

# Partnership News Report



Special points of interest:

- **Willamette Partnership Releases its Draft Ecosystem Credit Calculator**
- **An Ecosystem Credit Calculator**
- **Assurances**
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- **Submitting Comments**



*Increasing the pace, scope, and effectiveness of conservation in the Willamette Basin*

“Oregon Experiments with Mixed Credits.” [Click here](#) to read an article in the Katoomba Groups Ecosystem Marketplace Newsletter about the Willamette Partnerships efforts. The Ecosystem Marketplace is a premier nationwide news service focusing on emerging ecosystem market services

## Willamette Partnership Releases its Draft Ecosystem Credit Calculator

We know Oregon, like other parts of the country will continue to grow. Unavoidable changes to land and water resources come along with growth of our communities and industries. The Willamette Partnership supports and encourages application of laws and rules intended to avoid and minimize impacts from growth and development. Even the best planned growth and development can't avoid impacts to the environment altogether. That's where the Ecosystem Credit Calculator becomes important.

When people need to mitigate for unavoidable impacts resulting from development or, if they can off-set impacts from ongoing operations better by restoring the environment, they need a credible and transparent way to count changes to the environment that can be expected from restoration. The Willamette Partnership is working to develop the Ecosystem Credit Calculator because: 1) we want a way for people who spend money to mitigate or off-set activities to do it in a way that delivers the greatest ecological results; 2) we want a way for regulatory agencies to reward better, more comprehensive restoration in the right places and on the things that will make a difference; And 3) we want a credible and transparent way for land managers who protect and restore the ecological resources we need to be able to count the things they produce.

Over the last year we've been providing you with status reports and updates about the progress we're making developing the Ecosystem Credit Calculator. Now we need your help. After six months and 100s of hours of stakeholder meetings, reviews of existing methods, technical work, expert focus group reviews, and one round of field testing, we need your feedback on pieces of the methodology. Currently the calculator can count the benefits or impacts land management actions have on wetlands, salmon habitat, upland prairie habitat, and water temperature.

We've created a set of initial documents that we want your feedback on to make sure the methodology makes sense. In this newsletter we provide background and instructions about where to find the documents we want you to review and some of the questions we would like you to think about. We want your comments before **May 15** (as always though, earlier is better) so we can incorporate needed changes and take the methodology back into the field and finalize the first iteration in June.

- By David Primožich—Executive Director

## We Need Your Comments

The last six months have been particularly productive ones for those working on the Willamette Partnership's Counting on the Environment project. The following article outlines what has been accomplished, what actions we need taken by those interested in contributing to the project and what will be occurring over the next six months.

*By Mac Martin—Water Resource Analyst*



Willamette Basin Streams



Linn County daffodils

### An Ecosystem Credit Calculator

One sizeable achievement of the Counting on the Environment Working Group is a draft version of four currency-specific crediting protocols for water quality, salmonids, wetlands, and prairie. These new protocols, and a general one to serve as a guide, together represent Version I of the integrated Ecosystem Credit Calculator for the Willamette Basin.

The general protocol provides the overall framework and process for applying the Calculator. It describes why we think we need an integrated approach to credit calculation, and how a project turns from a good idea in a land manager's head into a portfolio of credit types they can sell. The

general crediting protocol focuses on process, while the currency-specific protocols focus on the credit calculation methods.

Each currency-specific protocol contains explanations of indicators used, how those indicators are combined into functional scores, and some of the references used to compose methodologies. These technical documents are all accessible on the website.

[Click here](#) to access the currency-specific and general protocols for the Ecosystem Credit Calculator. They will all be put into final draft form by the end of May 2009 and finalized by August 2009. Please submit any comments, using the contact information below, by **May 15, 2009**.

### Assurances Recommendations

The most significant element of the general crediting protocol is an integrated framework of assurances developed to make sure the credits offered by sellers provide the ecological benefits they promise. In addition to providing certainty about these ecological benefits, assurances also work to provide procedural certainty to buyers and sellers in markets. The framework created by Willamette Partnership staff

has been designed for use across many market types. It was developed based on existing market rules, their overlaps and the identification of gaps that could be filled by common approaches.

Markets use a variety of assurance tools to address sources of uncertainty, these tools include:

- Eligibility criteria for the impacts and benefits that are creditable and the trades that are appropriate;

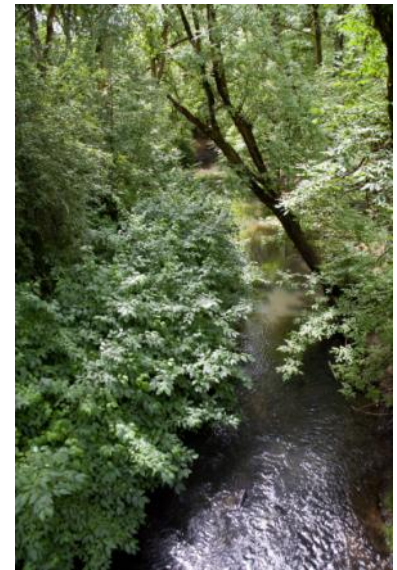
## Assurances (Continued)

- Verification rules for monitoring conditions on the site in relation to performance
- Liability, trading ratios, and other forms of risk-management;
- Performance standards and credit release schedules; and Programmatic monitoring and adaptive management

All of these tools are represented in the framework of

assurances selected and developed by Willamette Partnership staff who would like to get comment from a broader audience. [Click here](#) to review this package.

They will all be finalized by the end of May 2009. Please submit any comments, using the contact information below, by May 15, 2009.



Shady stream

## Field Testing

To date, the Ecosystem Credit Calculator has been fully or partially run at two restoration sites and at one impact site. The Working Group suggested and selected these sites as appropriate for the Counting on the Environment project due to their ownership type, stage of development, and ability to provide multiple ecological benefits through restoration activities. The first restoration site, on Gales Creek in the Tualatin sub-basin, will most likely generate wetland, salmonid, and water quality credits. The second restoration site, at Delta Ponds in Eugene, will most likely generate wetlands, salmonid and water quality credits. The lone impact-site, a bridge project on Dairy Creek in the Tualatin sub-basin, will most likely produce wetland, salmonid and water quality debits.

[Click here](#) for summaries of site-specific calculations which are presented as part of the field guide and data sheet package available on the Willamette Partnership's website. The pilot project summaries are meant as illustrations of how the credit calculator works and the field guide and datasheet are meant to ease application of the calculator.

The Willamette Partnership is interested in getting comment from a larger audience, specifically related to two questions: 1) do the pilot project summaries provide enough information as to whether the credit scores make sense and 2) is the field guide and datasheet formatted in a way that would be easy to apply in the field?



Fender's Blue Butterfly

### Help Field Test the Ecosystem Credit Calculator.

Come join the Willamette Partnership in Eugene to take the draft Ecosystem Credit Calculator on a trial run in the field on May 7th and 8th. We have 20 spots for the 2-day training/test. If you're interested, please contact [Joni Shaffer at jshaffer@willamettepartnership.org](mailto:jshaffer@willamettepartnership.org). We'll be visiting wetlands, prairies, and streams.

## Submitting Comments

Please submit comments related to any of these work products by email to Joni Shaffer at [jshaffer@willamettepartnership.org](mailto:jshaffer@willamettepartnership.org) before May 15, 2009. Questions can be directed to Bobby Cochran at [cochranb@cleanwaterservices.org](mailto:cochranb@cleanwaterservices.org) or 503-681-4435. Thanks!



Camas lilly Yamhill County



## History

The Willamette Partnership formed in 2004 to capture the momentum created upon completion of the Willamette Restoration Strategy. The Strategy articulated a vision for ecological health and economic vitality in the Willamette Basin and outlined critical actions needed to achieve success. Working with stakeholder leaders who developed the Strategy, the Partnership formed to accelerate needed innovation. One of these innovations is the establishment of an integrated ecosystem marketplace



To receive regular updates on the Partnerships progress, subscribe to our newsletter by going to [www.willamettepartnership.org](http://www.willamettepartnership.org) and signing up for wp-news