

A photograph of several sailboats on a large body of water under a clear blue sky. The water is dark blue with gentle ripples. In the background, a green shoreline with trees and some buildings is visible. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

The Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership –

Our Work for Clean Water in Clark County

October 5, 2022 for Clark County Clean Water
Commission

Chris Hathaway, Community Programs Director

Estuary Partnership Background

- Formed in 1995 – OR and WA Governors nominated the Lower Columbia River to EPA for inclusion into the National Estuary Program
- Developed the Lower Columbia River Management Plan 1999
 - Tons of outreach, stakeholder meetings, etc.
- Begin Implementing that Management Plan



Estuary Partnership Background

- Bi-state
- Non-profit
- National Estuary Program
- Bonneville Dam to the Pacific Ocean



Estuary Partnership Background

- Staff of 25-30 depending on season
- Organized into three main teams
 - Science Team
 - Community Programs Team
 - Executive Administration Team



Estuary Partnership Background

- Science Team
 - Large scale habitat restoration projects
 - Ecosystem monitoring
 - Project effectiveness monitoring
 - GIS and Data management
 - Toxics reduction
 - Climate change planning and resiliency



Estuary Partnership Background

- Community Programs Team
 - Environmental education
 - Classroom lessons
 - Field trips
 - Service Learning trips
 - Community (student and volunteer) riparian planting projects
 - On-water Big Canoe trips
 - Stormwater retrofit projects
 - Coordinate Lower Columbia River Water Trail
 - (help with the Lewis River-Vancouver Lake Water Trail)



Estuary Partnership Background

- Executive / Admin Team
 - Hold it all together!
 - Support / guide
 - Invoices, billing, reporting, etc. etc.



Estuary Partnership Work in Clark County

- Extensive!
- Huge percentage of work in Clark County
- Why?
 - Geography
 - Funding opportunities
 - Great partners!
 - Leads to projects



Recent/On-going Projects

- Community Programs Team
 - Salmon Creek
 - Burnt Bridge Creek
 - Vancouver Lake
 - Woodin Creek
 - Campen Creek/Washougal High School
 - WA Outdoor Learning Grant



Salmon Creek

- 2014 Clark County – Estuary Partnership Agreement
- Revegetate 12-acres at Salmon Creek Greenway Site (if funding found)
 - 2-acre increments
 - Site prep
 - Site maintenance
 - Planting, etc.
 - Planted close to 20,000 native trees and shrubs
 - Engaged hundreds of students and volunteers
 - Associated classroom lessons and field trips



Salmon Creek

- Funding from:
- LCFRB-CCCWRF
- WA Ecology
 - “Base”
 - Two Ecology-319 Projects



Salmon Creek

An aerial photograph of a wide, shallow creek flowing through a grassy field. The water is a light, milky color, suggesting sediment or silt. The surrounding land is covered in dry, yellowish-brown grass and some small, bare shrubs. In the background, a dense forest of evergreen trees is visible under a hazy sky.

- Working on an additional 7-acres (now almost at 20)
- Agreement with Clark County to work on an additional 20 ish acres
- Initiating work on a larger examination of the site
 - Stakeholder engagement
 - Determining size, scale, “site”
 - Project scoping
 - Data, examination, to assess site conditions more holistically
 - Is there something we can do to creek/floodplain connections, health

Salmon Creek

- Challenging site
- Wet, dry, climate change
- Creek incised
- Creek floods
- Tidal, Columbia River backflow
- Etc.



Burnt Bridge Creek

- Very similar!
- Two sites
 - Meadowbrook North
 - Alki Road Area



BBC Alki Road Area

- 9-acres of riparian planting
- 2019 – 2024/2025
- Hundreds of students
 - Classroom lessons, planting field trips
- Volunteer planting events
- Funding – LCFRB-CCCWRF, WA Ecology
- City of Vancouver Partnership
 - Site prep (spray, mulch)
 - Site maintenance (spray, irrigation)



Vancouver Lake

- Active participant in Vancouver Lake Partnership
- Began “Experience Vancouver Lake” project in 2015
- Funding from Clark County, Port of Vancouver, City of Vancouver
- Important on-going project
- Build stewardship/engagement at Vancouver Lake
 - Classroom lessons – 10 classes/250 students
 - Vancouver Lake field trips
 - On-water trips in Big Canoes
 - Family Nature Hikes
 - Communication



Woodin Creek

- Hidden Glen Park
 - 3-acres of restoration (from grass park to riparian forest)
 - 4500 native trees and shrubs planted
 - 530 students
 - 2-3 water quality focused classroom lessons
 - Planting field trip
 - 47 volunteers planted during volunteer planting events
 - Interpretive sign
 - Ecology 319 funding



Woodin Creek

- Brookhaven Park – Rasmussen Site
 - About 3-acres of restoration across two sites
 - Site prep, native tree and shrub plantings
 - Planted 4,455 plants
 - 21 classrooms – 540 students
 - 2-3 classroom lessons
 - Riparian planting field trip
 - 45 volunteers planted as part of the project
 - Interpretive sign
 - Great partnership with the City of Battle Ground
 - Funding – LCFRB-CCCWRF



Campen Creek / Washougal High School

- Multiple Components
- First – student and riparian riparian restoration along Campen Creek in Mable Kerr Park
 - Site prep (including tree removal/trimming for safety)
 - Archeology work (Ecology/DAHP – approval), monitoring plan. Archeologist on site during student/volunteer planting events.
 - On hold – Science Team developing larger Campen Creek restoration project within same project area



Campen Creek / Washougal High School

- Washougal High School and Adjacent Streets
 - Largest area of impervious surface in Campen Creek watershed
 - Flows to pipes and to Campen Creek with little/no treatment
- Developing Ecology grant application to design a series of stormwater retrofit projects that could capture/treat stormwater from 8-10 acres of impervious surface (mostly parking/streets).
- Partners: City of Washougal, Washougal School District, Washougal High School
- Hope to include stormwater/project engagement for HS students



Washington Outdoor Learning Grant

- New WA grant program
- Short timeline – awards announced 9/29
- One of 17 funded projects \$138,360 (72 applicants)
- Work with 5 Clark County elementary schools
 - Rural, economically disadvantaged, or high minority
- Provide 355 students with 18 hours of instruction in 2022-2023
 - 15 hours of outdoor learning (school and field)



Recent/On-going Projects

- Science Team
 - Steigerwald Lake National Wildlife Refuge
 - East Fork Lewis River
 - Campen Creek
 - Some monitoring in Clark County too... 😊



Steigerwald Lake NWR Restoration

- Largest restoration project in lower Columbia River (\$32 million)
- 120 acres of new wetland
- Planted more than 500,000 trees and shrubs across 250 acres
- Reconnected 965 acres of floodplain to the lower Columbia River
- Reconnected Gibbons Creek to its floodplain
- Raised Hwy 14 and build setback levees to reduce flood risk
- Built a new parking lot, added to the trail system
- Etc!



East Fork Lewis River

- SRFB Grant: \$183,109
- Develop final designs
- Remove a quarter-mile of hardened shoreline to reconnect two small tributaries
- Will improve function of a 10-acre floodplain wetland
- Re-establish native plants along shoreline
- Benefits multiple fish species



East Fork Lewis River

- EFLR and Mason Creek
 - SRFB Grant: \$199,297
 - Working toward final restoration designs
 - Riparian restoration, instream habitat improvements, off-channel connectivity
 - Improve habitat quality and quantity
 - Improve access to off-channel wetland areas
 - Improve thermal refuge areas
 - Multiple fish species



Campen Creek

- Developing restoration designs
- Mostly in Mable Kerr Park, possibly portions of Orchard Hills Golf Course
- Campen Creek - Key tributary to Gibbons Creek/Steigerwald
- Importance of moving upstream, whole watershed approach
- Design goals –
 - Re-engage the creek with its floodplain
 - Raise shallow groundwater levels
 - Dissipate and attenuate storm flows
 - Improve downstream water quality



Map of Mable Kerr Park Site, Washougal, WA

Mable Kerr Park Stormwater OSPREY Project

Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership

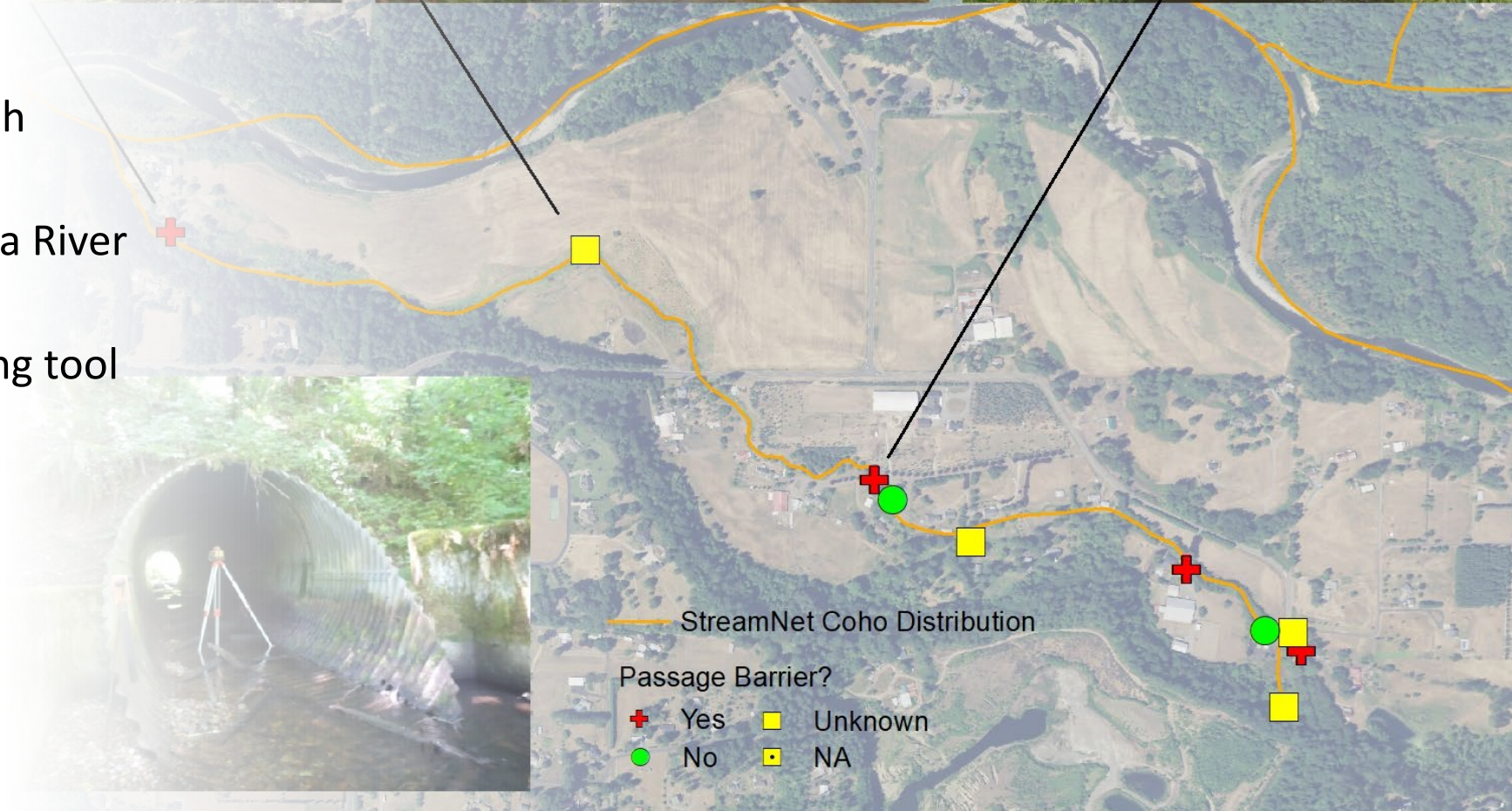
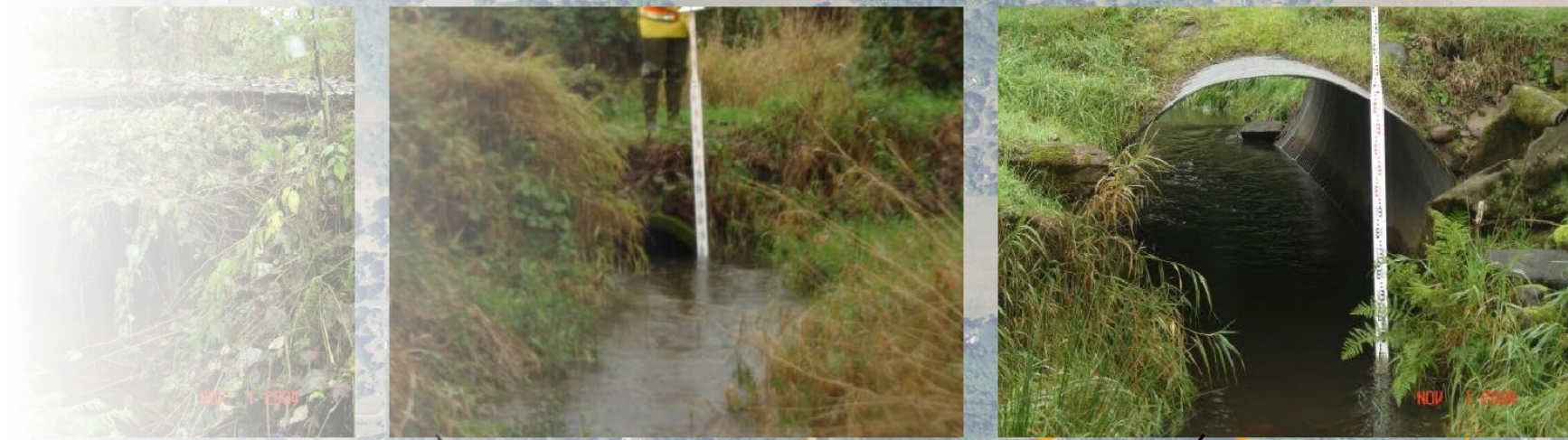
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Fish Passage Barriers Assessment

- SRFB Grant: \$299,731
- Evaluate and inventory fish passage barriers
- Across the lower Columbia River region
- Develop an online mapping tool
- Rank barriers in order of importance



Monitoring!

- Status and trend monitoring in Ridgefield Campbell Slough
- Restoration effectiveness near Vancouver Lake and in La Center
- Habitat restoration effectiveness monitoring at Steigerwald



A photograph of a sunset over a large body of water, likely a lake or bay. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a bright, shimmering path of light across the water's surface. In the foreground, the dark silhouette of a boat's rigging and mast is visible on the right side. Several sailboats are scattered across the water in the distance, their sails catching the light. The sky is a gradient of dark colors, from deep blue to a soft orange near the horizon. The overall mood is serene and contemplative.

QUESTIONS?