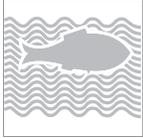


STREAM Condition Assessment

Reference TIPS brochure, pg. 6

Worksheet



This assessment will help you identify potential concerns for any stream or streamside area on your property. The questions below are designed to draw your attention to items that you may be able to improve. This tool was adapted from the Oregon State University Extension *Stream*A*Syst*¹ publication.

Instructions: Answer the questions below. For items to which you answer YES, read the following suggestions on how you can improve or protect your stream. A YES answer does not necessarily mean there is a problem, but it can help you focus your efforts as you learn more about the particular situation and possible courses of action. You can find resources for more information or assistance in the *Contacts* list at the bottom of each section.

Stream Condition Assessment		Site	Date
Issue	Indicators		
Water Pollution	<p>Are there ever any signs of pollution such as soap bubbles, oil sheen, unusual odors, manure, sewage or trash in or along the stream?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes ↴</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use the <i>Home*A*Syst</i>² online assessment and/or the Manure Management worksheet in this packet to evaluate your situation. 2. Check with upstream neighbors and/or have your septic system pumped and inspected. 3. If problems with the septic system are found, make repairs. 4. Contact a natural resource professional to evaluate the stream and make recommendations. 5. Work with ODA to assess whether the problem requires notification of additional agencies. <p>Contacts: septic pumping company, OSU Extension, SWCD/NRCS, local watershed council, neighbors, ODA, DEQ³</p>		
	<p>Is the water green? Is there a green scum or thick, stringy, green clumps? Or, is there a heavy, dirty-brownish, slimy material coating underwater objects?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes ↴</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Determine whether nutrients from fertilizer or manure runoff are entering the stream from your property. If so, take preventative steps. If not, check with upstream neighbors. <p>Contacts: SWCD/NRCS, watershed council, OSU Extension, neighbors</p>		
Water Removal	<p>Do water withdrawals or upstream dams ever result in extremely low water levels?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes ↴</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improve the efficiency of water use on your property. 2. Check into financial incentives for returning allocated water to the stream. <p>Contacts: SWCD/NRCS, OSU Extension, OWRD</p>		

continued on next ➡

¹ The Stream Condition Assessment worksheet was adapted, with permission, from the Oregon State University Extension publication, EM 8671, *Stream*A*Syst: A tool to help you examine conditions on your property* (Oregon State University, Corvallis, Oregon, June 2000, reprinted March 2001), 16 pages; available online at: <http://extension.oregonstate.edu>

² *Home*A*Syst* is a homestead assessment system provided by the Oregon State University Extension developed to help evaluate possible risks to the groundwater and drinking water; available online at: <http://wellwater.oregonstate.edu/> under "assessment tools."

³ An acronym reference sheet is provided in the **Resources** section, beginning on page 57 of this packet.



Issue Indicators

Muddy Water

A. Does the stream become muddy after storms and then take a long time to clear up again? Or, is the water in the stream muddier or cloudier when it leaves your property than when it enters?

- No Yes ↴

1. Look into upstream land use practices that might be causing muddy runoff. Determine whether sediment is entering the stream from your property; look for runoff from unpaved roads, fields, severe bank erosion or other sources. When you find the problem, take steps to address it.

Contacts: SWCD/NRCS, watershed council

Long-Term Data

A. Do long-term data show that your stream is limited in any water quality measurements? (The Oregon 303(d) stream segment database is available on DEQ's Web site and at most libraries. If water quality information is unavailable for your stream, check with your watershed council to determine how you can help gather needed data).

- No Yes ↴

1. Search for your stream in the bound copy of DEQ's 1998 303(d) database or online on the Oregon DEQ Web site at: <http://www.oregon.gov/DEQ>
2. Ask listed contacts for information.
3. Learn more about limiting factors and the connection with activities on your land.
4. Get involved with local efforts to improve water quality.

Contacts: watershed council, DEQ, SWCD/NRCS, OSU Extension

Barriers to Fish or Water Flow

A. Are there culverts, dams or other artificial structures in the stream that could block fish passage?

- No Yes ↴

1. Contact ODFW for more information. If the barrier prevents fish passage, modify it as needed.

Contacts: ODFW

B. Are bridges or in-stream culverts inadequate in size to convey high, overbank flood flows?

- No Yes ↴

1. Measure the culvert and contact an expert to help determine the culvert size required.

Contacts: ODF, OSU Extension forestry agent



Issue Indicators

Ditches & Drainage

Are any irrigation ditches, tile lines, drainage ditches or other artificial waterways connected to the stream?

- No Yes ↴

1. Create grass filter strips or other means to remove contaminants before drainage water enters the stream.
2. Screen pumps or irrigation diversions to prevent aquatic life from becoming trapped in the irrigation system. Screens must be designed according to ODFW standards.

Contacts: SWCD/NRCS, ODFW

Flood & Erosion Control Structures

Are there any berms, dikes, or riprap along the stream or has the stream been straightened?

- No Yes ↴

1. With the help of a natural resources expert, determine how structures or straightening may be affecting the condition of the stream. If a problem exists, modify as recommended by the expert.

Contacts: SWCD/NRCS

Channel Condition

Is the channel much wider and shallower than in the past? Are gravel, sand or silt bars noticeably building? Are there high, vertical banks in straight sections? Or, are there major changes to the stream after large flow events? For example, are pools filled in, riffle areas moved, streambanks greatly eroded, or has the whole channel moved?

- No Yes ↴

1. Do not be tempted to fix this on your own. Work with an expert to determine the causes and possible solutions.
2. The stream might be out of balance with the amount of water and sediment it is carrying. Ask about possible changes or restoration efforts. Keep in mind that changes might be needed up- and downstream, so coordinate your efforts with neighbors.

Contacts: watershed council, SWCD/NRCS, neighbors

Streambank Protection

Are there areas of bare soil along the stream that will come into contact with water during high or overbank flows?

- No Yes ↴

1. Provide natural, long-term streambank protection with plantings that will introduce large wood and/or add stability from roots.
2. Determine whether artificial protection measures are needed while plants become established.

Contacts: SWCD/NRCS, watershed council



Issue

Indicators

Streambank Vegetation

Have activities such as construction, grazing, landscaping or tilling within 35 feet of the top of the streambank disturbed permanent vegetation?

- No Yes ↴

1. Identify streamside areas that need vegetation and commit to management changes in that area.
2. If the area is grazed by livestock, develop and follow a prescribed grazing program, build off-stream watering facilities, and establish fencing as necessary.

Contacts: SWCD/NRCS, watershed council, OSU Extension

Types of Streamside Plants

A. Are there very few trees surviving or reproducing in the streamside area?

- No Yes ↴

1. Determine whether the water level has dropped or the channel has deepened. If so, roots of young trees might not be able reach the water table.
2. If the water level is not the problem, remove brush that might be shading young conifers. Protect young trees with tubes to prevent animals from eating them. Plant only trees recommended for your site.

Contacts: SWCD/NRCS, OSU Extension, watershed council

B. Are there large areas with plants considered to be weeds or invasives, such as blackberry, scotch broom, reed canarygrass, English ivy, thistle, cheatgrass or others?

- No Yes ↴

1. Refer to the **Weed Management Strategy** worksheet in this packet for information on how to identify the most appropriate method for removing weeds.
2. Determine whether grazing management changes are needed.

Contacts: SWCD/NRCS, OSU Extension, watershed council

C. Do bare soil or thin stands of grass dominate the area?

- No Yes ↴

1. Identify the reason(s) for lack of vegetation and address the causes.
2. Restore vegetation to the streamside area. Make sure to plant trees and shrubs suited to your location and follow through with the project to ensure their survival.
3. Ask about any available financial assistance.

Contacts: SWCD/NRCS, watershed council



Issue Indicators

Do you have other concerns about the condition of your stream? If so, list them in the space provided below and contact a natural resource professional to discuss possible causes and solutions.

Other

Other

Other
