

Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership

Columbia CONNECTIONS

Building connections...

Hundreds Get on the Water for First Time



"Look at the river!" shout excited kids as they arrive at Willamette Park on a sunny summer morning. These kids, along with adults and elders from Bridge Meadows neighborhood, came to paddle the Willamette River as part of the Estuary Partnership's Summer Paddle Program. For many, this was their first experience paddling a canoe on the water. During the two-hour canoe trip, the children and adults learned how to paddle a canoe, used binoculars to spy a great blue heron, and learned the importance of working together as a team. Smiles and laughter filled the day.

The focus of the Summer Paddle Program is to provide opportunities for people to get out on the water who typically do not have access to paddling programs. Bridge Meadows is a non-profit housing community for elders and children in foster care and a partner of the Estuary Partnership. Additional summer partners include the Portland Audubon Society Explorador Camp, Big Brothers Big Sisters, Self Enhancement Inc., and Friends of the Children. A goal is to spark a desire in the participants to connect and care for our local waterways.

The Estuary Partnerships' Summer Paddle program began in 2008 with the goal of increasing connections to the lower Columbia River by facilitating positive and safe on-water experiences for youth, families and under served community organizations. Each year the program grows, reaching new audiences and connecting more people to the Columbia River. This summer, the Estuary Partnership organized and led 24 paddle trips, taking nearly 500 youth and adults on-water.

[Read the full story](#)



Protecting ecosystems...

Louisiana Swamp Project restores 35 acres of habitat

In August 2013 the Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership, Lower Columbia River Watershed Council, Columbia Soil and Water Conservation District and US Fish and Wildlife Service began moving earth to restore 35-acres of wetland habitat at the "Louisiana Swamp" site on the lower Columbia River, 4.5 miles west of Clatskanie, OR. The collaborative partnership with the landowner, Greenwood Resources, Inc. removed and lowered large portions of a levee to reconnect the floodplain to Westport Slough, a tributary to the Columbia River. Once restored, the site will be a tidal wetland with a network of backwater channels; ideal for wildlife and migrating salmon to feed, rest and escape extreme conditions of the slough and Columbia River.

[Read the full story](#)



Engaging partners...

Smith Root supports the Estuary Partnership

Since 1964, Smith-Root, Inc. of Vancouver, Washington has supplied patented technology, product support, and specialized training to aquatic resource managers across the globe. The Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership Science Team recently used specialized Smith-Root equipment to assess the Horsetail Creek floodplain restoration project in the lower Columbia River Gorge. For 50 years, Smith-Root has been the world's leading provider of fisheries conservation equipment; even more impressive is that the company and its employees see stewardship as one of their primary objectives. Smith-Root is has been a long-time supporter of the Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership and is one of the prime sponsors of the upcoming 14th Annual Dinner & Art Gala on Saturday, October 12th at the Columbia River Yacht Club.

Smith-Root's President and CEO, Jeff Smith, serves on the Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership's Board of Directors, and recently noted, "With a team of extremely dedicated scientists, executives, and environmental educators, the Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership and Smith-Root share almost identical frameworks and conservation objectives. We are committed to the strong relationship we have with this organization that continues to deliver heightened conservation awareness and 'in-the-field' environmental education activities for local youth and adults." We are deeply honored to have this sustained investment from Smith-Root, Inc.

Upcoming Events

[14th Annual Dinner & Art Gala](#)

October 12, 2013, Columbia River Yacht Club

Join us for our largest fundraiser of the year and enjoy a wonderful evening on the river with friends!

Connect to the Columbia Volunteer Plantings

[Volunteer Tree Planting - Sandy River Delta](#)

November 2, 2013, 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM

Volunteers of all ages and abilities are needed to help plant trees at the beautiful Sandy River Delta.

[Volunteer Tree Planting - Steigerwald Lake](#)

November 16, 2013, 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM

Volunteers of all ages and abilities are needed to help plant trees at the beautiful Steigerwald Lake National Wildlife Refuge.

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