

Summer 2023

SIUSLAW

WATERSHED COUNCIL NEWS

What's Happening in Your Watershed?

Watershed Camp & Wilderness Weekend 2023

A successful Watershed Camp requires year-long planning, energetic staff and volunteers, engaging partner organizations, and generous funders. Participants attend with the expectation that Camp will be educational, exciting, and fun, and I believe we exceeded expectations this year!

Watershed Camp is a week-long program of the Siuslaw School District and Siuslaw Watershed Council that introduces area youth to experiential ecology education, outdoor recreation, and nature-inspired and culture-inspired art. Each day finds the campers in a different location throughout the Siuslaw and Coastal watersheds. This summer we explored the Siuslaw Estuary and Heceta Head on Monday, Lake Clewax and the dunes on Tuesday, Hult Reservoir on Wednesday, a riparian restoration site on Mapleton's main stem of the Siuslaw River on Thursday, and the Pacific shoreline on Friday.



This year we expanded Watershed Camp to include a “Wilderness Weekend” overnight program for high schoolers. We began the weekend with private flights around Florence, minus tide exploration at Heceta Head's tide pools, a tour of the light keeper's house, and a hike out to a backcountry campsite in Enchanted Valley—all in just the first day! We continued the next day with a pizza lunch and a transfer to Dunes City to launch boats. After kayaking out to another backcountry site, we set up camp and spent the rest of the weekend paddling, swimming, fishing, playing games, and making s'mores. The coastal July weather was perfect!

Funding for Watershed Camp and Wilderness Weekend was provided by the Oregon Conservation and Recreation Fund, the Weyerhaeuser Giving Fund, Bogs Footwear, and private donors.

Contributed by Tim Moffett, Project Manager & Camp Director





Sharing Gratitude and Continuing Good Work During SWC Leadership Change

Dear Siuslaw Watershed Community,

We are writing to let you all know that the Siuslaw Watershed Council Executive Director, Rosemary Pazdral, has made the bittersweet decision to transition out of her role as SWC Executive Director later this fall. As of September 2023, she will have served in this position for two years. In Rosemary's words, "I first joined the SWC team freshly out of a PhD program in Water Resources Science, and in my time here I have learned so much about on-the-ground, science-based conservation. I have truly enjoyed this journey, in large part due to the wonderful staff, board, Siuslaw Coho Partnership, and watershed community that I get to work with every day."

It is with the entire SWC team that we've been able to arrive where we are today, with several years of restoration funding ahead of us, a continuously improving financial position, new equipment to help staff implement daily restoration activities, the long-awaited initiation of tidal marsh restoration at Waite Ranch, strong relationships with restoration partners, expansion of our annual Watershed Camp and monthly ecological field trips, and a strong, cohesive staff. These accomplishments are exciting and give us confidence that the foundation is laid for a smooth transition towards new leadership.

The SWC Board of Directors will begin recruiting for the SWC's next Executive Director this week. Please visit our website to view the position announcement, and please share with potential applicants. We will be accepting applications through August 30th.

The Board thanks Rosemary for her dedication to the SWC and we wish her the best on her next endeavors. Rosemary will stay on staff at the SWC until the end of October. We look forward to continuing our work throughout this transition and beyond. Please reach out to us if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Margaret Corvi (SWC Board President)
Jim Grano (SWC Board Vice President)



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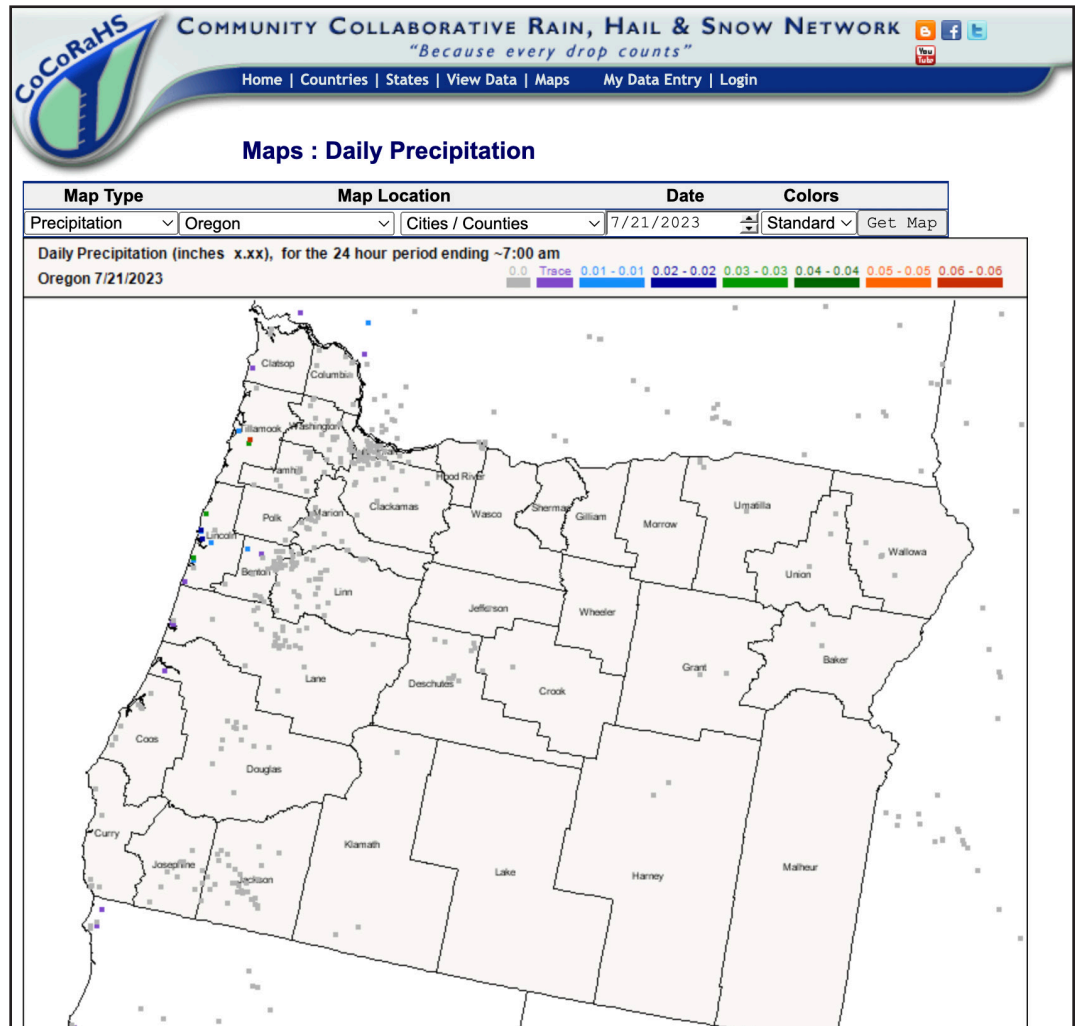
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NEWSLETTER DESIGNER
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The Siuslaw watershed is known for many amazing things such as salmon and steelhead fishing, old-growth and commercial forests, diverse flora and fauna, flatwater and whitewater boating and, of course, rain. Lots and lots of rain. The rain that flows through our watershed provides a strong physical and ecological driver for the abundant diversity and recreational opportunities that we enjoy and coastal residents feel a sense of impending excitement as the rains begin to cascade down, typically during the autumn months of September and October. With that being said, someone who feels a particular joy in bathing in our liquid sunshine and looks longingly for the long, hot, dry summer to end giving way to cooling fall rains could be referred to colloquially as a hydrophile.



There are many hydrophiles in the Siuslaw watershed, and Deadwood Creek basin in particular, and today I would like to highlight Aradia Farmer and the really awesome data collection that she has been conducting for approximately 6 years on Deadwood Creek to help characterize rainfall and barometric patterns. I was first introduced to Aradia's participation in CoCoRaHS (an acronym I just learned myself) through seeing their daily posts in the Facebook Deadwood Outreach group, and if you would like to see her posts you can subscribe to the group and stay informed!

Over the past few weeks I have had the chance to chat with Aradia and learn more about what they are up to in Deadwood and want to share some of that conversation and insight with the readers of our newsletter (paraphrased from a phone conversation).

Caleb: Hi Aradia, thanks for chatting today. It's really cool to see you posting the precipitation and other weather data on the Deadwood Outreach Group. What is the inspiration behind collecting and posting the data?

Aradia: It is part of the CoCoRaHS data collection effort that provides daily precipitation (and other) measurements to the public. It is a citizen science organization sponsored through the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association, National Science Foundation, and other groups. There are CoCoRaHS observers all across the United States, Canada, and the Bahamas.

Caleb: Very cool! So this is part of a larger data collection effort. What does CoCoRaHS stand for?

Aradia: CoCoRaHS is the Community Collaborative Rain, Hail & Snow network. And yes, there are thousands of volunteer citizen scientists across the continent who are participating and providing data to science through CoCoRaHS.

Caleb: I've seen you post your daily observations on the Facebook Deadwood Outreach group. Are they also posted elsewhere?

Aradia: All the daily measurements from participating CoCoRaHS volunteers are uploaded and mapped at the CoCoRaHS website at www.cocorahs.org.

Caleb: That's great that it is so interactive and provides timely information. I see that today (7/19) there are already 11,500 reports that have been submitted and mapped on the website. A couple of follow up questions are, is the CoCoRaHS program looking for additional citizen-scientists to assist in their effort? And do you need any specialized training?

Aradia: Yes absolutely! The program is always looking for more volunteers. The more data points that are being collected allows for better resolution in the overall weather patterns across the region. Everyone can take part in data collection! From kids to grandparents, we need all the observers we can get. No special education is necessary, just reading a few training slides that are on the website will be all the education that you need.

Caleb: Ok, so if folks are interested how do they sign up and what is the time commitment that they should expect.

Aradia: Anyone who is interested can sign up at the CoCoRaHS website (www.cocorahs.org) and begin collecting data. Collecting and reporting data takes just a few minutes to learn, and less than 5 minutes a day to report. The rain gauge costs \$50 and is very easy to use. The low-cost and ease of use is what helps make this program so successful across the country. The only real limitation is making sure you have a good site for collecting representative rainfall, but I suspect readers of this newsletter won't have a problem there!

Caleb: I love citizen-scientists initiatives and could chat about this all day but don't want to take up too much of your time. My parting question is what is something that is interesting or surprising that you have observed over the years?

Aradia: Making daily observations has shown me subtle variations in the environment and to notice trends in how the clouds bring, or don't bring, rain. We joke about endless gray and rainy days, but the actual variations are more dramatic when you start taking daily notes. If after reading this article you are feeling interested and inspired as I am and are wondering if you too can join in on CoCoRaHS data collection the answer is a resounding yes! The CoCoRaHS program would love to have more dedicated citizen scientists collecting data and contributing to the overall picture of the Siuslaw watershed rainfall regime. The first step would be to navigate to the CoCoRaHS website at www.cocorahs.com and familiarize yourself with the training materials and resources available. To everyone that does sign up and participates, I would like to say thank you for being a Siuslaw hydrophile!

Contributed by Caleb Mentzer, Project Manager

Siuslaw Watershed Council Mission Statement

SWC supports sound economic, social and environmental uses of natural and human resources in the Siuslaw River Basin. The Council encourages cooperation among public and private watershed entities to promote awareness and understanding of watershed functions by adopting and implementing a total watershed approach to natural resource management and production.



North Fork Indian Creek: complete road closure during culvert installations

In partnership with the United States Forest Service, the Siuslaw Watershed Council will be replacing two undersized and failing culverts on tributaries to North Fork Indian Creek with appropriately sized and installed aquatic organism passage (AOP) structures. As a result of this restoration work, the North Fork Indian Creek USFS Road 2116, also known as Mann Creek Road, will be closed to all traffic between the intersection of USFS Rd 5130 (Indian Creek Rd) and USFS Rd 2116 (Mann Creek Rd) and the Mann Creek bridge across North Fork Indian Creek. Construction and road closures are anticipated to begin on August 6th and will last until the project is completed, approximately on October 1st. Signs will be posted at the start and end of the section that will be closed once construction activities begin.

The goal of this project is to enhance fish passage through two road-stream crossings and gain additional access to spawning and rearing habitat to increase the carrying capacity for salmonids and other aquatic organisms, such as Pacific giant salamanders. This work is an important part of the Siuslaw Coho Partnership's Strategic Action Plan and the United States Forest Service's Landscape Management Plan for the Indian Creek basin.

This project is made possible through funding from the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board, United States Forest Service, and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association (administered through the Wild Salmon Center).

Deadwood Creek: expect delays and overhead hazards in the Deadwood Creek watershed during helicopter operation

The Siuslaw National Forest in collaboration with the Siuslaw Watershed Council will begin restoration work in the Deadwood Creek basin tentatively scheduled to occur during a portion of the period October 6th-October 20th, weather permitting. To promote habitat for salmon and other aquatic species, over 900 trees will be placed in Deadwood Creek, Fawn Creek, West Fork Deadwood Creek, and Green Creek. A helicopter will be used to move the trees from the ridgetops to the creeks.

The placement of large wood into the streams helps to create complex habitat by decreasing velocity and improving lateral connectivity to side-channels and floodplains. The altered hydrological regime promotes ecological processes that are critical to creating and maintaining instream channel conditions that are suitable to the spawning and rearing of culturally and economically important aquatic species, such as Oregon Coast coho salmon, lamprey, and other stream denizens.

The helicopter will be carrying trees between the tree source locations on ridgetops above Deadwood Creek, Fawn Creek, West Fork Deadwood Creek, and Green Creek to the placement sites in the streams. This work is taking place on National Forest land in the headwater tributaries, and the helicopter will not be transporting trees over private property with residences. Road guards may be in place on forest roads for public safety, and some temporary road closures may be put in place during helicopter flights to ensure no people are under the flight path of a helicopter carrying trees. Expect temporary road closures on FS roads including, but not limited to, 3200, 3259, 3279, 3500, 3510, 3515, and 6300, as well as Lane County-owned Alexander Road.

The helicopter will be serviced and refueled at a location at the intersection of West Fork and Deadwood Creek roads, so it will be flying back and forth from this location several times a day during the project but will not be carrying trees when flying to the service landing.

This project is made possible through funding from the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board and United States Forest Service.

Closing: If you would like additional information about either project or potential alternate routes to access the ridge forest road system, please contact the SWC Project Manager, Caleb Mentzer, by phone at 541-513-2604 or email at projects@siuslaw.org.

Contributed by Caleb Mentzer, Project Manager



Welcome New Restoration Technicians

Opal Burruss grew up in the Siuslaw and loves exploring and constantly learning new things about the watershed. When she is not working with SWC you can find Opal playing sports or working outside.

Adam Cook began forming a spiritual connection with nature as a teenager in his grandmother's garden. After studying at Ohio University, Peace Corps service in Uganda, and farming in several states around the country, he happily landed in the central Oregon coast. He sees the health of our watershed and the health of our communities therewithin as one and the same. On the weekend you can find him playing soccer in the park or picking flowers in his garden.

Wendy Short has loved working outside from a young age. She studied Agriculture and Business Management before transitioning into a career in conservation. Wendy has lived all over the country, chasing the knowledge and experience of different cultures and ecosystems. Now she is in Lane County for a season, hoping to learn as much as possible about this amazing watershed!



Funding the SWC

If you are reading this newsletter, you are probably interested in the Siuslaw Watershed Council and the work we do restoring land and waterways, enhancing salmon habitat, providing fun and educational outdoor activities for kids, distributing and planting native plants, and hosting community events.

Our knowledgeable and dedicated staff, wonderful board of directors, and amazing volunteers enable us to do this work, which also provides job opportunities for local individuals and small businesses. We are hardworking and frugal, operating out of an old school building, cleaning our office ourselves, and using our personal cell phones for work.

Federal, state, and local agencies, foundations, and donors generously provide funding for us to carry out the important work we do in the Siuslaw Watershed. This funding pays for our project managers, restoration crew, executive director, and financial manager when we are working on specific projects/grants, and pays for other project expenses like outside contractors, mileage reimbursement, and supplies and materials.

Unfortunately, our operating expenses are often funded at low levels or not at all.

Operating expenses are non-project-specific expenses like office rent, Internet and phone services, equipment, software, employee benefits, liability insurance, postage, website hosting, copying and printing, office supplies, and professional services (e.g. annual financial review, tax preparation, consultants). This also includes staff time when working on non-project specific activities, such as attending community meetings and events, processing payroll, grant writing, staff meetings, paying vendors, and keeping the office running to name a few.

We are seeking funding and donations to help us offset our operating expenses so we can continue to operate our organization and do important things like update our strategic plan, perform community outreach, engage watershed landowners and other stakeholders, participate in local organizations, and prepare and distribute materials like this newsletter.

Donations of any amount are appreciated. If you do not want to or are not in a position to make a monetary contribution, please let us know if you would like to volunteer with us. We have opportunities for people of all ages, interests, and abilities.

We are grateful to have the opportunity to contribute to the well-being of the Siuslaw Watershed and the people, animals, and plants with which we share it.

Contributed by Linda Poppenheimer, Financial Manager





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