

# PORTLAND HARBOR

## *Natural Resource Trustee Council*



Fall 2012

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### Upcoming Events

#### Would You Like to Schedule a Presentation?

The Portland Harbor Natural Resource Trustee Council is eager to talk to the public about the Draft Restoration Plan and EIS. If your neighborhood association, community group, or other organization would like to schedule a presentation and discussion of the plan while the public comment period is still open, we would be happy to meet with you.

If you'd like to schedule a presentation, please contact:  
**lauren.senkyr@noaa**

#### RiverFest

September 21-23, 2012  
Portland, Oregon  
Come see the Trustee  
Council at the RiverFair at  
Cathedral Park  
Sunday September 23rd  
9AM-3PM  
more details **here**

Dear NOAA,

Thanks to all of you whom we saw at the July and August public meetings on the Draft Restoration Plan and Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement. In case you didn't make it, you'll find several options on how to get more information about the plan in this edition of the newsletter.

Sincerely,

Lauren Senkyr  
Outreach Coordinator  
Portland Harbor Natural Resource Trustee Council

### Public Comment Period Still Open!

The Portland Harbor Natural Resource Trustee Council released a Draft Restoration Plan and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Portland Harbor Superfund site in July. We are still accepting comments on the plan! Join the conversation. Submit a comment.

### Public comments are due by Monday October 8, 2012.

Comments on the Draft Restoration Plan and EIS are welcome via mail or email. A comment form and the full Draft Restoration Plan and EIS are available at:  
**[www.fws.gov/oregonfwo/Contaminants/PortlandHarbor](http://www.fws.gov/oregonfwo/Contaminants/PortlandHarbor)**.

**Please send comments to:**  
**[portlandharbor.restoration@noaa.gov](mailto:portlandharbor.restoration@noaa.gov)**

or

Megan Callahan Grant  
NOAA Restoration Center  
1201 NE Lloyd Blvd. Suite 1100  
Portland, OR 97232

### Species Spotlight- Pacific Lamprey

The Pacific lamprey is a species of eel-like fish. Like salmon, lamprey are born in river systems, spend part of their lives in the ocean, and return to freshwater to spawn. Returning adult lamprey are around 20 to 30 inches long, have a round, suctioning mouth known as an oral disc, and are greenish-brown or bluish-gray in color. Adults can be found ascending the wet rock faces of Willamette Falls, suctioning with their oral discs and flinging themselves upward using their whip-like tails. As long as the spray from the Falls keeps their skin wet, they can survive the climb.

## Community Advisory Group Meetings

September 12, 2012  
October 10, 2012  
November 14, 2012  
(ongoing, the 2nd Wednesday of every month)  
6:00-8:00 PM  
City of Portland's Water Pollution Control Testing Lab  
6543 N Burlington Avenue  
Portland, Oregon  
more details [here](#)

## Portland Harbor in the News

**"Lead contamination makes North Portland's Willamette Cove unsafe, Oregon Health Authority says."**

*The Oregonian*  
August 3, 2012

**"Lower Willamette Group not complying with Superfund cleanup order for Portland Harbor, EPA says."**

*The Oregonian*  
July 31, 2012

**"Something fishy in the harbor."**

*The Portland Tribune*  
July 25, 2012

**"Plan devised for restoration of polluted Portland Harbor."**

*Daily Journal of Commerce*  
July 10, 2012

**"New plan charts course toward cleaner Willamette."**

*Oregon Public Broadcasting*  
July 9, 2012

## Multimedia

Check out this [article](#) on Portland Harbor and Pacific lamprey at NOAA's Office of Response and Restoration [blog](#)

## Species Spotlight continued:

Lamprey, also known as eels, are a vitally important traditional resource for food, medicine, and ceremony for all five of the Tribes on the Portland Harbor Trustee Council. The Tribes harvested lamprey for thousands of years in a number of areas throughout the Pacific Northwest. However, lamprey numbers have declined so dramatically over the last several decades that the only place in the Northwest that still supports a lamprey harvest is Willamette Falls.



Photo courtesy of Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife

Pacific lamprey change a lot in their lifetimes. They start out as eggs, hatching into small, eyeless juveniles called ammocoetes that filter feed in sediments for several years before making their trip out to sea and maturing into macrophthalmia. While at sea they feed by parasitism, suctioning onto fish and marine mammals and sucking their blood. On their return trip, lamprey no longer feed but swim, climb, hide, and suction their way to a spawning area, which can take up to a year or possibly longer.

Ammocoetes need river sediments for food and to escape predation. Sediments are plentiful in the Willamette River near the Portland area. Unfortunately, sediments in the Portland Harbor reach of the river also contain toxic contaminants. Few studies exist that measure the lamprey's sensitivity to toxics, but studies conducted by the Portland Harbor Natural Resource Trustee Council using sediments from Portland Harbor suggest that lamprey ammocoetes burrow into contaminated sediment more slowly than into cleaner sediment. Much remains to be learned, but this laboratory behavior could indicate that ammocoetes are more vulnerable to predation in contaminated environments.

On the Willamette River, records of returning adult lamprey numbers were not kept until recently, but historic commercial harvests of thousands of tons of adult lamprey were recorded, making it likely that the individuals numbered in the millions. Today, even with bans on commercial harvests, only a small fraction of their estimated historic population remains. While Pacific lamprey are not currently on the Federal Threatened & Endangered Species list, they are considered a Sensitive Species by the state of Oregon, and several Tribes and government agencies are undertaking major efforts to move the species towards recovery.

*The Portland Harbor Natural Resource Trustee Council is responsible for restoring natural resources that have been impacted by contamination in the Portland Harbor Superfund site. The Trustee Council is made up of representatives from two federal, one state, and five tribal governments. The purpose of this newsletter is to share information about the Trustee Council's work with those who are interested in our assessment and restoration efforts.*