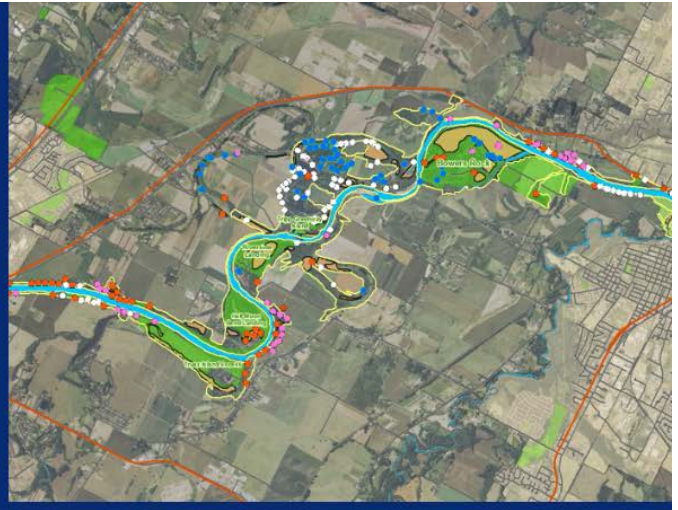


# WILLAMETTE MAINSTEM COOPERATIVE

ACTION PLAN 2020–2025



The mission of the WMC is to promote, facilitate, and foster long-term stewardship of natural resources along the Willamette River, with a focus on the Corvallis to Albany river reach, through the collaborative efforts of individual landowners and interested organizations.

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# Map of the Main Project Area



## Introduction

The Willamette Mainstem Cooperative (WMC) is a coalition of landowners, organizations, and volunteers working together to improve stewardship across all landownerships on the mainstem of the Willamette River, with a focus on the Corvallis to Albany river reach. Since our formation in 2011, we have accomplished many of the desired outcomes associated with implementing invasive species control strategies (Appendix A).

A stakeholder group and steering committee comprised of landowners and natural resource managers convene regularly to guide this process. WMC stakeholders participate in planning and implementation of projects, information sharing, technical assistance, decision making, and collaboration for project funding. Recently, collaboration has increased due to an increase in multi-year funding, which is foundational for planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation purposes, and interest in system-wide habitat restoration at a variety of scales. However, key stakeholders remain missing from the WMC process. To be successful in improving the ecological health of the river, all partners must participate in this effort. The WMC provides an opportunity to bring additional stakeholders to the table.

The WMC celebrates equity, diversity, and inclusiveness, embracing these pillars of excellence as crucial to healthy people, communities, and ecosystems. We believe our core values are strengthened when we commit, on a continuous basis, to all community members having a voice, contributing, and participating.

This plan represents a set of strategies that will be implemented by the WMC. The plan focuses on invasive plant management efforts, protection and enhancement of high-quality habitats, and long-term planning for sustainable funding to support proposed actions. The Benton Soil and Water Conservation District (BSWCD) serves in a leadership role to facilitate the activities of the WMC. The WMC effort aligns with the long-term strategies and goals of BSWCD.

## Mission

The mission of the WMC is to promote, facilitate, and foster long-term stewardship of natural resources along the Willamette River, with a focus on the Corvallis to Albany river reach, through the collaborative efforts of individual landowners and interested organizations.

## Structure

The steering committee and stakeholder group represent a variety of local and regional organizations and landowners, who provide guidance and direction for WMC initiatives. The steering committee votes on key decisions. The Stakeholder Group includes individuals that participate in program planning and project implementation, and regularly attend WMC meetings (twice annually). Other partners include individuals and entities that have a vested interest in the WMC mission and participate through projects and information sharing. Although all partners do not necessarily participate in program planning and decision making, each has an opportunity to contribute to the WMC mission in many other ways.

The WMC coordinator organizes and supports stewardship activities; facilitates communication and cooperation among partners; writes and administers grants; and manages WMC data and contracts. The WMC coordinator is housed at Benton SWCD and funded through Benton SWCD and other WMC funders.

# Steering Committee

## **Benton Soil & Water Conservation District**

Holly Crosson  
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## **Bonneville Environmental Foundation**

Kathleen Guillozet  
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## **Calapooia Watershed Council**

Collin McCandless/Cris Salazar  
Executive Director/Project Manager  
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## **Greenbelt Land Trust**

Matt Blakely-Smith  
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## **Linn Soil and Water Conservation District**

Debra Paul  
Conservation Planner  
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## **Oregon State Parks and Recreation Dept.**

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## **Oregon State University Extension**

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**Peter Kenagy**, Kenagy Family Farms Inc., and Farm  
Bureau Representative

## Stakeholder Group

### City of Albany

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### Cascade Pacific RC&D

Troy Abercrombie  
Coordinator for Western Invasives Network  
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### City of Corvallis Parks and Rec. Dept.

America McMillin  
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Corvallis Parks and Recreation Department  
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### Ducks Unlimited

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Regional Biologist  
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### John Keogh (landowner/farmer)

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[SOAPCREEK@CMUG.com](mailto:SOAPCREEK@CMUG.com)

### Willamette Riverkeeper

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## Cooperators and Partners

Benton County CWMA  
Benton County Parks & Recreation  
Bonneville Power Administration  
Carex Working Group  
City of Eugene  
City of Salem  
D Franco Contracting  
Integrated Resource Management  
Gilmour Farms LLC  
Goat Power, Inc.  
Long Tom Watershed Council  
Luckiamute Watershed Council  
Marion Soil and Water Conservation District  
Marys River Watershed Council  
McKenzie River Trust  
Mosaic Ecology LLC  
Meyer Memorial Trust  
North and South Santiam Watershed Councils

Oregon Department of Agriculture  
Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife  
Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board  
Polk Soil and Water Conservation District  
Portland State University  
River Spirit Journeys  
Stan and Louise Snyder (landowners)  
Tribes  
Upper Willamette CWMA  
Upper Willamette Partnership  
United States Geological Survey  
US Fish and Wildlife Service - Finley National  
Wildlife Refuge (Snagboat Bend)  
Western Invasives Network  
Willamette Aquatic Invasives Network  
Willamette River landowners  
Willamette Stewardship Team – Albany Reach

## Target Audience

Target audiences for this initiative include private and public landowners along the Willamette River from Corvallis to Albany, land managers, river recreationists, volunteers, basin-wide natural resource programs, and public entities with land management responsibilities along this stretch of the Willamette River.

## Funding Sources

Sustainable, long-term funding is integral to the success of the WMC initiative because habitat management and enhancement projects, particularly those associated with invasive plants, often require multi-year treatments to achieve and maintain desired future condition. In addition, climate change stressors are affecting a multitude of factors that influence vegetation composition, making it especially important to monitor habitats through time and adapt to these stressors. Failure to fund the WMC sustainably could jeopardize past strategic investments and lessen the potential for landscape-scale habitat improvements along the Willamette River.

The following entities support the administrative capacity of the WMC:

- **Meyer Memorial Trust (MMT)** – Willamette River Initiative three, two-year grants (2014–2016, 2016–2018, and 2018–2020) for continued coordination of the WMC; coordination of outreach and education activities to raise awareness about native and invasive plants along the river; and management of target invasives through planning, outreach, control, planting, and monitoring activities.
- **Oregon Dept. of Agriculture (ODA)** – Oregon State Weed Board (OSWB) grants (2014–2019) to conduct outreach and control activities associated with invasive water primrose (*Ludwigia hexapetala*, *L. peploides*) and yellow floating heart (*Nymphoides peltata*) in the Willamette River system. OSWB grant (2013–2014) for English ivy (*Hedera helix*), Traveller’s Joy (*Clematis vitalba*), and scotch broom (*Cytisus scoparius*) control at Half Moon Bend.

Existing and potential funding sources to implement the strategies and action of the WMC include:

- **Federal agencies**
  - Bonneville Power Administration (BPA)
  - National Fish and Wildlife Federation (NFWF) – Pulling Together Initiative (in partnership with the Willamette Aquatic Invasives Network)
  - National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)



- Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) – Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) & Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA)
- U.S. Forest Service (USFS)
- Willamette National Forest, Siuslaw National Forest
- U.S. Geological Survey (USGS)– monitoring studies
  
- **State agencies**
  - Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB) – Focused Investment Partnership, Willamette Anchor Habitat Working Group
  - Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) – Wildlife Grants
  - Salmon Plate funds
  
- **Local governments**
  - Cities
  - Counties (potential for Metro-like tax)
  
- **Nonprofit organizations**
  - Audubon Society
  - Ducks Unlimited
  - Meyer Memorial Trust
  - Oregon Hunter’s Association
  - Trout Unlimited
  
- **Universities**
  - Portland State University – monitoring studies
  - Oregon State University – monitoring studies
  - Row team
  
- **Private donors**
  - Corporations (Columbia, Nike, Patagonia, HP, Intel, etc.)
  - Landowner cost-sharing
  
- **Tribes**

## Program Overview and Goals

In 2012–2013, the WMC and Benton SWCD hired and guided the work of the Carex Working Group (CWG) to conduct the [Willamette Mainstem Vegetative Habitat Survey and Assessment](#) along the mainstem of the Willamette River between Corvallis and Albany. The purpose of the assessment was to evaluate the character and health, primarily of riparian communities, with an emphasis on invasive species. The survey included 2,500 acres of riparian lands, and mapping of priority invasive plants and high-quality habitats.

The report included a set of management recommendations:

- “Protect the Best” by initiating weed control efforts within or adjacent to high-quality habitats.
- Implement Early Detection Rapid Response (EDRR) to detect and eradicate small and emerging populations of invasive plants.
- Control priority invasive plant species.
- Work with landowners to raise awareness of the value of native riparian habitats and address weed control priorities.
- Conduct periodic monitoring to detect new infestations and follow up with control treatments.

This set of management recommendations was used to inform the WMC goals and strategic actions in this plan. These accomplishments have been cataloged in interim action plans and are summarized in Appendix A of this report.

## **GOAL 1: Conduct habitat assessment and enhancement activities to protect and enhance high quality natural resource habitats.**

The WMC seeks to assess and enhance quality natural resource habitats by reducing priority invasive species and maintaining habitats to a desired future condition that ensures ecological function. Collaboration with landowners and land managers throughout the geographic scope of the WMC, including upstream and downstream of the WMC focus areas, is integral to long-term success. Collaborative members seeks to work with willing landowners to protect high quality and unique habitats through management and control of land infested with high priority invasive plant species using the most current and effective techniques. Defining clear outcomes and desired future condition for specific projects is integral to evaluate progress through time.

From 2020–2025, the WMC intends to work with stakeholders to potentially expand the geographic scope of the collaborative upstream to the Long Tom confluence to downstream at the Santiam confluence. This expansion is intended to supplement the existing focus of Corvallis to Albany, and work collaboratively with partners to leverage existing efforts and future funding sources.

### *Strategic Actions*

1. Share assessment information, actions, and responses with stakeholders to support WMC efforts.  
**Status:** Ongoing
2. Develop, and evaluate on a consistent basis, a list of priority invasive plant species<sup>1</sup> using existing data and documents, adding species that are emerging EDRR species, and removing those whose populations are large, or too impractical, to control.  
**Status:** Ongoing – Prioritize ivy, Traveler’s Joy, water primrose, yellow floating heart, and invasive knotweed spp. Note: False brome has been removed from the priority invasive list.
3. To inform WMC actions, maintain an invasive plant species watch list based on the CWMA species list.
4. Protect and enhance high quality and unique habitats identified during the survey and assessment (i.e., Carex Working Group report) to target high priority invasives for control. (Funders: OWEB, ODA, BPA)
  - a. Implement priority weed control (OWEB, ODA, BPA).

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<sup>1</sup> Invasive plant species are prioritized and informed by risk assessments and habitat assessments within the WMC focal area context.

- i. Water primrose (*Ludwigia* spp.) – Control outlying populations and work toward largest known population – priority focus on areas connected to river.
  - ii. Knotweed spp., - (reduce seed production where possible)
  - iii. Traveler’s Joy
  - iv. Yellow floating heart
  - v. Remove aerial ivy to control seed production, and remove along river properties
5. Apply integrated pest management techniques – Manual pulling, goat grazing, mechanical mowing or cutting, replacement with competitive native plants, cultural (farming), and/or herbicides using best management practices (OWEB, ODA, BPA).
6. Incorporate adaptive management principles into contracted work to ensure long-term success of initiative.  
**Status:** Ongoing
7. Conduct a weed survey upstream of Corvallis.

## GOAL 2: Facilitate outreach & partnership building.

Develop relationships and facilitate coordinated efforts amongst stakeholders. Provide opportunities for project collaboration and sharing of resources. Conduct outreach in support of the goals and missions of the WMC program. (Funders: MMT, OWEB, ODA)

### *Strategic Actions*

#### **Actions within the focus reach (Albany to Corvallis)**

1. Develop site-specific plans and cost-sharing with partners.
  - a. Contact landowners for permission to access their property to conduct restoration activities, disseminate informational materials, and conduct site visits. Contact landowners on an as-needed basis and as funding allows.  
**Status:** Ongoing
  - b. Obtain landowner permissions to treat property.  
**Status:** Ongoing
  - c. Coordinate and schedule with landowners for contractor access.  
**Status:** Ongoing
  - d. Work with individual landowners and stakeholders on post-invasive plant control re-vegetation for each site.  
**Status:** Ongoing
  - e. Create and distribute outreach and education materials.  
**Status:** Ongoing
  - f. Update the [WMC webpage](#) on the BSWCD website on a regular basis.  
**Status:** Ongoing
  - g. Update and reprint BSWCD publication Water Weeds: A Guide to Aquatic Weeds in Benton County.  
**Status:** Ongoing
  - h. Brand the WMC initiative as part of the BSWCD marketing and outreach efforts to ensure there is raised awareness and understanding of the initiative and its outcomes.  
**Status:** Ongoing
2. Conduct landowner and volunteer trainings/workshops/events.
  - a. Ivy control workshop for private landowners focused on treating with herbicides/without herbicides. Build awareness and acknowledge organizations contributing to control efforts.  
**Status:** Ongoing
  - b. Provide training for landowners to monitor for re-emergence of treated plants and communicate with landowners on a regular basis to increase awareness of expected

emerging plants.

**Status:** Ongoing

- c. Conduct at least four events annually including volunteer opportunities and workshops that engage at least 50 individuals from WMC target audiences. Events include weed pulls (Paddle and Pulls and Let's Pull Together events), seed collection, native plantings, invasive plant surveys, and meetings to share assessment results and invasive plant identification and management techniques.

**Status:** Ongoing

- d. Host guided river trips each summer with a subset of stakeholders and policy makers to tour the river and sites to develop a shared awareness of progress to date with WMC initiatives.

**Status:** Ongoing

3. Increase the visibility of the WMC and its work through these potential outreach strategies:

- a. Install highly visible signs along highway 20 relative to ivy control.
- b. Produce visual maps/projects focused on ivy outreach.
- c. Materials to be distributed to community locations (e.g., coasters).
- d. Host booths/weed pulls on invasive species.
- e. Corvallis Farmer's Market
- f. Festival Latino
- g. Other community events
- h. Create a map that identifies invasive species populations by year and progress made by WMC controlling those species.
- i. Invite the media to highlight WMC importance and outcomes.
- j. Produce a map that illustrates the collaborative partners within the geographic scope of the WMC.

5. Update landowners that participated in the original habitat assessment – Consider a 7-year update to landowners – include actions taken, successes, current status.

6. Foster engagement of WMC steering committee and stakeholder group.

- a. Annually hold at least one WMC steering committee meeting.

**Status:** Ongoing

- b. Communicate regularly via email, site visits and phone calls.

**Status:** Ongoing

- c. Work with individual steering committee and stakeholder group members to implement projects.

**Status:** Ongoing

7. Conduct at least one field tour annually among collaborative members to assess and discuss invasive species issues on member lands.
8. Host a peer-to-peer workshop on lessons learned from water primrose and yellow floating heart treatments.  
**Status:** Ongoing

### **Actions outside of the focus reach (Albany to Corvallis)**

1. Communicate the intent to expand the geographic scope of the WMC to collaborators, partners, and stakeholders.
2. Communicate efforts to audiences working outside of WMC reach (up to Long Tom confluence and down to the Santiam confluence)
  - a. Present findings from WMC work at up to three conferences/meetings annually.  
**Status:** Ongoing
  - b. Provide best management practices and methodologies via the Willamette Aquatic Invasive Network (WAIN) and other sources, and post the latest techniques and methods on the [WAIN website](#) and [WMC website](#).  
**Status:** Ongoing – [Aquatic Invasive Species Resource List](#) (revised March 2018)
  - c. Participate in planning effort for WAIN strategic action plan to prioritize aquatic invasive plant species and high priority areas to focus control efforts on along the entire Willamette River.  
**Status:** Ongoing
  - d. Share results from WMC monitoring efforts and collaborate and learn from organizations conducting related monitoring efforts in reaches outside of the focus reach.  
**Status:** Ongoing (e.g., collaboration with USGS/PSU/OPRD/WRK/Benton SWCD, participation on Steering Committee for WAIN Strategic Action Plan, technical expert for OWEB FIP Effectiveness monitoring)

## **GOAL 3: Evaluate the effectiveness of WMC actions.**

Evaluate the overall effectiveness of WMC actions and success in implementing the action plan.

### *Strategic Actions*

1. Develop monitoring protocol guidance and best management protocols to assess the efficacy of invasive species control efforts and determine if management activities meet the goals of each project.

2. Replicate the 2012–2013 assessment effort to evaluate effectiveness through time.
3. Post all monitoring results online to *iMapInvasives/WeedMapper*.  
**Status:** Ongoing
4. Survey landowners every other year to monitor the effectiveness of control efforts on private lands.  
**Status:** Ongoing
5. Determine usefulness of information they received on invasive plant surveys.  
**Status:** Ongoing



## GOAL 4: Strengthen the WMC's administrative capacity and impact.

### *Strategic Actions*

1. Identify and secure funds for coordination of the WMC, including grant writing and reporting, planning, and administrative support for habitat restoration, outreach, and monitoring and evaluation (MMT, ODA).

**Status:** Ongoing.

- a. Research and apply for grants as needed for program coordination and project implementation.

**Status:** Ongoing

- i. Research existing information and opportunities for pre and post-treatment wildlife surveys including macroinvertebrates, and fish and wildlife species.

- b. Complete interim, final and post-implementation reports to meet grant funding requirements.

**Status:** Ongoing

2. Identify and secure funds for WMC activities, including long-term control of invasive species within the geographic scope of the WMC.

**Status:** Ongoing

3. Develop a marketing committee strategy.

**Status:** TBD.

4. Update the WMC bylaws every other year.

- a. Provide guidance on when the WMC can advise/support decisions re: potential invasives/existing invasives.

**Status:** TBD.

## Goal 5. Support diversity, equity, and inclusion in WMC efforts.

The WMC celebrates equity, diversity, and inclusiveness, embracing these pillars of excellence as crucial to healthy people, communities and ecosystems. We believe our core values are strengthened when we commit, on a continuous basis, to all community members having a voice, contributing, and participating.

We realize our diversity, equity, and inclusion goal by:

- Fostering a culture of open-mindedness, compassion, and inclusiveness among individuals and groups;
- Actively building a community whose members have diverse cultures, backgrounds, and life experiences;
- Providing effective leadership and participation in the development, coordination, implementation, and assessment of WMC priorities to promote diversity and understanding of differences;
- Providing educational opportunities toward the development of socially responsible leaders who are willing to engage in the discourse and decision-making that can lead to transformational change; and
- Honoring freedom of expression and civility of discourse as fundamental to personal, professional, and organizational growth.

### *Strategic Actions*

1. View and implement all goals and actions within this plan through a diversity, equity, and inclusion lens.
2. By 2021, assess the status of the WMC relative to diversity, equity, and inclusion, and develop a set of actions to better incorporate underrepresented community members and their perspectives in the WMC. Foster the development of long-term partnerships and relationships with community members.

## Resources

- Aquatic Invasive Species Resource List:  
[https://www.bentonswcd.org/assets/Aquatic\\_Invasive\\_Species\\_Resources\\_2018\\_March.pdf](https://www.bentonswcd.org/assets/Aquatic_Invasive_Species_Resources_2018_March.pdf)
- Carex Working Group: Willamette Mainstem Vegetative Habitat Survey and Assessment Final Report: <http://www.bentonswcd.org/assets/Willamette-Mainstem-Assessment-Final-Report-Abridged.pdf>
- Priority Invasive Map:  
[http://www.bentonswcd.org/assets/WillametteMainstemCooperativeProject\\_Priority\\_100.pdf](http://www.bentonswcd.org/assets/WillametteMainstemCooperativeProject_Priority_100.pdf)
- Water Weeds: Guide to Aquatic Weeds for Benton County:  
<http://www.bentonswcd.org/assets/BSWCDAquaticWeedGuidebklt.pdf>
- Willamette Mainstem Cooperative webpage:  
<http://www.bentonswcd.org/programs/willamette-main-stem/>
- WMC Programmatic Bylaws:  
[https://www.bentonswcd.org/assets/WMC\\_Bylaws\\_signed\\_2015\\_Nov\\_18.pdf](https://www.bentonswcd.org/assets/WMC_Bylaws_signed_2015_Nov_18.pdf)

## Appendix A. Completed WMC actions to date.

The original WMC Action Plan was adopted in June 2015 by the steering committee as a course of action for the newly formed WMC partnership. The plan highlighted goals and objectives to be accomplished by 2020. As we update our plan for 2020–2025 and continue to move forward as a partnership, the steering committee sought to assess and document progress made 2015:

- **Assessment**—Surveyed more than 2,500 acres of riparian habitat on the Willamette River between Corvallis and Albany to map invasive plants and assess habitat quality.
  - Developed a list of priority invasive plant species utilizing assessment.
  - Designated high priority areas for habitat restoration efforts.
  
- **Outreach and Education**—Engaged more than 275 participants from Eugene to Portland in our outreach and education events. Through these events, we have been able to implement early detection and rapid response of invasive species. All participants receive the *Water Weeds Guide to Aquatic Weeds* for Benton County, ensuring their continued ability to identify invasives along the Willamette River.
  - Hosted two paddle and weed pulls annually, surveying the river and hand-pulling small populations of priority invasives.
  - Hosted one aquatic plant workshop annually for community members to identify native and invasive species.
  - Hosted a Dead Ivy potluck for landowners who allowed ivy control treatment on their properties. Potluck highlighted ways to keep ivy off trees and how to leverage neighborhood events to keep the invasive at bay.
  - Wrote and published a blog on Ivy Impacts and Removal.
  - Hosted annual Let’s Pull Together volunteer ivy pull events at Takena Landing since 2015.
  - Hosted a demonstration day with potential contractors to feature a water and herbicide injection system designed for use in boats and other hard-to-access aquatic habitats.
  
- **Invasive Species Control** – Controlled invasive species on at least 400 acres of total riparian area and 20 miles of instream habitat through integrated management techniques.
  - Treated over 350 acres of Ludwigia infested off-channel habitat.
  - Treated over five miles and 230 acres of riparian habitat for English ivy and traveler’s joy through volunteers, contractors, and goats.
  - Found and eradicated the first siting of yellow floating heart on the mainstem Willamette River in Benton County.