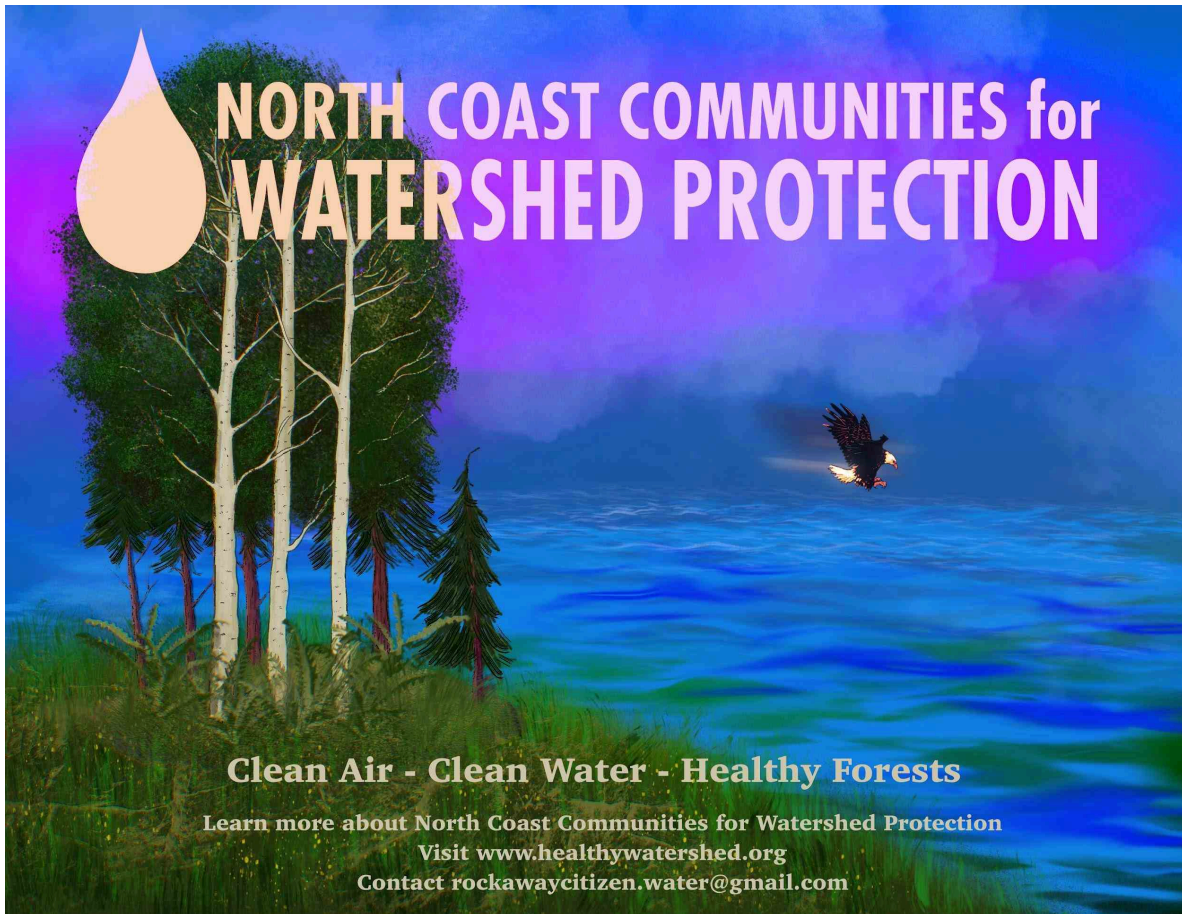


Fall 2024 Updates

North Coast Communities for Watershed Protection



Important Notice:

Thank you to everyone that have been attending NCCWP monthly community meetings. There will be **No NCCWP December meeting**. Starting Jan. 18th, please join us for our winter monthly meeting time, **every third Saturday of the month at 12 pm at Saint Mary by the Sea Parish Hall (275 S Pacific St, Rockaway Beach, OR 97136)**.

NCCWP's Recent & Ongoing Initiatives:

Rockaway Beach Chapter

Protection of Drinking Water Sources for Rockaway Beach



For decades the Jetty Creek Watershed, the primary source of surface drinking water for Rockaway Beach, has been privately owned by various timber companies. It is currently owned and managed by Nuveen Natural Capital (formerly

Greenwood Resources) and Stimson Lumber Company. Management and tree cutting activities in the 1,300-acre watershed have taken place without input from the City of Rockaway Beach and residents. The wells under the Nedonna Beach neighborhood are the secondary source of drinking water. Since 2000, the Jetty Creek Watershed has been 90% clearcut and aerially sprayed with a cocktail mixture of pesticides. These industrial forestry practices have degraded the watershed, leading to decreased quality and quantity of drinking water. Hope for protecting the watershed has increased now that both current owners, Stimson and Nuveen, have been talking with the City of Rockaway Beach about acquisition of the land.

Protecting the watershed is important, since Rockaway Beach continues to have an increased demand for water. More and more houses are being built, many of which will be used as short-term rentals. In Oregon, all drinking water is publicly owned. Jetty

Creek is listed for wild coho, steelhead, trout, and lamprey; therefore, sufficient water needs to be available for them.

The process of possible acquisition of the Jetty Creek Watershed has been long and slow. While NCCWP supports this goal, we also have concerns about the process. After all, public funds will be needed for acquisition. The decisions made now about buying and caring for the land will have long term consequences. Wildlife and people are all dependent on drinking water and a healthy watershed. It's important that the community has input, both for today and the future. The dream would be a naturally rewilded forest. So, let the alder trees return. That's the first step in forest succession. Before the City moves forward with acquisition, NCCWP recommends the following:

1. The future viability of Jetty Creek and the Nedonna Beach wells as drinking water sources should be evaluated by independent experts. These experts should include an independent licensed geologist, a hydrologist, and a forester. What are the best practices for safeguarding both of these drinking water sources? The majority of the Jetty Creek Watershed and neighboring land is officially listed as "actively sliding or highly likely to slide." The Nedonna Beach wells (only 50 to 60 feet deep) are susceptible to rising ocean levels and saltwater intrusion, as well as pollution from housing that has a high density of septic tank usage (75 percent of the houses in Nedonna Beach use septic tanks).
2. The water quantity records, both surface (Jetty Creek) and ground (wells in Nedonna Beach), should be made available to the public. This should include monthly records that report the amount of water coming separately from the wells (identified) and Jetty Creek during the last 20 years. We want the city to sign up with DEQ and OHA for well testing programs, including for so-called "forever chemicals." What is the level of chlorine usage? In order to make informed decisions, residents of RB need to know how much water is available. Are the effects of the changing climate being factored into projections of the quantity of drinking water that will be available in the future?
3. The public needs to know during source water protection planning and the watershed acquisition process what decisions are being made and who is making these decisions. NCCWP believes more time needs to be scheduled for public input and participation in the source water protection plan and acquisition process.

Nedonna Wave Development

The effort to save the Nedonna Beach wetlands continues. As you may know, the Oregon Shores Conservation Coalition filed an appeal of the Rockaway Beach Planning Commission's approval of the proposed Nedonna Wave Planned Unit Development, Phase 2 (PUD-24). **Unfortunately, on December 11, the Rockaway Beach City Council voted unanimously to deny that appeal.** We are very disappointed, but not surprised.



The good news is that there was a great turnout of people at the meeting who supported the appeal.

Thanks to all who attended, or watched on Zoom, the many Rockaway Beach Planning Commission or City Council meetings regarding the appeal. Special thanks go to those who gave testimony and/or submitted comments to the City. The level of public support for the appeal has been strong and heartening. The yard signs showing a kingfisher have helped generate attention to the environment that will be lost by allowing this PUD to be built.

Many people want to continue to challenge the Nedonna Wave PUD. Quite possibly, the City Council's denial will be taken to LUBA (the Oregon Land Use Board of Appeals). The Crag Law Center

(which represents the appellant, Oregon Shores) and Oregon Shores will decide the next steps soon.

The Nedonna Beach neighborhood is in a low-lying wetland area (part of which is in the City of Rockaway Beach) that is threatened by additional housing development. These wetlands are critical to the health of the climate, the integrity of drinking water sources, and the well-being of the community. Coastal wetlands act not only as carbon sinks and important wildlife habitat, but they also help to mitigate the impacts of natural disasters such as storm surges. Nedonna Beach is home to beavers, deer, coyotes, otters, frogs, fish, and other wildlife, as well as native plants.

Wetlands aid in filtering and providing clean drinking water — the Nedonna Beach neighborhood is in a DEQ-defined groundwater zone for drinking water. Additional development could lead to more pollution of the City's wells located in the neighborhood that are used as a secondary source of drinking water. Seventy-five percent of the houses in the neighborhood (those not in the City) use septic systems located above this groundwater aquifer.

In case of an emergency, people in the neighborhood are at risk, because there is only one road into (and out of) it. According to the Oregon Fire Code, a neighborhood with more than thirty houses is required to have more than one exit. Nedonna Beach already has about 375 houses. There is risk from wildfires, flooding, and tsunamis.

NCCWP has been working with Oregon Shores and Crag to stop the Nedonna Wave PUD. For more information, check the City of Rockaway Beach website (<http://corb.us/>) and the NCCWP website (www.healthywatershed.org) Additional questions? Contact Nancy at rockawaycitizen.water@gmail.com

Astoria Chapter

Mothball Hill and Davis Ridge Timber Sales



This year's Astoria District Annual Operation Plan (AOP) was published with little effort on Oregon Department of Forestry's (ODF) part to inform citizens of the draft and its very short 45-day comment period, (April 3 to May 17). NCCWP worked hard to quickly put on an "AOP Comment Event" in Astoria with the goal of increasing public participation and knowledge of ODF's yearly process. While looking into these sites, we realized many *immediately border* residential properties (View the ODF Annual Operations Plan Map [here](#)). We got in touch with several of these neighbors, and found they had not been notified by ODF of the agency's intent to auction the state forestland before or during their public comment period.

With our limited NCCWP staff and short timeframe, some residents were reached only a week before the May 17 deadline, a couple after the fact.

You can read some recent coverage of this issue in the Daily Astorian [here](#).

You can view our current petition “Save Mothball Hill, Davis Ridge, and Slough Hill From Clearcutting” [here](#).

In May we submitted a public records request to Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) for all the biological, threatened and endangered species, cultural, geo tech information including internal emails from ODF that apply to all the proposed sales in the 2025 Astoria District Annual Operating Plan. There was a long delay due to fire season and ODF being short staffed while they focused on fire, completely understandable. When we did hear back from them the estimated cost to obtain records for our public forests was really high, nearly \$1200. We have filed for a fee waiver using ODF’s Public Interest Threshold Evaluation criteria. As of this writing we don’t know the outcome. We feel that prior to a public comment period ALL information should be available to the public when it involves our public lands/forests. The only way we (the public) can make fully informed comments is to have full access to all information. It should not take an expensive and time consuming endeavor to obtain the documents, studies, ODF internal comments.

Hamlet Spraying on Weyerhaeuser Land

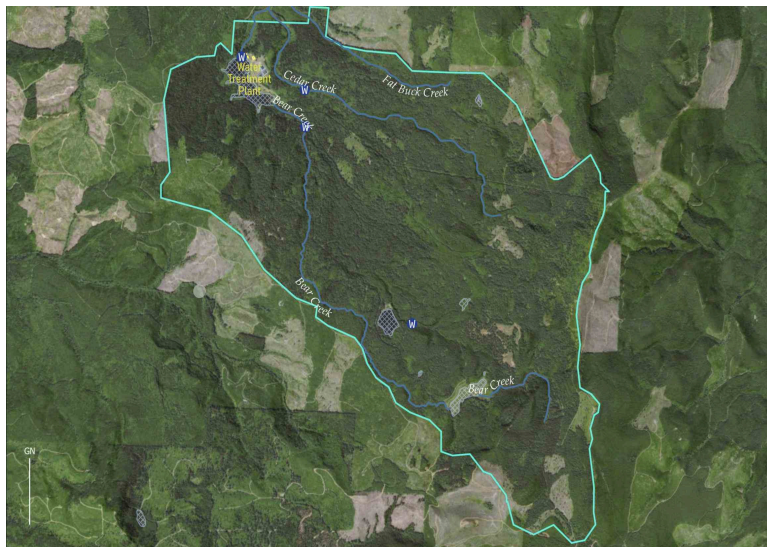
Thanks to the efforts of some homeowners in the Hamlet area with assistance from NCCWP, an aerial herbicide operation planned by Weyerhaeuser has been canceled. They still plan to spray by hand which endangers the health of those applying the chemicals but will limit the negative effects on the neighboring landowners and their drinking water sources. The lengthy battle to get the Private Forest Accord (PFA) passed paid off for these local folks. The PFA mandated that timber companies notify adjacent landowners in writing prior to any spraying application. This advance notification allowed the homeowners to draft a letter of concern and circulate it within their community for signatures. Their letter was sent to Weyerhaeuser, Oregon Department of Forestry and the Governor’s office. A few weeks ago the homeowners were notified that the aerial application was canceled. Though this shift from aerial to manual application is a small “win,” it should be noted that hand-spraying in no way guarantees pesticides will not enter into drinking water. In fact, NCCWP water testing in 2022 revealed pesticides residues in drinking water even 2 months after hand spraying occurred. Change to the status quo is hard and slow, especially when dealing with large companies and their bottom line. We are in it for the long haul and will keep working to protect drinking water and the forests that support it.

What Else Have We Been Up To?

April

Visit to Bear Creek Watershed

In mid April, Astoria Chapter members toured the Bear Creek Watershed, which provides drinking water to the the City of Astoria. The visit was positive. While surrounding land is owned largely by private timber companies, Astoria is lucky to own and manage their own watershed. Before the City acquired ownership, Bear Creek watershed had been clearcut by Crown Zellerbach. Efforts continue to restore densely replanted areas in the watershed through thinnings annually. Pesticide application is prohibited within the boundaries of the drinking watershed.



Annual Operations Plan (AOP) Comment Event

At this NCCWP Astoria Chapter gathering, we invited the public to join us in writing comments to ODF about their planned timber sales for 2025 in the Astoria District (Clatsop County). This came after we learned that last year's AOP only received 29 comments in the entire State. We wanted to educate the public about upcoming plans to clearcut and spray on public forestland, and to rally against the destruction of the remaining bits of mature forestland and healthy drinking watersheds. This evening at

Fort George alone generated more than 70 postcards to ODF. Continued efforts after the event brought the amount of public comments to over 1,000.



May

NCCWP Hosted Screening of Barbara Bernstein's "Once A Braided River"

For thousands of years, the north reach of the Willamette River was a braided river of shallow channels and islands, rich in biodiversity and home to many bands of Indigenous people.



Today the area is designated an "Industrial Sanctuary," but the communities that were displaced or damaged by this so-called sanctuary, see it as an industrial sacrifice zone. Along a six-mile stretch of Portland Harbor, hundreds of aging tanks store over 300 million gallons of volatile fossil fuels—90% of the state's liquid fossil fuel inventory.

"Once a Braided River," a new documentary by Barbara Bernstein, focuses on the part of Portland that most Portlanders ignore or don't know about. It braids together the strands of many issues that face us - climate chaos, rivers contaminated with toxic pollutants, fish and wildlife brought to the brink of extinction by these perilous practices, and the dire hazards of storing immense amounts of explosive fossil fuels upon liquefaction zones underlain by major fault lines along the shorelines of our rivers.

"Once a Braided River" begins with the story of the river before it was transformed into a Superfund Site and features community groups and activists working to replace the current "Industrial Sanctuary" with a green, working waterfront defined by good jobs, clean energy, and healthy ecosystems. The documentary explores their vision to reclaim this stretch of river as a place where people who depend upon the river for their homes and jobs, and wildlife that depends upon the river for *their* homes and migration routes, can thrive.

Watch the documentary [here](#).

June

NCCWP Hosted "Diverse Forests are Healthy Forests: Getting Pesticides Out of Forests and Watersheds and Valuing Deciduous Species"



This event was the first of a three-part lecture tour in partnership with our Sister Watershed in British Columbia, the Peachland Watershed Protection Alliance. The series of presentations was designed to raise awareness about the importance of native deciduous plants within mixed coniferous forests. These deciduous heroes help build ecosystem resilience by mitigating wildfire, revitalizing the soil after disturbances, and by enriching habitat, cultures, and food sources in our

communities. This event featured speakers Deke Gundersen, environmental scientist and toxicologist; James Steidle of Stop the Spray BC; and Ryan Branstetter, fisheries biologist from the Umatilla Tribe.

If you missed it, you can view the recorded talk [here](#).

July

Meeting with State Forester Cal Mukumoto at Jetty Creek Watershed

NCCWP had the privilege of hiking into Jetty Creek with State Forester Cal Mukumoto and Tillamook ODF District Forester Ed Wallmark. After the hike, NCCWP members discussed concerns about the management and future viability of the intensively

logged drinking watershed. Ultimately, the goal of this visit was to start a dialogue about the necessity of mapping and protecting all drinking water sources, with the hopes of bringing the discussion before the Board of Forestry.



August

Nancy Attends Weekly Roadside Rally Hosted by Protect Oregon Watershed



On August 24, Nancy Webster stood with members of the Lincoln County organization Protect Oregon Watersheds. Every Saturday at 11:00 a.m., POW supporters stand at the intersection of Highways 101 and 34 in Waldport. The day she joined them, music added to a very uplifting atmosphere. Most people driving by honked their approval and waved. Everyone had a good time getting the story out about the need to protect our drinking watersheds. If you find yourself in the vicinity of Waldport on a Saturday, join them for a good and meaningful experience.

Is anyone interested in doing a similar activity locally? Learn more about POW at <https://protectoregonwatersheds.org>

The Climate Crisis & The Oregon Coast:
Presentation by Natural Resource Economist Ernie Niemi

Mr. Niemi's presentation broadly explored the economic consequences of the climate crisis before examining the economic importance of maintaining our forested ecosystem.

If you couldn't make it to the event, or would like to share with a friend, you can watch a video recording of the evening [here](#), or find it on our website Healthywatershed.org under "Video Replays."

September

Deep Dive: Stories of Forests & Water

Reading by writer and forest activist Roger Dorband and screening of documentary filmmaker Jesse Clark's short, "Living Legacies"

In case you were unable to attend, please feel free to peruse the links below, where you can find Jesse Clark's short film, "Living Legacies," and Roger Dorband's recent publication in KALA's Hipfish Monthly. We encourage you to share with family and friends:

Watch "**Living Legacies**" and connect with documentary filmmaker Jesse Clark:
<https://www.oldgrovefilms.com/forest-stories>

Read Hipfish's September 2024 publication, including the last of Roger Dorband's 4 part series, "**Oregon Forests: Past, Present, and Future**":
<https://www.hipfishmonthly.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/924.pdf>



October

Landscape architecture master's students from the University of Oregon visited Rockaway Beach

Led by UO Assistant Professor in Climate Change Resilience, Ignacio Lopez Buson, the field trip was part of a studio class focused on developing nature-based adaptation plans for coastal communities in Oregon. The students, Inanna Hencke, Justin Mouldous, Lucy Gonzalez, Leo Frampton, and Jessie Crown, spent three days visiting



Jetty Creek watershed.

the city and its surroundings, documenting and studying its valuable environmental features. They met with local experts and community stakeholders, including Nancy Webster and Richard Felley from the North Coast Communities for Watershed Protection (NCCWP), who gave them a tour of the

For the next eight weeks, the students will analyze the collected data, create three-dimensional models, run environmental simulations, and through design sessions, imagine and visualize potential sustainable futures for Rockaway Beach in the face of climate change. In the words of Professor Lopez Buson, "The students are incredibly motivated and excited to share their findings with the community and help continue the conversation around a socially and environmentally resilient future for this city."

November

Forests & Ales Event Astoria

Held at the renowned local brewery, Fort George, this event opened up a community dialogue about current industrial forestry practices, including impacts on fish, drinking water, and climate. Featured speakers included Michael Lang, senior policy manager at Wild Salmon Center; Chuck Willer, executive director of Coast Range Association; and Nancy Webster, president of North Coast Communities for Watershed Protection.

Looking Forward

In November, expect a little slowing down with the change of seasons and as we work on future NCCWP programming. However, there are some events to look forward to:

On **January 18th at 12 pm at St. Mary's, Ignacio López Busón, Professor in Climate Change Resilience at UO, and his students** will come to RB to present the results of their study on global and coastal threats to the community and environmental health of Rockaway Beach. This presentation will be supported by a grant from UO. Clearcutting and pesticide spraying are two examples of threats to Rockaway Beach's valuable wetlands as well as to the Jetty Creek Watershed that the class will investigate.

Mapping and modeling will be a part of this research.

How Can I Get More Involved?

There are countless ways to get involved with NCCWP. We recommend you start by filling out our [Volunteer form](#), so that we can reach out to you, having a little more information about who you are, as well as what kinds and level of involvement you'd like to have.



NCCWP Volunteers range in experience and interest. Some examples of ways to be involved include:

- Postering
- Tabling at events
- Letter writing and editing
- Grant writing
- Technical & Scientific Advisors
- Creating graphics and posters
- Setting up & cleaning up events
- Monitoring relevant information

- Bridging connections between NCCWP and like-minded groups

Make a Donation to NCCWP:

Your donations make our work possible. As a small non-profit, we rely on financial contributions, no matter how small, from members like you in order to continue our efforts to protect our drinking water sources. **We want to continue advocating for the end of logging, slash burning, and pesticide usage in Oregon’s drinking watersheds, regardless of land ownership.** Any donation you make will aid us in hosting educational events, workshops, and activities, and in pursuing our mission to protect the quality and quantity of our drinking water for the generations to come.

Here’s how you can donate:

You can make a tax deductible donation to NCCWP through the secure payment system directly on our website (<https://healthywatershed.org/donate/>).

You can also donate by writing a check payable to our fiscal sponsor, **Fulcrum Community Resources**, and write **NCCWP on the memo line.**

Mail to NCCWP; Attention: Sharon Smith
PO Box 345
Wheeler, OR 97147

Fulcrum Community Resources is a local 501(c)3 organization created to support local non-profit organizations such as North Coast Communities for Watershed Protection.

For more information, visit the Fulcrum Community Resources website.

You can find out more about how your donations support our work by clicking [here](#).

Wanna Keep Reading? [Click Here For More Resources!](#)