

Introducing the West Willamette Watersheds (W3) Collaboration

Join us in bringing Watershed Council coverage to more of the west side of the Willamette River!

Led by Oswego Lake & Tryon Creek Watershed Councils

The Willamette River connects us all – are you one of the tens of thousands of people who live, work, travel, learn, or recreate in the West Willamette Watershed? We're coming together to support over 50 creeks and waterways flowing through neighborhoods and natural areas along a 42-mile stretch of the Willamette River, in a geography mostly uncovered by watershed councils.

We're embarking on an exciting opportunity to connect people with their local watersheds, improving the health of the land, water, and communities. The West Willamette Watersheds (W3) Collaboration project area includes parts of Wilsonville, West Linn, Lake Oswego, and Portland, up through Forest Park.

What's to gain? Establishing expanded Watershed Council coverage will:

- Provide local governments and jurisdictions with a common table to gather around, to each play their part in the watershed's systems and provide community members with access to resources to improve watershed health in their communities.
- Bring watershed-based planning to the landscape for [Endangered Species Act \(ESA\)-listed fish](#), and implement restoration to support them. More below on fish!
- Close gaps in representation and planning on the lower 40 miles of the Willamette River on a reach with many tributaries.
- Allow for increased collaboration, fundraising, and strategy to achieve and implement this work.



What is a Watershed Council?

Watershed Councils (WCs) are community-based organizations that respond to place-based needs in their watersheds. They implement projects to support healthy watersheds and fish habitat, convene stakeholders across jurisdictions (because *salmon* don't know what county they swim in), and engage community members in this good work.



Why is this needed?

There's a gap in coverage! Larger bodies of water have had Watershed Councils established for a while, but many smaller creeks flowing directly into the Willamette River don't benefit from an organized, cross-jurisdictional entity and the watershed-based planning that WCs bring to the landscape. Let's change that!



Our collective vision

To build widespread understanding across community members about what watersheds are, what Watershed Councils do, and how to get involved. Ultimately, we'll bring together a coalition of partners, neighbors, and communities ready to take action – across city and county lines – to improve the ecological well-being of the West Willamette region.



What's happening

Between now and June 2027, an intensive community engagement process will build a coalition of community members and partners connected to one another and their waterways. The input that we hear will guide the process of establishing coverage in uncovered areas, and exploring organizational (structural) outcomes.

A non-exhaustive list of our

Core Values

- Community-centered participation
- Uplifting indigenous knowledge & priorities
- Long-term care of the land and water
- Science-based adaptive management
- Advancing environmental justice
- Grounded in an interconnected worldview
- Climate resilience and adaptation

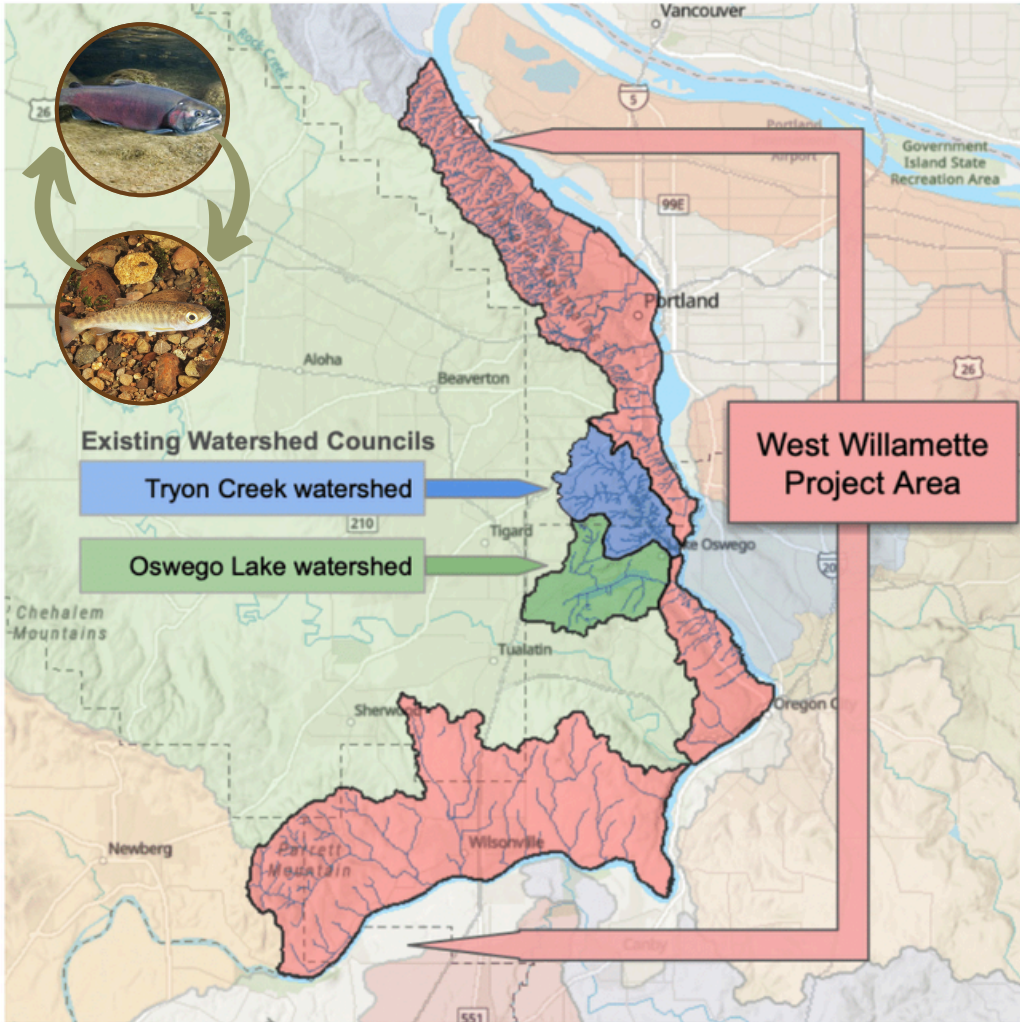
Get involved and learn more about the

West Willamette Watersheds (W3) Collaboration:

- Connect us with your networks & colleagues
- Bring a friend to our community engagement events
- Pop into our open drop-in sessions!
- Volunteer with short tasks
- Spread the word about W3
- Donate to support this effort!



or visit tryoncreek.org/w3



Native migratory fish such as salmon, steelhead, and Pacific lamprey benefit from Watershed Councils' work. When salmon migrate *from* their freshwater streams out to the Pacific Ocean, and then *back* to their natal streams to spawn, they need cool, calm water at confluences with the Willamette River.

Salmon? ...right here, in the city?

Yes! The stretch of the Willamette River and its tributaries in the Portland metropolitan area is a critical migratory corridor. Where smaller creeks meet the river, the cool and calm flows at those confluences offer resting areas and rearing habitat. Whether they migrate to spawn hundreds of miles further upriver in reaches like the McKenzie River near Eugene, or spawn nearby in the Clackamas or Tualatin Rivers, the Willamette River provides critical stepping stone habitat, especially at confluence junctions.

Only salmon, no other focus?

Not at all! What works for salmon works for us all, and they aren't the only ones who stand to benefit from this work.

Watershed Councils also implement upland projects, such as promoting Oregon White Oak, terrestrial habitat connectivity, forest health, and beyond. Importantly, WCs engage community members *-you!-* and local partners in all of this work.

