



Board Briefing Book November 2023

Prepared by:

E. Elaine Placido, DPA, Executive Director

Table of Contents

Meeting Agenda:.....	3
Prior Meeting Record:.....	4
Executive Director's Report:.....	6
Team Updates:.....	8
Community Programs/Ed Team:	8
<i>Totals for Education Programs the 23-24 school year from September 1 – November 17, 2023</i>	8
New Awards and Projects of Note:	8
Stormwater	9
Science Team:	11
Restoration Efforts:	11
Other Active Restoration Projects:.....	12
Monitoring Team:	13
Promotions	13
Conference Presentations:	14
Ecosystem Monitoring Program (EMP) and Action Effectiveness Monitoring and Research Program (AEMR)	14
Columbia County Water Quality Monitoring Program.....	14
BIL – Methane Carbon Flux Study (CH4C)	15
Communications & Outreach:.....	16
Social media stats:.....	16
Media Coverage:	17
DEI Steering Team:.....	18
Safety Committee:	18
Funding Report:.....	19

Meeting Agenda:

Board of Directors Meeting Agenda
November 30, 2023, **9:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**
Teams meeting link: [Click here to join the meeting](#)

- 9:30 Call meeting to order
Review of Agenda
Review and Approval of September Board Meeting Record
Introductions
- 9:45 Executive Director's Report
- Written Report/Board Book Follow Up
 - Grants Update, Pending and Received
 - Contracts Update
 - Personnel Update
 - Legislative Update
- 10:00 Program Presentation: *Stormwater Program*
- Presentation by Chris Hathaway, Community Programs Director, and Aaron Guffey, Stormwater Project Manager
- 10:20 Program Presentation: *Communications Plan*
- Presentation by Erinne Goodell, Communications & Development Manager, and Jasmine Zimmer-Stucky, Public & Legislative Affairs Specialist
- 10:40 **Board Action Item:** *Approval of Communications Plan*
- 10:45 Break
- 11:00 Program Presentation and Discussion with the Board: *Project Development – How to build a successful project, the challenges of time and funding*
- Paul Kolp, Restoration Program Lead
 - Chris Collins, Restoration Program Lead
 - Chris Hathaway, Community Programs Director
 - Jenny Dezso, Principal Restoration Ecologist
 - Valerie Pufahl, Education Programs Manager
 - Jasmine Zimmer-Stucky, Public & Legislative Affairs Specialist
 - Erinne Goodell, Communications & Development Manager
 - Elaine Placido, Executive Director
- 11:45 CCMP Update Check In
- 11:50 Board Member General Announcements
- 12:00 Meeting Adjourns

Upcoming Meetings & Events

Board Development Committee: January 22, 2024

Executive Committee: February 1, 2024

Board of Directors: February 15, 2024

Prior Meeting Record:

**Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership
Board Meeting Record**

Thursday, September 21, 2023 9:30 a.m. – 12:00 noon Estuary Partnership Offices

Members Present: Matthew Jones, Rosemary Furfey, Barbara Bergquist, Joseph Hattrick, Season Long, Margaret Magruder, Jane Bacchieri, Rian Sallee, Mary Lou Soscia, Tabitha Reeder

Ex Officio Members Present: Irma Lagomarsino, Yvonne Valette, John Netto

Presiding Officer: Matthew Jones

Staff Present: E. Elaine Placido, Madeline Marucha, Marci Krass, Jasmine Zimmer-Stucky, Samantha Dumont, Erinne Goodell, Alvey Seeyouma, Chris Collins

Other Present: Neina Chapa

Review and Approval of May 18, 2023 Meeting Record

Action: *Approved.*

Executive Director Update

Grants and Contracts. Elaine Placido gave an overview of current and pending grants and contracts.

ANEP Meeting. Director Placido reminded the Board that the Estuary Partnership will be hosting staff and directors from other National Estuary Programs on November 14-16. [A schedule of activities can be found here.](#)

Personnel Update. Director Placido gave an update on new staff members at the Estuary Partnership. The Partnership recently hired Principal Restoration Ecologist Kari Dupler, worked with three limited duration staff in the Monitoring and Education teams over the summer, and is in the hiring process for a new Program Assistant position to support the Community Programs team.

Action: *None Required.*

Executive Committee Report

Employee Handbook Revisions. Director Placido presented updates to the Employee Handbook that the Executive Committee approved in its recent meeting. She also updated the Board on further updates to the vehicle use policy based on suggestions from the Executive Committee and the Partnership's auto insurance carrier.

November Board Meeting Date. Director Placido informed the Board that the Executive Committee has voted to reschedule the November Board meeting due to the scheduling of the ANEP meeting. The Board meeting will now be held on November 30.

Action: *None Required.*

Indigenous Land Care Presentation, Marci Krass and Alvey Seeyouma

Principal Restoration Ecologist Marci Krass and Field Technician Alvey Seeyouma gave a presentation about the Indigenous land care strategies and tribal engagement work that they have been performing in their project at the Sandy River Delta. This project grew out of conversations following Confluence Field School.

Action: *None Required.*

Board Development Committee Report, Irma Lagomarsino

Irma Lagomarsino presented updates to the Board Recruitment Strategy and the new Board onboarding process. She also informed the Board that the Board Development Committee is seeking new members and encouraged the Board to consider serving on the Committee.

Action: None Required.

Board Action Items

New Board Members. The Board approved the nominations of Chad Brown and Amy Boyd.

Action: Approved.

Board Development Plan. The Board reviewed the revisions to the [Board Development Plan](#). They approved the plan, but noted that “Education” and “LGBTQ+” should be added to the table in the Board Composition section (they are present in the Board Profile Grid) and recommended that the Board retreat be held biennially rather than annually.

Action: Approved with further revisions as described.

Requirement for DEI Learning. The Board heard Director Placido’s recommendation to require DEI learning as a component of Board service; this recommendation is responsive to conversations with a new Board member.

Action: Approved.

CCMP Update Methodology. The Board reviewed the [proposed methodology for the upcoming CCMP update process](#).

Action: Approved.

Why Give? Fundraising Presentation

The Communications Team noted that in lieu of presenting on the importance of supporting the Partnership’s fundraising efforts, they would follow up with the Board via email.

Action: None Required.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:00.

Submitted by: Elaine Placido, Executive Director; Madeline Marucha, Operations Coordinator

Signature: _____

Date Approved: _____

Next Executive Committee Meeting: November 2, 2023

Next Board Meeting: November 16, 2023

Executive Director's Report:

The summer has been extremely busy across the entire organization. Below are some of the highlights of what I've been working on:

- EPA Workplan – We did receive our Agreement for EPA Base 8. We're waiting for the approval of the extension for Base 7. When the approval happens, we'll be able to drawdown funds that remain unspent from that Agreement.
- Equity Plan – The Equity Plan ended up not being approved when we expected it to be. Changes were submitted on October 4th that were responsive, I believe, to EPA's comments and concerns. But we're still awaiting approval. That approval is necessary for the match waiver for our BIL funding for years 3 and beyond.
- BIL Workplan and Implementation – we've completed our second year of BIL projects and are awaiting approval of our Year 3 Workplan. With some relatively minor changes in the workplan, the major project areas remain: Stormwater/Green Infrastructure; Environmental Education; Clark County Urban Streams; Ridgefield Pits; Mable Kerr/Gibbons Creek; Habitat Restoration; Inventory of Carbon Sequestration; and the Landcover Dataset update.
- Implementation of QuickBooks Online – the implementation of QB Online remains a challenge. Fiscal team members will be attending training over the next few weeks and are hoping to unlock some of the challenges of this system.
- ANEP Fall Tech Transfer- We were honored to host the Fall ANEP Tech Transfer meeting here at our office in November. Directors and staff from twenty-three NEPs attended the three-day meeting that included field trips to Steigerwald and Tillamook. Yvonne, our EPA Coordinator and your fellow Board Member, was integral in a well-attended session on grant and project management – thanks Yvonne!
- ANEP Board- During elections at our ANEP Board of Directors meeting on 11/14, I was nominated and elected to the Executive Committee and will serve as the ANEP Secretary for the next two years.
- Spring DC Trip and ANEP Meeting- Our next trip to DC and visits to the hill will be the week of April 29th. As last year, Jasmine, Erinne, and I will make the trip and mix meetings with fellow NEPs, ANEP, EPA, and visits to the hill to meet with as many of our Congressional delegation and/or their staff members as possible. The Fall Tech Transfer will be in DC and part of the RAE Conference.
- NEP PE Ex Officio Member – Another NEP Director asked me to serve on their PE Team, so I'll be participating again this coming year on another PE team, this time for the Partnership for the Delaware Estuary. It is a fantastic experience and a great opportunity to learn from other NEPs. This visit will be in early summer.

Since our last meeting I've participated in:

- Vancouver Lake Steering Committee Meeting
- The Annual Event! Thanks all for coming out and supporting us.
- Two new Board member on-boarding meetings
- Four meetings with Board members
- Attended one PMEP Steering Committee Meeting
- Attended two ANEP External Affairs Committee Meetings

- Attended the Columbia River Basin Restoration Working Group meeting
- Attended the Lacamas Lake Symposium
- Provided testimony before the OWEB Board about our Monitoring Team proposal
- Met with the OWEB Director
- Attended one ANEP Board Meeting

Team Updates:

Community Programs/Ed Team:

Totals for Education Programs the 23-24 school year from September 1 – November 17, 2023

- 51 classes within 15 schools
- 1,238 students
- 102 class lessons
- 20 student field trips

Totals for Big Canoe Programs between Aug 16 – Oct 30, 2023:

- 13 Big Canoe trips
- 203 participants
- 4 paddle locations
- 9 student field trips also included Big Canoe paddling at 3 locations

Totals for 2023 Big Canoe Programs (April – October 2023):

- 44 Big Canoe trips
- 509 participants
- 7 paddle locations
- Additionally, 23 student field trips included Canoeing for 947 students in 2023

New Awards and Projects of Note:

- RCO/OSPI Outdoor Learning Grant project has received full funding for the expansion of our Explore Local program (\$299,761). This project began in mid-October once the contract was received and executed on 10/20/23 and will continue through June 30, 2025. This project will provide 15 outdoor hours per student each school year for a total of 800 fourth and fifth grade students. Elementary students will receive 6 class lessons on their school campus, many of which will be outdoor lessons where they investigate environmental science, habitats, and species and receive 3 field trips over the course of the school year. We are also piloting a high school program for the summer of 2024 that will provide a 5–6-week Career and Technical Education program in Restoration Ecology for up to 16 students from the Evergreen School District. For the high school program, EP will partner with the Evergreen CTE program/teachers, Pacific Education Institute, and we will act as the community partner who will provide hands on experience of up to 100 outdoor hours per student.
- WA Ecology Salmon Creek Clean Water Enhancement and Education (\$249,369). Project is fully funded and will continue the Estuary Partnership ongoing riparian restoration work at Salmon Creek and associated water quality focused education from 2023-2026. We have received draft agreement and will meet with Ecology staff to review on 11/28/23. We anticipate a fully executed contract around January 1, 2024.

- Our Experience Vancouver Lake project has been extended through the end of the 2023 calendar year through an additional \$25,000 of funding from the Port of Vancouver. This will continue funding for 6 or more classes of elementary students to have three classroom lessons and a Vancouver Lake field trip, as well as provide up to two additional community Big Canoe programs this fall. The funding partners have decided to provide an additional \$175,000 in funding to continue the Experience Vancouver Lake project through June 30, 2026. We have submitted a SOW and budget and expect a signed contract by 12/31/2023.
- The Estuary Partnership signed a contract with Gorge Refuge Stewards for \$50,000 to continue educational and community programming and stewardship events at Steigerwald National Wildlife Refuge from October 1, 2023, to September 30, 2024. This was an invitation-only proposal that came about because of our long history working at Steigerwald, with the USFWS, and with the Gorge Refuge Stewards. Funding comes to the Gorge Refuge Stewards through the USFWS Urban Refuge program. Work has started and stewardship dates are being scheduled.
- Contracts with OWEB and Ecology for our 2023-2025 “base” projects continue to move through the contracting process. These biennial awards offer non-competitive critical funding for our community restoration projects, volunteer engagement, and student field experiences. These funds enable us to leverage these awards as a match to secure additional funding for our programs on an annual basis.

Stormwater

Baker Bay: Staff and contractors have completed and submitted to Ecology for their review of the project’s 90% Construction Documents. After Ecology’s 45-day review period, we anticipate being close to starting a bid process to hire a contractor to build the project. Construction would ideally start in late Spring. Project partners, the City of Ilwaco and the Port of Ilwaco are excited to be near the breaking ground point.

Rainier Boat Ramp: Construction has finished and DEQ has accepted our Final Report on the project, which was funded in part through a DEQ SEP. The project created a new stormwater infiltration facility at the Rainier Boat Ramp.

Grattix Box: We have built 16 Grattix boxes. Ten boxes have been delivered, and we are now working on the logistics for making downspout connections. Eleven boxes have been earmarked and we are working on logistics for shipping and installing them. Outreach will also continue until we find homes for the remaining 6 boxes. As a part of our efforts to promote Grattix boxes we presented the project at the EWRG Sustainable Stormwater Symposium and to the Columbia SWCD board of directors.

Mittleman Jewish Community Center: We have received our permit for the MJCC stormwater retrofit project. We are waiting for a construction price from our contractor (Verde Builds) and expecting to schedule construction in early 2024.

Washougal High School and Surrounding Streets: WA Dept of Ecology awarded a Stormwater Financial Assistance Program (SFAP) grant for the project to the City of Washougal. The Estuary Partnership and the City of Washougal have signed an MOU that outlines the flow of funds and the Estuary Partnership’s project management responsibilities. Ecology and the City of Washougal will sign a contract soon that provides \$390,502 to develop stormwater retrofit designs at the Washougal High School and three

surrounding streets. The Estuary Partnership's EPA Columbia River Basin School Stormwater Improvement project will provide approximately \$20,000 in match. Initial work (Geotech, survey) will start in early 2024. This is a design only project. Project construction will require a separate Ecology SFAP grant.

Tualatin SWCD TREE: All background investigation is complete for the Washington County Stormwater Assessment project. Our design consultant, Juncus Studio completed stormwater retrofit concept designs at three locations that could be used to apply for future funding for new projects on the ground. A final report will be submitted to close out the project.

EPA Columbia River Basin Restoration Program Fund the Funder: EPA has officially awarded the Estuary Partnership \$4,287,696 for our School Stormwater Reduction Program (\$2,376,029 has been allocated so far). We have multiple projects in the early stages of development with Portland Public Schools (Rigler, Chief Joseph, Laurelhurst, Creston Head Start, Glencoe). We're developing an RFQ to create an on-call list of landscape architects and stormwater engineers that to work on the project. Grant funding was used to create a new Ecology SFAP application for a project at Evergreen High School in Vancouver (see below).

Evergreen High School: On behalf of the Estuary Partnership, the City of Vancouver submitted a grant application to Ecology for a stormwater retrofit design project at Evergreen High School in Vancouver. (This approach mirrors our Ilwaco and Washougal projects – the Estuary Partnership needs a City, County, or Port partner to apply for SFAP funding.) Preliminary grant decisions will be announced in early 2024, final decisions in July 2024. The project would create designs for stormwater retrofit projects within multiple parking areas on the Evergreen campus.

Clackamas County Water Environment Services (WES) RiverHealth Grant at Sunnyside Elementary School (North Clackamas School District NCSD). We received a \$26,996 RiverHealth grant to build a stormwater retrofit project at Sunnyside School. This funding will provide a match for the EPA grant, and the EPA grant will provide any additional project funding necessary. We are hiring a landscape architect to develop initial designs with the idea of building the project in Spring 2024.

Science Team:

- Catherine Corbett chaired a technical session on integrating climate adaptation into restoration projects and resource management programming at the Coastal and Estuarine Research Federation (CERF) biennial conference held in Portland in Nov 2023. Chris and Catherine also hosted a tour of the Gorge and Steigerwald for CERF participants.
- The Tracking Toxics in the Lower Columbia (TLC) is well underway. They completed the first two cycles of sampling and have deployed samplers for the last cycle. The Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission (CRITFC) deployed samplers at a 10th site and is paying for lab analysis of samples collected at that site. We are getting ready to kick off the next phase of the project by hosting stakeholder meetings to discuss updating the sampling plan.
- We've held three community workshops in Baker Bay and two community workshops in Grays Bay for the Bay to Bay: Community Resiliency project with Washington Sea Grant and Pacific Conservation District. We're hosting the last workshop in Grays Bay in early 2024. The workshops have each garnered over 30 participants. We are initiating a Storymap to serve as the final Resiliency Plan that will host workshop results and concept designs for identified solutions. We likely will also host a final celebratory "workshop" for the two regions to present results of the project and garner support for next steps.
- The October Science Work Group focused on the annual update of results from the Ecosystem Monitoring Program. All presentations and the meeting recording are posted on our website if you would like further information.

Restoration Efforts:

Steigerwald: The project team has closed out three of five funding sources and completed all regulatory reporting, except FEMA remapping of the floodplain, which should be completed within the next six months. The team continues to give tours to select parties and control invasive species to promote our native plantings. The team will also do some additional interplanting this winter.

East Fork Lewis River Floodplain Reconnection Project (Ridgefield Pits): After a decade of planning and collaboration with over 25 stakeholder organizations and individuals, the East Fork Lewis River Floodplain Reconnection Project is moving towards construction. The Estuary Partnership, and design team, are completing the 60% design package with the engineer (Inter-fluve), which includes engineering drawings, construction cost estimates, design report and materials specifications. We are working on various state, federal and local permits to support this project. We have also hired Consor to review engineering designs, develop an independent cost estimate and to provide construction management services. Construction is fully funded with awards from Washington Recreation and Conservation Office Salmon Recovery Funding Grant (\$7.06m), Ecology's Floodplain by Design program (\$5.5m), and NOAA's Transformational Habitat Restoration and Coastal Resiliency Program (\$7.5m). Funding will correct legacy effects of instream gravel mining, restore three river miles of the East Fork Lewis River – protect homes, county property, businesses, and create habitat for salmon, steelhead, lamprey and create additional wetland off-channel habitat. In the short term, these funds equate to local jobs for construction crews and hands-on opportunities for students and community members to help restore an important local river. Next steps for this important project include submitting permit applications (winter 2023), finalizing project designs and costs (spring 2024), construction procurement (fall 2024), and construction (spring 2025).

Other Active Restoration Projects:

In addition to the Steigerwald Reconnection Project and the East Fork Lewis River Floodplain Reconnection Project, active restoration work continues eleven additional projects:

- Horsetail Creek Phase 2 –Plant establishment maintenance and interplanting continues at the Horsetail Creek floodplain in the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area (USFS) where 85,000 native plants were planted during 2020-2022. This adds to restoration and fish passage work completed at the site in 2013.
- Horsetail Creek Thermal Refuge Enhancement – We recently completed phase 3 of a multi-year feasibility study assessing the potential for constructing a cold-water refuge at the confluence of the Columbia River with Horsetail and Oneonta creeks. Currently, we are evaluating the next steps, including funding options and long-term maintenance and ownership.
- Mason Creek – Mason Creek is located about 1 mile downstream of the Ridgefield Pits project. Mason Creek is an important tributary of the East Fork Lewis River for rearing salmonids and is typically several degrees (Celsius) cooler. Restoration efforts will focus on a 1-mile section of Mason Creek above the confluence and on a ½ mile section of the East Fork Lewis River. The project will reconnect a 10-acre off-channel wetland, improve riparian conditions, increase instream habitat quantity and quality, and enhance existing cold-water refuge areas. We are currently developing the final design package with the engineer (Inter-fluve), which includes engineering drawings, cost estimate, design report and material specifications. We will also be developing permits and conducting a cultural resource survey. We will complete final designs and permitting, including cultural resources, by April 2024 and anticipate construction beginning in 2025 or 2026. The project is funded by the Washington Recreation and Conservation Office Salmon Recovery Funding Grant.
- Dyer Creek- Dyer Creek is located immediately downstream of the Ridgefield Pits project. Dyer Creek is an important tributary of the East Fork Lewis River, particularly for coho salmon, and is currently disconnected from the East Fork Lewis River. Restoration efforts will focus on a ¾-mile section of Dyer Creek above the confluence and on a ½-mile section of the East Fork Lewis River. The project will remove riprap from the streambanks to allow for natural channel processes, reconnect a 10-acre off-channel wetland, improve riparian conditions, increase instream habitat quantity and quality, and enhance existing cold-water refuge areas. We are currently developing the final design package with the engineer (Inter-fluve), which includes engineering drawings, cost estimate, design report and material specifications. We recently completed a wetland inventory, and the wetland report will be completed by the end of 2023. We will also be developing permits and conducting a cultural resource survey. We will complete final designs and permitting, including cultural resources, by April 2024 and anticipate construction beginning in 2025 or 2026. The project is funded by the Washington Recreation and Conservation Office Salmon Recovery Funding Grant.
- Woodard Creek- We received funding from the State of Washington’s Recreation and Conservation Office Salmon Recovery Funding Grant for a restoration project completed in 2021. The project will reconnect the channel to the entire valley bottom in an area impacted by historic road building, timber harvest and mining. The project will take place on U.S. Forest Service land, and they are our partner on this project. We submitted our initial final design package in June 2023 and are currently revising the designs with assistance from USGS, WDFW,

and Wolf Water Resources. We recently completed a wetland inventory, and the wetland report will be completed by the end of 2023. The revised final design package, and permitting, including cultural resources, will be completed by April 2024. We will apply for Construction funding in 2024, with an eye toward construction in 2025 or 2026.

- Multnomah Channel Marsh Natural Area (MCMNA) - We continue to work with Metro to specify and design restoration actions for the floodplain wetland site. The final 60% design for the project was completed in November. We also are working with ODOT, the railroad, and ODFW to assess the feasibility of replacing the culvert (which poses a partial barrier to fish and amphibian passage) under Highway 30.
- Campen Creek Floodplain Reconnection – We worked with the City of Washougal and our engineering and cultural resources consultants to develop the 60% plan set. We also submitted a grant for construction phase funding to the WA Dept. of Ecology and will be giving a site tour to Port of Camas Washougal commissioners, congressional staffers, and the board of the Gorge Refuge Stewards on November 18. We anticipate completing the 90% design and permitting in spring 2024 and plan to construct the project during summer 2025.
- East Fork Thermal Assessment- in 2022, we completed the lower East Fork River Thermal Assessment. The study assessed summer stream temperatures, identified potential thermal refuge enhancement sites, and ranked the sites based on ecological attributes and social constraints. Conceptual designs were developed for the top three priority thermal refuge enhancement sites. The assessment was funded by RCO and completed in partnership with Clark County, WDFW, and other stakeholders. In 2023 we secured grant funds from RCO to develop preliminary designs for several sites upstream of Daybreak Park, WA.
- Franz Lake National Wildlife Refuge – We recently completed a feasibility study and alternatives analysis at this site, in partnership with the USFWS and BPA. We currently are working with the USFWS to refine the preferred alternative, and we will develop the 30% design in 2024. This site is also one of our long-term monitoring sites under the Ecosystem Monitoring Program.
- Mirror Lake Upstream Reconnection Project (Rooster Rock State Park) - We currently are reaching out to ODOT, OPRD, and the UPRR to assess support for this project and evaluate its feasibility. That outreach will be completed in November, at which point we will assess next steps, including funding.
- Lower Columbia River Barrier Assessment - We are currently working on a fish passage barrier inventory and decision support tool for selecting barriers for passage improvement, for the lower Columbia sub-basin in Washington. The project was funded by RCO. This assessment will include a GIS-based comprehensive inventory of barriers for the region and a prioritization model that will determine where maximum salmon recovery benefits may be realized. We are currently compiling fish barrier inventories, conducting field visits to assess passage quality, and developing the decision support model. The project is scheduled to be completed in Fall 2024.

Monitoring Team:

Promotions

- Research Scientist II Ian Edgar was recently promoted to Research Scientist III. Ian Edgar has played a significant role in revolutionizing our data processing and management systems. With his new position, he will continue to play a pivotal role co-managing the Ecosystem Monitoring

Program and Action Effectiveness Management and Research Programs and implementing the BIL CH4C Project with Sarah Kidd and Sneha Rao.

- Research Technician Derek Marquis was also recently promoted to Research Scientist I. Derek will manage logistics for various pivotal operations in our projects.

Conference Presentations:

- Sarah Kidd, Ian Edgar, and Sneha Rao led a Tableau for Environmental Science Workshop at the CERF conference in Nov 2023
- Sarah Kidd and Ian Edgar facilitated a session on Tableau and other digital tools at the November 2023 ANEP Workshops

Ecosystem Monitoring Program (EMP) and Action Effectiveness Monitoring and Research Program (AEMR)

- We successfully released the EMP hybrid report in September 2023. This is a huge collaborative effort between researchers at LCEP and other principal researchers to transition a historically 300+ report into interactive Tableau dashboards. Click here to browse the EMP Hybrid report: [Ecosystem Monitoring Program Dashboard](#).
- The interactive dashboards of the EMP Program were presented at the October Science Work group. More info [here](#), including the meeting recording and all presentations.
- We also released the AEMR 2023 hybrid report, releasing more tableau dashboards that summarized the trajectories of restoration. The tableau dashboards can be found [here](#)
- We also released a significant update to its monitoring protocols for juvenile salmon habitats in the lower Columbia River estuary. This revision represents a strategic enhancement of this methodology, blending the best practices refined since the project's initiation in 2018 with the innovative strides in estuarine research. The composition of this guidebook is the culmination of concerted efforts and collaborative wisdom, offering a comprehensive framework for habitat monitoring. [link](#)
- We have now procured the Carrier H6 HE+ Hexacopter UAV, a Department of Defense (DOD)-approved drone. This new tool comes with advanced sensors for capturing high-quality images and videos and offers sophisticated mapping capabilities. We also participated in a comprehensive UAV training program, held by the drone manufacturer in July 2023 at Steigerwald Lake National Refuge. See the flier outlining the new drone [here](#). This equipment will be used to monitor Steigerwald and other BPA restoration sites.

Columbia County Water Quality Monitoring Program

- In an unfortunate turn of events, OWEB Declined to provide us with further funding to continue the water quality monitoring program. We are currently working with our Program Funder Columbia County Soil and Water Conservation District on a path forward, beyond December 2023.
- Using the current level of funding, we will continue monitoring and collect e-DNA samples, across Columbia County.
- The OWEB grant report summarizing WQ data from 2017-2022 was finalized ([link to public dashboard](#)). Data from this program is regularly shared with the ODEQ and is publicly available.

BIL – Methane Carbon Flux Study (CH₄C)

- The first Eddy Flux Tower results were presented at a poster by Dr. Joe Needoba of OHSU at the CERF Conference in November 2023.
- All the necessary research permits have been acquired and we're excited to work with PSU to incorporate soil chamber work into our data collection plan.
- We meet with all the researchers regularly to continue to develop our research design plans and coordinate our efforts accordingly.

Communications & Outreach:

- The Annual Celebration took place September 28. The guests had a good time and things went smoothly, considering some new vendors. Our night-of revenue was \$20,369, and sponsors were \$31,000. This was under our goal of \$30,000 at the event, so we're strategizing about next year
- Coordinated the Association of National Estuary Programs meetings at our office November 14-16. We had a great showing with more than 55 folks from various NEPs across the country, and overwhelmingly positive comments. The event included 2 days of meetings, an afternoon tour to Steigerwald, and an all-day tour to Tillamook NEP
- Federal delegation updates:
 - The resolution designating September 16-23, 2023, as National Estuaries Week was co-sponsored by Oregon's Congresswoman Bonamici, Chavez-DeRemer, Congressman Blumenauer, and Senators Merkley and Wyden. Washington's Senator Cantwell also co-sponsored the resolution. Additional work will be done in the following year to obtain a higher percentage of co-sponsors from the federal delegation representing the Estuary Partnership's study area.
 - Hosted at site visit for staffers representing Congresswoman Gluesenkamp Perez, and Senators Murrey and Cantwell on November 18 at Washougal's Mable Kerr Park and Washougal High School. Other attendees included representatives from the City of Washougal, the Port of Camas-Washougal, and the Gorge Refuge Stewards. The purpose of the site visit was to talk about upcoming restoration and stormwater projects led by the Estuary Partnership and to share information about how federal investments are being used.
 - An upcoming site visit for a staffer from Congresswoman Chavez-DeRemer's office is scheduled for December 15 at Sunnyside Elementary School in the North Clackamas School District. The purpose of this site visit is to talk about how the Estuary Partnership is using the EPA's stormwater grant to improve water quality in the Congresswoman's district.

Social media stats:

- Top Facebook post: Promoting Scappoose Veterans Park volunteer event (post on Nov 3) with a reach of 1402 and 21 engagements:
<https://www.facebook.com/estuarypartnership/posts/352358864127386>
- Top Instagram post: Promoting a job with Ecology (Rian's former position) with a reach of 491 and 41 engagements. <https://www.instagram.com/p/CxJWhmwOAI9/>
- Top Tweet: Celebrating National Estuaries Week on September 18 with 653 impressions and 22 engagements <https://twitter.com/ColumbiaEstuary/status/1703921486921376189>
- Top LinkedIn post: Welcoming Principal Restoration Ecologist Kari Dupler, with 615 impressions and 45 engagements.
<https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7102447028978286593>

Media Coverage:

Steigerwald Reconnection Project wins award. Camas Post Record, August 31, 2023

Helping Hands: Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership. Vancouver Family Magazine, September 1, 2023

Ecology awards \$63 million to reduce flooding, protect communities, farms, restore habitat. Sunnyside Sun, September 1, 2023

Funding to aid the East Fork Lewis River Restoration. The Columbian, September 1, 2023

Washington Ecology awards \$63 million for flood, habitat, farmland mitigation. Center Square, September 1, 2023

Restoration group gets \$5.4 million for East Fork Lewis River restoration project. The Daily News. September 9, 2023

Clark County salmon recovery groups get \$1 million in grants. The Columbian, September 19, 2023

Green initiative: stormwater project in Rainier creates environmental benefits. The Chief, September 22, 2023

Clark County projects receive more than \$1 million for salmon habitat recovery. The Reflector, September 25, 2023

Rising Tide: residents of the lower Columbia estuary confront a shifting landscape. The Wahkiakum County Eagle, September 28, 2023

Environmental group eyes Campen Creek restoration. Camas Post Record, September 28, 2023

Is this \$20 million river restoration funding being spent wisely? Columbia Insight, September 28, 2023

With success of Steigerwald refuge restoration, conservationists want to improve Campen Creek in city's Mable Kerr Park. The Columbian, September 30, 2023

Washougal School District, City partner with nonprofit to fix WHS parking lot. Camas-Washougal Post-Record, October 12, 2023.

Partnership between Rainier, environmental group finishes work on new stormwater facility. The Daily News, October 14, 2023.

DEI Steering Team:

The DEI Steering Team will meet next on December 12, 2023. All Board members and staff are welcome to attend. Current projects include:

- Improving communication between the DEI Steering Team and the Board of Directors.
- Re-evaluating our meeting schedule to ensure that Steering Team members can attend and improving our practices for meeting planning and facilitation.
- Continuing to develop our practice of holding small discussion groups on DEI topics that rotate every 2-3 months. The topic for November/December is Environmental Justice, and the topic for January/February will be Ableism and Accessibility.

Safety Committee:

The Safety Committee met on November 21 and members of the Committee performed the quarterly office inspection on November 27. Recent accomplishments include:

- Improved the safety of the Ed Team storage area and implemented a new system for storing gasoline.
- Briefed teams on incident reporting procedures.
- Subscribed to a roadside assistance service for company vehicles.
- Reconfigured a cubicle pod to improve wiring safety.

Funding Report:
Grant Report 7/1/2023 through 11/22/2023

Grant Activity since July 1, 2023		
Row Labels	Sum of Grant Funded Amount	Sum of Grant Ask Amount
Education	\$ 299,761.00	\$ 299,761.00
Closed - Funded	\$ 299,761.00	\$ 299,761.00
Washington Recreation and Conservation Office	\$ 299,761.00	\$ 299,761.00
Monitoring	\$ 43,500.00	\$ 313,500.00
Closed - Declined		\$ 270,000.00
Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board		\$ 270,000.00
Closed - Funded	\$ 43,500.00	\$ 43,500.00
Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 25,000.00
Columbia Soil and Water Conservation District	\$ 18,500.00	\$ 18,500.00
Restoration	\$ 12,747,501.00	\$ 13,633,444.71
Closed - Funded	\$ 12,747,501.00	\$ 12,775,000.00
Bonneville Environmental Foundation	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 25,000.00
Lower Columbia Fish Recovery Board	\$ 250,000.00	\$ 250,000.00
Pending		\$ 858,444.71
Bonneville Environmental Foundation		\$ 50,000.00
Stormwater	\$ 4,854,692.52	\$ 4,857,692.13
Closed - Funded	\$ 4,827,696.00	\$ 4,827,696.00
Environmental Protection Agency	\$ 4,827,696.00	\$ 4,827,696.00
Pending	\$ 26,996.52	\$ 29,996.13
Clackamas County Water Environment Services	\$ 26,996.52	\$ 29,996.13
Unrestricted		\$ 5,000.00
Pending		\$ 5,000.00
Clif Bar Family Foundation		\$ 5,000.00
Grand Total	\$ 17,945,454.52	\$ 19,109,397.84

Contracts Report:

Contracts Report: (9/1/2023 through 11/22/2023)				
Party	Contract #	Dollar Value	Purpose	Date Signed
Fee for Service:				
None				
Contracts Awarded to Estuary Partnership:				
WA-RCO	22-2069	\$ 99,700.00	No Child Left Inside	9/7/2023
WA ECY	SEAFBD-2325-LCEP-00060	\$ 5,418,532.00	Floodplains by Design - East Fork Lewis River	9/8/2023
Gorge Refuge Stewards		\$ 50,000.00	Environmental Education at Steigerwald	9/21/2023
EPA	44-02J49201-0	\$ 5,771,464.00	Stormwater- Columbia Basin Restoration Program	9/25/2023
BES, City of Portland		\$ 11,958.00	Environmental Education	9/25/2023
BEF	MG-10910	\$ 25,000.00	Carbon Credit Program	10/17/2023
RCO	23-1339	\$ 299,761.00	Explore Local, Encounters and Connections	10/30/2023
	Total:	\$ 11,676,415.00		
Contracts Let by Estuary Partnership:				
Interfluve	O7-2024	\$ 111,565.00	Mason Creek Final Design	9/18/2023
Robertson Fick		\$ 14,950.00	Landscape Archetect for Evergreen HS - BIL funding	9/21/2023
Juncos Studios		\$ 5,000.00	Engineering -stormwater project at Evergreen HS	9/21/2023
North Clackamast Schools		\$ 1,500.00	Bus Transportation for Env. Ed. Programming	9/23/2023
NOAA	O6-2024	\$ 230,000.00	Ecosystem Monitoring	10/2/2023
UW	II- 2024	\$ 101,232.00	Ecosystem Monitoring	10/17/2023
OHSU	10-2024	\$ 307,792.00	Ecosystem Monitoring	10/17/2023
OHSU	O9-2024	\$ 110,605.00	Carbon Flux & Sequestration in the Columbia River Intertidal Wetlands - BIL funded	10/24/2023
Wolf Water Resources	I4-2024	\$ 20,000.00	Bay to Bay Project	11/1/2023
PSU	O8-224	\$ 129,536.00	Carbon Flux & Sequestration in the Columbia River Intertidal Wetlands - BIL funded	11/17/2023
	Total:	\$ 1,032,180.00		
Other:				
None				