



2022

Annual Report

*Celebrating 28 years of watershed
stewardship in the Coquille Basin.
1994-2022*

The Coquille Watershed Association is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization with the mission to promote ecologic and economic resiliency in the Coquille watershed.

May 2023

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR



Dear members, friends, donors, and partners:

Your support has enabled much success in 2022! Through the work of our dedicated staff, the Coquille Watershed Association generated over \$3.5 million in new grants and donations. These funds support our core program areas of watershed restoration, noxious weed control, ecological monitoring, and community engagement.

Thanks to funding from our partners with Coquille Indian Tribe, OWEB, and WRCA, the Coaledo Tidegate Project has begun pre-implementation planning and will become this organization's largest project over the next few years. Restoration objectives were completed in Woodward Creek with the help of OWEB, BLM, ODFW, DWPP, Coos County Forest, private timber companies, and students from Coquille High School. Noxious weeds have continued to be a focus of our organization to reduce populations of knotweed, knapweed, gorse and other invasive species. Our monitoring program continues to accumulate critical data on coho juveniles as they are tagged and movements tracked at five locations in the valley.

2022 was a year of transition as we bid farewell to our executive director, Michael Hughes, and restoration program coordinator, Cyndi Curtis. It is a testament to the resiliency of our organization, that staff and board can withstand transition while continuing to do important work in the Coquille watershed.

We also lost a pillar of our organization and this community with the passing of Bob Sproul in 2022. He is missed dearly by those who worked closely with him on furthering the watershed's mission. We dedicate this year to his memory.

We thank you for your previous support and ask that you consider maintaining your annual donation or membership in 2023.

Sincerely,

Dan Silvius
Operations Manager
dsilvius@coquillewatershed.org



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MISSION STATEMENT & CORE VALUES



Mission Statement

To work collaboratively with communities and landowners to develop and implement voluntary watershed restoration, enhancement, and community engagement activities that promote healthy and resilient ecosystems and economies in the Coquille watershed.

Core Values

We recognize and believe that:

- It is possible to achieve both environmental integrity and economic resiliency in the Coquille watershed.
- The natural products and processes of the watershed are indicators of watershed health and are important to the economy and vitality of communities.
- Human activities have a legitimate place in the watershed.
- Our actions can affect the stability of the watershed and related economy.
- A watershed-scale perspective improves our ability to sustain the health of the watershed and related economy.
- Native fishes & wildlife are important to the economic, recreational, ecological, and cultural values of the communities in the watershed.
- Community education opportunities are key to achieving long term, sustainable, and positive change.
- The coordination of our individual efforts can achieve a synergistic and beneficial effect on the watershed.

BOARD AND STAFF



Staff Members

Michael Hughes, Executive Director April through October

Dan Silvius, Operations Manager

Julie Huff, Monitoring Program Coordinator

Cyndi Curtis, Restoration Program Coordinator through October

Rushal Sedlemyer, Project Manager

Ivy Metzgas, Watershed Specialist

Anna Pfeifer, Project Manager

Kyle Motley, Grant Writer

Carol Corral, Bookkeeper & Office Manager

Thank you to Cyndi Park who
transitioned to a new endeavor in 2022!

Board Members

Tom Jefferson - President, Bandon

Dan Silvius - Vice President, Middle Creek (through October)

Jeff Griffin - Treasurer, Port of Bandon

Helena Linnell - Secretary, Coquille Indian Tribe

Bob Sproul - Officer at Large, East Fork

Bruce Follansbee - Natural Resource Advisor, North Fork

Fred Messerle - Beaver Slough Drainage District/Messerle and Sons

Michael Clary - South Fork

FINANCIALS

2022 Fiscal Year (January 1, 2022 - December 31, 2022)



Revenue

Federal Grants: \$241,550

State Grants: \$1,057,118

Foundation and Private Grants: \$109,558

Partner Contracts: \$54,044

Donations and Interest Earned: \$11,205

Total: \$1,473,476

Expenses

Salaries, Wages, and Benefits: \$326,907

Programming Expenses: \$1,000,115

Operating Expenses: \$42,311

Total: \$1,369,333

Note, compensation line includes both program and administrative staff.

For additional financial information, including IRS Form 990 returns, please see our website or contact us directly.



WATERSHED MAP



PROGRAMMING

Programs Overview



Restoration Program: The mission of the restoration program is to enhance lands throughout the watershed to improve habitats for native fish and wildlife while also maintaining the capacity of working forests and ranches. Projects are designed to holistically improve water quality and habitats while also ensuring that the project is compatible with the production goals of the landowner. Common project activities include: fish passage enhancement (culverts, bridges, tide gates), instream habitat enhancement (large woody debris), riparian habitat enhancement (fencing, planting, off-channel livestock watering).

Noxious Weeds Program: Noxious weeds pose a serious threat to the South Coast economies and ecosystems. We prioritize taking action on controlling outlier populations of noxious weeds to prevent their spread. We actively participate on the Coos County Noxious Weed Control District Advisory Board, the South Coast Cooperative Weed Management Area, and the Gorse Action Group. Our target weed species are aligned with the Coos County Weed Board's "T-list" species and we implement best practices when controlling populations.

Monitoring Program: The goal of the monitoring program is to actively assess current watershed conditions and the effects of restoration practices on watershed health through consistent, scientifically proven methods with the intent on using the results to further improve restoration practices both locally and regionally.



RESTORATION PROGRAM

Restoration Projects



Woodward Creek Restoration - North Fork Coquille

Grants: ~\$1Mil, **Partners:** OWEB, BLM, ODFW, Drinking Water Providers Partnership, Coos County Forest, private timber companies, and Coquille High School.

Purpose: Woodward Creek is a major tributary to the North Fork Coquille River (NFCR) and has important spawning and rearing habitat for coho, Chinook, steelhead, cutthroat and Pacific lamprey. The Woodward Creek watershed is suffering from the legacy of historic land use practices. The limiting factors currently facing Woodward Creek are a lack of stream complexity, habitat and refugia, and excessive sediment loading from the road network. It has been further exacerbated by illegal recreational activity, as this area has never been open to motorized use. This project seeks to holistically restore the Woodward Creek subbasin. Objectives include improving habitat, gravel retention and floodplain connection by placing large wood into the stream and improving fish passage by replacing three undersized culverts. Further, high sediment loading from the road network into the stream will be reduced through road improvements and noxious weed species will continue to be treated to prevent spread. Lastly, partners have installed barriers to stop illegal OHV recreational activity at access points identified by landowners in the Woodward Creek sub-basin.

Work Completed: This project was completed over two years, where 14 large wood sites were installed, "sediment proofing" of the valley bottom road, and four fish passage barriers were removed in 2021. Three of the culverts were replaced on fish-bearing streams after they overwintered for one season, during the summer of 2023 with open-bottom arch culverts. Additionally, education and outreach focused on this project has been ongoing with matching funds and project partner assistance.

Upcoming Work: CoqWA will implement Phase 1 of planting the riparian area with Bandon High School students in February 2023. The landowner will continue brush clearing for site preparation through summer of 2023 and a smaller Phase 2 planting will occur Winter 2023/2024.

RESTORATION PROGRAM

Restoration Projects



Sandy Creek Whole Watershed Resoration - Phase 1

Grants: \$577,820, **Partners:** OWEB, Coos Bay BLM, ODFW, Coos County Roads Dept., timber companies, and a private landowner.

Purpose: This project will restore channel complexity and slow-water habitat in Sandy Creek, a 12,000-acre drainage to the Middle Fork Coquille River (MFCR) near Remote, OR in Coos County. The MFCR has the potential to provide year-round rearing habitat for coho and Chinook salmon, steelhead, coastal cutthroat trout, and Pacific lamprey but lack of spawning and rearing habitat in tributaries continues to be a critical watershed issue. Historically, Sandy Creek was clear-cut and subjected to stream cleaning. As a result, most of Sandy Creek and its major fish bearing tributaries have large sections of bedrock substrate, disconnected floodplains, lack sufficient large wood structures (LWD), and spawning gravel. Phase 1 project components include placing large wood (LWD) and boulders in constructed formations into Sandy Creek in high priority reaches as determined from a basin assessment. Specifically, we proposed a total of 36 sites for habitat enhancement in the mainstem of Sandy Creek and one tributary on BLM and private property.

Work Completed: To date, CoqWA hired Blue Ridge Timber Cutting in June 2022 and completed large wood placements at 9 sites along an upper key tributary of Sandy Creek. The constructed log jams utilized excavator and tree-puller methods. Large wood materials have been provided onsite by BLM and private landowners. The contractor will finish tree harvesting for the project this spring through summer.

Upcoming Work: The rest of the instream restoration sites will be implemented during summer 2023. Phase 2 components, to be funded with future sources, will address road improvements, culvert replacements, and riparian restoration actions to improve water quality by providing shade and reducing sediment loading into Sandy Creek from the road networks.



RESTORATION PROGRAM

Restoration Projects



North Fork Riparian Restoration - North Fork Coquille

Grants: \$329,383 **Partners:** Coos SWCD, ODFW, BLM, OWEB, Oregon Health Authority, City of Myrtle Point, and private landowners.

Purpose: This ecological restoration project will address DEQ 303(d) list water quality limiting factors by re-establishing processes, functions, and biological and physical linkages between the aquatic and riparian ecosystems. Water quality limiting factors include low dissolved oxygen (DO), high fecal coliform count, sedimentation, and high summer temperatures that are a result of degraded riparian ecosystems and extensive livestock presence. Restoration activities will include wildlife-friendly fencing to exclude livestock access from the river and establishing native plant communities in the riparian areas. This project will protect approximately 17.7 acres of riparian ecosystem with 14 acres to undergo weed treatment and supplemental riparian planting. This project seeks to plant 4,800 native trees and shrubs, locally harvest and plant at least 2,550 willows, and install 8,777 ft. of livestock-exclusion fencing along 2.1 stream miles.

Work Completed: To date, all 8,777 ft. of fencing has been installed as of spring 2022 and all native species were planted over the last two winters for all three project sites. All sites are currently undergoing plant establishment, which includes treating weeds with herbicides in the fall and mowing in the spring through summer. **Upcoming work:** Plant establishment activities such as brush maintenance and herbicide applications will continue for each site twice a year through 2025.



RESTORATION PROGRAM

Restoration Projects



May Ranch Riparian Enhancement

Grants: \$14,998 **Partners:** OWEB and private landowner

Purpose: The May Ranch Riparian Enhancement Project is located within the lower Coquille River watershed in Coos County, Oregon. The May Ranch is 55 acres in total, where 44 acres are planned to be used for livestock production and split into two pastures for field rotation. Currently, livestock have access to the riparian area and river, degrading the riparian ecosystem, causing erosion, and inputting sediment and nutrient runoff. The lower Coquille River is ODEQ 303(d) listed under category 5 for temperature, both spawning and year-around. This project will address water quality limiting factors by establishing an 11-acre riparian buffer zone along 0.42 miles of the Coquille River. Restoration activities will include fencing to exclude livestock access from the river and planting native species (including important plants for pollinators) in the riparian area. Buffer widths will be an average of 100 ft. with about 1,800 ft. of riparian fencing.

Work Completed: To date, the landowner hired a local contractor for site prep and fence installation.

Upcoming work: CoqWA will implement Phase 1 of planting the riparian area with Bandon High School students in February 2023. The landowner will continue brush clearing for site preparation through summer of 2023 and a smaller Phase 2 planting will occur Winter 2023/2024.



RESTORATION PROGRAM

Restoration Projects

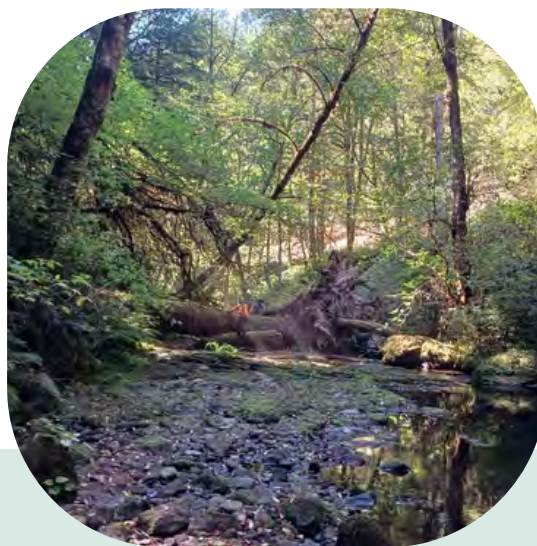


Middle Creek Instream Restoration

Grants: \$68,193 **Partners:** Coos Bay BLM & ODFW

Purpose: Middle Creek is a major tributary of the North Fork Coquille River (NFCR) watershed. CoqWA and the Coos Bay BLM have proposed to conduct wood placements at 20 sites along 1.4 miles of stream on BLM land in Middle Creek. The benefits of utilizing the available first-growth wood are significant due to its effectiveness and longevity compared to smaller stand trees or trees that lack rootwads: it is anticipated that these pieces could last over 100 years once they begin to interact with Middle Creek. This project will benefit federally-listed coho salmon, as well as Chinook salmon, Pacific lamprey, steelhead and cutthroat trout, in addition to improving drinking water quality for the town of Myrtle Point, OR, by capturing sediments.

Work Completed: CoqWA hired Blue Ridge Timber Cutting in August 2022 and the project was implemented between 8/23/22-8/30/22. The contractor repositioned approximately 29 first-growth trees with rootwads attached and about 25 boulders to benefit aquatic habitat and water quality. This project has utilized 200+ year-old first-growth downed trees that otherwise could not be moved to this location. Incorporating these substantially large, stable trees will last decades or longer and will result in vastly improved aquatic habitat.



RESTORATION PROGRAM

Restoration Projects



Winter Lake Restoration and Planting

Grants: \$1,231,505 **Partners:** OWEB, US Fish and Wildlife, the Beaver Slough Drainage District, the China Camp Creek Gun Club, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, The Nature Conservancy, the Coquille Indian Tribe, Wild Rivers Coast Alliance, Ducks Unlimited

Purpose: The restoration purpose is to break the 1,700 acre Winter Lake area along the Coquille River Valley into three distinct, hydrologically isolated management units, with the opportunity to manage the water levels independently in each unit. Units 1 and 3, total approximately 1,300 acres, would be managed by local landowners for grazing in the summer, and open in the late fall, winter, and early spring as off-channel habitat for Coho salmon. Unit 2, which is 392 acres, will be restored to native wetlands and open to tidal influence year-round. Unit 2 is also owned by two landowners – ODFW owns 287 acres (the Winter Lake tract of the Coquille Valley Wildlife Area) and the China Camp Creek Gun Club owns 120 acres. While not local landowners, TNC serves as a sub-recipient to this grant to conduct the tidal wetland restoration work on the 392 acres, and the Coquille Watershed Association (CWA) will be a sub-recipient for the restoration planting. Together, these partners are working to maximize fish passage and wildlife habitat.

Work Completed: The Coquille Watershed Association and partners at Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife harvested and planted 185 cottonwood stems along north Unit 2 ODFW berm on inside, to replace mortality from previous years planting. Previously used cages were reused. However, the original contractor's staking was poorly executed and approximately 200 new wooden stakes were used to increase cage durability. In August, Willamette Valley Forestry performed the fourth year of plant establishment maintenance within the planted area. From September through December 31st, approximately 15 new cages were installed on cottonwoods in Unit 2, incorporating 30 stakes.

Upcoming Work: The last year of plant establishment will be completed summer 2023. The remaining funding will be used to conduct parrot feather (*Myriophyllum aquaticum*) surveys within the floodplain of the lower Coquille River basin.



NOXIOUS WEEDS PROGRAM

Noxious Weed Control Projects



North Fork Knotweed Control Project, Phase IV - Upper North Fork Coquille River (NFCR) and Middle Creek Expansion

Grants and in-kind support: \$39,603 (OSWB)
\$10,778 (Landowner and BLM Knotweed Grant Match)

About the project: There is a significant knotweed infestation along the riparian corridors of the NFCR and its tributaries. The purpose of this ongoing project is to implement our knotweed control and riparian restoration plan, map the existing infestation, and control high priority reaches of the infestation in collaboration with private landowners using the best available science and methods.

2022 Work Completed: Staff surveyed and mapped knotweed re-growth from the BLM property above Four-Corners to the McKinley Bridge, taking site data and notes for the contractor about hard to find locations and large patches that needed treatment. The uppermost knotweed sites on Middle Creek we spot sprayed in October. An extension was granted for this project. A contractor will be hired in 2023 to complete the majority of the spray.

Upcoming work: 2023 will include spot spraying knotweed in the headwaters, and re-treatment as needed downstream to the McKinley Bridge. Surveys for re-growth on Middle Creek will be completed by June in preparation for Fall treatment. Landowner outreach will begin early to expand the 2023 treatment plan. Knotweed treatment will be conducted by CoqWA staff and the contractor in Mid-September.



NOXIOUS WEEDS PROGRAM

Noxious Weed Control Projects



Collaborative Weed Control Projects and Initiatives

Early Detection and Rapid Response Program

Early detection and treatment of small populations of high priority noxious weeds is critical for efficient eradication and the prevention of future infestations. CoqWA partners with the Coos Watershed to continue mapping, surveying and treating outlier population of noxious weeds in Coos County. Our target species for 2022 were gorse, knotweed, knapweed, milk thistle, yellow flag, jubata grass and purple loosestrife. In 2022, our organization surveyed and/or treated 76 gross acres within our watershed.

Funding: Oregon State Weed Board, \$12,710



South Coast Cooperative Weed Management Area

The mission of the CWMA is to reduce the negative impact of invasive plant species on the economy, environment and human health by collaborating with the community through education, information exchange and coordinating regional efforts for control. The CWMA meets quarterly to discuss outreach events. In 2022 CoqWA treated and/or surveyed 14 acres of gorse on BLM lands.

Funding: BLM, \$10,000



Noxious Weeds Survey & Control in the Coos & Coquille Watersheds

Partnering with the Coos Watershed Association, CoqWA surveyed approximately 1500 acres across Blue Ridge, Frona Flats and Steel Creek, cataloging nearly 425 noxious weeds and treated 11 sites. Flyers detailing the most concerning weeds in the area were posted around the trail system. With phase one completed, and populations mapped, weed patches will be prioritized and treated in 2023 as capacity and funding allows.

Funding: BLM RAC, \$12,930



NOXIOUS WEEDS PROGRAM

Noxious Weed Control Projects



Collaborative Weed Control Projects and Initiatives

South Fork Early Detection and Rapid Response Program

Partnering with the Forest Service, CoqWA surveys existing data sets and adds new locations to the Powers Ranger District weed maps. Noxious weeds are surveyed and treated primarily with manual control. Knapweeds and Ivy are chemically treated, while Canada Thistle and Broom are hand pulled or removed with weed wrenches. In 2022 we focused on locations that we had previously treated and that met EDRR size standards. Data that exceeds these standards was passed onto the Forest Service.

Funding: US Forest Service, \$18,783



Gorse Action Group (GAG)

CoqWA supports projects development and outreach in alignment with the Gorse Action Group and attends the quarterly meeting. The GAG's three key goals include:

1) preventing new infestations from establishing, 2) strategically controlling large, established infestations, and 3) increasing capacity and commitment to manage gorse on the South Coast. In 2022 we began project development and treatment for a gorse site at the confluence of Cut Creek and Poly Creek in Bandon.

WDX Excavation was hired to mulch one acre of gorse.

Once mulching was complete, the bare ground was seeded with a native grass mix and mulched with weed free straw. Cut stump treatment was completed on areas that could not be reached with the equipment.

Funding: WRCA, \$11,000



MONITORING PROGRAM

Restoration Effectiveness Monitoring



LOWER COQUILLE WORKING LANDS RESTORATION EFFECTIVENESS MONITORING

Grants and in-kind funding: \$1,040,000 (spent over 5 years)

Partners: ODFW, Coquille Valley ranch landowners, Coquille Indian Tribe, ODEQ, The Nature Conservancy, OWEB, NMFS, USFWS

The purpose of this program is to determine how effective new tide gate and working land restoration projects have been at meeting the goal of enhancing winter rearing habitat for juvenile coho and restoring ecological processes on working ranch lands. The five year project includes:

- Fish Passage (channel depth and connectivity, velocity at tide gate)
- Fish Habitat Quantity and Quality (channel complexity, water quality, water level, vegetation)
- Fish Response to Habitat Uplift (fish movement, relative abundance and condition factor)

2022 Work Completed: Coho juveniles were tagged with small transponders that allow them to be detected. Additional antenna arrays were installed at tide gates to track when tagged coho move in or out of the site. Fish sampling occurred at five locations in the valley throughout winter 2022/23. Water quality monitoring also occurred during that period. Thorough reports on this monitoring program can be found on our website. Overall, we have observed a high number of juvenile coho using these sites, resulting in higher growth rates. Juvenile coho are also using multiple off-channel habitats each winter, which means we need to upgrade more tide gates to allow access to these highly productive areas.

Upcoming Work: We will continue all elements of the monitoring in 2023. We will learn more about the effectiveness of tide gate replacements and working lands restoration projects to inform the development of new projects. Data will be shared in forthcoming reports.



MONITORING PROGRAM

Restoration Effectiveness Monitoring



COQUILLE BASIN MUSSEL SURVEYS

Grants and in-kind funding: \$25,000 (spent over 5 years)

Partners: USFWS, ODFW, Xerces Society, Coquille Indian Tribe

Freshwater mussels play an important but often unrecognized role in the river ecosystem. They improve water clarity and quality by filtering over 10 gallons of water every 30 minutes and they can live up to 100 years. Unfortunately, studies show that mussels are starting to disappear from rivers and creeks around the state.

The goal of this 2-year project is to determine if the imperiled Western Ridged mussel still inhabits the Coquille basin and determine its range. This information will aid USFWS, ODFW and the Xerces Society in petitioning the status of this vanishing species.

2022 Work Completed: The Xerces Society and ODFW started the field season off with a 2-day training on the Middle Fork of the Coquille River that was attended by 11 staff and partners. A total of 12 surveys were completed on private and public lands during the low flow periods of the summer. The first live Western Ridged mussels were found in the Coquille Basin since the 1980's. Furthermore, live Western Ridged mussels were observed in all four forks of the Coquille River with some survey locations containing all three native species of freshwater mussels.

Upcoming Work: We will continue surveying for mussels in 2023 to gain insight into the extent of their habitat in the Coquille Basin.



PARTNER RECOGNITION

Thank you to our invaluable partners!



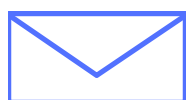
We are most grateful to our partners and funders, without whom our work would not be possible!

Beaver Slough Drainage District
Coaledo Drainage District
Cow Creek Band of the Umpqua Tribe of Indians
Coos County
Coos Soil and Water Conservation District
Coos Watershed Association*
Coquille Indian Tribe*
Coquille Junior High
Coquille Valley Elementary
Curry Watersheds Partnership
Forest Investment Associates
Gorse Action Group
Lone Rock Timber Co.
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation*
Oregon Dept. of Agriculture*
Oregon Dept. of Environmental Quality*
Oregon Dept. of Fish and Wildlife*
Oregon State University Extension
Oregon State Weed Board*
Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board*
Private landowners
Roseburg Resources
South Coast Cooperative Weed Management Area
The Ford Family Foundation*
The Nature Conservancy*
US Dept. of Agriculture - Natural Resources Conservation Service
US Dept. of Agriculture - US Forest Service
US Dept. of Commerce - National Oceanic and Atmospheric
Administration*
US Dept. of Interior - Bureau of Land Management*
US Dept. of Interior - US Fish and Wildlife Service*
Weyerhaeuser Co.
Wild Rivers Coast Alliance*

**asterisk denotes funder*

CONTACT US

Stay involved and keep in touch!



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Donate today!
Click [here](#) to donate directly.
We are also on Amazon Smile!



Become a Member Today!

Interested in getting involved and supporting the work of the Coquille Watershed Association?

Become a member today! By becoming a member, you are supporting our work to build community around the shared values of enhancing the local economy and stewarding our natural resources.

For more information please go to our website or call: 541-396-2541