

Do you ♥ estuaries? Read on to find out how to show them some love this month!

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Making a Difference on MLK Day



Martin Luther King, Jr. Day is celebrated across the U.S. as a day to make your community a better place. This year, over 30 volunteers of all ages joined us in the Gorge to plant **870 native ninebark, snowberry, and salmonberry** along the banks of Wahkeena Creek in Benson State Park. Riparian plantings help shade and cool the water to temperatures that support salmon. Plantings are part of a **larger habitat restoration project led by the Estuary Partnership** at

Benson that includes placement of 80 large logs for fish habitat, stormwater treatment for the park's parking lot, and replacement of a water diversion structure to maintain higher, cooler flows through the summer when salmon are most in need of cold water refugia.

It was a fine January day and everybody had a great time. Thanks to the generosity of New Seasons Market, everyone was treated to a tasty lunch. A pileated woodpecker even joined us! A gallery of photos from the day can be found [on our Facebook page](#).



Thank you for making our volunteer plantings possible: Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, REI, New Seasons Market, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Oregon State Parks, and U.S. EPA.

And huge thanks to everyone who came out to help us make a difference!

Family Watershed Festival



This **Thursday, February 12**, the Estuary Partnership is co-hosting a Family Watershed Festival with the [City of Vancouver Water Resources Education Center](#) at [La Center Middle School](#).

The event will run

from **5:30 - 7:30 p.m.** and feature a variety of fun, family-focused activities. Kids (and parents!) can test water quality, observe stream bugs, explore animal furs and skulls, and learn ways to help keep our streams and wetlands healthy. All ages are welcome to attend. There will be prizes, snacks, and lots of ways to engage, learn, and have fun. We hope to see you there!

Paddling Show Promotes the Partnership



Photo by Bryan Aulick

Each year, thousands of paddlers spend a few hours or a few days on the [Lower](#)

[Columbia River Water Trail](#). Fewer endeavor to paddle the entire 146 miles from Bonneville Dam. An even smaller number of hardy souls undertake the trip in late October/early November when daylight is short and rain is prevalent.

Seattle area travel writer and mountain guide [Charlotte Austin](#) is used to such adventure. On



Welcome to new Board member **Roger McFadden**, Vice President, Senior Scientist of Staples, Inc. [Read bios for Roger and the rest of our outstanding Board.](#)



We're HIRING!

The Estuary Partnership is seeking an exceptional **Executive Assistant**. Applications are due February 26. [Find out more or apply now](#), and please help us spread the word!

short notice and with limited paddling experience, [borrowed gear](#), and lots of pluck, she organized and took such a trip this past fall. Now, she's telling the story of her paddle in a series of slideshows around the region – and she's donating the proceeds to the Estuary Partnership!

At her Portland show on Thursday, January 22, nearly 100 people filled the Patagonia store to see and hear about the experience. For donations to the Estuary Partnership, attendees got Ninkasi beer, Brew Dr. Kombucha, and raffle tickets for Patagonia gear and other great prizes. By the time the night was over, over \$200 filled the donation pot for the Estuary Partnership.

We'd like to thank Charlotte for her efforts and her support. Mark your calendar for her [upcoming shows](#):

- Wednesday, February 11 in Port Angeles, WA at the Vern Burton Community Center
- Thursday, May 21 in Astoria at Fort George Brewery & Public House (part of the North Coast Nature Matters series). We'll be there, too!

Paddling the [Lower Columbia River Water Trail](#) is all about adventure, connecting to nature, and creating and telling stories. Thanks to Charlotte for sharing her story and inviting us to share ours!



[Volunteer - plant trees!](#)

We have plantings coming up at Benson State Park near Multnomah Falls on **February 28, March 7, and March 14**—we hope you will join us!



@ColumbiaEstuary

[#IHeartEstuaries](#)

February 11-13, we are joining estuary groups across the country to tell our leaders to prioritize the funding of federal programs that support estuaries - like the National Estuary Program.

Check [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) for the [#iheartestuaries](#) tag, and join the conversation!

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