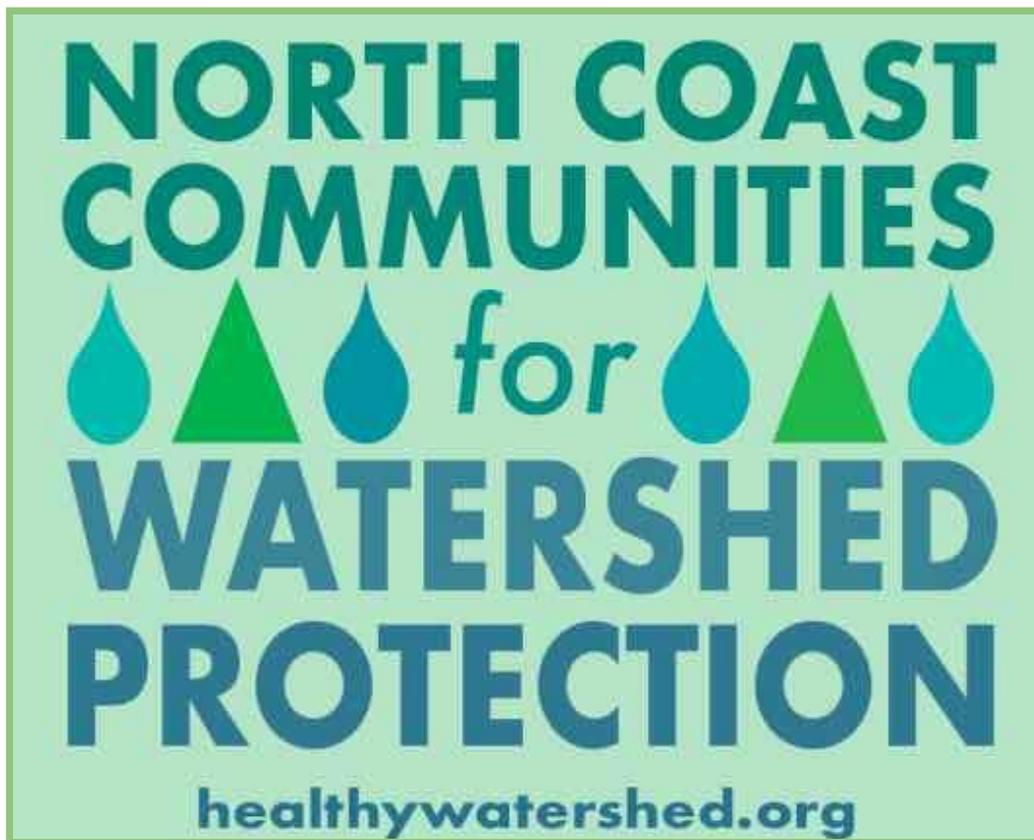


NORTH COAST COMMUNITIES FOR WATERSHED PROTECTION

February 2022 Newsletter

February 23, 2022

2021 Overview | Drinking Water First! | Meeting Recap | Volunteer Opportunities



Greetings North Coast Community!

Thank you for your support of North Coast Communities for Watershed Protection (NCCWP) over the past year and beyond! What an important time to be working to



preserve the forestlands that support all of our drinking water sources, as well as the air we breathe and the soil we stand on.



Given the current climate realities, we recognize that this is a now-or-never moment and a critical time to protect the water (and air, soil and ecosystems) our coastal communities depend on.

Our primary focus in 2022 and beyond will be the safeguarding of *all* drinking water sources originating on forestlands.

Our lives, very literally, depend on the health and vitality of our drinking water, and it takes community members like you to protect them from further destruction.

We are honored to have you working with us towards realistic solutions to preserve the future health of our communities, as well as all the other life that depends on healthy watersheds.

Drinking Water First!

Because of climate change, heat domes, drought, and the threat that industrial forestry practices pose to coastal communities, NCCWP takes the position that there should be ***no* commercial logging nor pesticide use in drinking water watersheds.**



All Oregonians deserve to have their water protected, similarly to the protections Portlanders today have for their main source of water, the Bull Run watershed. There is really no other reasonable and responsible choice at this point.

We recommend reading [this article](#) by Douglas W. Larson, Ph.D. published in the journal *American Scientist* in 2009 that describes how Portland's Bull Run watershed became protected. It demonstrates the relevance of stories like this today, since it took grassroots efforts to make it happen.

We also recommend reading this 2020 article published in *The Oregonian*, "[Timber tax cuts cost Oregon towns billions. Then clear-cuts polluted their water and drove up the price.](#)" The reality we face today is that these clear-cut and polluting practices have only continued, and in many places worsened. Look up at the hillsides surrounding Nehalem right now, for example, and you can plainly see how timber corporations are in a process of "liquidating" their forestlands via mass clear-cuts.



Overview of 2021

Despite Covid-19, in 2021 NCCWP persisted in its advocacy for clean and safe drinking water. Thanks to all of you who participated, wrote comments, testified and spoke up for drinking water in 2021!

Last year, NCCWP continued to raise concerns about drinking water with key government policymakers, including the Governor's Office, various state agencies, and the Oregon Legislature. We've been credited with bringing the issue of drinking water protection "to the table." We've also continued to emphasize public participation and education.

Below are a few of the key accomplishments of NCCWP in 2021:

- We hosted educational hikes into clearcut areas and many educational Zoom presentations—including talks by economists and forestry experts.
- We offered a variety of training sessions, including:
 - How to track detrimental forestry practices with ODF's [FERNs](#) system
 - How to write letters and opinion pieces to newspapers
 - How to testify before government agencies
- We've been involved in ongoing public discussions with the Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) about the new [Habitat Conservation Plan Initiative](#), as well as their proposed [Forest Management Plan](#). We've also participated in ongoing Zoom meetings with the ODF Conservation Collaborative.
- We started participating in the ongoing audit of rural drinking water resources which is being conducted by the Oregon Secretary of State's office.
- We've been collecting and documenting the stories of people in our communities who have been adversely affected by clearcutting and pesticide spraying, and our team of filmmakers and photographers has worked to document industrial logging and the resultant damage to local communities.
- We coordinated a survey of residents in Wheeler and Nehalem, "Illness Survey of People Exposed to Herbicides on the Oregon Coast," which was completed in December 2021.



- We've started citizen science projects, including air quality (smoke) monitoring efforts to track smoke produced by the industrial forestry practice of slash burning, as well as a creek water monitoring and turbidity sampling project.
- We've sent out alerts to people in nearby communities about upcoming pesticide spraying near them.
- We were featured in [media coverage](#) of forest water issues in *The Oregonian* and elsewhere.

In 2022, NCCWP will continue efforts to combat the damage caused by industrial forestry practices to the watersheds that Oregonians rely on for safe, clean, and abundant drinking water.

Drinking Water Crisis on the Coast?

NCCWP is concerned that the Oregon Coast is facing an evolving drinking water crisis.

Coastal communities are experiencing [water quality](#) and [quantity](#) issues, especially in the summer months. Industrial forestry practices, combined with climate change, drought and heat domes, are a serious threat to the future of our water quality and quantity.

In 2017, [OPB published an article](#) explaining how Oregon's Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) drafted a report that demonstrated logging as a contributor to known risks for drinking water quality in communities up and down the Oregon coast—then scrapped the report after the timber industry pushed back.

Forestry practices in Oregon have not improved or changed significantly since 2017, and our [global climate crisis only promises to worsen](#).



A REPORT FROM LINCOLN COUNTY

A citizen report was sent to NCCWP's Nancy Webster by Mike Edwards, an educator, nature writer, concerned citizen and resident of the Oregon Coast since 2018 who lives in Lincoln County.

Mike discusses the preexisting drought conditions in the region, and the impacts of logging on the Siletz River's private lands. The Siletz drainage had a net loss of over 40% of its forest cover in the last 20 years, and Edwards is concerned over the likelihood of timber company lobbying in Salem and Washington, D.C. to open the Siuslaw National Forest to timber harvests. [Read more here.](#)

We know that intact, healthy, biodiverse forests are the key to protecting our water resources, which you can learn more about in this report by the [World Resources Institute](#). The continued logging and depletion of coastal forestlands will mean the continued depletion of our communities' water resources.



How to get involved with NCCWP this year:

Group Meetings

We encourage you to join our **group meetings** throughout 2022.

Environmental advocacy for Oregon Coast communities is the core of our mission. We want you to join us for these group meetings so that we can hear from *you* firsthand.

NCCWP 2022 Kickoff Meeting

We had our NCCWP 2022 Kickoff Group Meeting on February 8, with a presentation of a health study by Bryn Clodfelter, who recently finished her senior project at Pacific University. She assessed acute health effects of pesticide spraying on the residents of Wheeler and Nehalem and demonstrated a clear need for more research in the area. We also offered a Q&A with Bryn's advisor, Dr. Deke Gundersen, who is a toxicologist and the director of the Environmental Studies program at Pacific University. Gundersen offers consulting services to agencies concerned about water quality and has consulted with NCCWP on toxicology issues. A recording of the presentation will be available on our website shortly.

As noted in the meeting, the [Highway 36/Triangle Lake](#) public health

assessment investigating chemical pesticide exposure in 2011 showed years ago that residents in the Highway 36 corridor near Eugene were exposed to pesticides (including those used in logging spray practices following clear-cuts).

Also discussed in the meeting was the fact that many of the chemicals used to spray clear-cuts for monocropping purposes along our coast are outlawed around the world, including in California, Washington and many nations across Europe. For example, the European Union, as well as California and a number of other states have [completely banned](#) the use of the brain-damaging pesticide chemical chlorpyrifos and [in 2021 the EPA made it illegal to spray on food products](#). However, the chemical continues to be [allowed in Oregon](#) for forestry practices

For years, NCCWP has approached Oregon's [DEQ](#), [OHA](#), [ODE](#), [EPA](#), [OSU](#), [OHSU](#) (and the list goes on) for testing and epidemiology surveys of chemicals and runoff into our drinking water resources, with no significant response. It is clear we can not rely on such studies happening unless we as citizens make them happen. This is why we are supporting citizen science and looking into the best routes to produce our own independent research studies.

If you have research experience, ideas or insights, we'd love you to reach out to us and get involved.

Volunteer Opportunities

There are many volunteer opportunities to contribute to NCCWP's efforts in 2022! Our [Volunteer Opportunities](#) list offers a variety of ways to get involved.

We are especially on the lookout for volunteers with campaign organizing and/or interested in on-the-ground campaigning to help us raise community awareness around no logging, no spraying near ANY drinking water sources on the coast.

We are a 100% grassroots group that relies on volunteers, and we're open to your ideas about how you might get involved with our efforts!

You can sign up to volunteer via our [Volunteer Sign Up Form](#). You can also email us directly with any questions: rockawaycitizen.water@gmail.com.

We're excited to stand with you for the health of our forests, our drinking water sources, and the vitality of our communities throughout 2022 and beyond!

With thanks and love,

NCCWP

North Coast Communities for Watershed Protection (formerly Rockaway Beach Citizens for Watershed Protection) is a grassroots group working, through education and advocacy, for better protections of the water we drink, the air we breathe, and the forests that sustain us.



healthywatershed.org | www.facebook.com/NCCWATERSHEDPROTECTION

Comments or questions? Contact Nancy Webster
rockawaycitizen.water@gmail.com

SALT & STUMPS

Salt & Stumps is an independently published booklet of photographs, art, and essays about the embattled forests of the Oregon Coast. This fun and educational booklet, to be published quarterly, describes the wonderment of forests and why it's important to save them.

It includes an essay by Nancy Webster entitled "Water is Life." You may purchase the inaugural winter edition of Salt & Stumps for the low price of \$8.

Just email Michael Edwards at saltstumps@gmail.com or send a postcard to 1606 NW 26th Street; Lincoln City, Oregon 97367 and he'll send you a booklet with an invoice. Or just send him a check, cash, or coins. (Please don't send nickels or pennies; their weight to value ratio is skewed.) Some of the proceeds will benefit NCCWP.

