



COAST FORK WILLAMETTE WATERSHED COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT 2020

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LOOKING BACK ON A COMPLICATED YEAR

The Coast Fork Willamette Watershed Council (CFWWC) was able to continue with a majority of our projects and programs, though some required major accommodations to continue. True to the course of 2020, each project encountered something different and provided its own unique challenges. Prior to contractor work, we required each contractor to have COVID-19 safety procedures in place and provide CFWWC a copy to review prior to work taking place. Over \$275,000 was used to help support local contractors to continue to work throughout 2020.

Work continued on these projects:

Camas Swale Restoration Project
Carnine Upland Prairie and Oak Savanna Restoration Project
Garden Lake Riparian Enhancement Project
Hidden Meadows Oak Restoration Project
My Brothers Farm Riparian Enhancement Projects
Neighbors Working Together Projects
Salyers Family Ranch Riparian Restoration Projects
Salyers Family Oak Restoration Phase I
River Road Riparian Restoration Project



The Coast Fork Youth Conservation Crew (YCC) was able to take place in 2020, but was our most painstaking program to keep and adapt to make it happen during the pandemic. It took many conversations with project partners, concessions, and reimagining of the program on the fly to pull it off. Instead of reducing the number of participants it was decided to move forward with a "teams" approach with staggered start and end times.

While emergency food support does not typically come to mind when thinking of a watershed council, we do work with several farmers and ranchers. Through support from the United Way, we were able to secure funding to purchase food (veggies, meat) from local farmers and ranchers and get the food to those in need. It has been amazing to work with new partners in order to meet needs of our most vulnerable community members and lessen the impact to local farmers.

September brought a fire season unlike the Willamette Valley had ever experienced in recent memory. Our watershed was spared most of the impacts. During the worst of the smoke, the CFWWC opened its office as a clean air shelter to provide respite for those displaced from the fires or those just seeking refuge from the smoke. After the smoke lifted, CFWWC partnered with our friends in the McKenzie area to aid in surveying the devastation resulting from the fires. This also provided a unique training opportunities for staff should similar devastation take place in our watershed.

While most of our volunteer and community events were not able to take place, we did have a few successful events in early 2020. The Leap Day Tree Planting Event (pic below) brought out young and old alike to help plant native trees and shrubs along the Coast Fork River. Unfortunately, our "Science on Tap" series and the remaining community events had to be canceled due to the pandemic. We do look forward to getting together again in the future.



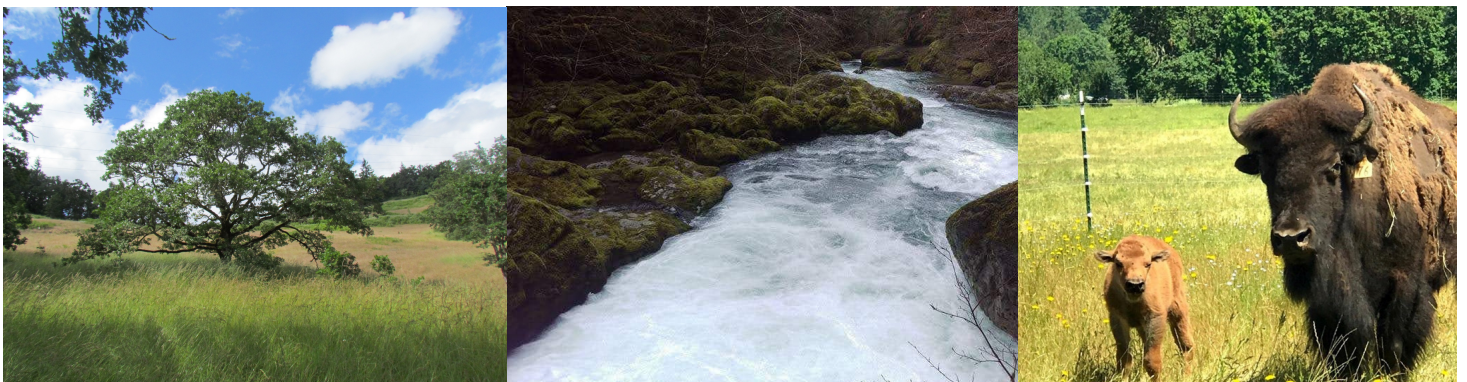
PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

Creswell Butte Planning: Historically this 73-acre private property was once covered in native wildflower meadows and large open canopy Oregon white oaks. A Creswell Butte Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) has been convened to assist with this planning with representatives from the US Fish & Wildlife Service, US Army Corps of Engineers, OR Dept. of Fish & Wildlife, McKenzie River Trust, and the City of Creswell. The TAC has made a lot of progress to date in the restoration planning including determining restoration priorities, creating a preliminary "Desired Future Conditions Map," contracting a plant biodiversity survey, and worked with a NRCS engineer to reroute the existing access road off the remnant upland prairies. Creswell Butte has the potential to be a place for community members to recreate, hike and explore the unique habitats that make Oregon special.

Engaging Stakeholders in Restoration to Enhance Drinking Water Quality: As one of the two headwater rivers that create the mainstem Willamette River near Eugene, the Coast Fork Willamette Rivers' influence can be felt throughout the Willamette Basin. This project seeks to recruit stakeholders in the prioritized regions of the Row River, Mosby Creek, and Upper Coast Fork Willamette watersheds to conduct on the ground restoration. The sensitive areas identified are drinking water sources for both the City of Cottage Grove and the City of Creswell. This work is essential for the long term protection of drinking water sources for the communities reliant on the Coast Fork Willamette River surface water for drinking water.

Lower Coast Fork Willamette Hydrologic Analysis and Design Project: The geographic scope this project encompasses a 12.5-mile reach of the Coast Fork Willamette River. Ecologically this project is essential for allowing partners to prioritize floodplain restoration efforts leading to increased storage capacity, improved water quality, and improved habitat for listed fish and species of concern. Tribal communities have identified the project area as being culturally significant, and consider it a high priority for the restoration, management, and sustainable harvest of traditionally significant plants. The goal of this project is to create process-based floodplain restoration designs resulting in a suite of projects that build upon each other, as well as past restoration investments, and can succeed within the constraints of the Lower Coast Fork Willamette sub-basin. Partners include the Coast Fork Willamette Watershed Council, Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, McKenzie River Trust, Friends of Buford Park and Mt. Pisgah Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, Oregon Parks and Recreation Department, US Army Corps of Engineers, and Lane County.

Working Lands Program: This past year the council began building a body of work focused on catalyzing our working farms and ranches to better provide clean drinking water, carbon sequestration and healthy habitat throughout the watershed for generations to come. Over the past few months we have worked with the Natural Resources Conservation Service and Upper Willamette Soil and Water Conservation District to expand a conservation implementation strategy from McKenzie River to the entire Upper Willamette Sub-basin and have begun developing a comprehensive source water protection strategy for these communities. Our working lands program is also exploring ways to support existing and new farmers in gaining access to land in order to sustain the important ecosystem services that well run farms and ranches provide and empower the next generation of stewards to build thriving and sustainable land based businesses.

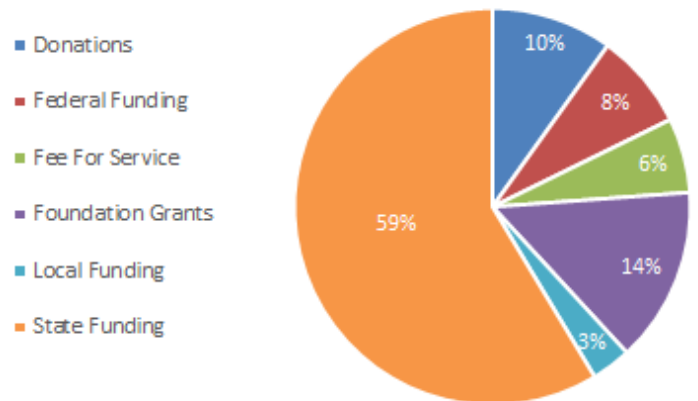


STAFFING AND OPERATIONS

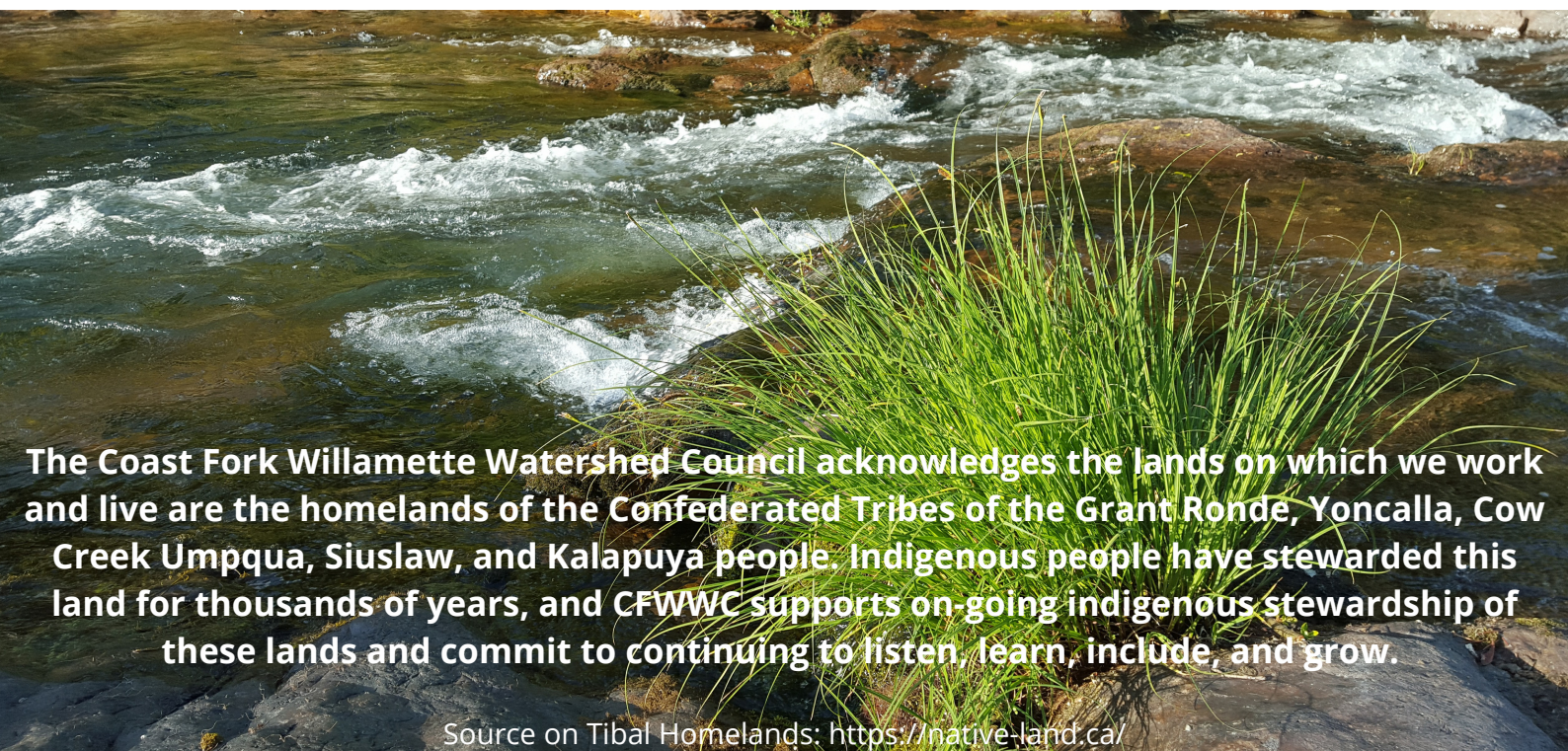
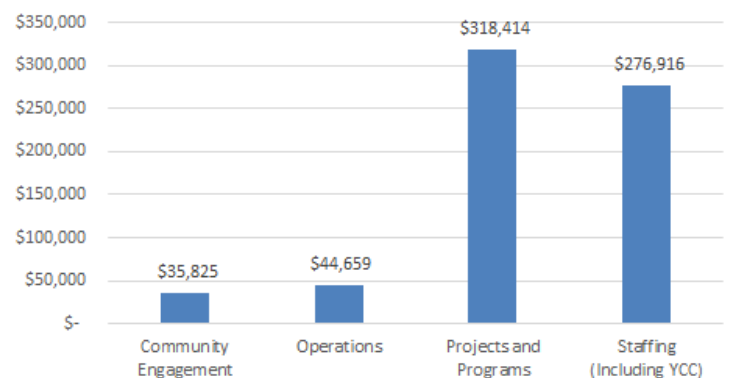
This year has tested the term “adaptive management” for many, including us here at the CFWWC. The operational and staffing impacts to CFWWC are not unique. As the state began to adhere to the “Stay Home, Save Lives” Executive Order, we were able to quickly move to all staff working from home. Our Annual Budget was approved pre-COVID. In April 2020, CFWWC revised the annual budget to reflect our new and ever changing reality. We remained upfront and honest with staff through the shutdown on what prolonged restrictions could mean to positions that relied heavily on in-person student or community involvement. Simultaneously, we received a private donation to help fund capacity of our developing working lands program. All in all, we increased staffing 15% in 2020, despite the elimination of the education and outreach position.

Board and staff worked diligently on reimagining fundraising efforts. These funds are essential to support general operations and funding for non-grant related activities. Local small businesses have donated to us for years to help make our year end fundraising drive a success. This year we paid that forward and purchased auction items for the Winter Watershed Soiree to help support our local businesses who support our work. The year end campaign was a resounding success bringing in a total of \$36,560 to support activities in 2021. CFWWC is determined to continue to expand our good work throughout the watershed.

2020 Funding Sources



2020 Spending by Activity



The Coast Fork Willamette Watershed Council acknowledges the lands on which we work and live are the homelands of the Confederated Tribes of the Grant Ronde, Yoncalla, Cow Creek Umpqua, Siuslaw, and Kalapuya people. Indigenous people have stewarded this land for thousands of years, and CFWWC supports on-going indigenous stewardship of these lands and commit to continuing to listen, learn, include, and grow.