



# SLOUGH NEWS

NEWSLETTER OF THE COLUMBIA SLOUGH WATERSHED COUNCIL

Spring 2003 - Volume 4, Issue 2

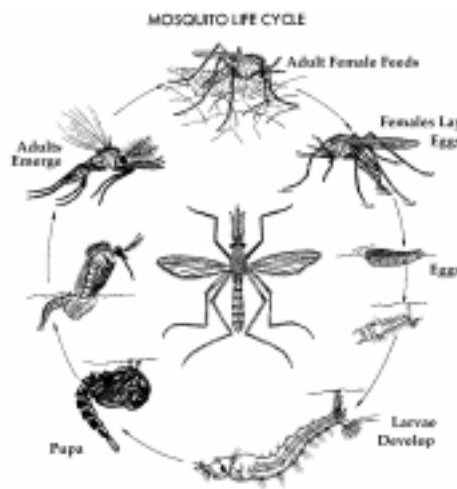
## West Nile Virus

Christopher M. Wirth, Multnomah County

While West Nile Virus (WNV) has not yet been detected in the state of Oregon, it is anticipated that the virus will reach Oregon in 2003. WNV is a naturally occurring disease of birds. To date, there have been 138 known species of birds infected by WNV including raptors, corvids and captive or exotic species such as cockatiels, finches and lorikeets. WNV is transmitted to birds by mosquitoes. Birds belonging to the family Corvidae, such as crows, jays and magpies, are most fatally affected by WNV and have been proven to be an effective surveillance tool for following WNV movement into human and other "dead-end host" populations. A dead-end host means that the host can't infect others or serve as a reservoir to spread the disease. Mosquitoes infect humans through a bite, but less than 1% of those infected develop severe or fatal illness. Regardless, there is a great deal of fear and misunderstanding about WNV.

There are numerous species of mosquitoes that can carry and transmit WNV. In the United States, there are both native and exotic species of mosquitoes capable of WNV transmission. In Multnomah County, we predict there to be a minimum of four mosquito species of concern at this time. These mosquitoes are found from early spring through early fall, depending on weather and other climatic conditions. Mosquitoes have a complete life cycle of metamorphosis, similar to butterflies but the immature stages are water-dependent.

Mosquito larval or breeding habitat may be temporary water sources associated with floodplain environments along the Columbia and Willamette Rivers and the Multnomah Channel or urban water environments with organic content. Some examples of temporary water sources are catch basins, stormwater detention facilities, wetlands, abandoned swimming pools, blocked rain gutters, wheelbarrows, old tires, wading pools, or anywhere water is collected and retained. In Multnomah County, mosquito control experts routinely focus suppression methods county-wide, on different life-cycle stages by means of an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) program. This holistic approach evaluates a suite of control options, including: education, site elimination or reduction, biological, biorational and / or chemical control strategies for mosquito suppression.

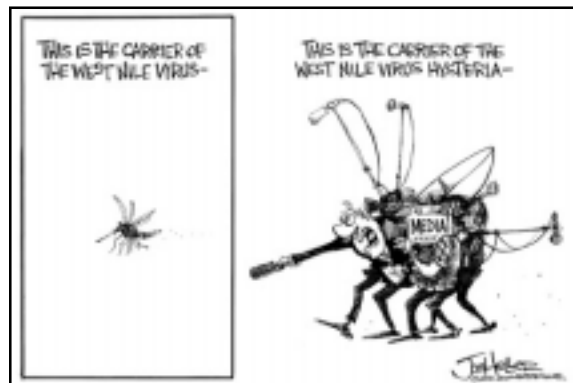


Multnomah County Vector and Nuisance Control (MCVNC) has a phased response plan to monitor, test, and control the species of mosquitoes that transmit West Nile Virus. Factors considered will be: abundance of mosquito species capable of transmitting the disease; numbers and types of dead birds reported to the county; identification of the virus in a mosquito or bird; and WNV cases in humans, horses or other vertebrates. Besides routine surveillance operations such as sentinel chicken and adult and larval mosquito sampling for presence of disease and species diversity and density, MCVNC is conducting enhanced surveillance activities including dead bird collection and passive surveillance such as human or other dead-end hosts. Furthermore, this plan includes a multi-lingual communication plan with educational materials available in English, Spanish, Russian, Vietnamese, Chinese and Korean.

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Unfortunately, mosquitoes do not adhere to boundaries or property lines. For example, those mosquitoes with vector capacity for WNV transmission in Oregon have a flight range of 1-20 miles. It is imperative that citizens of Multnomah

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“To foster action to protect, enhance, restore and revitalize the Slough and its watershed.”

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## Spring in the Watershed

Watching Spring unfold is a joy no matter where you live. Here at Whitaker Ponds, where the Council has its office, there is an especially nice view of nature at work. Every day there are subtle, gradual changes as the season unfolds. It is amazing how life can return after the dark, cold winter. Spring takes a long time to get here, but when it does, it is spectacular.



The first sign of change came when American bald eagles were spotted at Whitaker Ponds during their annual migration in February and March. Then the yellow daffodils bloomed once again. Most recently the tall Black cottonwood trees around the pond began to develop a tinge of green where new leaves are emerging. Ducks and geese have been flapping and splashing about as they court and mate. Killdeer and Northern flickers are seen once again. Last week Rachel Felice, our Slough School educator, watched a Rufous hummingbird outside the picture window feeding on the flowering native shrubs that were planted here in recent years. The whole place is pulsing with potential.



Jay Mower, CSWC Coordinator, enjoys the spring day at Whitaker Ponds

Come and experience your own Spring renewal along the Columbia Slough. Visit quiet natural areas. Hike the 40-Mile Loop Trail along the Slough. Or go for a paddle on the water. Call to request a free recreation guide and/or a free paddler's guide to the Columbia Slough. The recreation guide is available in Spanish, too. I invite you to participate in any of our upcoming events this quarter.

## Staff Changes

In early January 2003 Bonnie Shoffner, Program Assistant at the CSWC office, resigned to accept an exciting six month volunteer opportunity in West Africa working for a conservation organization. Her predecessor, Sarah Murphy, returned to the CSWC office after a nine month internship at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Portland office. Bon voyage, Bonnie, and welcome back, Sarah.

## Watershed Council to Initiate Volunteer Program

The Columbia Slough Watershed Council has been selected to host a Northwest Service Academy AmeriCorps member for 11 months beginning in October. Our AmeriCorps member will serve as our Volunteer Program Coordinator, and will lead the Council efforts to start a volunteer program. They will help lead our Eyes on the Slough volunteer monitoring program, set up stewardship activities throughout the watershed, assist with Slough School programs, and do outreach to watershed businesses and neighborhood groups.



The Northwest Service Academy is an AmeriCorps program that addresses significant environmental and educational needs in Washington and Oregon. Their mission is to serve and strengthen northwest communities by addressing critical environmental and

educational needs. The Northwest Service Academy provides a tremendous service to local groups like the Council, and we thank them for this opportunity.

#### Council Office Wish List:

- Gas powered weed-wacker
- Paper cutter
- Push mower
- Recycled copier paper
- Computer (Pentium 3 +)

We will begin recruiting for our AmeriCorps member this spring. If you are interested in more information or know of someone who may be interested in the position, please contact Sarah Murphy at 503-281-1132 or [sarah.murphy@columbiaslough.org](mailto:sarah.murphy@columbiaslough.org)

## Winter Slough School Adventures

Rachel Felice, Slough School Educator

The beginning of spring this year has been marked by more than the appearance of a Rufous Hummingbird or the heavy boughs of the Red-flowering Currant here at Whitaker Ponds. An early spring visitor may also notice a new crop of white flagging tape moving in the wind. It marks the work of hundreds of students involved in restoration plantings over the winter planting season.

Students involved in Slough School planted over 290 native plants at Whitaker Ponds, including species such as Snowberry, Douglas Spirea, Thimbleberry, Fringecup, Vine Maple, Western Red Cedar, Oregon Grape, Salal and Red Elderberry. Students have also been involved in planting events throughout the Slough, such as the Children's Arboretum and Kelley Point Park. The winter rains and cooler weather provide ideal conditions to put plants in the ground.



Students from Boise-Eliot Elementary plant Spirea at Whitaker Ponds Environmental Learning Center.



Students and a parent examine macroinvertebrates at Whitaker Ponds on a wet winter day.

prevent erosion, create shade to cool the Slough and surrounding waters, and provide habitat and food sources for native animals in our watershed. Slough School students did a fantastic job braving the wet and cool weather to learn close-up about their native plants and the hard work that is a necessary part of any restoration plan. Many students are excited to return to the study site as the seasons change to check on their newly planted friends and to assure that the woody sticks turn into flowering plants.

For more information on Slough School, contact Rachel Felice, Educator, at 503-281-1132 or [rachel.felice@columbiaslough.org](mailto:rachel.felice@columbiaslough.org)

For most groups of students, the opportunity to participate in a planting event comes after a course of study about our watershed and the impacts our actions as humans have on the watershed. Students learn about the differences between native and non-native plants and understand that the benefits of our native plants are numerous. Native plants work to pre-



Students planting trees during the restoration season at Whitaker Ponds.

**A Special Thanks**



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Bicycle Trailers  
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Backtrek makes light, high quality trailers designed specifically for hauling sports and recreation gear. The trailers can be towed by any vehicle that can pull a trailer.

[www.backtrek.com](http://www.backtrek.com)

### Thank You's

Thank you to the following partners for your generous support of the Council.

Backtrek Trailers - Thank you to Backtrek trailers of Bend, Oregon for your generous donation. The eight-canoe trailer that you helped us locate and subsidized will be an essential component of our new canoe fleet!

URS Corporation - Thank you to URS for donating office furniture to the Council. Our staff appreciates the new chairs, table, lateral file cabinets and bookshelves!

Alder Creek Kayak and Canoe - Thank you to Alder Creek Kayak and Canoe for securing a great deal on kayaks and canoes for our new canoe and kayak fleet.

Susan Barthel & Dorothy Sperry, volunteer Project Managers, Watershed Action Plan - Dorothy and Susan have poured a super-human amount of time and energy into co-managing the development of the Columbia Slough Watershed Action Plan. Their efforts have far exceeded the call of duty. Thank you Dorothy & Susan for your hard work & commitment!



# SLOUGH NEWS

## West Nile Virus - Continued from Page 1

County and surrounding communities reduce standing water around their property. The simple steps that citizens can take to reduce mosquito breeding and protect themselves from biting mosquitoes are critical to reduce WNV risk. It is important to limit the areas around your house that provide habitat for mosquitoes, including:

- Empty tin cans, plastic containers, ceramic pots or other containers
- Remove old tires and turn over wheelbarrows
- Clean rain gutters so water flows freely
- Do not allow ornamental ponds to stand still or stagnate
- Use mosquito fish in ponds or water gardens that are not connected to any other bodies of water
- Turn over wading pools when not in use
- Change the water in birdbaths at least once a week
- Keep swimming pools cleaned and chlorinated. Empty water that collects on swimming pool covers
- Fill in puddles. Report large areas of standing water at [www.mchealthinspect.org](http://www.mchealthinspect.org)



Old tires and tire piles are perfect habitat for mosquitoes to breed.

For information regarding West Nile Virus or Vector Control, please view <http://www.mchealthinspect.org/vector/index.html>. If you have any questions or request further information, please contact Multnomah County at 503-988-NILE (6453). For dead bird sample collection, please call 503-988-3464 or visit <http://www.mchealthinspect.org/vector/deadbird.html> for online reporting. Other good sites include Centers for Disease Control - <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile/index> and Oregon Health Division - <http://www.ohd.hr.state.or.us/acd/wnile/home.htm>

## Fish and Wildlife of the Columbia Slough

Ry Thompson, City of Portland BES



Wilson's Warbler, a common visitor along riparian areas



Great Horned Owl, several nesting pairs are found in the watershed



Chinook Salmon in the Lower Columbia Slough

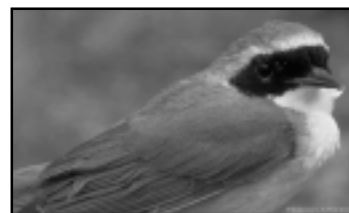
"A low piney country with an emence quantity of Geese, Brants, Ducks and sea otters, Swan and cranes" - Journals of Meriwether Lewis, 1805, describing Columbia River floodplain

The wetlands and riparian forests along the Columbia Slough serve as important habitat and travel corridors for native wildlife. They also provide a priceless greenspace for humans, with opportunities for hiking, canoeing, bicycling and wildlife viewing near home and work. These greenspaces vary from narrow strips of riparian forest along much of the Slough to the 160-acres of riparian forest at Kelley Point Park to a 2,000-acre wetland complex and wildlife refuge at Smith and Bybee Lakes to the undeveloped uplands in the Rivergate Industrial District.

Many of these sites have public access and are ideal for viewing wildlife. Canoe the slough with binoculars and see what wildlife you can find. Walk or bike the 40-mile Loop Trail or the Peninsula Crossing Trail in search of wildlife viewing opportunities. You'll be glad you did.

During our watershed planning process, we've documented 184 species of birds, 29 species of mammals, 26 species of fish, 5 species of reptiles and 5 species of amphibians that utilize the Columbia Slough watershed for breeding, feeding and / or resting at some point during their life cycle. A more detailed brochure is forthcoming on the "Fish of the Columbia Slough".

For more detailed information about wildlife viewing along the Slough, visit the sites described in Wild in the City or the "Exploring the Columbia Slough" brochure and map. If you would like species lists and more information regarding wildlife found along the Slough, contact Ry Thompson at 503-823-5760 or [ryt@bes.ci.portland.or.us](mailto:ryt@bes.ci.portland.or.us)



Common Yellowthroat, a common wetland visitor along the Slough



Black-crowned Night Heron, a common wading bird along Bridgeton Slough



Western Painted Turtle are a very sensitive species along the Slough

# SLOUGH NEWS

## Volunteer Spotlight: Gail Shaloum, Wetlands Representative to CSWC

Gail Shaloum is the wetlands representative to the Columbia Slough Watershed Council. She has nine years experience with a local consulting firm and has recently started her own business, Shaloum Environmental Services. Gail's experience includes wetland mitigation planning and design, stream restoration projects, erosion and sediment control, stormwater BMP design, Environmental Impact Statements, inventories of natural resources, NPDES stormwater permits, wetland delineation, and landscape plans and specifications. Gail is also a registered landscape architect with five years experience including site planning and subdivision design, regulatory review, conceptual design, preparing permit applications, and preparing working drawings for construction.



Gail joined the Council in 2000, hoping to use her skills to contribute something to the community and the watershed in which she lives. In addition to participating in the monthly Council meetings and attending other Council events, Gail has been involved in other Council activities, including:

- Active member and chair of the Wetland Mitigation Oversight Committee. This committee reviews proposals within the watershed for projects that would alter existing wetlands and develops comments on behalf of the Council to regulatory agencies. The committee also works with applicants to find alternative ways of achieving their development goals while minimizing impacts to wetlands.
- Developed and presented a wetlands "primer" course called Wetlands 101. The Council will offer the course for the third time this May.

Her education includes a Master of Science degree in Environmental Science and Engineering from the Oregon Graduate Institute in 1993 and a Bachelor of Science in Landscape Architecture from Rutgers University in 1986. Gail is married and has a four year-old daughter. Shaloum Environmental Services will offer assessment, permitting, planning, and design related to wetlands, stormwater, and environmental enhancement projects.

## FAQ: How Big is the Columbia Slough Watershed?

Well, it depends on whose boundary you use to measure it!

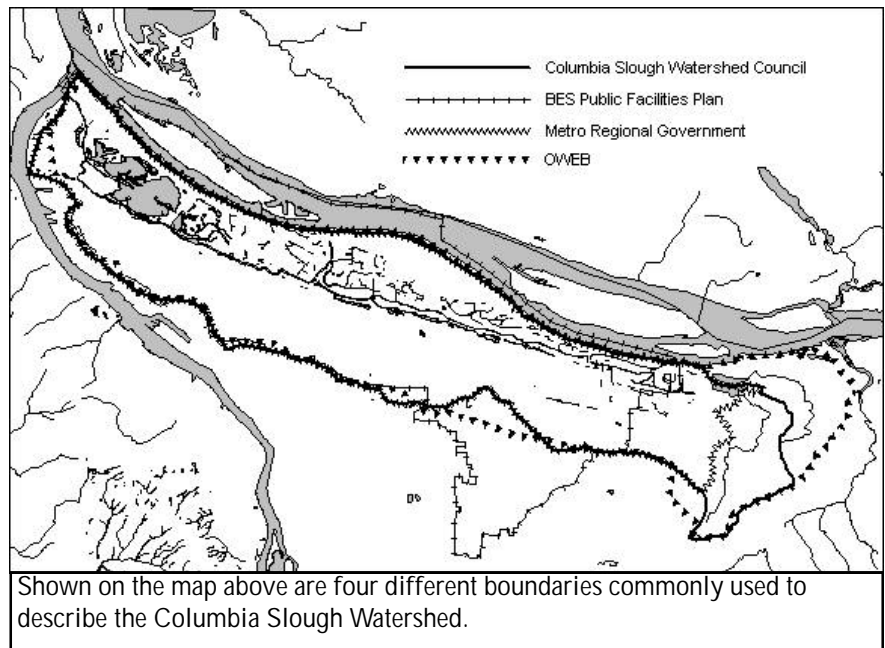
CSWC Action Plan (51 sq.mi., 32,700 acres) – It represents the strict topographic boundary, including Fairview Creek, Fairview Lake and the Lower, Middle and Upper Columbia Sloughs. This boundary most closely matches the definition of watershed.

BES Public Facilities Plan (56 sq.mi., 36,000 acres) – It describes the Columbia Slough/River service area in the Public Facilities Plan. It includes:

- the combined topographic boundaries of both the Columbia Slough and the Columbia River, truncated to be within the boundary of the City of Portland, and
- the sewer basin infiltration areas in East Multnomah County that drain to groundwater, which may end up in the Columbia Slough, Columbia River or Willamette River.

Metro Regional Government (47 sq.mi., 29,900 acres) – It represents the topographic boundary similar to that used by the Watershed Council, but does not include Fairview Creek.

Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (58 sq.mi., 37,000 acres) – It also represents a topographic boundary. It differs little from the Watershed Council's in most cases. However, it includes the watershed of Arrata Creek (which actually drains to the Columbia River instead of the Slough) and the watershed of Blue Lake (which has no outlet).



# SLOUGH NEWS

## Harvesting Rainwater, Protecting the Slough

Tom Miller, Kenton Neighbor & Watershed Resident

The decision to call a place home brings with it the responsibility and wisdom of stewardship. Native Americans fished the Columbia River and its tributaries—including the Slough—for 10,000 years without harm to the ecosystem. My work to defend Native American treaty rights to fish reminds me that protecting fish and the system upon which they depend is a matter of protecting home.

Working to protect 'home' beyond the boundaries of my property lot seems similarly intuitive. When my family decided to establish its roots in the Kenton neighborhood of North Portland it seemed wise to invest in our local watershed. After all, the difference between a contaminated watershed unfit for fishing or recreation and one teeming with life and options for enjoyment impacts our property value and quality of life.

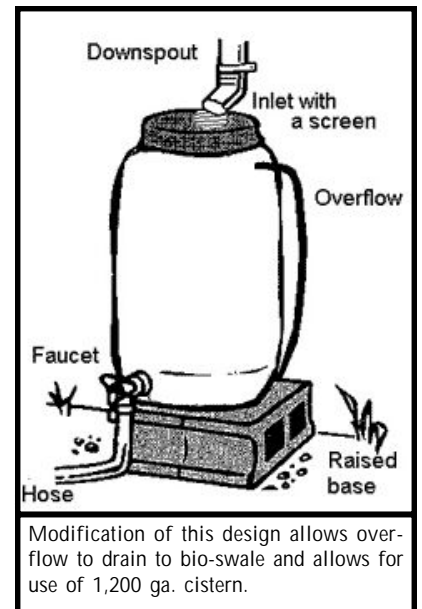
The Columbia Slough Watershed Council encourages the 158,000 of us who live within the watershed to plant native flora to help restore ecosystem health. My family thinks this is a great idea and wants to go further. We want to reduce our water consumption and stormwater runoff. Reducing our demand for water not only ensures more water for other important uses such as river flow, it also saves us money. Stormwater management means reducing the quantity of contaminated water discharged into our rivers. By reducing contamination into rivers we help to protect water quality, which is vital for drinking water, fish health, and other species protection.

To make these changes we've taken a simple, affordable approach. With the support of the Council and the Kenton Neighborhood Association, my family is seeking a grant from the City of Portland's Community Watershed Stewardship Program. Grants of up to \$5,000 are available each May for community groups and citizens to enact innovative strategies that improve the health of Portland's watersheds. If awarded the grant, we will establish a rainwater harvest system.

The system will collect a portion of the rainwater that hits our roof and store it in a 1,200-gallon cistern. The cisterns are available from regional farm stores and will include a spigot that connects to our garden hose. The system comes equipped with an overflow system that will lead into a bioswale planted with water-loving native species. In the dry summer months we'll use the water we've stored to water our garden that accommodates a landscape planted with drought-resistant native species.

My family thanks the Council for its support of our endeavors. Please visit us in the fall with the City of Portland's Naturscaping Program to learn more about our efforts and how they might apply to your home or business. Together we can all do our part to restore the Columbia Slough in simple, affordable ways.

For more information about what you can do at home to manage your stormwater, contact Dawn Hottenroth, Bureau of Environmental Services at 503-823-7767 or dawnh@bes.ci.portland.or.us. For more information about the Community Watershed Stewardship Program's Grants program, contact Amber Marra at 503-823-5740 or amberm@bes.ci.portland.or.us. Grant applications must be received by 5pm, Friday May 9, 2003. Applications can be downloaded from [http://www.cleanrivers-pdx.org/get\\_involved/stewardship.htm](http://www.cleanrivers-pdx.org/get_involved/stewardship.htm) or requested from Environmental Services Community Watershed Stewardship Grant Program, 1120 SW 5th Ave., Room 1000, Portland, OR 97204.



## Calendar of Events

For information about Columbia Slough Watershed Council (CSWC) Events, call 503-281-1132, email [info@columbiaslough.org](mailto:info@columbiaslough.org) or visit [www.columbiaslough.org](http://www.columbiaslough.org)



<b>April</b>		
Saturday, 19	9am-1pm	Whitaker Ponds Work Day Whitaker Ponds Env. Learning Center
Monday, 28	5-8pm	CSWC General Meeting Nabisco, 100 NE Columbia Blvd.
<b>May</b>		
Thursday, 15	6-9pm	Wetlands 101 Seminar - \$10 fee. RSVP. Port of Portland, Commission Room
Saturday, 17	9am-12pm	Wetlands 101 Field Trip - RSVP Required. Smith and Bybee Lakes Wildlife Area
Saturday, 17	10am-3pm	Native Plant and Arts and Crafts Sale Lakeshore Park, Fairview Lake For more info: <a href="mailto:mistyschlegel@attbi.com">mistyschlegel@attbi.com</a>
Monday, 19	5-8pm	CSWC General Meeting Nabisco, 100 NE Columbia Blvd.
Thursday, 22	6-7:30pm	Slough Paddle Whitaker Ponds Env. Learning Center
Saturday, 31	10am-12pm	Great Blue Heron Week Vanport Bike Tour Heron Lakes Golf Course
<b>June</b>		
Wednesday, 4	5:30-7:30pm	Great Blue Heron Week Slough Paddle 16550 NE Airport Way Boat Launch
Thursday, 12	7-8:30pm	Lower Columbia Slough Full Moon Paddle St. Johns Landfill Boat Launch
Saturday, 14	1-5pm	Explorando el Columbia Slough Whitaker Ponds Env. Learning Center
Monday, 30	5-8pm	CSWC General Meeting Nabisco, 100 NE Columbia Blvd.
<b>July</b>		
Sunday, 27	9am-1pm	9th Annual Small Craft Regatta Launch location TBD

**COMING SOON**  
Columbia Slough  
Watershed Action Plan

Available mid-June

**CD, Web or Print format**

To request a copy contact: (503)-281-1132  
or email [info@columbiaslough.org](mailto:info@columbiaslough.org)

**Volunteers Wanted**

**Spanish – Speakers:** We are looking for Spanish speakers who are fluent enough to help us host Explorando el Columbia Slough in June. There are a wide variety of volunteer jobs for Spanish speakers. Volunteering for Explorando can be a one-day commitment.

**Lawyer:** Seeking experienced lawyer willing to provide pro-bono legal consultation services to the CSWC. The Council periodically needs a lawyer to review contracts and policies on an as needed basis.

**Graphic Designer:** Got style and time? We have brochures, displays, handouts and our newsletter that could use a fresh look.

**SECOND ANNUAL  
EXPLORANDO el  
COLUMBIA SLOUGH**

SATURDAY  
JUNE 14, 2003

WHITAKER PONDS  
ENVIRONMENTAL  
LEARNING CENTER  
100 NE COLUMBIA BLVD.  
PORTLAND, OREGON

FREE CANOE RIBES, GAMES, STORYTELLING, AND MUSIC



Columbia Slough Watershed Council  
7040 NE 47th Avenue  
Portland, OR 97218  
info@columbiaslough.org  
www.columbiaslough.org

## Wetlands 101

Join the Columbia Slough Watershed Council for this two-part seminar designed to give both a classroom and a hands-on overview of wetland ecology and regulations. Guest speaker Paul Adamus. Register for both the workshop and the field trip. **\$10 registration fee.** Scholarships available. **Registration required.**

### Seminar

Thursday May 15, 2003  
6:00 pm - 9:00 pm  
Port of Portland  
Commission Room  
121 NW Everett Street

Topics include: wetland function and values, wetland mitigation, wetland regulation, and restoration.



### Field trip

Saturday May 17, 2003  
9:00 am - Noon  
Smith & Bybee Lakes  
Wildlife Area  
Directions will be provided

Activities include: digging and examining wetland soils, viewing wildlife, and plant identification.

Contact: Sarah Murphy, Columbia Slough Watershed Council  
at (503) 281-1132 or sarah.murphy@columbiaslough.org