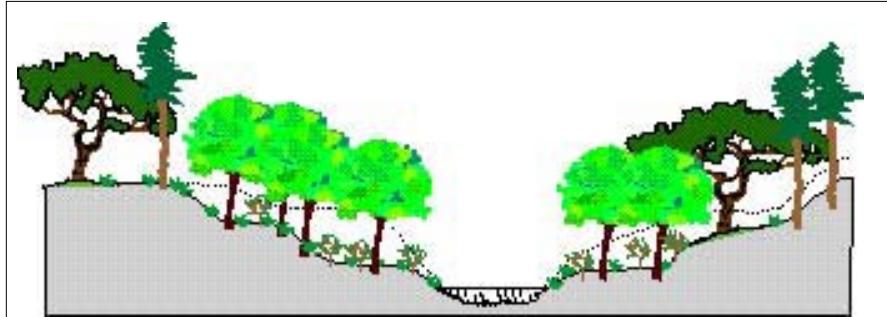
### The long-awaited plan advocates a watershed-wide approach

It was a typical coming out party in some ways, with lots of people, food and music. But instead of a small gathering, the release of the first draft of the long-anticipated Draft Johnson Creek Restoration Plan had its big day among hundreds of interested and excited watershed residents at a local high school.

Unveiled at the Johnson Creek Summit, the draft plan represents years of work and thousands of hours of research and field investigation. A cooperative effort spearheaded by City of Portland Environmental Services, the plan's goal is to provide a call to action for watershed partners. It is a banner for people who care about the watershed to rally around.

But it is much more than that. It is a thorough examination of the main stem of Johnson Creek, with an eye toward conceiving projects that will restore the natural functions of Johnson Creek by working with nature instead of against it. These projects will assist in reducing damage from nuisance floods, improving water quality, and creating more fish and wildlife habitat.

The team of scientists, engineers, and restoration specialists who worked on the project started by looking at existing information, including the Johnson Creek Resources Management Plan, the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife aquatic



*Floodplain reconnection is one of the project types the plan recommends: The dashed line shows the stream bank before the reconnection project. See sidebar on page 3 for more information.*

## Watershed Summit 2000

The results are in: Summit 2000 was an unprecedented success. Dozens of evaluations from the big event offered both suggestions and compliments on everything from the lunch speaker to the format itself.

Best of all, though, the evaluations say that the summit and the watershed council seem to be on the right track.

The third annual summit convened on November 18, 2000 at Marshall High School, where 188 people gathered to discuss the Draft Johnson Creek Restoration Plan and progress toward the goals of the Resource Management Plan.

The participants engaged in discussion via a town hall forum, bringing up issues and responding to each others' questions.

The first town hall session addressed the goals and vision established at Summit 1998. The general atmosphere was one of support and

*Keep the big picture in mind and work together like friends .. and all will be well.*

encouragement, although many people expressed concern over enforcement of regulations and the need for education.

The second town hall session was preceded by a video presenting the Draft Restoration Plan. Participants then took the opportunity to raise questions about the plan and its

goals, especially regarding cost, prioritizing, and breadth of participation. Overall, the audience was supportive of the plan's intent and enthusiastic about taking active steps to plan for creek recovery.

The Summit brought together people from throughout the watershed with many different perspectives. Their comments will be instrumental in guiding the Johnson Creek Policy Makers' Committee as well as the watershed council's education and restoration programs.

*Continued on page 3*

# First JC 101 is a Swimming Success

On Saturday, February 3, the auditorium at Alice Ott Middle School was ringing with laughter and shouts. Could it have been the sound of sixth graders having fun at lunchtime? Yes. But it wasn't. It was one of the things that happens when forty adults play the salmon game at JC101.

JC101, so called because it is an introduction to the basic workings of Johnson Creek Watershed, also brought about lots of questions and answers. It provided time for neighbors to get together to talk about their watershed.

Laura Perkins and Marta Conkle of the Community Watershed Stewardship Program designed the workshop. It was intended to raise awareness about Johnson Creek and the things that affect it and its residents. Of course, the salmon game was not the only hot topic.

The workshop also provided in-depth information on a variety of other relevant topics. Steve Johnson, lifelong resident and watershed activist, started the day off with a discussion of the creek's history, including a video produced by Jefferson High School students.

Karl Lee followed Mr. Johnson with a history with a bigger picture. Karl, a hydrologist with the US Geological Survey explained how water moves through the watershed. The audience took furious notes while Karl explained ground water and the far-reaching impacts of the Missoula floods, which occurred over ten millennia ago.

Jeff Uebel, who not only serves as Chair of the Johnson Creek Watershed Council, but also works as a fish biologist for the US Forest Service, rounded out the morning's presentations with an explanation of Johnson Creek's role in the lives of salmon and trout. The audience learned which salmonids reside in Johnson Creek, and what time



*Chris Watson's plastic fish makes it through a culvert in the Salmon Game.*



*Jeff Uebel explains salmon issues while AmeriCorps Member Laura Perkins and Outreach Coordinator David Reid take a different line on the subject.*



of year to expect them to visit us. Jeff also discussed the threats to salmon and trout and what the audience could do to help the threatened and endangered species.

Finally, it was time for the Salmon Game! Contestants had to pass through several real-life obstacles before they could make it to sea. Of the forty contestants, only three made it through. It's a tough life for a fish!

The afternoon session was also packed, as were the participants' stomachs. Despite bulging pizza bellies, the audience had lots of questions for City of Portland's Tom Liptan about stormwater issues. Tom presented many options for people to keep dirty runoff out of the creek.

Finally, Maggie Skenderian, also from the City of Portland, briefed the crowd on recent floodplain remapping (see pg 6).

The Johnson Creek Watershed Council is beginning

to plan for the next class in the series. We are also considering whole classes on hydrology, threatened and endangered species, stewardship or history. Interested? Call to let us know what you'd like to learn about!

# Restoration Plan Offers Involvement

*Continued from page one*

habitat inventory, and historic documents. They then used sophisticated computer models, aerial photos and historical records to determine where frequent flooding would occur.

Based on their findings, the team conducted extensive field study, looking at on-the-ground conditions and opportunities.

The result is a headwaters to confluence evaluation of restoration opportunities along the main stem of the creek. Recognizing that not all of the projects are easy to implement, the plan identifies eight high-priority areas, where the least cost will produce the most benefit (see sidebar).

The Draft Restoration Plan also divides the creek into 58 sections, or reaches, and lists the opportunities for restoration within those areas. This gives a head start to anyone considering a restoration project. It also lets landowners know what they can do to help restore the natural functions of the creek.

Perhaps the most exciting aspect of the plan, though, is its very existence. The decision--based on rigorous scientific inquiry--to address nuisance flooding, fish and wildlife habitat, and water quality through watershed restoration signals a dramatic shift.

The Draft Restoration Plan is already making headway. The project team presented it to most of the jurisdictions who might help to put projects on the ground. The city councils and county commissions are supportive of the plan, which is crucial to the plan's ultimate implementation.

The final plan is due out sometime this summer, incorporating comments from citizens and other agencies. The draft plan is available at Multnomah County libraries within the watershed, or from the Watershed Council office.

## Key Restoration Concepts

**Floodplain Reconnection:** Due to increased volume and rate of flow, the creek has cut down (incised) into its bed in many places. This means that despite lots of water, the creek is cut off from the area it would naturally flood (its floodplain). With no floodplain access, the floodwater can only pass downstream, causing increased flooding where there is floodplain access, and more incising where there is not. Floodplain reconnection means cutting the banks down to where the creek can get to them to slow the flow. Flood plains are also good places for fish to wait out big floods and look for food.

**Wetlands:** Wetlands are a key part of the creek's system. Much of the low-lying areas around the creek were wetlands at one time. Wetlands provide important functions for the creek. They can absorb an enormous amount of water, and they can even help to clean it. Wetlands provide these critical functions whether they are on the creek or in the upland area.

**Riparian Area:** Riparian areas are any areas adjacent to natural watercourses such as Johnson Creek. Healthy riparian areas include a diversity of plants, which help to provide homes and food for wildlife, slow runoff, prevent erosion, and keep the creek cool by shading it.

## Restoration Plan Priority Areas

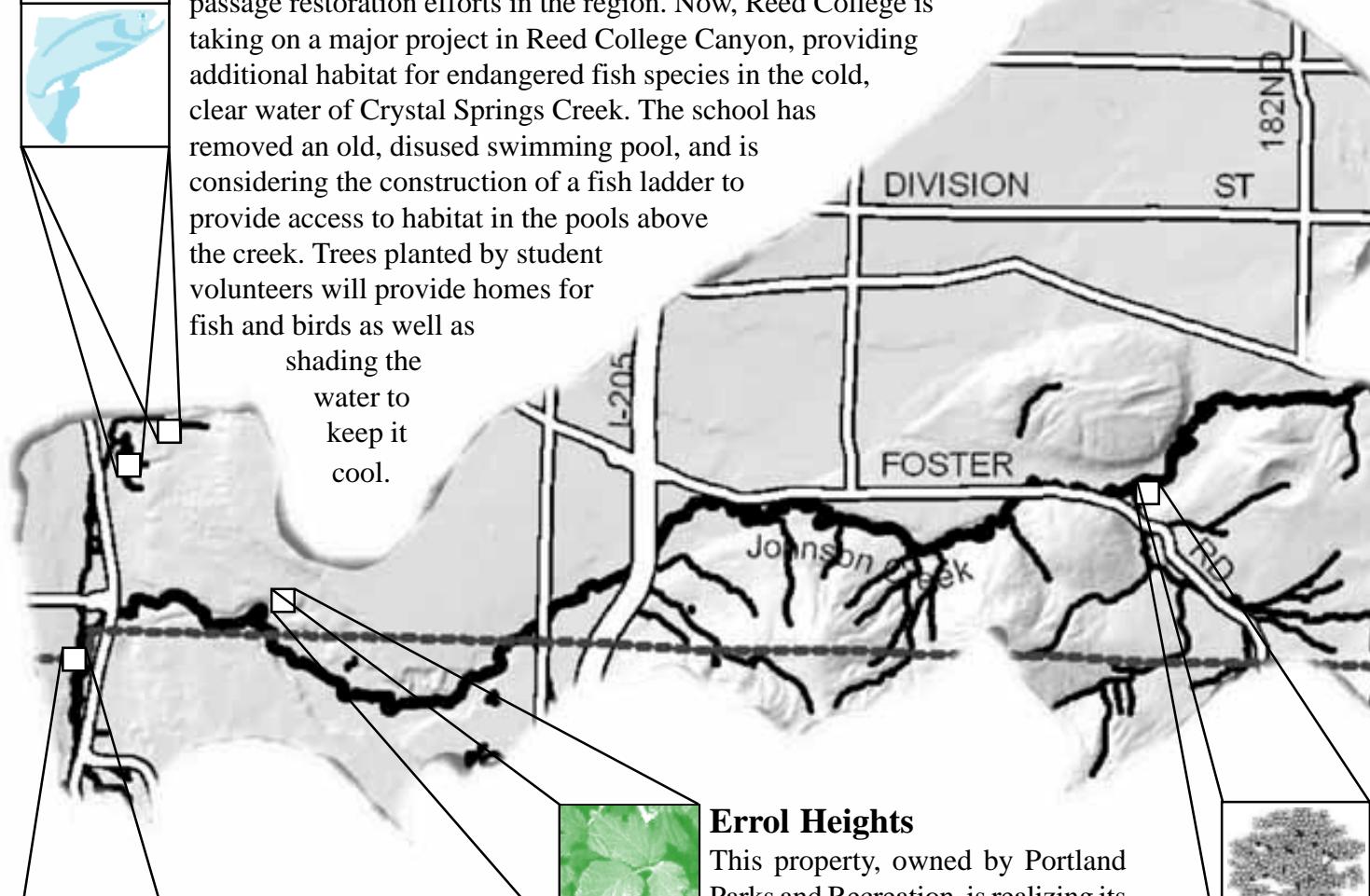
- 1) Lower Johnson Creek Restoration** would provide needed fish habitat at the creek's mouth.
- 2) Tideman Johnson Nature Park** offers opportunities to create habitat and flood storage by creating wetlands.
- 3) Bell Station Flood Mitigation** will ease flooding by connecting the creek with its floodplain and adding wetlands.
- 4) West Lents Flood Mitigation** will be a constructed wetland to reduce localized flooding.
- 5) Lents Alternatives** represents a number of possibilities in the Lents area, such as wetlands and open space.
- 6) Alsop Floodplain Restoration** see page 5.
- 7) Gresham Stream Corridor** is a perfect place for floodplain reconnection and riparian enhancement.
- 8) Upper Reaches Riparian Improvements** are opportunities to enhance riparian zones in the upper watershed.

# Restoration Within Your R



## Crystal Springs & Reed College Canyon

Last year, the Johnson Creek Watershed Council brought together a coalition of over 20 partners to complete a major restoration project at East Moreland Golf Course. The project is one of the most significant fish passage restoration efforts in the region. Now, Reed College is taking on a major project in Reed College Canyon, providing additional habitat for endangered fish species in the cold, clear water of Crystal Springs Creek. The school has removed an old, disused swimming pool, and is considering the construction of a fish ladder to provide access to habitat in the pools above the creek. Trees planted by student volunteers will provide homes for fish and birds as well as shading the water to keep it cool.



## Milport Road, OLCC

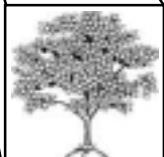
JCWC is working with Oregon Liquor Control Commission and Friends of Trees to maintain a planting adjacent to the creek. These trees will help keep the creek cool as it passes through Milwaukie and is joined by Crystal Springs Creek. The trees will also provide food and hiding places for both birds and fish. Join us on Feb 24 to help plant!



## Errol Heights

This property, owned by Portland Parks and Recreation, is realizing its potential as wildlife habitat.

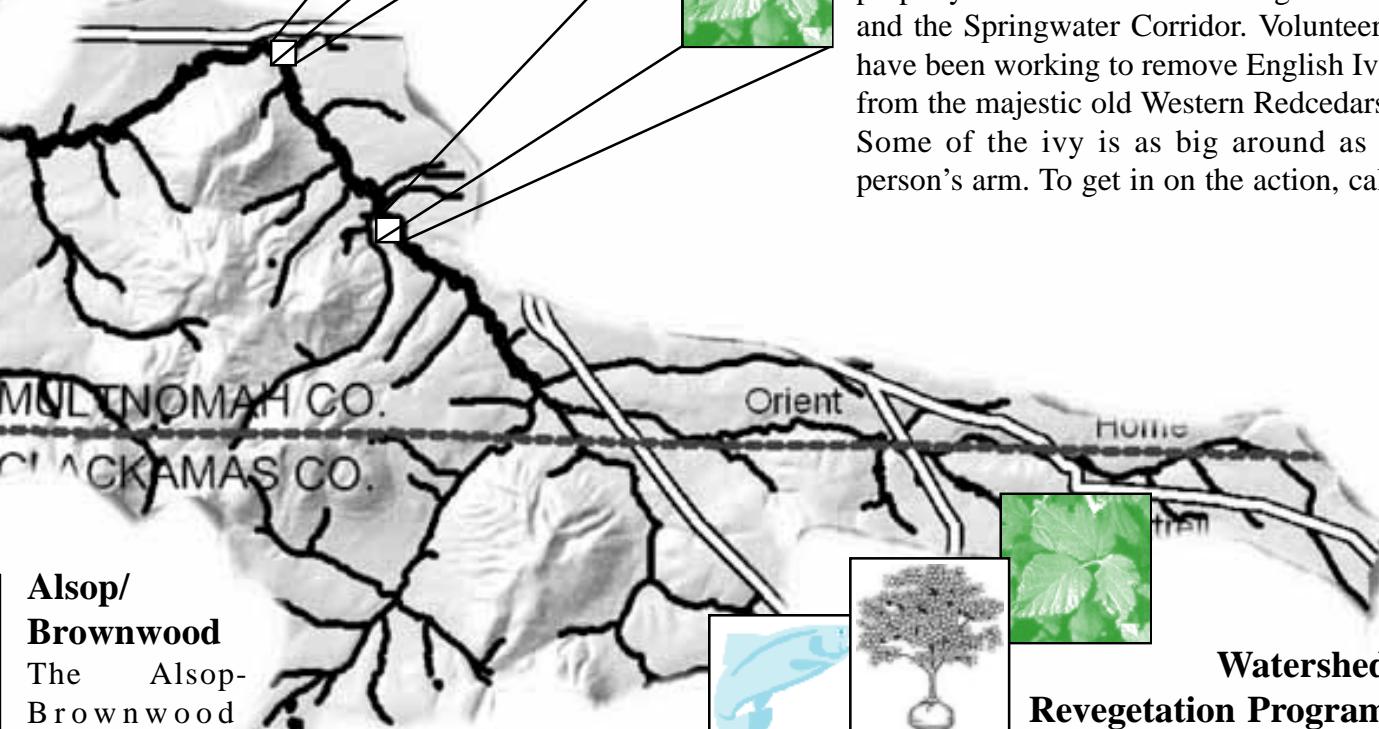
Identified as one of the highest quality refuges for salmon and trout in Johnson Creek Watershed due to its cold, clear water and rich habitat. After many years of volunteer-led restoration efforts, Portland Parks has moved to acquire more property in the area as well as coordinating volunteer efforts to combat the array of resident invasives, including English Ivy, Himalayan Blackberry, Japanese Knotweed, Purple Loosestrife, and Reed Canary Grass.



# each

Your Guide to restoration projects throughout the watershed.  
Have a restoration project that we missed?  
Call (503) 239-3932 to tell us about it.

## *Get Involved! Restoration is within your reach!*



### **Alsop/ Brownwood**

The Alsop-Brownwood Project is a

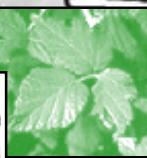
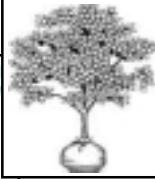
large-scale constructed wetland and riparian enhancement project undertaken by City of Portland Environmental Services. In addition to providing some flood storage space, the project will also help to slow the flow of the creek by increasing its meander. These effects will not only help humans throughout the watershed, but salmon and trout, too, since they need access to places to wait out big floods.

### **Main City Park**

Students at Alpha High School in Gresham are working to enhance the natural areas at Main City Park. They are working with the City of Gresham to identify projects to improve the riparian corridor to benefit wildlife and water quality.

### **Hogan Cedars**

Metro Parks and Greenspaces owns this property at the intersection of Hogan Road and the Springwater Corridor. Volunteers have been working to remove English Ivy from the majestic old Western Redcedars. Some of the ivy is as big around as a person's arm. To get in on the action, call



### **Watershed Revegetation Program**

The Watershed Revegetation Program, also known as the ReVeg Team, is in its second year in Johnson Creek after five successful years in the Columbia Slough. Funded by the City of Portland Environmental Services and grantors such as Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board, the program works with private and public landowners to install revegetation projects throughout the watershed. Call James Allison at (503) 823-2365 for more information on this exciting opportunity.

# Federal Flood Agency Releases New 100-Year Floodplain Map

A lot can change in twenty years. That's why the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) recommends updating floodplain maps every five to ten years. But that recommendation doesn't come with any dollars to offset the cost of the massive information gathering project.

The 100-year floodplain is an important concept for FEMA, which oversees flood relief effort and offers flood insurance policies. The 100-year floodplain is the area that has a one in 100 chance of flooding any given year, and people living in the floodplain pay FEMA a higher insurance premium.

The remapping project looked at historic precipitation and stream flow, the lay of the land, the shape, slope, and size of the channel, soil permeability, and the size of bridges

and culverts to develop a clearer understanding of where water will go in a major flood event. City of Portland Environmental Services took on the monumental project, and released its findings on December 21, 2000.

But the 100-year floodplain is not definitive. The 650 households removed from the new floodplain map are no less likely to flood than they were before. In fact, 62 per cent of flood insurance claims come from people living outside the 100-year floodplain. They will have lower insurance premiums, but not necessarily any more peace of mind.

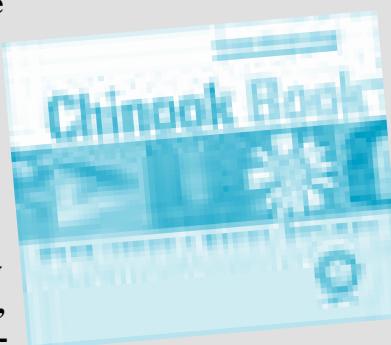
Johnson Creek is identified as a Project Impact community, which means that FEMA is focused on reducing damage from flooding in this area through education and demonstration projects.

## Chinook Books Available from JCWC

**How often do you get the opportunity to support your watershed council by saving money? Once a year!**

That's how often the Chinook Books will be coming out, but you're not too late to get this year's edition! Full of coupons and information on how to have a salmon-friendly house, yard, car, and neighborhood, half of the proceeds go to support Watershed Council programs and activities.

The \$15 book is packed with good ideas, from using compact fluorescent light bulbs to landscap-



ing with native plants. The book not only encourages fish-friendly behavior, it tells you how to do it and offers coupons worth \$5000 to make fish-friendliness more affordable.

The makers of the book have also conducted research to confirm the environmental benefits of the practices they suggest.

This is an opportunity to help your watershed in two ways: first, by making some small changes to the way you live with the help of the Chinook Book, and second by supporting your watershed council by purchasing your Chinook Book here.

## The Johnson Creek Watershed Council

JCWC is a program of the East Multnomah Soil and Water Conservation District, and is funded by the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board, the cities of Portland, Gresham, Happy Valley, and Milwaukie, and Multnomah and Clackamas Counties.

The council was formed in 1994 on the recommendation of the Johnson Creek Resource Management Plan. The Council's mission is to inspire and facilitate community investment in the Johnson Creek Watershed for the protection and enhancement of its natural environment.

Please contact us with any questions or concerns.

Kim Hatfield, Council Coordinator  
[kim@jcwc.org](mailto:kim@jcwc.org)

David Reid, Outreach Coordinator  
[david@jcwc.org](mailto:david@jcwc.org)

## Thank you!

Thanks go out to our newest members, as well as to everyone who has contributed time or resources to our success

John & Margaret Delacey  
Walt Mintkeski  
Daniela Brod  
Jim Barrett  
Ruth Blackburn  
Deborah Hofman  
Barbara Potter  
Jack Friberg  
Precision Cast Parts  
Assn. of NW Steelheaders  
Steve Bennett  
Oregon Worsted Co.  
Diane Fackrell

# Welcome Back to the Newsletter for the Johnson Creek Watershed Council!

Kim Hatfield, Johnson Creek Watershed Council Coordinator.

Lots of changes have happened since you last received the newsletter of the Johnson Creek Watershed Council!

First of all, you have a new Council Coordinator – I've spent the last six years roaming around my native Oregon, working in natural resources and watershed management. I'm happy to be back home in the Portland Metro area with my husband, Robert, and our two dogs.

We also have a new Outreach Coordinator – David Reid, also a native Oregonian, who brings extensive community outreach and education skills to the Johnson Creek Watershed. If you haven't met David yet, you will soon!

And if that wasn't enough excitement, the Johnson Creek Watershed Council is also in the process of filing for federal non-profit tax status, also known as 501(c)(3) status.

This means that your donations and membership fees will continue to be tax-deductible and that a whole new array of grant funding may be available to the Council for projects and programs. Foundations and trusts that offer funds to non-profits generally require an organization to have 501(c)(3) status to be eligible to apply for funding opportunities.

There are many other potential changes coming soon, such as:

- “ Reorganization of the council
- “ Changes for the voting membership, Executive Committee, and Officers.
- “ Incorporation as a Public Benefit Corporation with the State of Oregon
- “ Preparation of draft bylaws for Council approval.

If you are interested in getting involved in shaping the Council's future, please contact me, Kim Hatfield, (503) 239-3932 or e-mail: [kim@jcwc.org](mailto:kim@jcwc.org).



**There are probably almost as many ways to say YES! to supporting your watershed council as there are people who do. But the most important way you can say YES! to your watershed council is by becoming a member.**

**YES!** I want to help the Johnson Creek Watershed Council by making a *tax-deductible* membership pledge. I want to be a part of creating a healthy watershed community that preserves and protects natural resources while promoting community values.

See the enclosed check for a donation  
of \$ \_\_\_\_\_.

**No.** I'd rather support the work of the watershed council another way. Please contact me about volunteering and other options.

name \_\_\_\_\_

address \_\_\_\_\_

city, state, zip \_\_\_\_\_

phone \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you for making a difference in your watershed!**

HIGHLIGHTS

BUSINESS

TREES

Salmon

FISHES

• On

WORKS

What Makes a Watershed?

RAIN



## Get Involved in *Your* Watershed

### February

- 20** Johnson Creek Watershed Council Meeting, Lakeside Garden, 7:00 pm
- 24** Planting at Milport Road with JCWC and Friends of Trees, 9-1. Call (503)282-8864.

### March

- 17** Errol Heights Work Party: Portland Parks and Recreation, 9-1. Call (503)823-6131.
- 20** Johnson Creek Watershed Council Meeting
- 22** Muddy Waters Restoration Workshop: Community Watershed Stewardship Program and Metro. E-mail [ryt@bes.ci.portland.or.us](mailto:ryt@bes.ci.portland.or.us) by March 8 to register.

### Coming up...

- April 21 Earth Day 2001: Watershed Wide Event
- May 5 Naturescaping Workshop

### Volunteer Opportunities

**Newsletter Correspondents:** Always dreamt of seeing your name in print? Now's your chance!

**Public Speakers:** We're looking for a few good folks to take the word to the streets.

**Spawning Surveyors:** Not such a people person? Great! Hang out by the banks and watch for fish!

**Database Guru:** Hone your computer skills and get the scoop on who's who in the watershed.

**Lents 2040 Participants:** Ready for advocacy? Represent the watershed in this crucial process, learn about land-use planning, and shape the future of your neighborhood.

**Senate Bill 1010 Representative:** Help your creek and get to know your neighbors! Call for more info.

**Recycling Regent:** Help the environment and raise funds for the watershed council by recycling donated materials. Easy, fun, and fast!

**Eyes and Ears are Always Needed!**

Visit us on the web at [www.jcwc.org](http://www.jcwc.org) -- E-mail at [info@jcwc.org](mailto:info@jcwc.org) -- Call David (503)239-3932