

# NETWORK OF OREGON WATERSHED COUNCILS NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2022



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with us!**





# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR MESSAGE



## Happy Fall, Colleagues!

As the “pandemic bubble” has eased, I’ve enjoyed getting to see many of you in person and learn more about your projects at the CONNECT+ conference, our regional quarterly meetings, and especially our 1:1 interactions. I also enjoyed getting to spend dedicated time learning along with so many of you during the NOWC-sponsored DEI training this past spring. In total, we hosted 58 staff and Board members from 31 different councils for this training!

As you know, I have been busy coordinating our statewide activities across the NOWC Board and Leadership Committees. I am especially proud of the legislative tours which took place last month. We had beautiful weather for the eight state and national elected officials / their representatives and other guests who joined us to learn about wildfire mitigation, climate change adaptation, and water storage opportunities with [McKenzie Watershed Council](#) and [North Fork John Day Watershed Council](#). These councils and their restoration partners very capably showcased the benefits of watershed council work statewide.

Looking ahead, we are preparing to track the upcoming Oregon state legislative session and will be sending summaries of relevant developments along the way. We will also continue the [NOWC Insider Webinar Series](#), focused on topics and experts identified by you. These webinars aim to provide resources that strengthen our



Landowner partners at Rudio Creek, North Fork  
John Day legislative tour



councils and support each council's efforts to be effective and efficient nonprofit organizations. Early in 2023, NOWC will be rolling out an organized social media plan, based on the prep work provided by our undergraduate intern, Charis Rieder. Keep an eye out – NOWC will regularly feature pictures and info about your good work!

The [NOWC leadership committees](#)

have become a strong feature of the watershed council community.

Almost half of the councils participate in some way, helping to steer NOWC advocacy, develop services and resources for our members, and guide our organization's growth.

Committee service is a great way to build collegial relationships, develop professional experience and skills, and make an impact at the statewide level. Several committee members will conclude their appointments at the end of this year and we are actively seeking new folks to join.

Current committee members

recommend committee service as a valuable learning experience for newer Coordinators/Directors or staff members, and a good utilization of knowledge and skills for seasoned Coordinators/Directors or Board members. If you, or someone in your shop would be a good fit for the NOWC [Government Relations Committee](#) (steering advocacy), [Member Services Committee](#) (developing resources), or [Business Development Committee](#) (guiding organizational growth), please let me know.



State Representative Nancy Nathanson (Eugene)  
leaning in to learn at Finn Rock Reach

**For your reference, here is a full list of [NOWC activities](#) this year.** As always, be sure to connect with me with questions, ideas or concerns!

**All my best,**

*Vanessa Green*

Vanessa Green, NOWC Executive Director



# PRESIDENT MESSAGE



The Oregon we live in is rich in its geographic diversity and so the challenges and opportunities we face as watershed councils are also diverse. I have learned a lot about the different regional issues and approaches during my short time on the NOWC Board and even shorter time as your interim board president.

I live and work on the north Oregon coast. Our council's challenges include restoration on agriculture and forest lands, sport and commercial fishing interests, NOAA and FEMA regulations, balancing the use and preservation of our estuaries – these may be different than where you live and work. Drought, wildfires, water rights, different ESA listed species and many more unique characteristics of each region come together when our NOWC Board meets. Our membership represents all of us. And what has amazed me in this short two years I've been on the board? How much we have in common, and how much we learn from each other.

NOWC provides our councils many great services. Educational webinars, OWEB representation, providing input on federal and state regulations and legislation, promoting the work of local watershed councils, and much more. But as a collective of councils, we serve and support each other. I encourage you to participate in your regional NOWC meetings, send our ED, Vanessa Green, your questions, let us know of your challenges, give us reports on your successes so we can highlight them as well. Let's learn and support each other. NOWC is our engine, you are its fuel.

## **Guy Sievert**

NOWC Board Interim President;

Board member, Nestucca, Neskowin & Sand Lake Watershed Council



# GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE RELATIONS UPDATE



Getting ready with the North Fork John Day tour group.

2022 has been a productive year for NOWC's Government Relations Committee (GRC). Our Executive Director, Vanessa Green has provided verbal and written testimony to the OWEB Board on several key issues impacting Watershed Councils across the state. Topics included the need for additional capacity funding and feedback regarding the OWEB FIP application process. The Committee tracked the Oregon 2022 Legislative Session and sent you a summary of relevant developments. Vanessa and Board member Andy Maggi, (Scappoose Bay WC) teamed up with the Oregon Association of Conservation Districts (OACD) at the CONNECT+ conference in September to provide an overview of Oregon's legislative process and ways that Watershed Councils and SWCD's can effectively engage in that process.

This is the second year that NOWC has coordinated Legislative Tours for elected officials (federal/tribal/state/local), agency representatives, conservation partners, and key stakeholders. These tours broadly showcase the roles watershed councils play in conservation and provide a valuable opportunity to speak with state, federal, and local representatives about how they can help advocate on behalf of Oregon's watershed councils.

NOWC partnered with two watershed councils to host legislative tours in October 2022. The North Fork John Day Watershed Council (NFJDWC) highlighted our Rudio Creek Stewardship and Restoration Assessment project, a cooperative effort with Monument Soil and Water Conservation District. The Rudio Creek watershed provides critical cold water habitat for ESA listed Middle Columbia Summer steelhead, making it a high priority system for restoration. The tour was attended by State Representative Mark Owens, State

## **The GRC can communicate and raise awareness of issues impacting our state's watersheds.**

At the October OWEB Board Meeting, Alexis Barton (Tryon Creek WC) and Dov Weinman (Middle Fork Willamette WC) provided verbal comment on the first documented Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) on the West Coast in Forest Grove.

This small invasive beetle has become the costliest and most destructive pest in North America since arriving in Michigan in 2002. This presentation outlined the ecological and economic impacts of the EAB.



Senator Lynn Findley, and the staff Natural Resources director for US Senator Jeff Merkley. The tour was also attended by the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs and the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, OWEB, and agency representatives from ODFW and BLM. Several private landowners and private lands managers from properties within the project area were also in attendance.

The second tour was led by the McKenzie Watershed Council and highlighted watershed restoration projects on the McKenzie River aimed at improving water quality post-Holiday Wildfire. Approximately 200,000 people in the Eugene area rely on the McKenzie as their primary source of drinking water. This large scale effort is in collaboration with Eugene Water and Electric Board, Oregon Department of Forestry, McKenzie River Trust, and more than 150 private landowners. The tour was attended by State Representatives Paul Holvey and Nancy Nathenson, a staff representative for State Senator James Manning, a staff representative for US Senator Jeff Merkley. The tour was also attended by OWEB and ODF representatives, and private landowners. A reporter from television station KEZI attended, her coverage was featured that night in the [KEZI evening news](#).

Our Government Relations Committee has proven to be a cohesive group that provides robust input and guidance for public-facing NOWC interactions with state agencies and our legislature. Our members have gained valuable professional development experience as we've learned how to navigate opportunities for public engagement. We have several senior members who are concluding their appointments, to make room for other leadership opportunities -- we are in need of new committee members from several regions. If you, or someone from your council are interested, please reach out to Vanessa Green or myself. No previous experience is required, as your fresh eyes, regional perspective, and willingness to learn will all be assets. And be sure to let us know if there is an issue you think we should track, or if you'd like assistance in planning your own testimony or legislative tour.

**Warm regards,**

Kristen Walz, Interim GRC Chair, NOWC Board Member;  
Executive Director, North Fork John Day Watershed Council

### Government Relations Committee in Action

- At the January 2022 OWEB Board Meeting, NOWC requested opportunities to share concerns about potential impacts of the OWEB Climate Change Resolution.
- OWEB held six Climate Resolution listening sessions ; the GRC attended and kept notes for all six.
- The GRC closely reviewed the [OWEB Engagement Process report](#); concurs with its findings.
- NOWC recommended the appointment of several individuals to the Climate Resolution Rules Advisory Committee (RAC) -- three of our recommended members have been selected to serve.



# MEMBER SERVICES COMMITTEE UPDATE



Evidence of the Holiday Farm  
wildfire, McKenzie River

## **Greetings from your Member Services Committee chair!**

Over the last year, the MSC has been working to address some of the professional needs that members have identified through surveys, direct communications with MSC members and the NOWC Director, and messages to the Google group. While we've been working on an assortment of projects, a few stand out. If you are not already familiar with any of these, I hope that this note will provide enough information to whet your curiosity, and lead you to connect with NOWC in new ways!

## **Template Library**

The [Template Library](#) was refreshed this year, and houses some more current resources and examples of documents that every council needs. There are foundational documents, tools for strategic planning, materials to support board development and function, and other useful items that folks have been willing to share. The overall site is more user-friendly, and we continue to update the library as people request and share documents.

## **Administrative Intern**

In order to go fast, you sometimes need to start slow. We all know that even when we have a great need for additional staff, carving out the time to identify the duties they would perform, post a recruitment, interview candidates, hire a new staff member and get them to a place where they can comfortably handle the anticipated workload can be a huge lift. We are so grateful to Vanessa for committing to all of these steps, because the outcome is a mutually beneficial internship at NOWC for UO undergraduate senior Charis Rieder! One of the tasks that Charis focused on during this internship is the Google group—pulling out frequently asked questions, resources that members have provided over time, and identifying loose ends. The info will be used to create an “FAQ” resource on the NOWC website, making the rich content housed in the Google group archives more accessible into the future.



## **Webinar Series**

The fledgling NOWC Insider webinar series has been so much fun to work on and the MSC is incredibly excited at what's to come! These webinars are intended for watershed council staff and board members, and recordings of each webinar are available afterward on the NOWC website. To date, NOWC has hosted six webinars, and has three more in progress.

- December 14th (2021): Governance of NonProfit Organizations
- March 2nd: Financial Policies and Best Practices
- April 26th: Life Cycles of Watershed Councils
- May 25th: Program Updates from ODA and ODFW
- October 27th: Insurance for Watershed Councils
- November 16th: Grant Management 101 for OWEB's Open Solicitation Grant Program

Keep an eye on your inboxes for more information about upcoming webinars between now and the end of the year!

## **Watershed Council Mentor Network**

Earlier this year, we sent out a survey to get a better sense of whether a mentor network would be value-added for NOWC member councils. The response rate was fantastic, and the results indicated that most folks felt a mentor network would provide meaningful resources and developmental support, both for newer Directors and those with more experience. Some of the responses inspired us to think more expansively about mentorship, and formation of a mentor network – we will be working on this project more in the new year.

This year has been full of growth and change as we reemerge from our living rooms and laptops, sometimes meeting each other for the first time face to face, or connecting with colleagues we haven't seen in months. The Member Services Committee is grateful to Vanessa for her leadership and laser-focus on bringing cohesion to NOWC member councils' voices and being responsive to member needs. I am deeply appreciative of Vanessa and the other MSC folks for their passion and drive to turn ideas into actions. Please join us at an upcoming MSC meeting, whether you have ideas to share, or just want to see which committee has the cutest animals on Zoom (spoiler: it's us). We meet the fourth Thursday of each month at 11 and we'd love to see you!

Shannon Richardson, MSC Chair;

Executive Director, South Santiam Watershed Council



# SPOTLIGHT ON MEMBER BENEFIT



We'd like to direct your attention to [Expert Voice](#), one of several [membership benefits](#) available to NOWC organizations' staff and board members (and their families). NOWC is a partner organization with Expert Voice, an online platform for "industry experts" who can purchase items at wholesale cost. It is easy to participate: just fill out their application and upload the latest NOWC membership dues invoice for proof of your affiliation. Once approved, you just set up an Expert Voice profile, and then you can shop across over 500 brands that offer a wide range of clothing and gear that can prove useful in restoration work. Below is a sample of some products purchased by WC folks this past year – let us know if you have any questions as you get started!

| Category                | Item Purchased              | Expert Voice Price      | How much did you save? | Was it worth the effort? |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| Apparel                 | Flannel Shirts              | \$47.50 each + shipping | 50%; \$47.50 each      | Easy Process             |
|                         | Pants for field work/office | \$66.50 + shipping      | 30% \$28.50            | Easy Process             |
|                         | Altra shoes                 | \$55+ shipping          | 40%; \$48              | Yes                      |
|                         | Keen shoes                  | \$45 + shipping         | 50%; \$45              | Easy Process             |
| Accessories             | Sunglasses                  | \$41.40 + shipping      | 40%; \$27.60           | Yes                      |
|                         | Sunglasses                  | \$130.49+ shipping      | 50%; \$130.49          | Yes                      |
|                         | Balaclava                   | \$27.00                 | 40%; \$18              | Yes                      |
| Outdoor and Sports Gear | Trail running shoes         | \$84 + shipping         | 40%; \$56              | Easy Process             |



# NOWC FINANCIAL OVERVIEW



## Fiscal Year 2022

(July 2021-June 2022)

### Profit and Loss

#### Income:

- Grant Income: \$175,818.95
- Member / Affiliate Dues: \$26,187.50
- DEI Workshop Registrations: \$5,600
- Donations: \$364.26
- Fiscal Sponsorship: \$32,000.00
- In-kind donations: \$250.00
- Interest: \$0.57

**Total Income: \$240,221.28**

#### Expense:

- Contracted Services: \$96,625.30
- OrCP Grant sub-recipients: \$63,093.93
- Operating Expenses: \$7,351.34
- Program Expenses: \$815.40
- Wages and Benefits: \$50,218.13

**Total Expense: \$218,104.10**

**Net Income: \$22,117.18**

## Fiscal Year 2023 Budget

### Budgeted Revenue:

- Grant Income: \$54,423.00
- Member / Affiliate Dues: \$30,250.00

**Total Revenue: \$84,673.00**

### Budgeted Expenditures:

- Contracted Services: \$10,700.00
- Operating Expenses: \$5,635.89
- Program Expenses: \$2,288.00
- Wages and Benefits: \$59,619.73

**Total Expense: \$78,243.62**

**Net Income: \$6,429.38**



This last fiscal year could be described as a year of transition. NOWC has rotated fiscal management of the OrCP grant to COLT which has both reduced our funding and our workload. Overall, we see this as a positive change as it allows our Executive Director to focus more time on providing additional services for watershed councils across Oregon.



NOWC was successful in securing a Meyer Memorial Trust grant and utilized those funds to provide diversity, equity and inclusion training for watershed councils from the Center for Diversity & the Environment. There was great participation across the state and folks seemed to really be

challenged and grow from the training.

NOWC also served as a fiscal sponsor for a watershed council, which allowed us to bring in some additional funds through indirect costs. NOWC is continuing to actively apply for additional grants to offer more training opportunities and services for councils.

Looking forward to fiscal year 2023, NOWC is operating off a lean budget but we believe we can make a large impact across the state.

Our focus will be bringing in additional grant funding to provide more resources and trainings to watershed councils.



Warm regards,

Jesse Steele, NOWC Treasurer and Board Member;  
Executive Director, Grande Ronde Model Watershed Council





# WALLA WALLA BASIN WATERSHED COUNCIL FEATURE

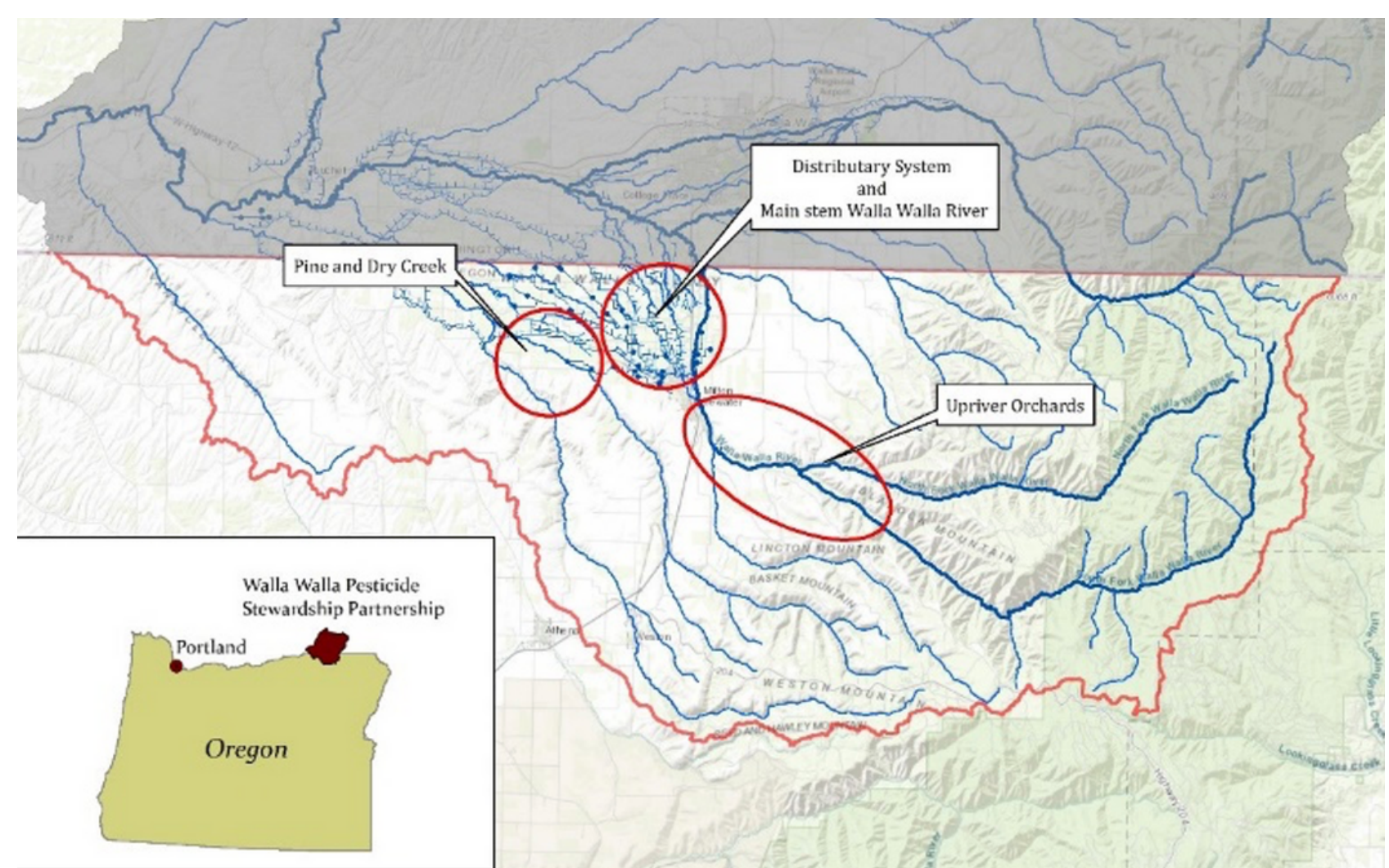


## Walla Walla Pesticide Stewardship Partnership Project

*Troy Baker, Walla Walla Basin Watershed Council Executive Director*

The Walla Walla Pesticide Stewardship Partnership (PSP) began in 2005. The sizable amount of fruit orchard acreage in the Walla Walla Watershed near Milton-Freewater, organophosphates, and a progressive grower community were primary factors in initiating a PSP. Monitoring sites were established on the mainstem Walla Walla River and throughout the Little Walla Walla River distributary system to encompass the upriver agricultural areas, urban, dryland hay/pasture, and orchards. In 2015 the program expanded to include pea and wheat growers interested in having their farms certified as Salmon-Safe. As part of the PSP program, water quality is monitored for pesticide residues beginning in March and continuing through June. Sampling typically picks up again in September and continues through October.

The Walla Walla PSP has been active in identifying and implementing management measures designed to address the results of water quality analysis. In 2012 significant increases in the detection of the herbicide diuron were



PSP Project Focus Areas

noted and traced to its application in irrigation canals. A local irrigation district worked with the PSP partners and discontinued its use, resulting in a significant decrease in diuron detections. In the spring of 2017, spikes in the detection of an organophosphate, chlorpyrifos, were traced

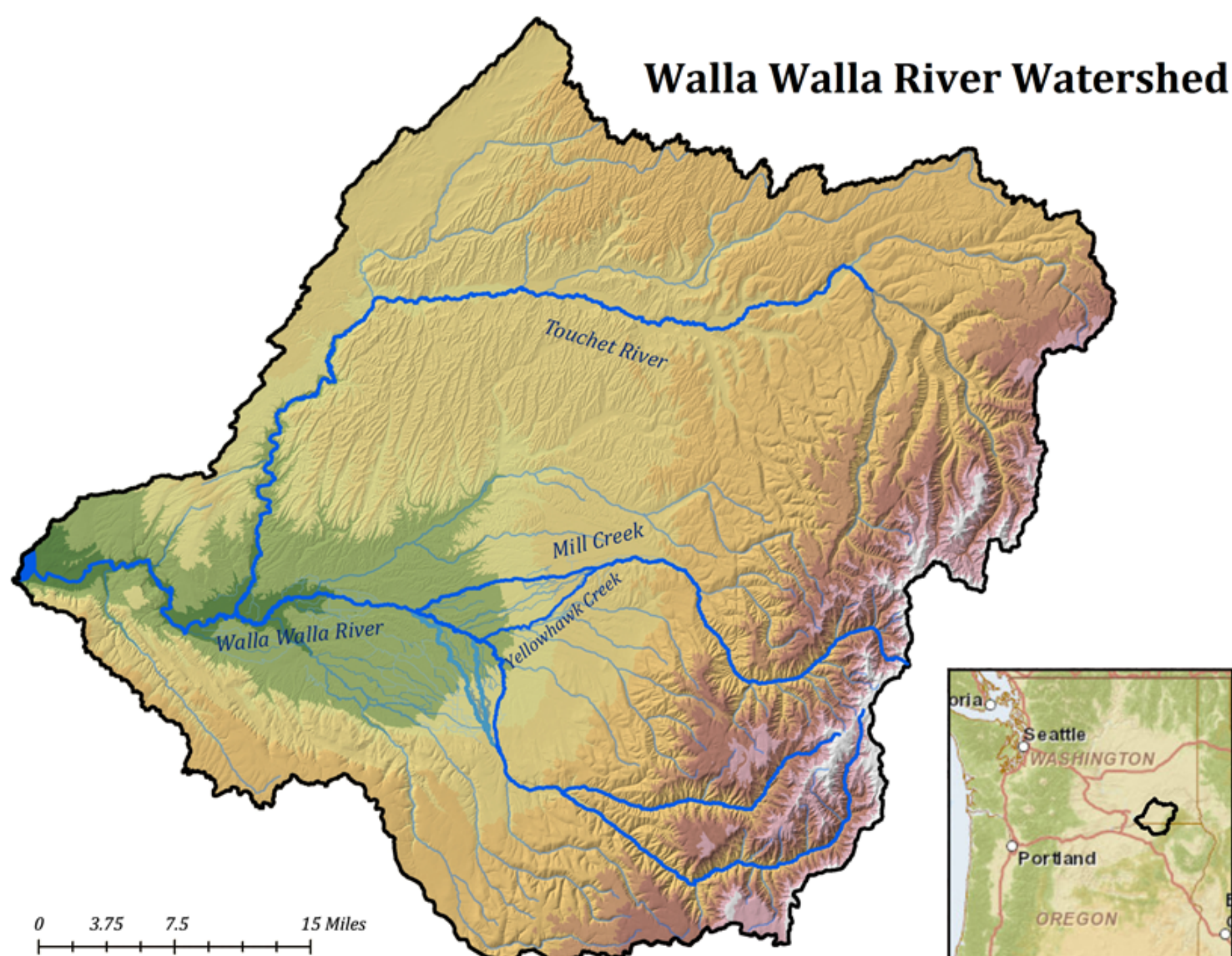


to lapses in application methodologies by a small number of applicators, who have since corrected practices. Installation of wind and weather stations in the PSP for use by growers has contributed to the reduction of spray drift resulting in decreases of detected pesticide residues in monitored waterbodies. A trend analysis of pesticide concentrations indicates a downward trend in carbaryl, diuron, glyphosate, and simazine. Sampling results from 2020 revealed zero detections of chlorpyrifos for the first time since the project started in 2005. In 2021 the Walla Walla PSP completed its Strategic Plan; the plan will guide and facilitate the activities of the PSP for the next five years.



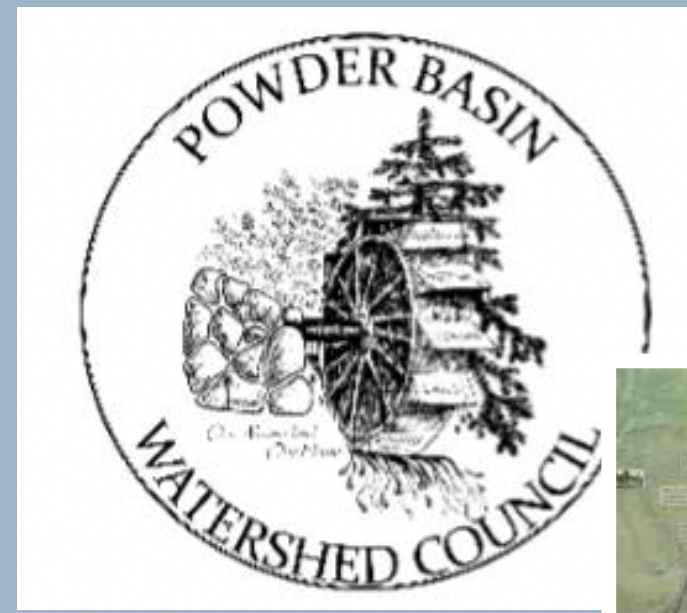
WWBWC staff taking a water quality grab sample in the distributary system

For more project information, contact Troy Baker ([troy.baker@wwbwc.org](mailto:troy.baker@wwbwc.org))





# POWDER BASIN WATERSHED COUNCIL FEATURE



## **Tim Bailey, Powder Basin Watershed Council Executive Director**

### *Elkhorn Wildlife Area Water Quality Monitoring*

The Mission of the Powder Basin Watershed Council is to facilitate community-supported maintenance and restoration of the streams, rivers and lakes within our watersheds. Key to accomplishing our Mission is actively responding to watershed health concerns expressed by the community.

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) operates ten wild ungulate feeding stations within Wildlife Areas along the foothills of the Elkhorn Mountains in the Powder Basin. These feeding stations serve as a tool to discourage elk and deer from wintering on agricultural fields lower in the valleys. Two of these feeding stations are located adjacent to perennial waterways. In addition to wild ungulates, the feed sites managed by ODFW are grazed by cattle during the summer months.

PBWC's work to monitor water quality on the ODFW Elkhorn Wildlife Area is a direct response to local livestock producers who contacted us expressing concern that the concentration of elk and deer overwintering at the feeding sites may impact water quality in Anthony Creek and the North Powder River, further exacerbating water quality concerns downstream. The PBWC shared these concerns with ODFW staff. As a result of these communications, ODFW contracted with the PBWC to conduct water quality monitoring at these sites over a period of three years, 2019 through 2021, to investigate water quality at the elk feeding sites.



Elk Photo – Elk at the ODFW  
Anthony Creek feeding site



Water samples were collected to determine numbers of E. coli bacteria and total phosphorous concentration, pollutants often associated with concentrated animal feeding operations. We sampled at five locations, two at both feed sites and one on the North Powder River 8.5 miles downstream. On the feed sites, sample locations were located upstream and downstream of the actual feeding locations. Sampling was conducted at the lower site to provide a comparison to water quality with typical land uses, agriculture, and livestock grazing.

We collected water quality samples from each sampling location three times annually: late January when elk numbers were high at the feed sites (feeding), late April – mid-May during runoff (runoff), and during baseflow in early August.

We found that numbers of E. coli bacteria sampled at both feed sites were relatively low and did not increase upstream to downstream for the feeding and runoff period samples. We found a similar result for total phosphorous. Thus, the data do not suggest that elk feeding at the sites is degrading water quality with respect to E. coli bacteria and total phosphorous.

Samples collected during the baseflow period, when livestock grazing occurs, did show high E. coli bacteria counts, some exceeding state water quality standards. We are having discussions with ODFW

regarding actions

that could address this concern and they have asked us to pursue several solutions including off-channel livestock watering, increasing riparian buffer widths and some instream/wetland restoration. We look forward to developing some effective projects with ODFW and the local community. The outcome of this effort highlight what can happen when the community works together.



Sampling Photo – PBWC staff collecting water quality samples on Anthony Creek





# THANK YOU FOR A GREAT YEAR!



Hood River Watershed  
Group

Click below to  
connect!



South Santiam Watershed  
Council



Rogue River Watershed  
Council