

Executive Summary

The Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board asks watershed councils to conduct watershed assessments to determine specific conditions that limit salmon recovery. Councils are then encouraged to develop action plans based on the findings from the assessment, that specify what the council will do to address these conditions.

The Upper and Lower Nehalem Watershed Councils contracted with Portland State (PSU) to develop an assessment of the Nehalem watershed. In February 2000 a draft of this assessment was presented to the Lower Nehalem Watershed Council. This document along with additional information generated by the Council¹ formed the basis for an action planning process initiated in the January of 2000.

By the June 2000 Council meeting, descriptions of the issues and possible projects in each of the six planning areas were completed. Council members and other meeting participants were asked to establish priorities for the 64 possible action items. Those items ranking highest were developed as projects to be undertaken in the ensuing year.

During the following year considerable progress was made on the highest priority objectives and a great deal more was learned about the specific needs for action in the Lower Nehalem basin.

In May and June of 2001, the Council updated the issue statements and possible project list. One additional area, "Learning about the Watershed and enjoying its wonders" was added to the issue areas.

Priorities for this new list of possible projects were established in the July 2001 council meeting and formed the basis for council activities during 2002.

During August, and September of 2002 the Council again reviewed and revised the issue descriptions, described the current conditions in each issue area, identified ongoing projects and developed a list of possible new projects for 2003-2004. At the September meeting Council members prioritized these projects.

¹ Possible projects developed earlier by the council, a draft of a Strategic Plan, internal papers on the estuary, flooding, and low water flow.

Ongoing Projects – 2002

Fish and Fish Habitat

1. Obtain grant funds to survey low gradient streams for quality of habitat.
2. Identify locations in the Lower Nehalem that should receive priority for large wood placement.
3. Place fish carcasses in at least four streams each year.

Water Quality

1. Maintain current monthly monitoring program through December to complete our five-year baseline.
2. During the next two years, continue collecting annual autumn macroinvertebrate samples to help establish a complete 5-yr. baseline database for trends analysis.
3. Collect summer thermograph and monthly thermometer data to augment current temperature monitoring database.

Riparian Areas

1. Establish a native plant nursery to supply stock for riparian restoration

Channel Modifications

1. Roy Creek culvert replacement project

Nehalem Estuary

1. Develop an action plan to implement the recommendations from the OWEB estuary assessment.
2. Develop educational materials on the estuary to be given out at boat rental locations.
3. Complete an estuary cleanup every two years.

Hydrology - Flooding

1. Two members of the Lower Nehalem Watershed council continue to attend and participate in COE Feasibility Study meetings