

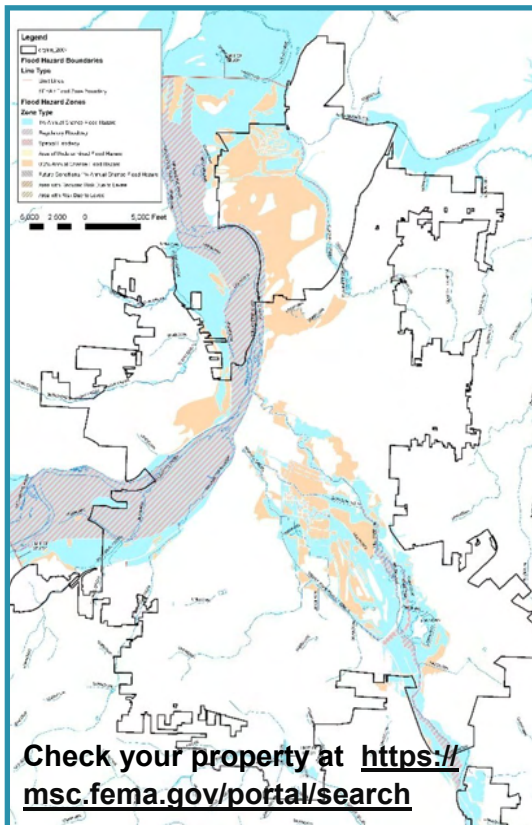
# Watershed Events

Glenn and Gibson Creeks Watershed Council  
Summer 2023



## A Proposal to Help Floodplain Protection

The Glenn Gibson Creeks Watershed Council has applied to the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board for grant funding for a joint project with the City of Salem. The project would develop a Floodplain Species Assessment and a Natural Floodplain Functions Plan with the City. If funded, the watershed council will contract for technical services and provide community engagement.



### SALEM'S FLOODPLAINS

The floodplains within Salem's urban growth boundary are extensive. There are more than 1,700 acres of floodplain subject to potential development. Current floodplain regulations of the City do not include considerations for the ecological functions of floodplains. You can find your property at <https://salem.maps.arcgis.com/apps/InformationLookup/index.html?appid=51cd6b06a0214257af748e3f923e87e7>.

### WHAT IS THE PRESENT CITY POLICY?

The City of Salem Floodplain Management Plan was updated in September of 2022 and added: "Prepare a Flood Species Assessment [and Plan] in conformance with CRS Activity 510." Therefore, completion of an FSA and FSP is consistent with Salem's Floodplain Management Plan.

Salem's 2017 Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan includes action item FL#2, "Improve the City of Salem's National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) Community Rating System (CRS) rating in order to reduce flood risk and NFIP premiums." These objectives are difficult for Salem to accomplish with current staff and

workload. The grant application was developed to help Salem accomplish their policy objectives.

### WHAT IS A FLOODPLAIN SPECIES ASSESSMENT?

A Floodplain Species Assessment is an evaluation of all species listed or candidate for listing under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) that occur within the flood affected area of a community. Such an assessment is conducted under the guidance of the National Flood Insurance Program's Community Rating System (CRS). An assessment of floodplain species and a plan of action based on that assessment are credited under the Community Rating System (CRS) of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) to encourage and recognize community actions to protect species listed pursuant to the Endangered Species Act, protect their critical habitat and habitat in general, and help those species recover. Development of an Assessment adds credits to the Community Rating System that can translate to lower floodplain insurance rates.

## WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT LISTED SPECIES IN THE SALEM AREA?

Spring Chinook salmon and winter steelhead populations in the Willamette River are listed as threatened species under the federal ESA. These two species have mapped “critical habitat” through the



Salem area. The floodplain habitat needs, use and timing will be documented for the Assessment. There are some 13 plant species in the Willamette Valley that are also either candidate or listed under the ESA. Documentation of their occurrence and the occurrence of other



animal species needs to be documented for the Assessment. Northern Red-legged frogs and Northwestern Pond turtles are “species of concern” that likely can be found in the floodplains of the streams in the Salem area. Ground nesting birds like the streaked horned lark (a candidate species) may also occur in the floodplain area. Other bird and mammal species could also be found here. The Assessment will document all known and suspected species, their status, and their use of floodplain habitats.

## WHO WILL REVIEW THE ASSESSMENT?

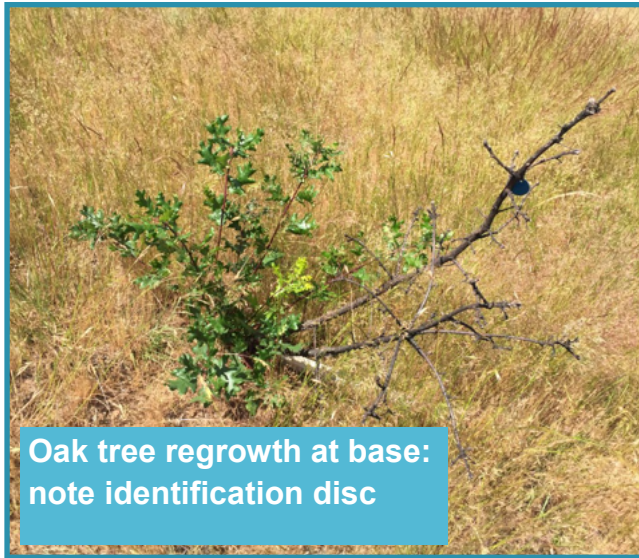
The listing agencies (U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service & National Marine Fisheries Service) will review the draft assessment for accuracy and completeness. The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife will also be asked to review the draft assessment. The Assessment will be developed in cooperation and regular communication with City of Salem staff. Upon technical review by the natural resource agencies, any adjustments will be made, and a final draft provided to City staff.

## WHAT WILL FOLLOW?

Following the completion of the Assessment, the watershed council, our consultant, and the City staff will prepare a plan to provide guidance on how to address potential conflicts during floodplain development proposals. Recommendations will identify critical areas and habitats for protection, potential restoration sites, and provide options for City of Salem to consider on how to accomplish the objectives. The draft plan will identify where the City can obtain the most Community Rating Points and what further steps would be necessary to document and obtain credit. During the development of the plan, the watershed council will present the Assessment and plan concepts to affected neighborhoods across the City of Salem. The feedback and input from the neighborhood meetings will be considered during plan development.

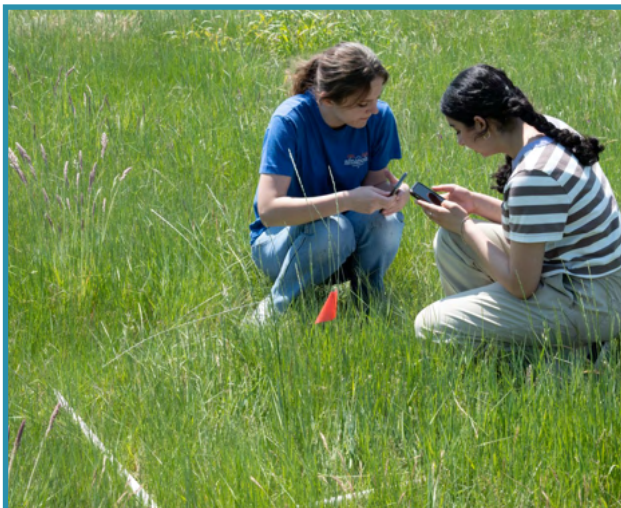


## Orchard Heights Oak Savanna: coming back and being carefully studied



The Oak Savanna appears to be rebounding from the fire last summer. Most, but not all, the burned Oak trees show regrowth at the root base. Grasses and wildflowers appear unchanged.

Professor Bowersox, Willamette University, reports on his class's study of the Oak Savanna: Last summer (2022), the class flew an initial multispectral drone flight, established some non-invasive survey plots around the oak copses, and took our initial field data. This April, we flew a second multispectral drone and again after budding and leaf out advanced, then did another round of field data collection. By May, we will have a draft analysis with which we are fairly confident. I hope to incorporate some additional work next fall and spring as well, so we can see a bit more of what the trajectory is looking like. We are looking at how the ground truthing is confirming or disconfirming the multispectral drone data.



The above photos are of West Salem High School students hard at work laying out study grids and conducting field surveys. These photos are courtesy of their teachers Morgan Kerr - Staudinger and Gerald Turner. The hope is to continue these studies to learn more about the long term effects of fire on the Oak Savanna.



## Invasive Species: One of the biggest threats to Biodiversity

Habitat loss and invasive plants are the leading causes of native biodiversity loss. Invasive plant species spread quickly and **can displace native plants, prevent native plant growth, and create monocultures**. A healthy plant community has a variety of herbs, shrubs, and trees.

Here is the June 2023 Weed of the Month from Mid Willamette Cooperative Weed Management Area (CWMA) via the Marion Soil and Water Conservation District



Photos by  
Douglas Goldman Wikimedia  
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### IDENTIFICATION

A somewhat succulent annual with red-spotted orange flowers with recurved spurs. Elliptic to egg-shaped, alternate, scalloped leaves.

### IMPACTS

Forms a dense carpet, particularly in riparian understories and shades out native plants. Die by fall, leading to soil erosion.

### MANAGEMENT

Hand pull small patches when soils are moist. Repeat annually until seed bank has been depleted. Bag and seal seed capsules, if present.



## ABOUT US

The Cooperative Weed Management Area partnership connects land managers, increases weed awareness, and supports collaborative weed management efforts. Visit us at [marionswcd.net/what-we-offer/mid-willamette-cwma/](http://marionswcd.net/what-we-offer/mid-willamette-cwma/).

## LEARN MORE ONLINE



[WWW.MARIONSWCD.NET/  
PLANTS/SPOTTED-JEWELWEED/](http://WWW.MARIONSWCD.NET/PLANTS/SPOTTED-JEWELWEED/)



From the Oregon Department of Agriculture

## Plant Conservation News

June 12, 2023:

Oregon Department of Agriculture formally added eight endangered and five threatened species to the State's list of threatened and endangered plants, effective June 8, 2023.

From top, clockwise:

*Erigeron stanselliae*

*Lathyrus holochlorus*

*Lomatium ochocense*

*Moconella oregana*

*Sisyrinchium hitchcockii*



The Oregon Department of Agriculture Native Plant Conservation Program (ODA) is responsible for the periodic review of the Oregon State List of Endangered and Threatened Plants ([OAR 603-073-0060](#) & [0070](#)). In 2022 and early 2023, ODA worked with federal and state agencies in Oregon, Washington, California, Nevada, and Idaho, local Oregon governments, non-profit organizations, and citizens to collect population data, threat information, and gain an understanding of the species' current condition from those most familiar with each species. For each species, ODA presented information on 1) habitat and ecology, 2) geographic range, distribution, and abundance, 3) factors affecting survival, and 4) current condition (i.e., representation, resiliency, and redundancy) to a Technical Advisory Committee in January and February 2023.

Following a public comment period, the species below have been added to [OAR 603-073-007](#)

### Endangered

*Arabis mcdonaldiana* Eastw. – McDonald's rockcress;

*Collomia renacta* E. Joyal – Barren valley collomia;

*Erigeron stanselliae* K.L. Chambers – Stansell's daisy;

*Gilia millefoliata* Fisch. & C.A. Mey. – Seaside gilia;

*Lathyrus holochlorus* (Piper) C.L. Hitchc. – Thin-leaved pea;

*Lomatium ochocense* Helliwell & Constance ex Helliwell – Ochoco lomatium;

*Navarretia willamettensis* S.C. Spencer – Willamette navarretia;

*Sisyrinchium hitchcockii* D. Henderson – Hitchcock's blue-eyed grass

### Threatened

*Astragalus lemmonii* A. Gray – Lemmon's milkvetch;

*Howellia aquatilis* A. Gray – Water howellia;

*Meconella oregana* Nutt. – White fairy poppy;

*Monardella angustifolia* Elvin, Ertter & Mansfield – Leslie Gulch monardella;

*Pinus albicaulis* Engelm. – Whitebark pine

Effective June 8th, 2023, it is unlawful to take, import, export, purchase, sell, collect material from, store, preserve, possess, cultivate, propagate, knowingly transport, or attempt any of these actions for any of the above listed plants on non-federal public land in Oregon without a written permit (see [OAR 603-073-0100](#) for more details). Information on consultations and permitting can be found online [here](#). Species specific technical information will be available soon.