

Coquille Watershed Association Annual Report

2016 – 2017



23 Years of Restoring Watershed Health, One Stream at a Time

Coquille Watershed Association Fiscal Information

Most recent tax filings

Total funding for FY 2015-16: \$268,496

\$35,116 in Federal Grants

\$179,986 in State Grants

\$53,394 in Private Grants and Donations

Total Expenses for FY 2015-16: \$238,245

\$133,916 Wages and Benefits

\$74,748 Project Expenses

\$29,581 Operating Expenses

Form 990 is available to view at the CoqWA office:

223 N Alder St., Suite D

Coquille, OR 97423

Phone: 541-396-2541

Our Work in the Coquille Watershed

The Coquille watershed encompasses approximately 1,000 square miles predominately located in Coos County, OR. The Coquille watershed is the largest watershed to originate from the Oregon Coast Range and has the potential to provide high quality habitat for coho, chinook, steelhead, and Pacific lamprey in addition to many other aquatic dependent species. Predominate land uses in the watershed include private forested lands, agriculture, public forested lands, and urban areas.

The Coquille Watershed Association (CoqWA) aims to enhance the health of the watershed to promote economic and ecological sustainability. Currently, the streams of the Coquille watershed face multiple stressors including high summer water temperatures, high sediment loading, poor stream habitat complexity, and erosion. We work with private landowners and on public lands to implement restoration projects that address these impairments to improve water quality and habitat complexity that will enhance the recovery of salmon and improve the quality of working landscapes.

For every \$1 million spent on restoration projects 15-23 jobs are supported and 95% of our funding stays within Coos County as we are committed to purchasing local and hiring local contractors when possible.



The Coquille Watershed Association: At a Glance

Mission: Provide the structured framework to coordinate the assessment of the watershed's conditions and to implement and monitor proven management practices that are designed to support environmental integrity and economic stability for the communities of the Coquille watershed.

Work areas: Watershed Assessment, Restoration: Instream & Riparian, Outreach and Education

Staff: Coordinator – Melaney Dunne and Program Manager – Caleb Mentzer

Board of Operating Officers: President Julie Huff, Vice President Pat Quinn, Treasurer Tom Hoesly, Secretary Helena Linnell, Officer at Large Tom Jefferson



CoqWA staff at the 2017 Powers Fish Derby

Outreach and Education



Coordinator Mel making buttons Powers Fish Derby participants.



Program Manager Caleb with our CoqWA Stream Trailer at the Mayfly Festival.



Our SWOCC intern, Abe, next to a beaver dam as he was surveying stream habitat on Sandy Creek.

Capacity Funding

Capacity funding from OWEB (\$110,125) and the Wild Rivers Coast Alliance (\$53,480) has allowed us to enhance our capacity this year and increase our impact within the watershed by funding the training of our new staff, covering operating expenses, and funding other critical expenses such as yearly tax filing, payroll reporting, business licensing, insurance, rent, office supplies, and utilities.



Coquille Watershed Website

Grants and in-kind funding: \$5,855

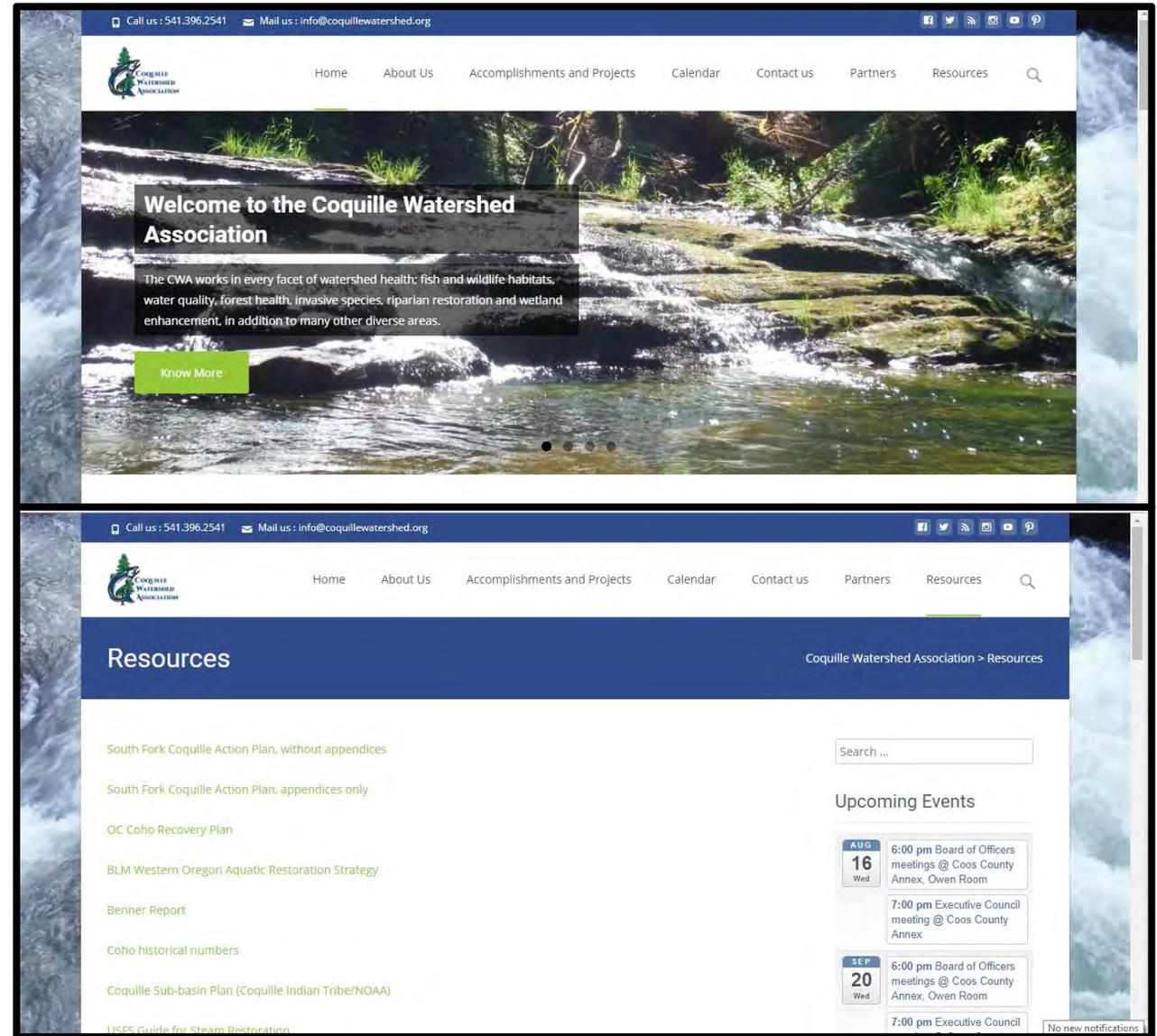
Partners: Coquille Indian Tribe – Tribal Community Fund, OWEB, CoqWA Board and Volunteers

Purpose: The previous CoqWA website was outdated and not user friendly. Web-based communications are increasingly vital to an organization. For the CoqWA it is imperative that we can communicate our work on restoration projects, post about upcoming events, and serve as a clearing house for natural resources information with links to other agencies and private partners that communicate up to date science and regulations regarding natural resources.

Work Completed: A local web designer has created a new website that is easy to use, has trained staff on how to update it, and currently staff are posting on the website and our new facebook account.

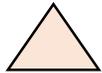
Website: www.coquillewatershed.org

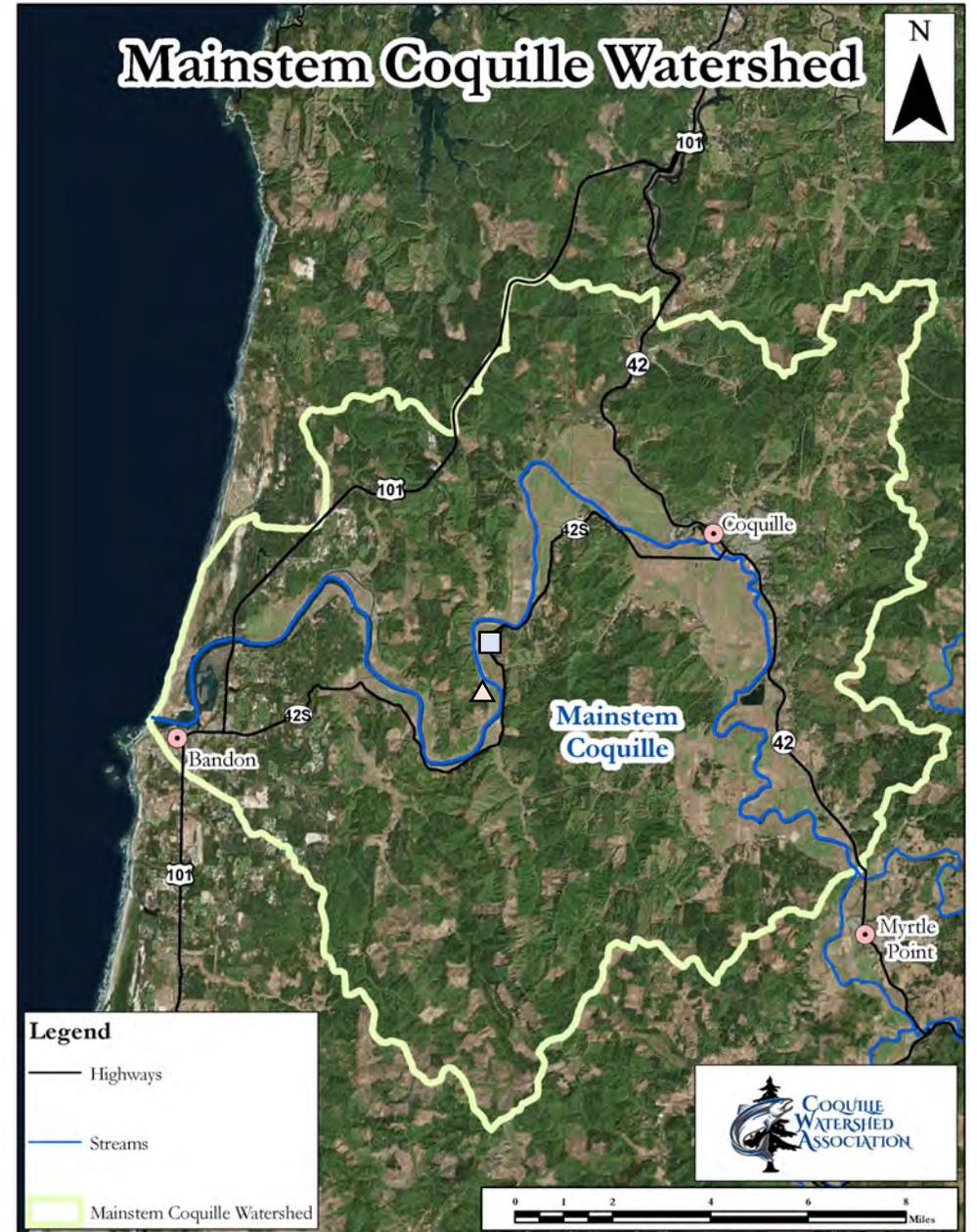
Facebook: www.facebook.com/CoqWA



Sample webpages from the new site! Top: Homepage. Bottom: Resources page with links to reports, agencies, and other watershed information. All our webpages also show upcoming events in the sidebar.

Mainstem Coquille River Restoration Projects

-  Lower Coquille River Wetland and Stream Enhancement
-  Seestrom Creek Restoration Project – Engineering Phase



Lower Coquille River Wetland and Stream Enhancement

Grants and in-kind funding: \$376,315

Partners: Coquille Indian Tribe, ODFW, Private Landowner

Purpose: This project is located on an organic dairy and has been identified as having high intrinsic potential for over-wintering juvenile coho salmon and other salmonid species. This project is incorporating the “working landscapes” model for conservation that identifies win-win scenarios for private landowners and conservation of natural resources. This project will improve fish passage through a tidegate equipped with a Muted Tidal Regulator, increase wetland and stream complexity in approximately one mile of channel by remeandering the channel and placing LWD, and we will fence and plant 5 acres of trees and shrubs in the riparian corridor. Additionally, the water management with the new tidegate will improve the drainage for the pasture. This project is addressing the primary limiting factors for salmonid recovery in the Coquille watershed by improving habitat complexity and water quality.

Work Completed: The engineering and permitting has been completed, a timeline for the summer 2017 in-water work period has been created, and the tidegate and culvert has been replaced.

Upcoming Work: The channel will be remeandered in August and September 2017 and the fencing and planting will occur in the winter and spring of 2018.



Current state of the channelized stream through the pasture that will be remeandered in summer 2017 and have the riparian area fenced and planted 2017/2018



View of the pasture from the tidal channel



New tidegate structure installation in late July 2017

Seestrom Creek Restoration Project – Engineering Phase

Grants and in-kind funding: \$50,000

Partners: USFWS, ODFW, Private Landowner

Purpose: This project is located on a large pasture that was historically high quality juvenile coho salmon over-wintering tidal channel and floodplain habitat. Currently, engineering work is being conducted to evaluate the fluctuation of water levels on the site, the extent of tidal inundation, and understand the subsurface conditions at the site. As the engineering nears completion, the CoqWA is seeking funding for the implementation of the project. The project objectives are to improve fish passage to the site by removing one failing tidegate and replacing another tidegate with a new tidegate that has a Muted tidal Regulator on it, improving access for fish, create 15,000 feet of on-grade tidal channel with increased stream complexity and restored riparian function. Similar to the LCWSE project, this project aims to address the defined limiting factors for recovery including poor water quality and habitat complexity. Moreover, this project will provide benefits to the landowner by enhancing the water management on the pasture.

Work Completed: The engineers have initiated borings and water level monitoring in the spring of 2017 and the 30% design has been completed.

Upcoming Work: Project partners will convene to review the engineering results and design and seek funding for project implementation.



Satellite view of the project site



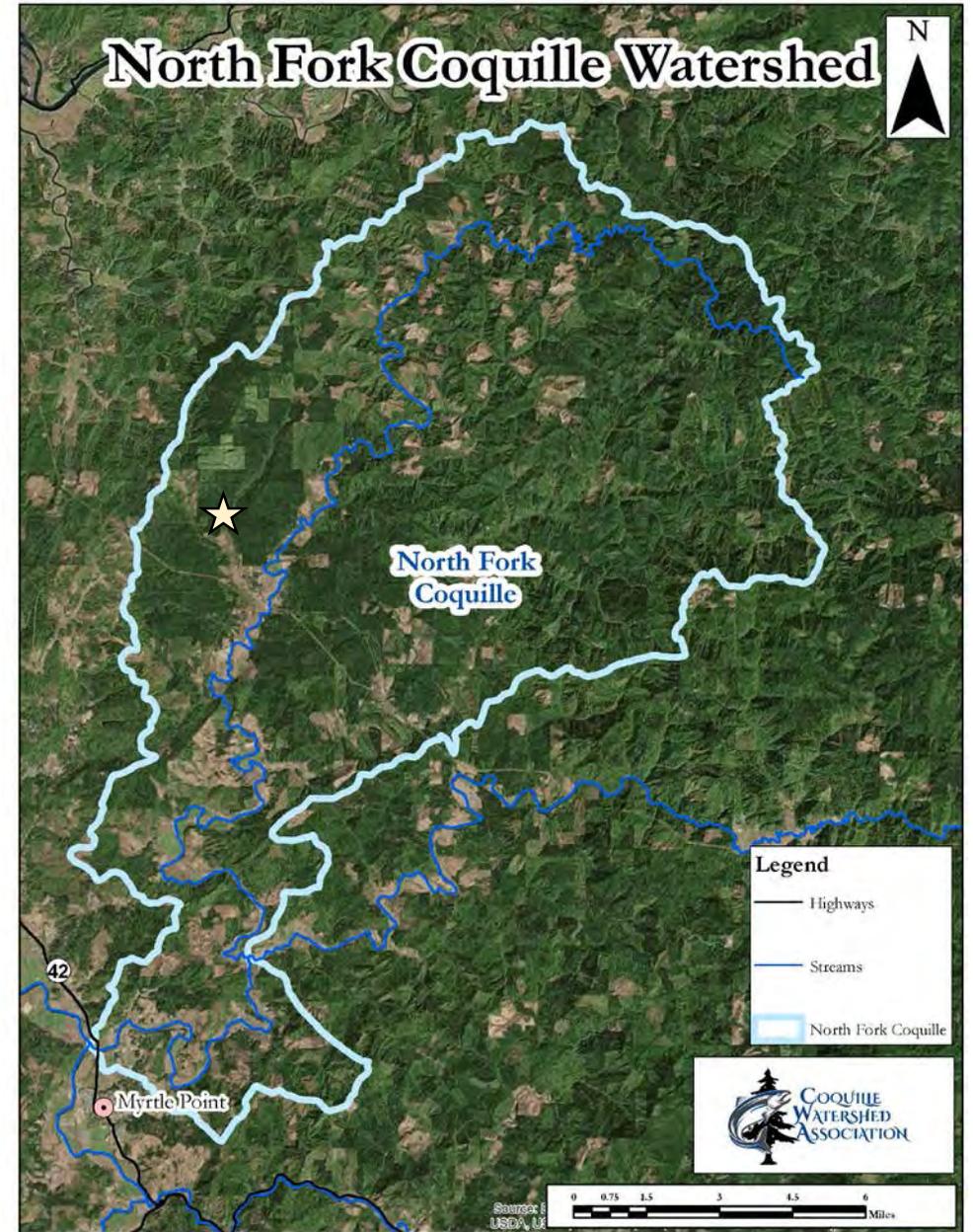
Engineers onsite in the spring of 2017

North Fork Coquille River Restoration Projects

North Fork Knotweed and Riparian Improvement Project
(occurring throughout the North Fork Watershed)



Woodward Creek Instream Restoration Project



North Fork Knotweed

Grants and in-kind funding: \$51,520

Partners: BLM – Coos Bay, ODEQ, Coos County Weed Advisory Board, Coos Soil & Water Conservation District, Coos County Planning, Private Landowners, CoqWA volunteers

Purpose: To create a landowner database of North Fork Coquille residents, to map all locations of knotweed and other invasive riparian plants in the North Fork watershed, create a coordinated management plan to target primarily knotweed on all North Fork locations. Knotweed is a highly invasive species, that competitively excludes other native species and eliminates shading of the riparian corridor.

Work Completed: During the summer of 2015 CWA staff surveyed roughly 42 miles of streambank for knotweed presence and size of infestation. Specifically, 8 miles were surveyed on Middle Creek, 34 miles on the mainstem North Fork Coquille River from the mouth of Moon Creek to the confluence of the North Fork and mainstem Coquille River.

Upcoming Work: Begin the comprehensive management plan to have complete by winter 2017 and begin initial control efforts on the North Fork in 2017.

QUICK SUMMARY ABOUT KNOTWEED

- Coos County has 3 species of knotweed: Japanese, Giant & Himalayan
- All species were brought to the U.S. from Asia by the ornamental trade in the late 1800s
- Knotweeds are currently being surveyed in river basins for Coos County
- Cutting, mowing, or pulling knotweed causes faster and more vigorous growth - DO NOT DISTURB IT!
- Fragments of knotweed less than 2 inches long can create entirely new infestations downstream or expand old infestations
- The CWA is currently looking into safe, effective control of knotweed for residents.



Japanese knotweed growing from a rhizome fragment 3 inches long

Knotweeds



Help Save Our Rivers,
Forests and Wetlands

*Excerpt from the outreach brochure created by
CoqWA and CoosSWCD staff.*

Woodward Creek Instream Restoration

Grants and in-kind funding: \$204, 930

Partners: BLM – Coos Bay, ODFW Restoration & Enhancement, Campbell Global, Oxbow Timber 1, LLC, ODFW, CoqWA volunteers

Purpose: To increase instream habitat complexity and potential salmonid spawning and rearing habitat in Woodward Creek through the placement of Large Woody Debris (LWD) structures. Woodward Creek is listed on the DEQ 303d list for high temperatures and sediment loading. Project goals include: increasing pool depth/complexity, trap sediment, juvenile salmonid habitat, nutrient cycling, improve and/or create off-channel habitat, improve floodplain connection, increase LWD volume.

Work Completed: During the instream work period in the summer of 2016 there were 30 LWD structures constructed containing a total of 309 logs along 3 miles of Woodward Creek. The project goals were completed in 2016 with a budget surplus allowing for additional restoration projects to be implemented in the Woodward Creek drainage. Since 2008, the Coquille Watershed Association has been a partner in implementing stream restoration projects within approximately 32 miles of tributaries of the North Fork Coquille River.

Upcoming Work: Plans in 2017 and 2018 are to expand the scope of the project to include the enhancement of the water quality in Woodward Creek. Specifically, improvements will be made to the forest road prism to reduce sediment loading in Woodward Creek and the North Fork Coquille River.



Excavator placement of LWD at one of the installation sites on Woodward Creek



Completed LWD structure on Woodward Creek in summer of 2016



BLM staff and volunteers, CoosWA Youth Corps, and CoqWA staff replanting the excavator access sites in spring 2017.

East Fork Coquille River Restoration Projects

- Elk Creek Instream Restoration Project
- ◇ Steel Creek Watershed Restoration Project



Elk Creek Instream Restoration

Grants and in-kind funding: \$312,924

Partners: BLM – Coos Bay, ODFW, Weyerhaeuser, Coquille Indian Tribe

Purpose: The project goals were to increase wood volume, pool complexity and total area, secondary and off channel habitat, and gravel recruitment. Our overall objective was to meet ODFW benchmarks for the above categories within 5-10 years of project completion, increasing the survival for juvenile salmonids. The LWD placement resulted in capturing fine sediment and improving both instream and riparian habitat.

Work Completed: This project improved instream habitat complexity by placing LWD structures in Elk Creek. Through helicopter and excavator log placement, a total of 667 logs were placed in 5 miles of stream, exceeding the original objectives of the project. This includes 71 LWD structures on both public and private lands. This portion of the project was completed in 2012.

Upcoming Work: Additional LWD placements are being coordinated using remaining project funds and additional funding through the Coos Bay – BLM for the summer of 2017.



LWD structures created in Elk Creek.

Steel Creek Watershed Restoration

Grants and in-kind funding: \$99,102

Partners: BLM – Coos Bay, US Fish and Wildlife Service

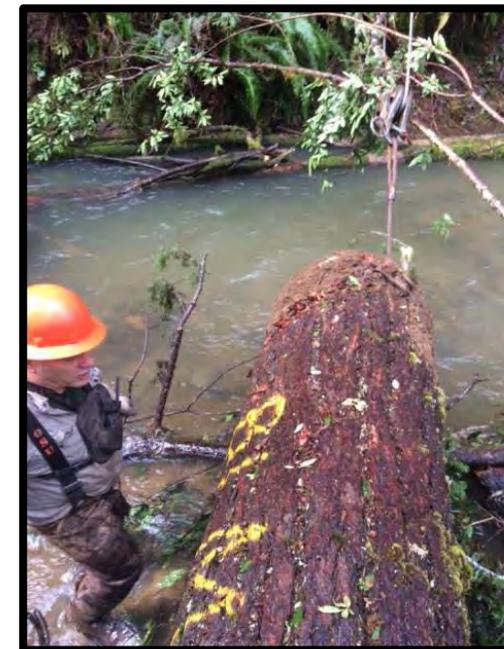
Purpose: To apply a “whole watershed” restoration approach to Steel Creek by improving the in-stream habitat for coho, chinook, steelhead, and Pacific lamprey, enhancing the riparian vegetation, and reducing the sediment loading from the road prism in the Steel Creek drainage. The BLM Western Oregon Aquatic Restoration Strategy identified the East Fork Coquille and tributaries as a high priority for restoration actions. The scope of this project includes the decommissioning of a BLM road, conducting GRAIP road surveys in the drainage, installing LWD structures, and improving the riparian vegetation in the corridor.

Work Completed: Geomorphic Road Assessment and Inventory Program (GRAIP) analysis – has begun on the road prism in Steel Creek that identify sources of potential erosion, landslide risk, and stream crossing failing leading to high levels of sediment loading into streams. CoqWA and BLM staff evaluated the road to be decommissioned and assessed three problem culverts within the decommissioned section, the road decommissioning was put to bid and is planned to occur in late summer 2017. Also, a large tree with a root wad fell onto Miller Road near Steel Creek in the winter of 2017 and it was placed in the stream.

Upcoming Work: Upcoming work includes decommissioning the road segment, removing invasive species such as English Ivy, adding LWD to the stream, and further improving the road drainage network as identified in the GRAIP analysis.

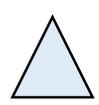


One of the culverts that will be removed during the road decommissioning.

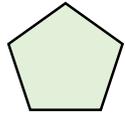


Large tree that had fallen over, was cable yarded into Steel Creek.

Middle Fork Coquille River Restoration Projects



Twelvemile Creek Project Development
(Entire Basin)



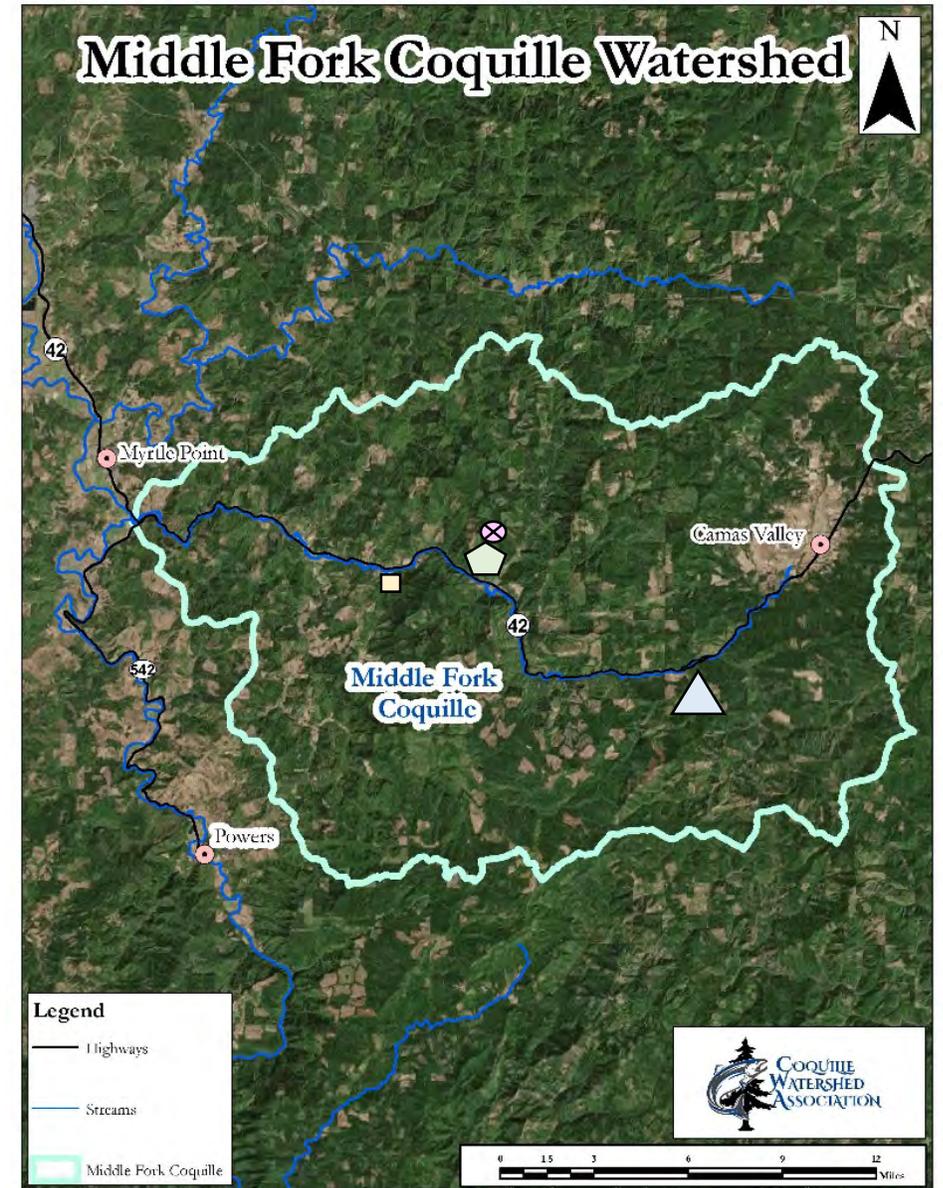
Sandy Creek Project Development
(Entire Basin)



Sandy Creek Stream Crossing
Improvement



Anderson Creek Riparian Improvement



Twelvemile Creek Project Development

Grants and in-kind funding: \$25, 000

Partners: BLM –Roseburg, ODFW, Cow Creek Band of the Umpqua Tribe of Indians, CoqWA Board Members

Purpose: To identify, prioritize and implement restoration projects in the Twelvemile Creek basin that will improve water quality and enhance habitat for coho, chinook, steelhead, lamprey, and other aquatic organisms. The creek has limited LWD and therefore we aim to enhance instream habitat complexity and improve water quality by enhancing the riparian vegetation and possibly reducing sediment loading into the streams.

Work Completed: Preliminary site visits with project partners have indicated that the most limiting factor for anadromous fish species are lack of instream habitat complexity and sediment loading from the existing road prism within the Twelvemile Creek watershed. Initial project planning is underway and we expect to seek additional funding for planning and implementation of restoration projects.

Upcoming Work: We will be contacting landowners in the Twelvemile Creek basin and seeking additional funding for assessment of the basin and project designs before seeking project implementation funding.



CoqWA, ODFW, and BLM staff onsite at Twelvemile Creek.



Twelvemile Creek in March 2017, depicting high sediment loads and invasive riparian vegetation.

Sandy Creek Project Development

Grants and in-kind funding: \$51,240

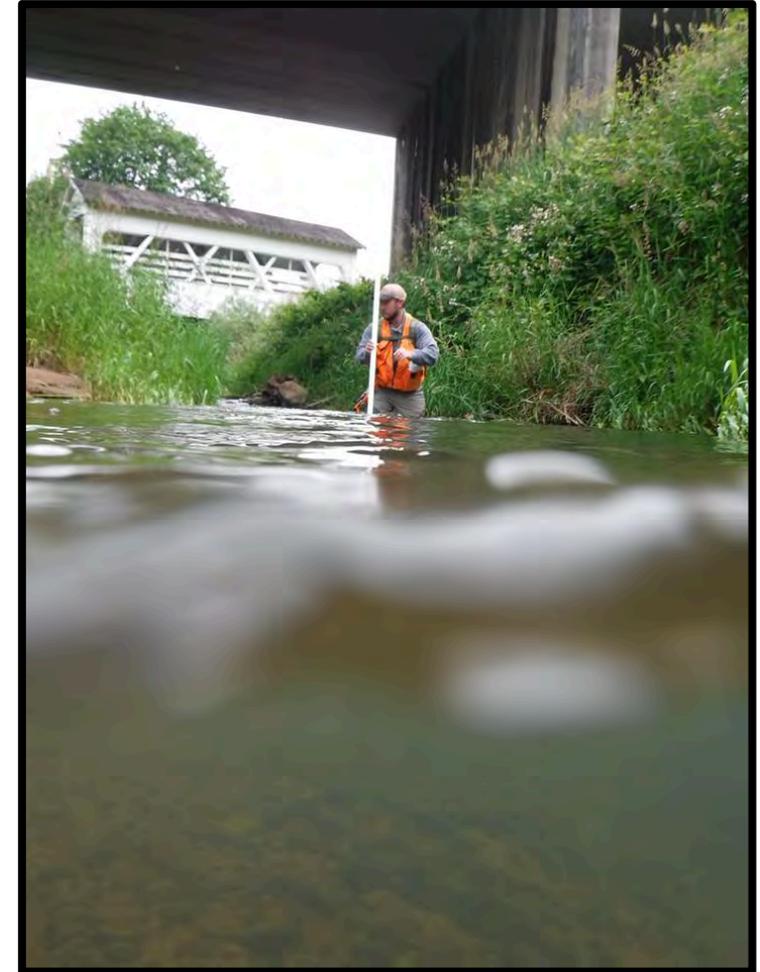
Partners: BLM – Coos Bay, ODFW, USFWS, Coos County Road Dept., Private Landowners

Purpose: To evaluate the current watershed conditions in the Sandy Creek basin so as to prioritize habitat restoration and water quality improvement projects. Watershed assessments include:

- **Geomorphic Road Analysis Inventory Package (GRAIP)** to assess the extent of sediment loading to the streams from road networks
- **Aquatic Habitat Inventory survey (AQI)** to identify key limiting factors and priority reaches for restoration, and to identify any fish passage barriers
- **Landowner outreach** as needed to discuss projects and survey results.

Work Completed: CoqWA staff have attending the AQI training held by ODFW in June of 2017 and have begin a basin wide AQI stream survey in summer of 2017.

Upcoming Work: Plans are to complete this survey by fall 2017 and to seek implementation funding for the first major project in the basin which involves replacing two failed culverts on Sandy Creek Road, increasing habitat complexity, and improving the riparian zone in Sandy Creek. GRAIP surveys will commence in winter of 2017.



CoqWA staff conducting an Aquatic Habitat Inventory survey in Sandy Creek.

Sandy Creek Bridge Crossing

Grants and in-kind funding: \$9,170

Partners: Private landowner, OWEB Small Grant Program

Purpose: We seek to address a current watershed problem regarding an old forest skid trail and low water crossing. Specifically, the property contains sixty acres of recently cut and replanted timber and a CREP conservation easement of 10 acres, which at the current time can only be accessed via a skid trail and low water crossing. Road systems are known to be high contributors to overall sediment loading in rural watersheds and low water crossings damage the streambed matrix and can interrupt crucial in-stream processes for fish and macro-invertebrate development. Sandy Creek is known to provide critical spawning and rearing habitat for ESA listed coho salmon, chinook salmon and wild winter steelhead. The project aims to address the watershed problem by decommissioning the skid road that accesses Sandy Creek and providing a bridge crossing where previously the landowner had relied on an instream low water crossing to access the riparian conservation easement zone.

This project will help fish and other aquatic wildlife by decreasing the sediment load from the skid road and water crossing. Also, the riparian easement zone (10 acres) is used as an educational field trip site by the natural resource department at Southwestern Oregon Community College, and will remain open for SWOCC and other interested school groups for the entire year with the bridge access. Sandy Creek is currently a target sub-basin for the Coquille Watershed and this project would not only enhance water quality on Sandy Creek and Middle Fork Coquille River but also aid in building partnerships with landowners.

Work Completed: The landowner has completed the bridge construction and the skid road is no longer in use.



Previous low water crossing.



Bridge construction.



Completed bridge.

Anderson Creek Riparian Enhancement

Grants and in-kind funding: \$10,000

Partners: Private Landowner

Purpose: The Middle Fork and Anderson Creek are listed by the DEQ as 303(d) for temperature and dissolved oxygen. Historical farming/ranching practices have reduced buffers to minimal stands if any at all in some areas along rivers and tributaries. This project installed livestock exclusion fencing to protect and enhance approximately 5 acres of riparian buffer along both sides of Anderson Creek along 1,200 ft. A few patches of Himalayan blackberries were also noted and will be treated by landowner. Planting conifers to diversify the dense hardwood stands will consist of approximately 50 trees. This riparian improvement will enhance the water quality of Anderson Creek for aquatic organisms including ESA listed coho salmon.

Work Completed: The fence has been constructed in fall of 2016 and conifers were planted in the winter of 2017.



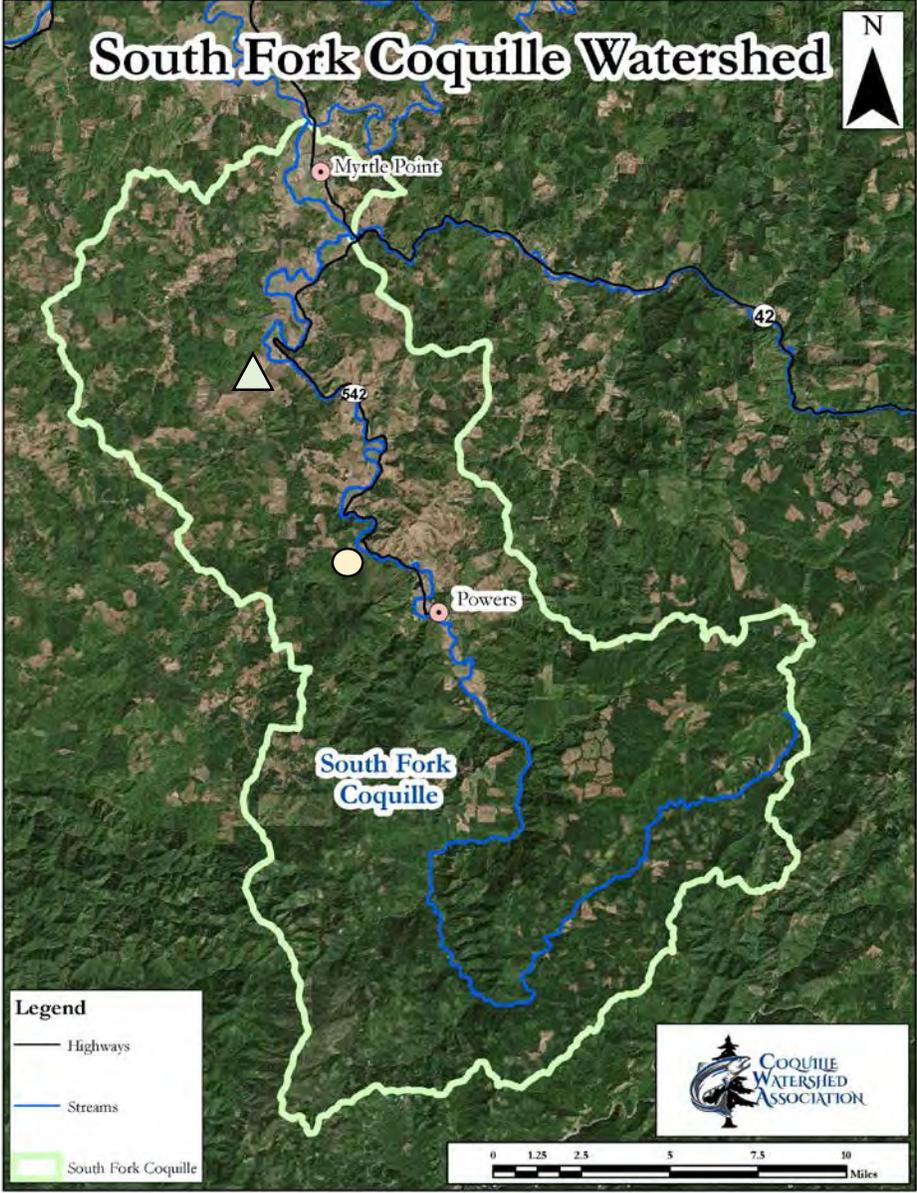
New fence along Anderson Creek.



CoqWA Program Manager, Caleb, planting conifers in winter 2017.

South Fork Coquille River Restoration Projects

-  Baker Creek Culvert Removal and Restoration Project
-  Dement Creek Project Development (Entire Basin)



Baker Creek

Grants and in-kind funding: \$154,138

Partners: BLM – Coos Bay, USFWS, Weyerhaeuser, ODFW, CoqWA volunteers

Purpose: Baker Creek currently has a culvert that is restricting habitat connectivity and fish passage. Baker Creek has the potential to provide high quality cold water refugia for juvenile salmon and spawning habitat for returning adults. The objectives are to develop the engineering for the project to have design plans for the removal of the culvert and associated fill material, address impacts to the existing road prism and bridge, and realign and regrade the natural channel for improved habitat access and complexity in the site.

Work Completed: Engineering on the project has again commenced as the project was on hold due to change in ownership on the property.

Upcoming Work: The CoqWA anticipates that permits and engineering for both the infrastructure and channel realignment will be completed by summer 2018. Funding will be sought for implementation in 2018.



Current fish ladder that provides poor fish passage and is in need of maintenance



Photo point looking upstream on Baker Creek at the culvert

Dement Creek

Grants and in-kind funding: \$11,125

Partners: BLM – Coos Bay, ODEQ, ODFW, ODA, Lone Rock Resources, Private Landowners, CoqWA Board Members

Purpose: Similar to the Sandy Creek and Twelvemile Creek projects, this watershed assessment project aims to identify areas of water quality impairment (temperature and sediment) and areas with low habitat complexity. CoqWA will again employ AQI, GRAIP, and landowner outreach initiatives to assess areas in need of improvement in the basin. Additionally, temperature and sediment monitoring will occur to understand the extent of water quality impairment and track improvements over time as projects are implemented in the basin. Specifically, a discrete water sampler will be deployed to evaluate sediment loads in Dement Creek and 9 temperature loggers will be deployed throughout the basin to identify cold water refugia. After the assessment is complete, CoqWA will have prioritized projects to implement that will have the largest positive impact for working landscapes, salmon recovery, and water quality improvement.

Work Completed: In spring of 2017, initial landowner outreach has been conducted with major landowners in the basin. In July 2017, two preliminary temperature loggers have been deployed in the lower reach of the basin in primarily pasture grazing areas.

Upcoming Work: We aim to obtain additional funding to conduct the GRAIP and AQI surveys in 2018. We will deploy the remaining temperature loggers and discrete water sampler in 2018. Landowner outreach will also continue.



Example of sediment runoff from the road network in the basin.



Observed potential fish passage barrier on Russell Creek, a major tributary to Dement Creek

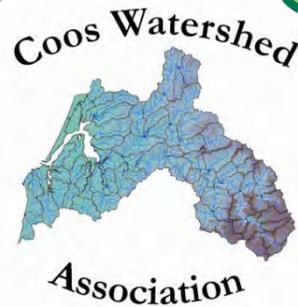
Thank you to our partners!



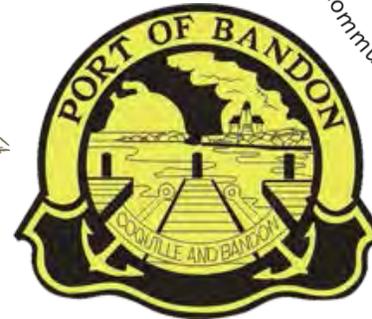
State of Oregon
Department of
Environmental
Quality



Road Dept., Planning
Dept., and Commissioners



COOS SWCD



Board and Volunteers



Bandon Native
Plant Nursery



COW CREEK BAND
OF UMPQUA TRIBE OF INDIANS

