



photo by [SoulRider.222](#), flickr.com

River News Digest: December 16, 2011

River News Digest is a compilation of interesting items and announcements relating to rivers—with a focus on better understanding, enjoying, and caring for our local rivers, while touching on items from around the country and the world. Please note much of the information is from sources other than the City of Portland [like news media, non-profit organizations, and other government agencies]. The Rivers Office lists these items for information purposes only and is not responsible for their content

Coming Right Up!...

Christmas Ship Parade

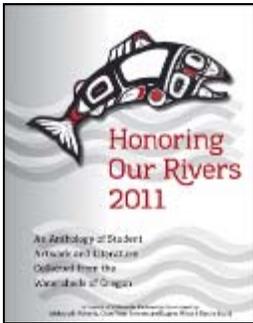


images from [Christmas Ship Parade](#)

[Christmas ships sail Columbia, Willamette rivers for 13 nights.](#) “The 57th annual Christmas Ship Parade will light up the Columbia and Willamette rivers beginning Thursday night. Individual volunteers, as well as those from various yacht and boating clubs, provide the colorful shows. The Christmas ships will run for 13 nights, depending on weather.” [Click here](#) for more information. *OregonLive.com, December 4*

[Walk to view the Christmas Ship Parade Saturday, Dec. 17, 2011.](#) “Enjoy the Christmas Ship Parade as you walk along the Willamette ... This free walk is offered each year by the Columbia River Volkssport Club. The 5K (3.1 mile) or 10K (6.2 mile) route is rated easy -- but dark! Register and start walking from the Buffalo Gap Pub & Eatery, 6835 SW Macadam Ave.” *examiner.com, December 14*

[Lighting of West Linn's Maddax Woods:](#) Take a stroll down a lighted accessible path through the woods and to a viewing platform on the Willamette River. Walk open 4-9 p.m. daily, through Dec. 31. Maddax Woods, 5785 River St.; free; 503-722-2137. *City of West Linn*



[Rivers anthology's new director seeks entries.](#) "*Honoring Our Rivers: A Student Anthology*,... has hired Portland author Inara Scott as the new outreach coordinator. Honoring Our Rivers was created in 1999 to raise awareness of Oregon's fragile river systems and watersheds, as well as provide a showcase for student writing and artwork. Students from kindergarten through college are invited to submit poems, essays, photographs and drawings focusing on the relationships between people and watersheds. ... Submissions for the 2012 Anthology are due by **Jan. 31**. Visit www.honoringourrivers.org for more information about the anthology and submissions." *StatesmanJournal.com, December 6*

Lead a Community Earth Day Project: SOLV IT: SOLV invites Earth-minded individuals to "Lead a community project for Earth Day... on April 21st, 2012... **Applications ... will open online mid-December** on the [SOLV IT website](#). SOLV supports community litter cleanups, invasive plant pulls or native tree or shrub plantings with small \$100 grants, cleanup supplies, event planning guidance, online registration and outreach." [SOLV](#), *December e-update*

January 17—Maritime Heritage Coalition: *River in Focus* brownbag (noon to 1 pm, Portland Building Auditorium). **Chris Finks** describes this newly-formed coalition of local organizations whose aim is to celebrate, promote, and preserve the maritime heritage of Portland through education, exploration, and discovery—including by establishing a Maritime Heritage Center on Portland's waterfront.

1. News In Our River Neighborhood...



[Big Pipe Project Is Done, Will Generate A Lot More Recreational Interest.](#) "The City of Portland plans to tell the Oregon state Environmental Quality Commission Thursday that its Big Pipe project is now finished -- on time and on budget. ... 'It's going to generate a lot more interest in recreational use of the river. It's frankly going to generate a lot more interest in people getting close to the river,' [BES Director Dean] Marriott said." *OPB.org, December 15*

[In our view: Big Dream, Big Pipe—Portland's new wastewater system provides lessons about mega-projects.](#) "So, for all the hand-wringing and acrimony about the Columbia River Crossing, Portland instructs us that mega-projects can be undertaken and — get this — completed on schedule and within the budget. Let that be at least one example for the CRC's work toward replacing the Interstate 5 Bridge. Fiscal and chronological standards can, indeed, be met." *The Columbian, December 4*

[Vigor gets \\$75 million from Endeavour.](#) "[Endeavour Capital](#) has paid \$75 million for a minority stake in [Vigor Industrial](#), a resurgent ship repair and manufacturing firm on Portland's Swan Island. The funding deal is Vigor's second major coup this year. In January it closed its \$130 million acquisition of Todd Pacific Shipyards of Seattle. ... `Vigor now employs as many as 1,700 workers in facilities in Portland and Seattle, as well as Everett, Tacoma, Bremerton and Port Angeles. The company's annual revenue approaches \$400 million, said Frank Foti, Vigor CEO." *OregonLive.com, December 1*



Image from [Vigor Marine](#)

[Zidell site team celebrates substantial completion of work.](#) "A barge-building company's 30-acre site along the Willamette River, slightly north of the South Waterfront District, is finally being cleaned up. After years of studies and discussions, crews are continuing to remove contaminants and cap others along a 3,000-linear-foot stretch of riverbank."

DJCOregon.com, December 13

[Columbia River Crossing gets critical OK from federal transportation to proceed.](#) "The [Columbia River Crossing](#) took a crucial step forward Wednesday when two federal agencies granted the controversial bridge-freeway project a federal "record of decision."
OregonLive.com, December 7



image from www.sellwoodbridge.org

[Sellwood Bridge replacement to fill funding gap with \\$17.7M TIGER grant.](#) "The Sellwood Bridge is slated to have its last piece of funding fall into place. According to an "[advance notice](#)" sent to Congress from the U.S. Department of Transportation today, the Sellwood Bridge will receive a \$17.7 million grant through the TIGER III discretionary grant program."
DJCOregon.com, December 12"

[Sellwood Bridge construction zone sets up.](#) "A general contractor hired by Multnomah County will set up a construction staging area for the Sellwood Bridge project beginning Monday. The project will lead to changes in public access for areas near the bridge and for Willamette River users." *KPTV.com, December 8*

[City unveils design for bridge connecting Chimney and Pier parks, trails.](#) "Portland Parks & Recreation will unveil the latest design for a ... footbridge connecting Pier and Chimney Park... . According to [Metro, the bridge will](#) provide a critical connection from Chimney Park to the rest of St. Johns as well as to [Smith and Bybee Lakes](#) and completed segments of the [40-Mile Loop Trail.](#)" *OregonLive.com, December 13*

[Portland's newest Fire Bureau rescues man in Willamette.](#) "Portland's newest Fire Bureau rescue boat helped pull a man from the Willamette River on Saturday afternoon. It took just four minutes for the Eldon Trinity to reach the man, who apparently jumped into the river from a float between the Portland Spirit and the Hawthorne Bridge." *Portland Tribune, December 4*

[Clark County Sheriff's Marine Patrol boat gets much-needed upgrade at bargain price.](#) "Just a couple of weeks ago, the Sea Sport boat William Ryan, named after the first territorial sheriff in Vancouver, was delivered after a makeover. ... The boat and its old engines had been used on the Columbia nearly 12 years. ... Stevens Marine in Tigard, Ore., agreed to take the old engines in trade and replace them with two new Mercruiser 4.3-liter V-6 engines and outdrives for \$32,000. ... And thanks to a Federal Safer Boating grant, Clark County's cost was only \$16,000, Neiman said. The William Ryan now is valued at more than \$150,000." *The Columbian, December 3*

[Spring chinook return forecast looks decent in Oregon's Willamette River.](#) "The Willamette River spring chinook return looks good in 2012. Oregon Fish and Wildlife announced today a forecast of 83,400 back to the river that runs right through the heart of downtown Portland... Last year, 104,000 were predicted to return to the Willamette, and the actual return was 80,254. If the Willamette forecast pans out then it would rank second behind 2010 return of 110,000 springers." *Seattle Times, December 13*



ODFW image



USGS image

[Saving The Unloved Chum Salmon](#). "... plenty has been written about coho, sockeye, and the ever-popular Chinook, or "king" salmon. But there's a green-and-purple oddball that tends to be more popular with biologists than fishermen. The Columbia River has 13 runs of threatened salmon. There's a long history of fishing in the basin for Chinook, coho, sockeye, bull trout, steelhead -- 12 of the listed runs. Lucky number 13? Chum salmon." *OPB.org, December 14*

['Survival of the fittest' for salmon supporters](#). Environmental nonprofits in Lower Columbia navigate a complicated, dwindling funding landscape to secure grants, other resources. *The Columbian, December 7*

[Portland Audubon issues South Waterfront Osprey Statement](#). "... Audubon has worked on environmental restoration efforts at South Waterfront for more than a decade and has worked to help support the osprey since they began nesting along the South Waterfront Greenway in 2007. Audubon fully supports the restoration efforts of Portland Parks and Recreation at South Waterfront. ..." *Audubon Society of Portland, December 5*

[Canoe Season Kicks Off](#). "The Estuary Partnership and the City of Portland Bureau of Environmental Services forged a new partnership to provide a series of Willamette River canoe paddles in September to kick off the canoe season. Roughly 180 students from Cleveland High School paddled the big canoes from Willamette Park to Ross Island, learning about local natural history and water quality, along with having the unique experience of being on-water. In addition, to celebrate the completion of the east-side Big Pipe Project, an evening canoe paddle brought sixteen community members aboard the big canoe to learn about the projects successes and to experience the river first hand. Our partnership with BES will continue with paddles scheduled for 2012." *Lower Columbia River Estuary Partnership, December 2011 Update*



USGS image

[Christmas Ships fleet leader guides participants' fancy maneuvers](#). "Leading the Columbia River fleet of Christmas ships can be a bit like coaching and calling out football plays — although most sports coaches wouldn't use names like Candy Cane Swirl and Ribbon Candy to describe their route patterns, said Doug Romjue, fleet leader." *The Columbian, December 1*

2. Up the Willamette and Columbia...and more

[New Poll Shows Willamette Views](#). [EarthFix](#) commissioned a survey of Idaho, Oregon and Washington residents to learn what's on their minds when it comes to top environmental priorities ... The EarthFix Poll, conducted by Davis, Hibbitts & Midghall (DHM Research) in mid-November, polled 1,200 residents in Oregon, Washington and Idaho. It queried Oregon residents about the Willamette River. When asked to rate the river's overall environmental health (0=not at all healthy, 10=very healthy), 37% scored river health as 6 or above. When asked, "How likely do you think it is that each of the following creates a pollution problem in the Willamette River?," survey takers generated the following responses:

Discharge from industrial and commercial sites: 83%

Sewage system overflows: 76%

Stormwater runoff from highways, roads, and streets: 76%

Agricultural runoff: 69%

Discharges from residential sites: 64%



images from www.willamettefalls.org, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

[Willamette Falls Locks deemed non-operational, could put jobs at risk.](#) "...The Corps announced last week that the locks was in "non-operational" status and its gudgeon anchors, which connect the gates to the lock wall, have corroded so severely that a shutdown was needed to prevent putting passing vessels at jeopardy or risking further infrastructure damage. ... Dave Bernert, owner of Wilsonville Concrete Products and Marine Industrial Construction, said the indefinite closure of the locks means he can't retrieve two dredges, three tugboats and four barges from the upper portion of the river. It also cuts him off from his moorage site in Wilsonville, leaving him to look for alternatives downstream" *OregonLive.com, December 5*

[Canby Ferry crew face challenges with closure of Willamette Falls Locks.](#) "The plan was to float the [Canby Ferry](#) down the Willamette River, through the Willamette Falls Locks and on to Portland for its mandatory inspection and installation of a new propeller system. But Canby Ferry crew members didn't factor into their plan [the closure of the Willamette Falls Locks.](#)" *OregonLive.com, December 8*

[Barge Industry Wants Its Share Of Federal Backing.](#) "Perhaps you've heard trains can move a ton of freight 500 miles on a single gallon of fuel. Now the barge industry is hopping on the public relations train, saying "we're like railroads but better." ... But the barge industry, in particular, depends on government funding for river infrastructure — some of which is operating on borrowed time. ... a grain barge [can move] 1,500 tons of wheat, that's two and a half million loaves of bread. The gasoline barge ... can move enough to keep 2,500 automobiles running for year. ... Barge companies say rivers big and small need an estimated \$8 billion worth of work. They hope to convince Americans that's a relatively small price for keeping a valuable mode of transportation afloat." *NPR.org, December 6*

[Four boaters rescued after 'close call' on Willamette River near Wheatland Ferry.](#) "A clear December Sunday gave four Yamhill County boaters a rare chance to enjoy the Willamette River, but pleasure quickly turned to panic after their 16-foot drift boat ran out of gas and started to sink. ... 'The hard part with the Willamette is that it looks real smooth and glassy, but this time of year it has a pretty strong current,' [Yamhill County Sheriff's Office Sgt. Tim] Svenson said. 'When you're out on the river and the wind picks up, and it's in the mid-30s or lower 40s and the water temperature is 43 degrees -- it's not a good picture.'" *OregonLive.com, December 5*

[Willamette rivers to stay higher, longer after rain.](#) "Critical repairs are happening at dams in the Willamette Valley to protect towns downstream from the danger of flooding. But until the work is done, the river could rise faster - and the water stay high longer - when big winter storms hit, according to the Army Corps of Engineers..." *KVAL.com, December 13*

[Willamette Valley Resilience Compact kicks off with local officials 12 Dec.](#) "Oregon's populous and resource rich Willamette Valley faces a variety of pressures, from extreme weather to rapid growth, that cross all political boundaries. On December 12th, local government officials from counties and cities throughout the Valley ... will meet to confront these shared challenges. This landmark assembly will seek to offset shrinking budgets and tax bases, as well as reduced state and federal support, by identifying mutually beneficial economic strategies based on future population and economic trends." *Salem-News.com, December 8*

[Channel Rehabilitation Below Bonneville Dam Brings Big Boost To ESA-Listed Chum Salmon Spawners.](#) "The newly restored and expanded Hamilton springs channel just off the Columbia River below Bonneville Dam has become the destination of choice this year for a much greater than average number of threatened chum salmon spawners." *Columbia Basin Bulletin, December 2*

[Oregon Supreme Court Mulls Gill-Net Ban Title; 2 More 'Backup' Titles Proposed For Nov. 2012 Ballot.](#) "Banning non-tribal commercial gill-net fishing on the mainstem Columbia River remains a hot topic with comments flooding in regarding two additional draft ballot titles based on Oregon voter initiative proposals submitted early in November." *Columbia Basin Bulletin, December 2*

[Research Shows Columbia River Sockeye Adapting To Climate Change, Migrating Earlier.](#) "Sockeye salmon are evolving through natural selection to deal with a warming climate, according to a study by researchers at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. In recent decades, scientists have observed that salmon in the Columbia River are starting their migration earlier in the year. The fish now migrate upstream an average of 10 days earlier than they did in the 1940s." *Columbia Basin Bulletin, Dec. 2*

[Judge of the river.](#) "James Redden was more than a "salmon judge," but his biggest legacy is the fight that he's waged to force the government to recover wild fish" *OregonLive.com, December 5*

[Annual Avian Predation Report: Estuary Terns, Cormorants Consume 15-20 Percent Wild, Hatchery Smolts.](#) "Combined losses of juvenile salmon and steelhead to predation by Caspian terns and double-crested cormorants in the Columbia River estuary were about 27 million smolts ... If that number holds up, that consumption by avian predators nesting on East Sand Island would represent a toll of from 15-20 percent on the overall number of hatchery and wild fish that survived their journey down the Snake, Willamette and Columbia rivers and tributaries to near the Columbia's mouth." *Columbia Basin Bulletin, December 2*

[Astoria Dry-dock Facility Might Be Listed As Superfund Site.](#) "Since March, the Environmental Protection Agency has slated the Astoria Marine Construction Company for addition to its Superfund site priorities list, a designation that could cost the owners hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of dollars in cleanup fees and environmental studies. The boat-repair company that once received multimillion-dollar Navy contracts during World War II and the Korean War wants its previous insurance providers to front the costs for the study and cleanup, but the process of securing the money for that work has been slow going." *Daily Astorian, December 6*

[Columbia River water a priority, backers say.](#) "Oregon farm and business interests appear to prepping for a new run at Columbia River water withdrawals. The Oregon Business Council will highlight Columbia River withdrawals at its annual Oregon Leadership Summit, Dec. 12 in Portland." *Capital Press, December 7*

[Wash. state agency targeting northern pike.](#) "State wildlife officials will ask fishermen to help control the advance of northern pike toward the Columbia River. Fishery managers in the next few months plan to enlist anglers to remove as many northern pike as possible from the Pend Oreille River ... Studies ... show a dramatic decline in native minnows, largemouth bass, yellow perch and other fish species that inhabit the 55-mile Box Canyon Reservoir. Fish managers have traced the movement of northern pike into the Pend Oreille River from rivers in Montana, where they were stocked illegally. Last spring, Canadian anglers reported catching them in the Columbia River near its confluence with the Pend Oreille, just north of the border between Washington state and British Columbia." *SeattlePI.com, December 13*



image from <http://fish.dnr.cornell.edu>

[Marine Board Seeks Public Comment on Proposed Adopt-A-River Program Rules.](#) “The Oregon State Marine Board seeks public comment on proposed rules that would identify a list of invasive species that are approved for removal by groups participating in the program, along with protocols to follow and the development of best management practices to guide program activity.” *Oregon State Marine Board media release, December 6*

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