



750 Commercial Street, Room 205, Astoria, Oregon 97103  
Phone: (503) 325-0435, Fax: (503) 325-0459  
Website: [www.columbiaestuary.org](http://www.columbiaestuary.org)

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Greetings CREST Members and Partners:

I am pleased to bring you the first CREST email newsletter. Initially, I intend to send this out every other month, with the goal of keeping everyone more informed about CREST projects and services.

2009 has been a big year for CREST, with exciting work taking place in all three departments: Coastal Planning, Habitat Restoration, Research & Monitoring. This edition of the newsletter will focus on habitat restoration projects completed in 2009.

Meanwhile, the CREST Council will be reviewing a draft Strategic Plan in February that identifies goals and actions to ensure CREST's fiscal sustainability and enhance services in the next 2-3 years. This Plan is thanks to the input of several CREST members, non-profit partners, community volunteers and staff.

Please stay in touch and let us know CREST can assist you in the coming year. Happy holidays!

Best,

Micah Russell

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The ***Big Creek Velocity Barrier Removal*** project was completed by CREST and the Nicolai-Wickiup Watershed Council in July, 2009. Funding came from the Estuary Partnership, Bonneville Power Administration (BPA), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Agency (NOAA), Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB), US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and Hampton Affiliates. Fish were unable to pass above a fast flowing man-made chute meant to protect the adjacent logging road from flooding. By installing two bridges on the road the stream was rerouted to its historical meander, thereby allowing coho and steelhead access to 11 miles of additional spawning habitat. Our monitoring team is using radio telemetry to track returning salmon this fall/winter and has already seen several coho access the newly available habitat. Tidal habitat several miles downstream was also enhanced through culvert removal and riparian plantings.



*Big Creek velocity barrier (left); new bridges on the historic meander (right).*

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The ***Gorley Springs Habitat Restoration*** project was completed by CREST in August, 2009 with BPA funding. Several Engineered Log Jams (ELJs) were installed and anchored in the upper Grays River to promote recovery of chum salmon spawning grounds lost to severe flooding, as well as flood protection for nearby landowners and roads. We will be keeping an eye on this project throughout the winter to see how the river responds.



*Newly buried ELJ structures at summer flow (left); the return of winter flow (right).*

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The *Perkins Creek* project was completed by CREST and the Skipanon Watershed Council in October, 2009. Funding came from the Estuary Partnership, BPA, and USFWS. An undersized culvert was replaced on Perkins Lane, allowing for improved fish passage and floodwater conveyance. In addition, invasive Reed Canary Grass (RCG) was scraped down and removed and large woody debris installed, to be followed soon with native plantings. Visiting the site recently we found a good-sized cutthroat trout carcass, victim to a bird of prey judging by the talon marks.



*New culvert and RCG scrape down area (left); wild cutthroat found at site (right).*

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Upcoming projects in summer 2010 include a dike breach project near Fort Clatsop, removal of a fish barrier on the Chinook River, off-channel habitat creation on Ecola Creek, and reconnection of a large wetland complex to the Columbia River near Fort Columbia.