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NEWS RELEASE

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Fueled by Local and Grant Funds, Planning to Remove Kellogg Dam and Restore a Free-Flowing Creek Advances at a Critical Time

Efforts to to remove the Kellogg Dam, an outdated structure built at the confluence of Kellogg Creek and the Willamette River in 1858, are taking a leap forward with the launch of a project to design the restored river channel that will someday replace the dam and spillway. The result will be a preliminary design and implementation schedule for the restored creek from Oatfield Road to the Willamette River, addressing salmon passage, habitat, sediments, wetlands and engaging stakeholders.

The North Clackamas Watershed Council has recently received funding for the effort from the City of Milwaukie, the PGE Salmon Habitat Support Fund, and the Open Rivers Fund, a program of Resources Legacy Fund supported by the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation.

The funding comes at a critical time. "We have a rare chance remove a dam that has been blocking salmon passage since Abraham Lincoln was a young Congressman from Illinois, and hasn't served any purpose for 130 years," said Neil Schulman, Executive Director of the Milwaukie-based North Clackamas Watersheds-Council. With possible infrastructure dollars from the COVID-19 pandemic stimulus package,

other federal legislation and new developments in ecosystem credit markets, a window of opportunity exists. This design of the restored creek is an essential step to getting the project ready for funding. "Moving quickly and being ready is critical," said Schulman. "The last time this project got close to funding was during the financial-crash stimulus package, and it wasn't considered ready enough" said Schulman. "We're working with ODOT, the Governor's Natural Resources Office, the City of Milwaukie, ODF&W, and other agencies to move quickly. If we all row together, we can get this done. "

"Restoring a free-flowing Kellogg Creek is a priority for the City," said Milwaukie Mayor Mark Gamba. "Our kids and grandkids should grow up watching the salmon return every year. Removing Kellogg Dam is the biggest single thing we could do to make that a reality."

The City of Milwaukie, which owns most of the lakebed, contributed the first funding to this design process to catalyze the process. Kellogg Creek is vital for local spawning salmon and steelhead, and for migration and rearing habitat for all the fish throughout the Willamette Basin. It is the highest priority barrier to salmon passage owned by ODOT in the entire state of Oregon.

Removing the dam will create jobs. "We can simultaneously restore our rivers, replace an aging, earthquake-unstable bridge, and provide living-wage construction jobs," said Schulman. In 2018-20, the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board, funded a Stakeholder Process that brought all the parties together, including the City of Milwaukie, state and regional agencies, and the Congressional Delegation.

Public support for the removal of the dam is strong. "The community wants to see the dam gone and the stream restored," says Mayor Gamba. "It's a no-brainer. The dam blocks salmon, serves no purpose, and is aging. It's something ODOT, the City of Milwaukie, the Watershed Council and everyone else will be very proud of."

The North Clackamas Watersheds Council is a community-based nonprofit whose mission is to restore healthy watersheds in North Clackamas County for fish, wildlife, and people. The Council was founded in 2010. Its office is in Milwaukie.

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