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Focus on Florence

A Newsletter from the City of Florence

Siuslaw Bridge photo courtesy of Joshua Greene, © 2011 All Rights Reserved

September 2011

Infrastructure Project to Improve Old Town water lines

Florence Urban Renewal Agency funded project to start construction in late fall or early winter.



Florence Urban Renewal Agency Chair and City Council President Nola Xavier.

Submitted by Nola Xavier, Florence Urban Renewal Chair and City Council President

Have you noticed? Those blue, yellow, green and white marks on the streets and sidewalks of Quince, 2nd, and Harbor streets aren't graffiti, they are the beginning of our Florence Urban Renewal Agency's project to up-size the water and sewer lines in the Old Town area.

City of Florence Public Works is engineering the first phase of the project now, with construction to begin in late fall or early winter. This \$2.5 million project is completely funded by tax increments that come to the Urban Renewal Agency from each of the special

districts that have taxing authority within the City of Florence. Last year this tax increment was \$262,562.70.

This infrastructure project will bring our more than 50-year-old water lines up to current fire flow requirements and will create a looped system to ensure good water delivery service to the Old Town area. The sewer line upsizing will correct flow problems that have troubled the area for a long time. We are hoping that currently competitive construction bids will allow us to stretch

funds to also include a start on undergrounding the power lines and to improve our stormwater handling through tree wells as we do some streetscaping and planting.

The Urban Renewal Agency does an annual report about the district, the budget, the projects approved and those completed. The report also lists the tax increment received from each special district and can be found on the urban renewal web page at www.ci.florence.or.us/urbanrenewal.

This infrastructure project has been a long time in coming and we are excited to finally have it underway. You can watch the progress as we update the urban renewal web page with pictures as it moves along. Stay tuned!

*Nola Xavier
 Chair, Florence Urban Renewal Agency*

Siuslaw River Watershed Provides Critical Habitat

Submitted by Community Development Department

The lower Siuslaw River watershed is a significant natural area that provides critical habitat for endangered and threatened animal species, contains sensitive plant species, and provides valuable habitat for sensitive animal species (U.S. Natural

Resources Conservation Service; Oregon Natural Heritage Program). Under the federal Endangered Species Act, the brown pelican is listed as endangered. The bald eagle, western snowy plover, marbled murrelet, Aleutian Canada

See **WATERSHED** Page 2

Recycle these materials in your bin:



PLASTIC ITEMS: Remember the Rule of 4. Items must measure at least 4 ounces or 1/2 cup.

- NO Styrofoam • NO filmy plastic (bags)**
- NO toys • NO household items**
- NO wet or soiled paper • NO dishes**
- NO containers with contents**



Environmental Management Advisory Committee
 Meets 3rd Thursday of the Month 2pm at City Hall
 Questions about what, how or why to Recycle?
 Call your hauler or 541-997-8237 or
 e-mail wendy.farley@ci.florence.or.us

WATERSHED from Page 1

Goose, northern spotted owl, Nelson's checker mallow, Oregon silverspot butterfly and Oregon Coast coho salmon are all listed as threatened. In fact, the Siuslaw River once was the Oregon Coast's largest coho-producing system next to the Columbia River. The estuary is proposed for critical habitat for the threatened Southern District Population segment of green sturgeon. The purple martin is listed as critical, and American marten as vulnerable, by Oregon. Twelve plant species in the area are listed as threatened, endangered, or possibly extirpated from Oregon.

The Siuslaw estuary also supports shellfish resources, including clams, crab, mussels, and shrimp. In all, about 23 species of fish, almost 200 species of birds, and 40 species of marine mammals use the estuary and the surrounding wetlands, lakes, riparian and upland areas. The watershed supports spawning runs of fall Chinook, chum, winter steelhead, coho, and sea-run cutthroat; and receives significant waterfowl use. The estuary has retained a relatively large proportion of its tidal marshes (764 acres) and contains large eel grass



Approximately 23 species of fish, 200 species of birds and 40 species of marine mammals use the estuary and surrounding wetlands and lakes.

beds, and very productive intertidal (sand and mud flats) and subtidal habitats, emergent marsh, scrub-shrub, and forested wetlands. There has been at least one winter count of more than 1,000 shorebirds. The South Jetty wetlands adjacent to the lower river are one of the two most important wintering areas for tundra swans on the Oregon coast. The estuary has been designated an Important Bird Area by the National Audubon Society.

Water quality is of particular concern to our community. Florence has Oregon's only sole source aquifer as designated by the Environmental Protection Agency, and, there is concern for water quality in the Siuslaw River. The Siuslaw River is classified as Water Quality Limited under the Clean Water Act and is included on the state's 303(d) list of Impaired Waterbodies by the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality. There is not enough dissolved oxygen, there is too much fecal coliform, the habitat has been modified to the detriment of fish and aquatic life, and the temperature is too warm. Salmon fish spawning and rearing, anadromous fish passage, trout rearing and migration, and shellfish growing are thus impaired.

Actions the City is Taking to Improve the Chances of Salmon Survival and Improving Health of the Siuslaw Estuary Watershed

The City of Florence has in place many policies and programs that help salmon survive and our watershed health thrive. The City, through the Siuslaw Estuary Partnership, is also working collaboratively with federal, state, local, and tribal partners on more ways to protect and improve water quality and fish and wildlife habitat in the lower Siuslaw River Watershed.

STEP: The Public Works Department works with the Salmon and Trout Enhancement Program on the fish hatchery along Munsel Creek. The City of Florence was recently recognized as a "Resource Steward" by the Oregon Dept. of Fish and Wildlife Salmon and Trout Enhancement Program Advisory Committee for its outstanding contribution to natural resources education, the goals of STEP, and fish resources in Oregon.

Surface and Groundwater Monitoring: As part of the Siuslaw Estuary Partnership, the City regularly tests Munsel Creek, Ackerly Creek, and 16 test wells to determine the quality of the water and to identify water levels and flow. With this information, we are building a hydrologic model to better understand the relationship of surface and groundwater. The Partners are in the process of developing Oregon's first "Aquifer Protection Plan" which will contain strategies for protecting fish and wildlife habitat as well as Drinking Water Protection Areas.

Wetlands and Riparian Areas: Through the Siuslaw Estuary Partnership, we have updated our inventory of wetlands and riparian areas to better understand how they improve water quality, help prevent flooding, regulate the temperature of the water, and provide fish, aquatic, and terrestrial habitat. We are now identifying which wetland and riparian areas are significant and then how best to protect them. We are also identifying opportunities for restoring wetlands on city-owned property.

Stormwater: Florence is implementing state-of-the-art stormwater best management practices with a new Stormwater Design Manual introducing best management practices specific to Florence's sand and high water table. Development standards deal with both the quality and quantity of runoff. The City is demonstrating some of these techniques as part of the Siuslaw Interpretive Center on Bay Street.

Public Education and Stewardship: Various activities undertaken by the City and the Siuslaw Estuary Partnership include: creating a vision for an Estuary Trail that would provide public access to the estuary and educate people about the watershed, maintaining a website (www.siuslawwaters.org), mailing newsletters to local business and residents, holding workshops and field explorations for school children and adults; organizing work parties for removal of noxious weeds; and encouraging land owners along Munsel Creek to plant native vegetation by partnering with the Watershed Council which provides free plants. To be on the mailing list for the Siuslaw Estuary Partnership or to share other ideas you may have, please e-mail Sandra.belson@ci.florence.or.us or call 997-8237.

Vegetation Retention and Control: The City makes efforts to remove noxious weeds on city-owned property and requires removal of noxious weeds on private property. City codes require vegetative buffers along the estuary, Munsel Creek, other streams, and around our lakes. The City requires vegetation clearing permits to prevent speculative clearing, thereby preserving native vegetation and limiting opportunities for the spread of invasive species. Landscaping requirements encourage preservation of native vegetation. City staff and the Planning Commission have prepared and distributed educational brochures about appropriate plantings and how to preserve native vegetation. System development charges are structured in a way that offers a financial incentive to maintain existing vegetation rather than water-intensive landscaping such as lawns.

Zoning: In addition to zones for industrial, commercial, residential and mixed-use development, the City adopted overlay zones that establish standards that limit detrimental impact on prime wildlife areas, natural resource areas, and beaches and dunes. The City has also divided the river into three zones depending on the characteristics of the estuary. One zone protects areas providing significant fish and wildlife habitats, a second provides for long-term use of the estuary's renewable resources, and a third provides for navigational needs and water-dependent development.

Pharmaceutical Collection: To mitigate problems with drugs getting into the environment, a pharmaceutical disposal program is in place in the City of Florence. A pharmaceutical disposal collection box, being similar to a mail deposit box, is located in the lobby of the Florence Justice Center under constant video surveillance. Members of our community can now drop off our outdated or unwanted medications. Prescription medications, including medications classified by the FDA as controlled substances, over the counter medication and even pet medications may be disposed at the collection receptacle. We take pills, liquids, patches, ointments and lotions. People may leave the medication in its original package or put it in a sealable plastic bag before bringing it to the collection receptacle if they wish to remain anonymous.

Hazardous Waste Collection: Twice a year, the City works in conjunction with Lane County to allow people to drop off hazardous waste free of charge. Offering people a no-cost option for disposal of hazardous materials helps keep those hazards from being improperly disposed and a threat to our environment.

Street Sweeping Operations: The Public Works Department street sweeping program includes monthly sweeps of most City streets, and weekly sweeps of the Old Town area. Chemicals from automobiles, debris, leaves and sediment in streets have the potential to pollute our waterways, including our sole source aquifer. If these materials are washed into the stormwater system, they can flow directly into our rivers, streams, lakes, including the seasonal lakes and wetlands. In addition, large debris can block stormwater catch basins and cause localized flooding during heavy rains. Pollutants, including sediment, debris, trash, chemicals and trace metals (from automotive brake linings) are minimized by street sweeping.

City of Florence Source Water Protection



Submitted by
Public Works Department

Did you know that the City's water supply is from groundwater? The aquifer (North Florence Sole Source Dunal Aquifer) supplies groundwater to the City of Florence's well field, which has 13 wells.

In 1987, the aquifer from which the City receives its drinking

water was designated by the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as a Sole Source Aquifer. The federal designation is due in part because the North Florence Sole Source Dunal Aquifer is highly sensitive and vulnerable to potential contaminant sources at the surface in addition to being interconnected with other area lakes, area creeks, wetlands, the Siuslaw Estuary and ocean. It is this interconnectedness that classifies the aquifer as "sole source" since it is the only drinking water source for a majority of the people that live within the area.

What can we do to protect our source of drinking water?

There are many simple things that we can do as residents and businesses to help protect our precious drinking water resource. These include:

- Apply fertilizers, herbicides and pesticides only as directed.
- Cultivate plants which discourage pests (this reduces pesticide usage).
- Leave lawn clippings on the lawn or compost them.
- Pull weeds by hand.
- Clean up after pets.
- Recycle used oil and antifreeze.
- Have automotive fluid leaks fixed.
- Clean up spills immediately.
- Take unwanted chemicals to hazardous waste collection sites, such as the Florence Transfer Station on New Hope Lane off of Rhododendron Drive.
- Dispose of unused pharmaceuticals at the Florence Justice Center drop-off center.

Every little effort helps. It only takes minute levels of chemicals to enter the aquifer to cause it to be undrinkable. If we all do our part, we can provide the protection necessary to protect this incredible resource.

Pharmaceutical and Personal Care Products – Why are they a concern?

Pharmaceuticals and personal care products (PPCPs) are a diverse group of chemicals including all human and veterinary drugs; dietary supplements; other consumer products including fragrances, topical agents such as cosmetics and sunscreens, laundry and cleaning products; and all the "inert" ingredients that are part of these products.

Pharmaceuticals and personal care products are introduced to the environment as pollutants in a variety of ways, including: excretion by humans and domestic animals; intentional disposal of unneeded PPCPs (flushing); bathing or swimming; discharge from municipal sewage systems or private septic systems; leaching from landfills; runoff from confined animal feeding operations; discharge of raw sewage from storm overflow events, cruise ships, and some rural homes directly into surface water; accidental discharges to a groundwater recharge area; loss from aquaculture; and spray-drift from antibiotics used on food crops.

A study by the U.S. Geological Survey published in 2002 brought attention to PPCPs in water. In a sampling of 139 susceptible streams in 30 states, detectable yet minute quantities of PPCPs were found in 80 percent of the streams. The most common pharmaceuticals detected were steroids and nonprescription drugs. Antibiotics, prescription medication, detergents, fire retardants, pesticides and natural and synthetic hormones were also found.

The potential human health risks associated with minute levels of PPCPs in water in general and drinking water in particular is still being determined. Until more is known, we all need to do our part in reducing the risk of these items entering the environment to protect water resources.



New City Animal Code Goes Into Effect September 15th

Submitted by Police Chief Maurice Sanders

On August 15, 2011 the Florence City Council adopted a new Animal Code that has some significant changes. As part of our approach to code enforcement being one of education and voluntary compliance, it is important that outreach to the community be done before the ordinance becomes effective on September 15, 2011. Enforcement action of the animal code in its entirety will be done primarily by the Code Enforcement Officer and supplemented by the police officers as necessary. Enforcement action will be generally generated on a complaint driven basis.

It will now be a violation for an animal owner or for the person in control of the animal, other than a cat, to allow that animal to leave its solid waste on the property of another without promptly removing the waste. This means that if people walk their dogs and their dogs “do their business” on property other than their own, then the person must pick up the waste created. Failure to do so then becomes the violation.

The “leash law” portion of the new Animal Code is something that needs to be discussed. Whenever any animal, other than a



Animals outside of private property must be on a leash or tether no longer than 6-feet in length.

Leash law violations are punishable by fines of \$50 for the first violation, \$100 for the second violation, \$200 for the third violation, \$400 for the fourth violation, and \$750 for everything after that.

healthy cat, is off or outside the private property of its owner or the person in control of it, the animal must be on a leash or tether that is adequate to control the animal. The leash cannot be longer than 6-feet in length. People are not permitted to allow dogs to run off leash anywhere in the city except on their own property. Leash law violations

are punishable by fines of \$50 for the first violation, \$100 for the second violation, \$200 for the third violation, \$400 for the fourth violation, and everything after that is \$750. Should an animal be found running at large and taken to the Florence Area Humane

Society, the owner of the animal may find themselves subject to a citation when they claim their dog.

The new ordinance addresses “Off Leash Areas.” Currently, there are no “dog parks” in the City. The Florence City Council may at some point in the future designate certain areas as off leash areas for dogs. Whenever any such designation occurs it could

take effect immediately. Dog owners would be required to follow the rules of the park (no fighting with other dogs, no barking or threatening behavior, and no injuring any person or animal). Also dogs which have been or are designated as Dangerous Animals under this new Animal Code will not be permitted in any Off Leash Area under any circumstances.

The laws surrounding the feeding of wild animals were adjusted. Beginning September 15th, if any person leaves food outside for any purpose, including for the purpose of feeding domestic animals and pets, in a place where wild animals can access it, that person would be in violation of the new Animal Code. This doesn’t apply to birdseed held in receptacles that are designed to prevent access by wild animals. It also doesn’t apply to the feeding of caged animals provided they are fed in a way that prevents access to the food by other animals. It also does not apply to providing food, during daytime hours, in live traps being used to capture feral cats for spaying and/or neutering.

There have been some questions as to what animals are prohibited after September 15. Under the new ordinance, livestock (cows, sheep, pigs, horses, etc.), rodents which do not meet the definition of exotic pets (exotic pets include turtles, gerbils, hamsters, etc.), poisonous snakes, large carnivorous snakes, bears, deer, felines other than domestic cats, crocodiles, alligators, or other similar predators not customarily and routinely kept in residential areas as domestic pets are all prohibited. Female chickens which do not create a nuisance will be permitted under the new Code, but no roosters.

The new code is posted in its entirety on the City of Florence website at www.ci.florence.or.us under Title 6, Chapter 1. Should anyone have any questions in regard to the new animal code, you are encouraged to contact either myself or Lt. Gutierrez at the Florence Police Department. We may be reached at maurice.sanders@ci.florence.or.us and ray.gutierrez@ci.florence.or.us respectively. You may also contact us at 541-997-3515.



From left to right: Councilor Brian Jagoe, Council President Nola Xavier, Mayor Phil Brubaker, Council Vice-President Suzanne Roberts, Councilor Paul Holman

Visit the City of Florence online at www.ci.florence.or.us

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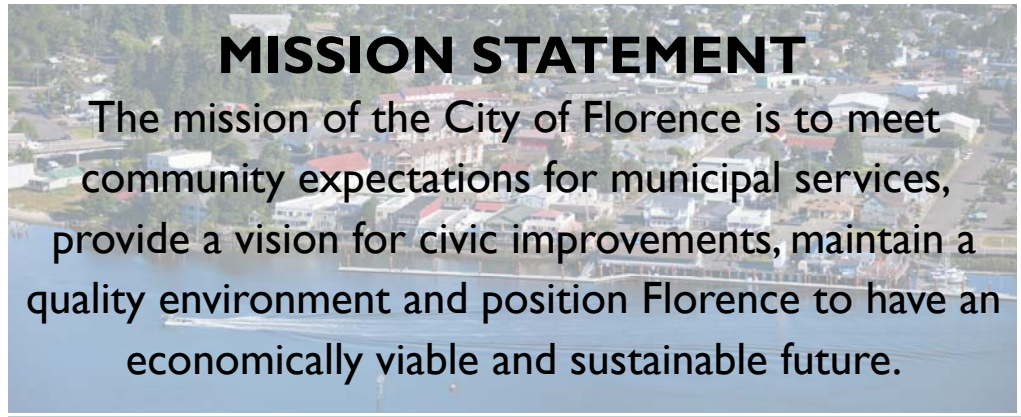
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MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the City of Florence is to meet community expectations for municipal services, provide a vision for civic improvements, maintain a quality environment and position Florence to have an economically viable and sustainable future.

City Calendar

September 2011

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5 Labor Day Holiday <small>City Hall Closed</small>	6 City Council Meeting	7	8 Florence Urban Renewal Agency	9	10
11	12	13 Planning Commission Meeting	14	15 Environmental Management Advisory Committee Meeting	16	17 Yard Debris Disposal
18	19 City Council Meeting	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27 Planning Commission Meeting <small>*Tentative*</small>	28	29	30	

For more information about meeting times and locations, contact City Hall at 541-902-2182.