



**Now is a Great Time to Get Involved - Chuck Harrison, Chair**

Over the years the Columbia Slough Watershed Council has been very fortunate to have many terrific volunteers who have filled positions as Council Board Members and even more people who have volunteered during one of the many events sponsored by the Council. To those of you who are (or have been) Council Board Members, thank you for the time and effort you have given to make the Council a success. To those of you who have volunteered at one or more of the Council's events, your time and commitment have been key to making our events successful.

To the rest of you I offer a challenge. Get involved in the Columbia Slough Watershed Council. We have opportunities for everyone. Regardless of your knowledge level, educational background, time availability, where you reside or any other factor – we can use your talents, time and enthusiasm. If you would like to become a Board Member or alternate, there are openings to be filled. If you would like to become a committee member, we have openings on the Action Plan Implementation, Slough School, Finance and Outreach Committees. If you would like to help out at one of our many events, we can always use more volunteers. If you are looking for a bigger challenge, become a project champion for one of the 85 high priority projects identified in the Council's Action Plan. Get involved now and leave a living legacy that will last for years.

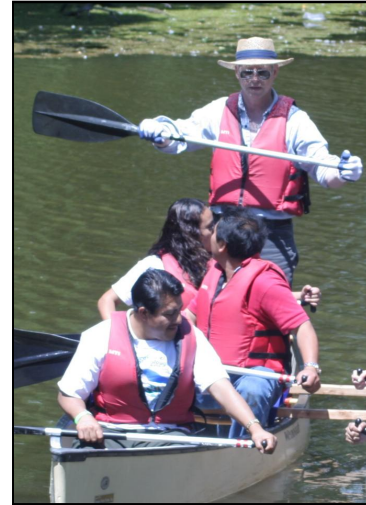


Photo: Benjamin Ortega

Long-time volunteer and former Council Member Steve Cameron gives instructions to a group of paddlers at last year's Explorando el Columbia Slough.

**From the Executive Director - Chuck Sams**

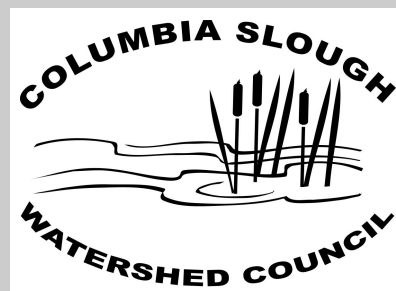
Each day I come to work I am amazed at the sights, sounds, and smells at Whitaker Ponds. My senses instantly come alive as I walk towards the office or when I'm out and about around the ponds or on the Slough. Most mornings I see cars and trucks driving by Whitaker Ponds and yet the birds and other wildlife seem undisturbed by their presence. I can hear the planes taking off from the airport, trucks driving by on 47th Avenue and Columbia

Boulevard, birds singing to each other on the trees, and rain falling into the pond. On any given day I can smell the fresh rain, the flowers in season, or diesel and grinding metal. Each day is exciting. Being situated in the middle of the watershed I get a clear understanding of the issues we all face in our urban watershed. Over these past eighteen months I have seen a tremendous amount of growth by the council members, staff, and volunteers. Together we have

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## The 2005 Columbia Slough Awards Celebration Winners



Ethan Chessin, Jeff Adams, Ry Thompson, Al Smith

Photo: David Ashton



Bob Dolphin, Linda Robinson and Bob Sallinger

Photo: David Ashton

### Awards Celebration Program Sponsors

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On Friday, January 20, 2006, community members, political leaders, government agencies and businesses joined the Columbia Slough Watershed Council to recognize award winners at the Council's Seventh Annual Awards Celebration.

### Achievement Award Winners

The Council's Achievement Awards recognize "extraordinary projects or project-related efforts".

**Jeff Adams** - Recognized for his work on "A Bug's Life in the Columbia Slough".

**Al Smith** - Recognized for his work on the first Pacific Northwest freshwater mussels guidebook.

**Ry Thompson** - Recognized for his management of the Ramsey Salmon Refugia creating 1½ acres of salmonid habitat in the Lower Slough.

### Leadership Award Winners

The Council's Leadership Awards recognize "individuals who demonstrate an extraordinary and long-term commitment to the watershed".

**Bob Dolphin** - Recognized for his work as the Council's Treasurer guiding the Council through a dynamic transitional period.

**Linda Robinson** - Recognized for her years of steadfast service on a variety of committees - specifically her years of advocacy for the Big Four Corners Acquisition.

**Bob Sallinger** - Recognized for his years of remarkable dedication to regional conservation issues. Bob Sallinger is a well known leader in the area of wildlife habitat protection.

### Outstanding Service Award Winners

The Council's Outstanding Service Awards recognizes an individual or organizations that make "extraordinary voluntary contributions" which benefit the watershed.

**ProLogis** - Recognized for its combined sale and donation of 114 acres of land to the City of Portland as part of the Big Four Corners land acquisition creating Portland's fourth largest Natural Area.

**Ethan Chessin** - Recognized for his outstanding service to the Council as an AmeriCorps Volunteer leading the Council's Volunteer and Stewardship programs.

**Slough School: Making a Difference for Students and Native Species**  
**By: Rachel Felice, Education Director**

Slough School is the Columbia Slough Watershed Council's K-12 youth education program. Students participate in both classroom and field trip experiences, allowing them to explore many of the wild areas in their region. We work with students from throughout the Columbia Slough Watershed, including the school districts of Portland, Reynolds and Gresham. Topics include watershed ecology, ethnobotany, riparian plants, wetland science, groundwater, water chemistry, macroinvertebrates and others.

The rainy weather and winter days mean time in the field planting native trees and shrubs in our natural areas. Many students participating in the plantings have first learned about watershed ecology, native plants and water quality in the classroom. The process of planting trees and shrubs is one way that students can participate in the watershed restoration efforts across our area and practice their new knowledge in a real life setting.

Students from Chief Joseph Elementary, Trillium Charter School and Multnomah Youth Cooperative have all worked to plant nearly 300 plants at Whitaker Ponds Environmental Learning Center in Northeast Portland this season. The high school students from Multnomah Youth Cooperative provided guidance and served as mentors for the younger students during the planting efforts. Two of these groups were rewarded in their efforts by



Rachel Felice,  
Education Director



Slough School Students planting native trees and shrubs at Whitaker Ponds.

**“Topics include watershed ecology, ethnobotany, riparian plants, wetland science, groundwater, water chemistry and macroinvertebrates”**

the sight of a Bald Eagle flying over head. The adult bird perched for a number of hours at Whitaker Ponds and excited students got an extended look at this magnificent bird!

In addition, students from Clarendon Elementary planted Oregon Grape and Red Osier Dogwoods at the Columbia Boulevard Wastewater Treatment Plant in early 2006. These second graders have been walking to this site a number of times over the course of the school year and are familiar with this portion of the riparian area along the Columbia Slough.

A new planting site for this season is a restoration area near Wilkes Creek Park. Slough School established a partnership with SOLV to aid in their onsite restoration efforts and those of the nearby neighborhood residents. Second and fourth grade students from Wilkes Elementary worked together to plant a variety of native shrubs in the riparian area. During one terribly wet morning, over 115 plants were added to a gentle slope recently cleared of blackberry. The heavy rain and extensive mud of the day didn't hamper the students' enthusiasm for the project!

Slough School will continue to work with various student groups to plant an additional 200 plants at Whitaker Ponds in the next month. As winter gives way to spring, student field trips will begin to focus on migratory birds, macroinvertebrates and ongoing maintenance of the new plants.

If you are interested in having your students or class participate in Slough School activities, please check out our extended class topic list at the “Slough School” page of our website: [www.columbiaslough.org](http://www.columbiaslough.org).

## Jill Shannon Wall Joins the Council Staff

The Columbia Slough Watershed Council is delighted to announce the hiring of Jill Shannon Wall, the Council's first full-time Bookkeeper & Office Manager. Jill brings over eight years of bookkeeping experience to the Council. She has worked for several local non-profit organizations including Bradley-Angle House, Earth Conservation Corps: Salmon Corps, Community Energy Project and the worker-owned cooperative Citybikes. Jill holds a B.S. degree in Ecology, Evolution & Conservation Biology from the University of Texas at Austin.

Welcome Jill!



Jill Shannon Wall,  
Bookkeeper/Office manager



Photo: Eric Kellon

This picture shows the inside of a pollution reduction vault at Whitaker Ponds. The vault has separated the water (upper half of the picture) from the diesel fuel (bottom half) that spilled on Columbia Blvd.

## Executive Director - continued from page 1

strengthened our organization's ability to provide a multitude of direct services, partnership opportunities, and community support that works towards our mission, goals, and objectives in enhancing and restoring the Columbia Slough and the watershed. Together we can learn from our challenges and build upon our successes.

Our urban watershed is complex. We face many competing interests in the watershed, yet together we can educate each other, discuss our issues, and find common ground that supports a healthy environment, a growing economy, and a diverse society. The balance we work towards may seem never ending, but as long we continue to engage multiple stakeholders we will find solutions and creative methods in striking a balance.

I look forward to seeing past members rejoin our efforts and to welcoming new faces to our discussions in the years to come. Our Council is very fortunate and thankful for our partnerships, members, staff, and volunteers. I hope you enjoy getting a brief look into our collective experiences in this newsletter.

## Pollution Reduction Facility: On the Job at Whitaker Ponds

As rain hits the asphalt surface of Columbia Boulevard, just North of Whitaker Ponds, it does what all water does, goes down hill. Because it is in the Columbia Slough Watershed it heads straight for the Slough. Along the way it picks up dirt, oil, antifreeze and anything else you can imagine that has fallen on the roadway.

But not so fast. On this particular stretch of Columbia Boulevard the stormwater runoff is channeled through a Pollution Reduction Facility (PRF) instead of a straight pipe to the Slough. This PRF consists of two vaults that trap sediment and separate oil followed by four small ponds which act to trap the remaining sediment and pollutants before they reach Whitaker Ponds and the Columbia Slough.

The PRF is also effective in protecting the Slough against accidental spills. In November 2005, for the second time in the span of one year the PRF installed at Whitaker Ponds proved it's worth. An unknown quantity of diesel fuel was spilled and entered the storm drains connected to the PRF. When word came about the spill, the staff expected the worst - a rainbow colored sheen of fuel across the pond and Slough.

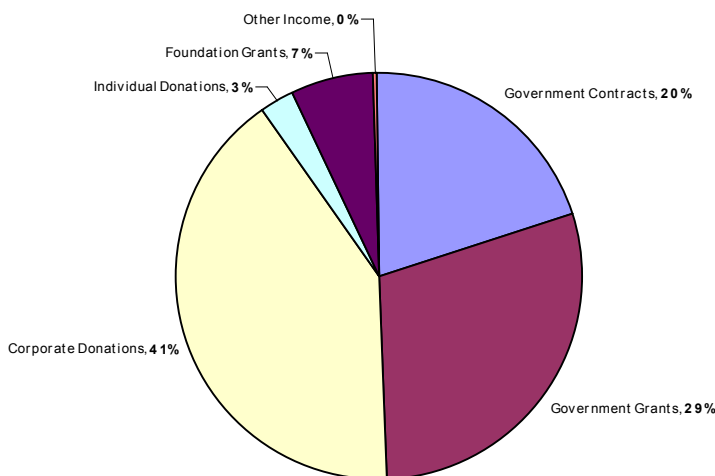
Instead there was no sign of the spill. A check of the first PRF vault held the answer. The vault had worked! Virtually all of the fuel had been captured. The City of Portland's Spill Response Team arrived with a vacuum truck, vacuumed the diesel fuel, cleaned the vault and a serious slough contamination was averted.

A few months earlier a similar scenario played out: a wreck on Columbia Boulevard released 55 gallons of diesel fuel. The combined effectiveness of the vaults and the retention ponds enabled 54 gallons of the spilled fuel to be recovered.

You can see the PRF at the next Soup on the Slough tour April 21st at 11:30am.

## The Bottom Line: 2004 - 2005 Income & Expense Report

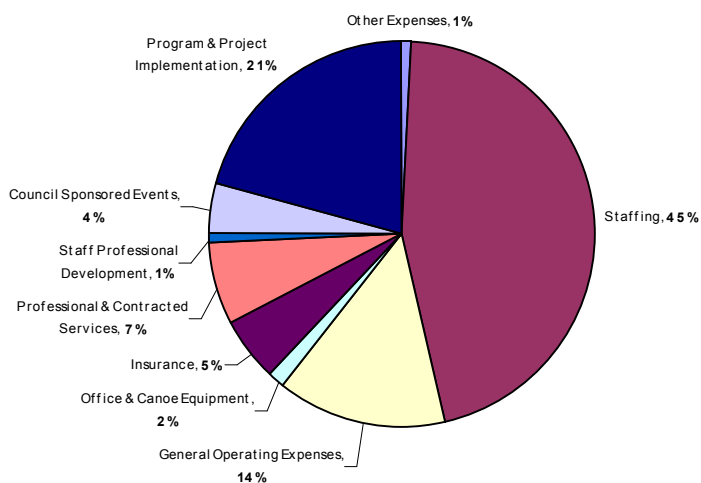
2004-2005 Income  
\$370,664.87



Chuck Sams,  
Executive Director

■ Government Contracts ■ Government Grants ■ Corporate Donations ■ Individual Donations ■ Foundation Grants ■ Other Income

2004-2005 Expenses  
\$329,403.12



■ Other Expenses ■ Staffing ■ General Operating Expenses  
 ■ Office & Canoe Equipment ■ Insurance ■ Professional & Contracted Services  
 ■ Staff Professional Development ■ Council Sponsored Events ■ Program & Project Implementation

### Council Finances

The Council's 2004 - 2005 program year expenditures were in line with the approved budget. The Council has diversified its funding base to include more private, corporate, and foundation support. As the Council develops and grows we will capitalize on our strengths of leveraging resources that better serve the goals and objectives of our organization. The Finance Committee is looking for new members who can help develop and sustain our fiscal health. Please call Chuck Sams at (503) 281-1132 to join us in ensuring the current and future health of the watershed.

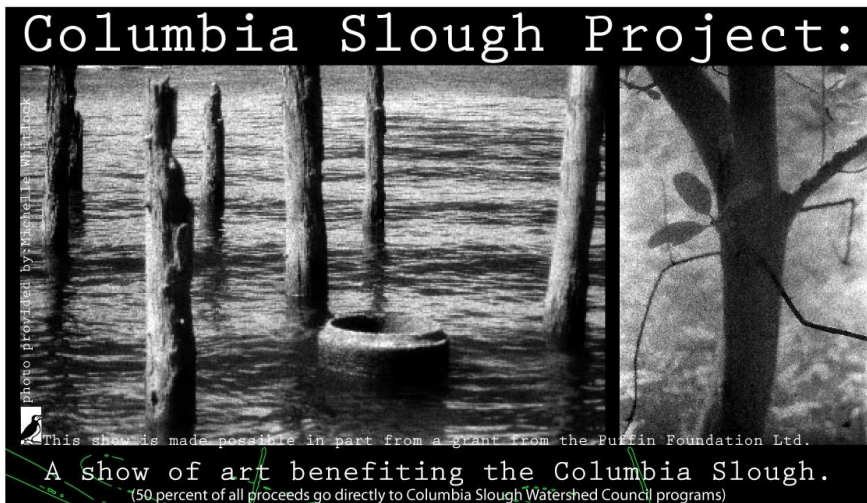
## **The Columbia Slough Project: A Show of Art Benefiting the Slough**

**By: Jean Clugston**

My special focus as an artist has been to explore an approach to landscape painting that allows me to study in depth locations that interest me. The Columbia Slough allows for this type of exploration, in particular the Upper Slough, which reminds me of the places I explored as a child while growing up in rural Oregon.

As a way to give something back, I link up with environmental groups who are advocates for the protection of the places that I am painting. Favorable interest and an expressed need to contribute by several local artists helped this project to evolve from an individual show into a group show. To make more of a collective impact, a number of the artists have made works specifically of the Slough. The works include landscapes in oils, pastels, prints, mixed media and charcoal drawings with some wall sculptures.

The purpose of the Columbia Slough Project is to raise community awareness of the Columbia Slough and generate funds to aid in its preservation and restoration. The goal of the show is to bring together artists, art enthusiasts, and environmentalists which will encourage a greater breadth of dialogue, resulting in creative solutions to issues and broader community understanding of the Slough and its preservation. Much of the art will be specifically of the Slough, which will create connectedness for artists as well as the viewer. Artists will be donating 50% of the proceeds to the Columbia Slough Watershed Council.



The Council is a diverse group of agencies, municipalities, landowners and residents working together to solve some of the urban waterway's problems. The Columbia Slough, which runs in the flood plain of the Columbia River, has been altered by levees and residential and industrial development since 1850. However, the waterway still functions as an important regional wildlife corridor and recreation area. More than 160,000 people, 175 bird species, endangered salmonids and other wildlife call it home. And thousands more visit to paddle, hike, watch birds or do science lessons.

The Columbia Slough and other wildlife areas help to keep people connected with nature, possibly fueling a deeper interest in its preservation. The Columbia Slough is representative of many natural areas that have been affected by urban and industrial development. Painting this and other wild places has made me acutely aware of human impacts to our environment and the remarkable ability of an area to adapt and recover.

For more information click "Columbia Slough Project" on the events page of the website: [www.columbiaslough.org](http://www.columbiaslough.org) or contact Jean Clugston at (503) 752-5111 or

via email [jeanclugston@gmail.com](mailto:jeanclugston@gmail.com). I hope to see you at the show.

### **The Columbia Slough Project**

**The Show Runs**  
**April 5th - 27th**

**Gallery Hours**  
**Monday - Friday**  
**9:00am - 2:00pm**

**Opening Reception**  
**1st Thursday, April**  
**6th, 5:00 - 8:30pm**

**Location**  
**ArtReach Gallery,**  
**First Congregational**  
**Church, 1126 SW**  
**Park Ave. Portland**

### **Volunteers Needed**

**Sample freshwater**  
**mussels and fish of**  
**the Columbia Slough**

### **For More Info Contact**

**June Mohler**  
**(503) 492-0899**

**2005: A Year in Review on the Columbia Slough**

Through partnership and action the Council can reflect on many accomplishments during the 2004 / 2005 program year. With the support of council members, staff, and volunteers we have directly reached 2,689 adult community members. The Council staff has consulted on the design, development, and implementation of 12 major projects and 18 Outreach and Education events.

The Slough School program has worked with 32 different schools in 5 school districts serving over 4,500 student contacts and providing teacher education to 21 educators.

The Slough School works in partnership with many other agencies and groups in order to reach students throughout the watershed. In addition to the Spirit Mountain Community Fund, some of our other supporters and partners during the 2004-05 school year include the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board, City of Portland's Clean Rivers Education Project, the Lower Columbia River Estuary Partnership, Portland Parks and Recreation Environmental Education Program, the City of Gresham's Stormwater Division, Portland State University's Center for Science Education, The Port of Portland and Metro Regional Government.

The Council's Community Stewardship program promotes community volunteerism through education and action. Last year 722 volunteers contributed 2,822 hours during 28 events. The volunteers enhanced 11 sites and restored over 16,110 ft<sup>2</sup> of habitat in the watershed.

**Watershed Projects**

- West Bridgeton Slough Habitat Project
- Time Oil Road Wildlife Undercrossing
- Bunn Property Acquisition (Whitaker Ponds)
- Wilkes Creek Streambank Restoration Project
- MCDD – Public Canoe/Kayak Launches
- Big Four Corners Acquisition
- Smith & Bybee Lakes Revegetation Project
- Smith & Bybee Lakes Public Canoe/Kayak Launch
- City of Gresham & MCDD – Water Level Sewer Pipe Replacement
- 92nd & 105th Avenue Streambank Stabilization Project
- Fairview Creek Homeowners Streambank Restoration Project
- Ramsey Off Channel Salmon Refugia Restoration Project



Eric Kellon,  
Outreach Coordinator  
Slough News Editor



**Outreach & Education Events**

- Aquifer Adventure: A Groundwater Treasure Hunt
- Canoe the Slough Paddling Trips (6)
- Columbia Slough Regatta
- Cycle the Well Field
- Explorando el Columbia Slough
- Groundwater 101 Workshop
- The Seventh Annual Columbia Slough Awards Celebration
- Slough 101 Workshop
- Soup on the Slough (4)
- Wetlands 101 Workshop

**Call Today to Sign-up for This Year's Events**

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Portland, OR 97218

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Fax: (503) 281-5187  
info@columbiaslough.org



**A 501(c)(3) Nonprofit Organization**



***Our mission: To foster action to protect, enhance, restore and revitalize the Slough and its watershed.***

## **Mark Your Calendar for these Upcoming Events**

### [Columbia Slough Project](#)

Exhibit Dates, April 5th to 27th, 2006

A show of art benefiting the Columbia Slough.

### [Cycle the Well Field](#)

Saturday, June 10, 2006 9:00 AM

A bicycle riding tour through Portland's Groundwater Protection Area.



Cyclists glide through Blue Lake Park during Cycle the Well Field.

### [Explorando el Columbia Slough](#)

Saturday, June 24, 2006 1:00 PM

Join the Columbia Slough Watershed Council for a FREE bilingual environmental education festival. Canoe trips, music and more. Activities offered in Spanish and English.

### [Columbia Slough Regatta](#)

Sunday, July 30, 2006 9:00 AM

This family-focused event attracts hundreds of canoeists and kayakers each year to the banks of the Columbia Slough.

**Please visit our online events page to view all scheduled events and workshops.**