

WALLA WALLA BASIN WATERSHED COUNCIL

WATERSHED WATCH

April 21, 2023 | Q2 Newsletter

Announcement

This year, WWBWC partnered with Earth Day Oregon and a number of local businesses who have agreed to make donations (10% of their sales) to the council in honor of Earth Day this year. Make sure to treat yourself to these businesses on their participating days (and also throughout the year):

Walla Walla Cheese Company (April 19-23)



Timber Ridge Coffee (April 22-23)



Sub Shop #38 (April 22)



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Earth Day Tree Planting

This Saturday, April 22, WWBWC and volunteers will be meeting at the Lampson property for some more tree planting. In addition to small willow bare-roots and whips like have been planted previously, **Victorian Gardens, Inc.** has donated 6 Linden trees that are more matured young trees. Once mature, these trees will be quite tall and hopefully add a lot of shade to the river. We are excited to get these additions into the ground and are welcoming volunteers to join us from 9am-11am at 54738 Day Rd. Volunteers will be receiving a “Free 1-scoop ice cream” from Walla Walla Cheese Company and a “\$1 off sub or wrap” from Sub Shop #38 as well.

A huge shout out to Victorian Gardens, Inc., Walla Walla Cheese Company, Timber Ridge Coffee, and Sub Shop #38 for their support for Earth Day this year!

2023 Spring Projects Tour

On April 15th we welcomed members of the public to join members of WWBWC on a tour of our projects around the basin. To ensure we would have plenty of space for attendees, we limited registration to 25. Though we had received response from 9 persons, 5 people were in attendance. The small number wasn't a concern, though, as the community members who did make it were very engaged and good conversations about our watershed were had. The engaged attendees also all kindly filled out surveys. Some preliminary data from these show that, on average, people feel they know a medium amount about our hydrology but desire to know more. All responses were very keen on floodplain function and rehabilitation.

Walla Walla Water2050

Members from WWBWC would like to encourage everyone to mark your calendars for April 26 and join us and many other organizations and agencies at the Walla Walla Community College from 6-8pm. This is an outreach event organized to include and inform basin members on the Water2050 Strategy that has been in development since 2019. WWBWC staff will be there engaging with community members and sitting on panels throughout the evening.

Walla Walla Water 2050 Plan Community Meeting

Date: Wednesday, April 26

Time: 6 p.m. - 8 p.m.

Location: Walla Walla Community College
Health Science & Performing Arts Building E Auditorium

Join the Walla Walla Water 2050 conversation. Learn about strategies to help the community achieve a sustainable water supply into the future.

Presenters include:

- Elected officials
- Local environmental agencies and stakeholders
- WA Department of Ecology
- Oregon Water Resources
- Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation



Moment from tour at Couse Creek at Blue Mountain Station with Eric (blue) describing some processes.

Photo Contest Updates

Our “Beauty in the Basin” photo contest has been having success in increasing engagement from our community with a Facebook audience increase of 20 and an Instagram increase of 9 people between January 1 and April 11. I have also received entries through both email and office drop ins. some amazing photos! In both February and March, I couldn’t help but wish that more than one photo could be chosen, and there was almost a tie to be broken in both those months as well. To me, that proves it’s not just me that is having a great time looking at everyone’s submissions and thoroughly enjoying the shared moments. Thank you to all that have shared!

If you haven’t participated with us yet, I encourage you to do so! The easiest way is through Facebook, but, if requested, I can easily make an email list for participation that way.

Below are the winning photos for January (winter-y photo), February (photo with red/pink/purple), and March (green photo). April’s theme is photos of stormy weather—if you have any you would like to share we would love to see them! Enjoy some of the additional photos that have been submitted along the right.

Honorable Mentions



Board Updates: Feb-April

Aside from updates to the board on the tour, planting, and Water2050 meeting, there have been positive updates on the processes of permitting for the North Fork construction, Mill Creek spring inventory, and the Couse Creek BDAs/PALs. Material collection is also coming along nicely for the latter, and is anticipated to be compiled and ready for the summer work presently.

Our monitoring program manager, Luke, has kept us up-to-date on the river's flows. On a 10-year median, usually by our board meeting in April the Walla Walla River has seen its yearly peak in flow. This year the spring has been so mild temperature-wise the data suggests we haven't seen much of our snowpack hit the rivers yet (volumetric sum of flow for this water year is about 10,000 fewer acre-feet than average for this water year. NRCS graph shows we're at 124% of median snow-depth for the year still, and SNOTEL at Milk Shakes shows an above average snow depth for this time, and an ever-so-slight above average in water equivalency.)

The National Weather Service and NOAA are predicting hotter, drier months ahead during May-July. While central Oregon has seen improvement in its drought condition and status, closer to home Wallowa county saw degradation and now much of that county is considered to be in moderate drought. Umatilla county holds firm with the northern half not having a drought rating and the southern half considered "abnormally dry". For more National Weather Service data visit <https://www.weather.gov/pdt/>

Board meetings are held on the 3rd Monday of the month beginning at 7 pm and are open to the public. We also host the meeting on Zoom—please reach out if you're interested in joining.

Mark your calendars!

Return to the River festival and the Ducky Derby are Saturday, May 13th, at the WWCC campus. WWBWC is planning to be there with a booth to interact and engage with community members—plan to stop by and see us!

RETURN TO THE RIVER

SALMON FESTIVAL

May 13th, 2023 11am - 3pm



Connect with us!

If viewing on a computer or mobile device, logos are linked. Otherwise find us using our handles for social media, or scan the code to visit our Flip Cause.



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