is maintained by students and monthly work parties of community volunteers. The project has been the recipient of numerous grants and awards.

Stop 5: Porter Park

Location: footbridge in the park, on south side of NW Garfield Ave. between Kings Blvd. and 17th St.

Crossing under Kings Blvd., Dixon Creek winds its way through backyards before entering Porter Park at Garfield Ave. The City of Corvallis has implemented channel restoration and riparian plantings in the park. *The Cleaning Crawdads of Dixon Creek*, a 4-H Wildlife Stewards homeschool club, are dedicated to keeping the Porter Park stretch of the creek free of litter and invasive species. They applied to SOLV's Oregon Adopt-a-River program to obtain assistance with funding and supplies. Another collaborative effort in the park is underway. Corvallis Sustainability Coalition, Corvallis Parks & Recreation, Public Works and a horticulture student from OSU are planning a demonstration garden for planting with natives in a riparian area.

Stop 6: Corvallis High School

A bioswale (www.teamfourstlenews.com)

Best Time to Visit: when school is out of session

Location: between the high school's 11th St. parking lot and the footbridge

Dixon Creek enhances Corvallis High School's environment while providing students with hands-on educational and service-learning possibilities. In 2005, the Corvallis High School renovation was completed, which included a bioswale–a vegetated ditch that cleans and slows stormwater runoff from the parking lot. The swale is filled with native plants that add beauty and wildlife habitat to school grounds in addition to improving water quality in Dixon Creek. In May 2008, a SOLV Down By The Riverside project used student power to remove invasive Himalayan blackberry from the banks of the creek and plant native plants next to the bioswale.

Stop 7: The Sleep Center

Location: parking lot at 908 NW 9th St.

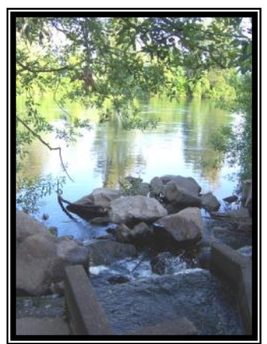
Here Dixon Creek winds around the Sleep Center's parking lot before crossing under 9th Street. At this site, you can look to Dixon Creek's banks for clues about its overall functioning. Little or no vegetation usually indicates that excessive bank erosion is occurring. Signs of erosion include gullies cut into banks by runoff flowing down into the creek. Sloughing banks are another obvious sign of erosion. Unstable bank undercuts could threaten rather than provide good fish habitat, and can be detrimental to buildings and parking lots near the creek. Fortunately Mr. Wake's CHS classes have been part of a multi-year restoration effort supported by Benton Soil & Water Conservation District, Project Learning Tree and the property owners . Students have removed invasive weeds and plan to introduce native riparian plants to stabilize the bank and to improve water quality and wildlife habitat.

Stop 8: Willamette Confluence

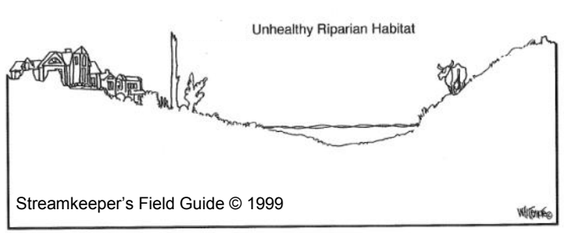
Location: north side of the creek at Water Works Ave. off of 2nd St.

At its mouth, Dixon Creek empties into the Willamette River, carrying with it sediment and debris. Most storm drains in Corvallis flow directly to the nearest stream or river, not to the Waste Water Treatment Plant. Stormwater can pick up fertilizer, pesticides, soap, oil, pet waste, paint and other pollutants, washing them directly into Dixon Creek and eventually into the Willamette. The presence of these pollutants degrade water quality and wildlife habitat.

Young salmon and steelhead, as well as native cutthroat trout, routinely use small Willamette River tributaries in the Corvallis area for spawning, rearing, and refuge. In the past, fish had difficulty entering Dixon Creek due to the concrete box culvert under Highway 20. During the summer of 2007, the City of Corvallis improved fish passage by constructing a natural fishway at the confluence of Dixon Creek and the Willamette River downstream from the herring bone fish passage weir inside the culvert under Highway 20. The weir causes the water to back up and slow down, making it deeper and more accessible to fish. One disadvantage of the design is that it clogs easily, so a team of volunteers is keeping the weir clear of debris. If you'd like to help, contact Karen Hans of Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife at 541-757-4186 x 251.



A view of the confluence of Dixon Creek and the Willamette



How to Get Involved with Local Waterways

Benton Soil and Water Conservation District: www.bentonswcd.org or 541-753-7208

City of Corvallis Parks and Recreation: Volunteer Coordinator 541-754-1739

City of Corvallis Public Works: Stormwater Specialist 541-766-6454

Corvallis Sustainability Coalition Soil & Water Task Force: www.sustainablecorvallis.org/committeesandtaskgroups

Marys River Watershed Council: http://mrwc.net/

Luckiamute Watershed Council: http://luckiamute.watershedcouncils.net/

ODF&W Salmon Trout Enhancement Program: http://www.dfw.state.or.us/STEP/ or 541-757-4186 x 251

Oregon Trout: www.ortrout.org or 541-753-4280

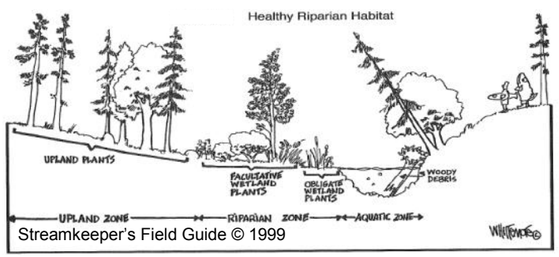
OSU Extension 4-H Wildlife Stewards Program: http://wildlifestewards.4h.oregonstate.edu/ or 541-766-6750

SOLV Adopt A River: www.solv.org/programs/oregon_adopt_a_river.asp

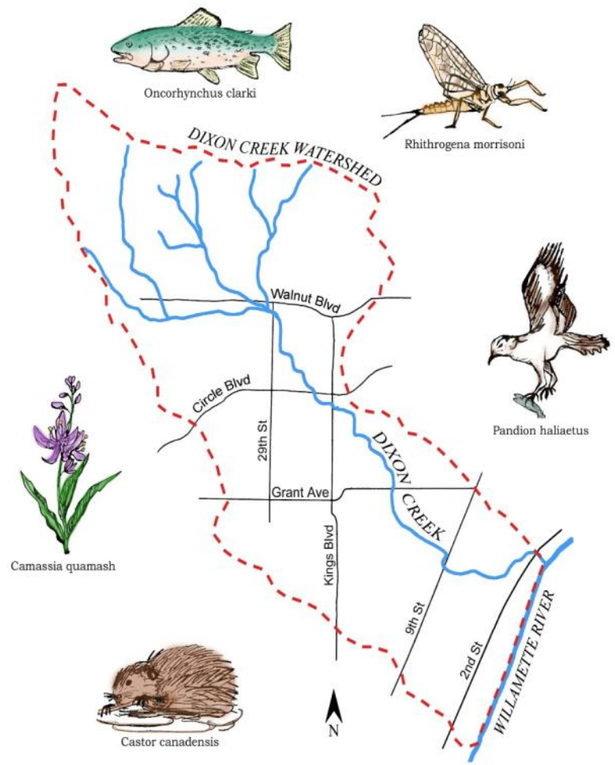
Willamette Riverkeeper: http://www.willamette-riverkeeper.org/

Healthy Water Tip!

Never use storm drains for disposal. Contamination of storm drains should be reported to 766-6565. Leave a message on the City of Corvallis Stormwater Pollution Prevention Hotline.



DIXON CREEK TOUR



HEADWATERS TO MOUTH

Get acquainted with Dixon Creek Watershed!

Discover wild places in the city, urban influences on the creek, and how to become a steward.

Last updated September, 2013

More information and an electronic version of this guide are available online at: www.bentonswcd.org

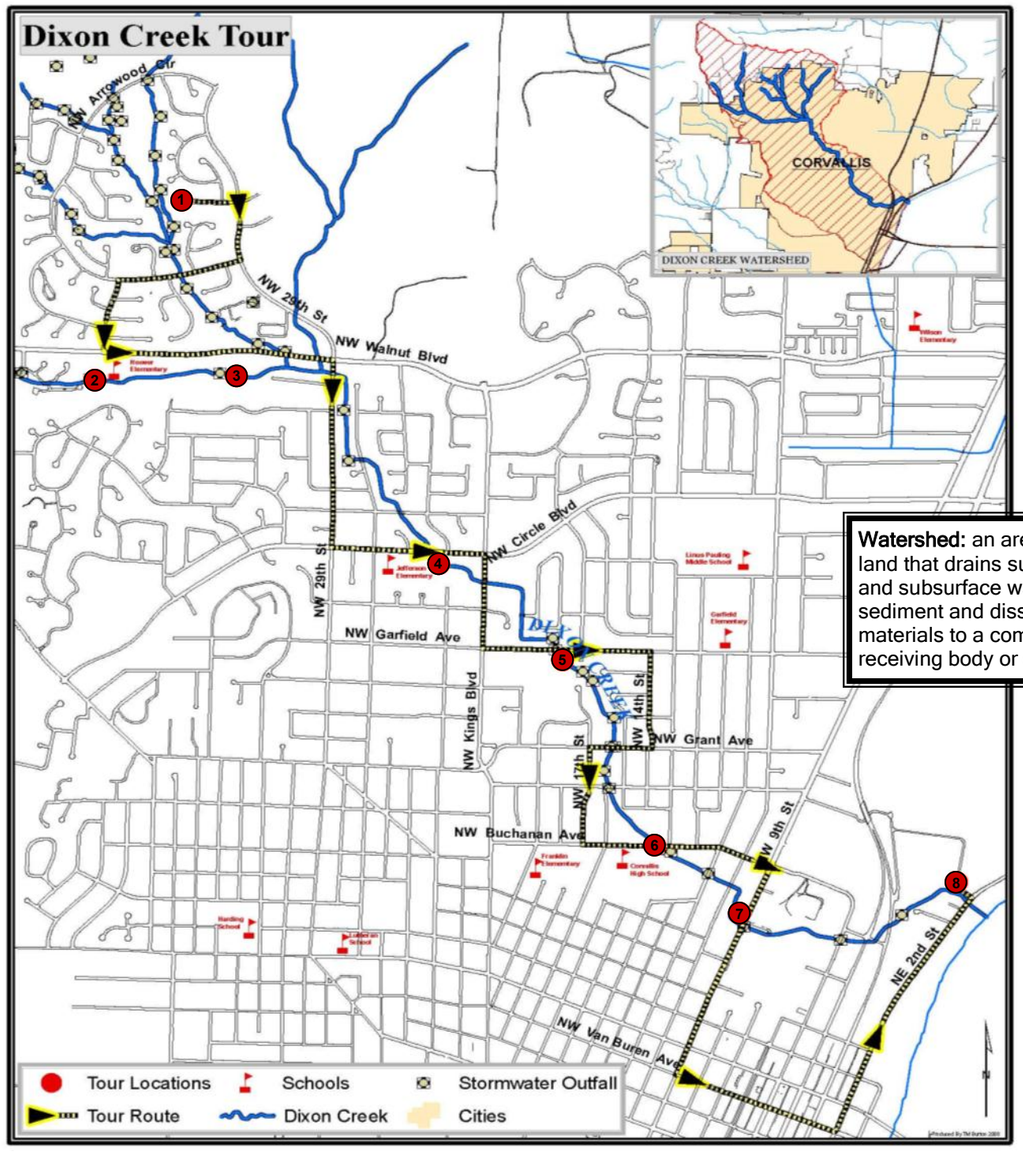
Tour stops correspond to numbers on the map below. Some of the sites can be visited any time, but stops #2, #4, and #6 should be viewed when school is not in session. As a self-guided tour, estimated tour time is 1 to 1 ½ hours.

Introduction to the Dixon Creek Watershed

The Dixon Creek Watershed originates in the northwest hills of Corvallis and encompasses 2,712 acres. The 3.5-mile creek is named after Corvallis co-founder William Dixon. The three headwater forks of the creek meet just to the southwest of the intersection of NW Walnut Blvd and NW 29th Street. Dixon Creek enters the Willamette River near the Waste Water Treatment Plant.

For much of its long history Dixon Creek was a meandering stream crossing wide floodplains and surrounded by biologically diverse habitats. Today, Dixon Creek and the surrounding land is greatly impacted by the Corvallis urban area and its inhabitants. Dixon Creek has been rerouted and realigned into fewer, deeper channels and is in many places constrained by the built environment. The creek flows through backyards, schools, city parks, public spaces, commercial properties, and is crossed by roads over 33 times in its short reach.

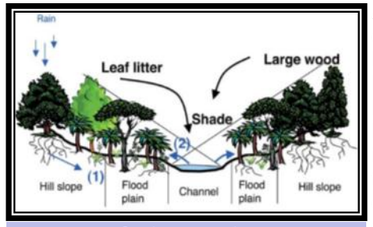
Human influences such as these have had negative consequences for the whole watershed including loss of habitat for aquatic and riparian species, decreased water quality, faster water flows, increased potential for flooding, bank erosion, and the introduction of non-native plants and wildlife.



Watershed: an area of land that drains surface and subsurface water, sediment and dissolved materials to a common receiving body or outlet.

Stop 1: Timberhill Greenway

Location: footpath at the west end of NW Huckleberry Pl. off of 29th St.



Creek cross-section
nhttp://www.niwa.cri.nz/pubs/wa/ma/11-4/riparian

At this stop you are close to the headwaters of the Middle Fork of Dixon Creek. Headwaters are important because they influence conditions downstream and also because they often support diverse plant and animal communities. As you walk down the paved trails of this community greenway you will see the riparian corridor–the area around the stream, which contains native species such as Oregon ash, big leaf maple, red alder, white alder, willow, and Oregon white oak. The riparian corridor enhances water quality by acting as a biological filter to trap sediments and pollutants in runoff. Riparian corridors also provide habitat for terrestrial and aquatic wildlife. Preserving Dixon Creek's headwaters and riparian corridors is a critical component to the health of the watershed and its inhabitants.

Stop 2: Hoover Elementary School

Best Time to Visit: When school is out of session

Location: trail behind Hoover Elementary at 3838 NW Walnut Blvd.

At this site you will see the main channel of Dixon Creek as it runs behind Hoover Elementary, a 4-H Wildlife Steward member school. Hoover Habitat Heroes seek to promote hands-on science and nature-based learning in their schoolyard habitat. They also encourage students to become involved with Dixon Creek restoration plans. Hoover students enjoy learning in an outdoor education site that features almost 2000 feet of Dixon Creek, nature trails, a mixed conifer and deciduous forest, a grassy meadow area, and many plants and animals. Students were delighted at their recent discovery of a 14-inch cutthroat trout in the creek behind their school; a good sign that portions of the creek are healthy enough to support aquatic life, although the culvert underneath bridge is a barrier to fish passage. In the 1970's this stretch of the creek was channelized to control flooding. Since then, entrenchment of the creek and undercutting of banks have worsened. One goal of the Hoover Habitat Heroes is to restore the meandering nature of the creek to improve fish habitat and water quality.

A 14" cutthroat trout found in Dixon Creek at Hoover, spring 2008

Stop 3: NW Hills Community Church

Location: footbridge behind west side of NW Hills Community Church at 3300 NW Walnut Blvd.

Dixon Creek behind church parking lot

Just downstream of Hoover Elementary, Dixon Creek traverses an area of open space behind the NW Hills Community Church. The City of Corvallis 2002 Stormwater Master Plan identified this location as a prime spot for a passive flood storage facility during the winter months because this area was part of the historic floodplain complex. Flood management and control is another important function of riparian corridors, which slow and temporarily hold stormwater runoff before releasing it into the stream, hence reducing impacts of floods. Without riparian corridors, stormwater moves quickly into streams, and the resulting high, fast-moving flows can damage riparian ecosystems as well as threaten human life and the built environment. Restoring the floodplain would create backwater habitats, contribute to the process of denitrification (an instrumental process in the removal of excess nitrate from groundwater), improve water quality, and contribute to the overall health of the Willamette River.

Stop 4: Jefferson Elementary School

Best Time to Visit: When school is out of session

Location: trailhead on the west side of Dixon Creek on NW Circle Blvd.

Dixon Creek at Jefferson School: a good example of how flow spreads through a floodplain during high discharge.

About 600 feet of Dixon Creek border Jefferson Elementary. Like Hoover, Jefferson is a 4-H Wildlife Stewards member school . Since 2002, Wildlife Stewards have worked to restore the site by removing invasive weeds, installing a 4 ft wide interpretative trail with 12 sign posts and benches, and planting over 600 native trees and shrubs. Due to state regulations restricting the application of pesticides in the vicinity of schools, the blackberries have been removed and managed manually without the use of chemicals. The area