Our Mission: Umpqua Watersheds is dedicated to the protection and restoration of the ecosystems of the Umpqua watershed and beyond through education, training, advocacy and ecologically sound stewardship.

KQUA Update

KQUA has made significant progress with a website, live365 listening App on Google Play, and new programming. We still have some needs for the station. Until the end of this month, we are holding a fundraiser to cover the costs associated with keeping KQUA on the air. Funds are needed to make the station more accessible to listeners, cover monthly operational costs, and purchase much needed hardware and software updates to improve your listening experience. To make a tax deductible donation right now, visit KQUA.org and click on the “Support Community Radio.” A listener pledged $1000 as a matching fundraiser. Donations during week 3 can be doubled up to $1,000! A donation of $50, becomes $100!

On March 14 and 28, 11am-5pm, there will be music request time where for a $5 donation you can request a song through KQUA. If we have it, we will play it. For $100 you can request an entire episode of any of our previous talk programs. All donations over $5 receive an official KQUA sticker. Listen for a sticker giveaways. More information at KQUA.org or by calling 541.672.7065. Follow us on Facebook and listen live.

Outreach Update ... Kasey Hovik

It's been a year now since our semi-isolation because of the pandemic. We've missed our favorite social gatherings with friends and family. Many of us have worked from home. In 2020, Umpqua Watersheds had to cancel main fundraising events, the Membership Banquet and Silent Auction, River Appreciation Day, Summer Concerts, and what would have been our 11th Umpqua Brew Fest. Yet, we have persevered thanks to the support of our members, staff, and volunteers. In the process of writing a grant, I calculated that in 2020, even without our significant events, we had over 3,000 volunteer hours, which amounts to over $80,000 of in-kind value when using the most recent national rate.

We are proud that our AmeriCorps program continues to thrive, thanks to Ryan Kincaid and our Education team's tireless efforts to provide environmental education in our community. We are grateful for the work Patrick Schneider and his team have put in to enable our radio station to expand from being heard within 10-miles of downtown to being listened to worldwide, thanks to the internet. Our fabulous office manager, Melanie MacKinnon, continues to do a fantastic job handling day-to-day operations and leading our Grant Committee. Our Wilderness Committee continues to press forward to keep us informed on the latest legislative initiatives to protect our rivers and the continued effort to make a Crater Lake Wilderness area a reality. Angela Jensen has led our Conservation Committee and represented UW on important statewide committees to make sure the concerns of the Umpqua are represented. I couldn’t be prouder of our board of directors and their dedication to ensuring we...
fulfill our mission and move forward with our strategic plan.

The level of financial support we received from our members and supporters in 2020 exceeded 2019. The staff and board of Umpqua Watersheds are so grateful and humbled by your support.

Our level of support reflects just how special the place we call home is to all of us. The Umpqua watershed encompasses 4,219 miles, 87% the size of the state of Connecticut! We live within a couple of hours from the beautiful Cascade Mountains and Crater Lake National Park, and the Pacific Ocean's pristine beaches. The North, South, and main stem Umpqua, as well their tributaries provide fresh water and bountiful recreation opportunities.

A frequent refrain you may have heard from me is, "We live here?! At the Twin Lakes campout, presentations on wildlife biology, botany, geology, astronomy, native history, and hydrology help give kids an appreciation for the Umpqua ecosystems. We go to "The Rock" and look out at the stars, and I tell our campers that "There Is No Planet B." Even if it were possible to travel at the speed of light (impossible to our current understanding of physics), it would take 4.5 years to reach the nearest star system. While nine years would have transpired on the spaceship, over 70 years would have occurred on earth!

So, what does this have to do with Umpqua watersheds? Everything! We live in one of the most beautiful places on the planet. We have clean air, clean water, an abundance of wildlife, and natural wonders. But it needs to be protected, preserved, and restored because the planet is changing faster than we realize because of global warming and overpopulation. The population in the United States is projected to exceed 400 million by 2050. We must make sure that the abundant natural resources we enjoy today are here for future generations.

Hopefully, in the second half of 2021, we will return to some of our usual activities. We look forward to a River Clean-up event centered around Earth Day week in April, hikes, River Appreciation Day in July, our annual Twin Lakes Youth Wilderness Campout, concerts, and the Umpqua Brew Fest in October. While we know that if these happen, certain health safety restrictions will need to be in place. After a year of virtual events, I think most of us will be giddy to return to doing some of our favorite things with our favorite people.

On behalf of the staff and board of directors of Umpqua Watersheds, thank you for all of your support and encouragement during this very challenging year. Continue to stay safe and well. The challenges we faced this past year are not over yet but I am more confident than ever that together, we will come out of this stronger than ever. Until then, stay tuned for online events in the near future. Events will be posted on the website and through Watersheds Moments emails.

Spotlight on our donors

We received a very generous donation to fund our AmeriCorps Environmental Education program for the 2021-2022 year from Jerry Mires. Jerry grew up in the Umpqua Valley. He was born and raised in Sutherlin, OR and always enjoyed the natural world around him and sharing the excitement and wonders with others. His interest in the natural world led him to study biology at Oregon State University. Before he finished his degree, he joined the Navy and spent 4 years in various places working on aircraft. After the Navy, he returned home to Oregon and finishing his degree at OSU. His first field job was with the Bureau of Land Management in Eugene, OR where he surveyed for spotted owls. His love of the Umpqua Valley brought him back to Roseburg where he worked for the Roseburg District of the BLM as a Wildlife Biologist until his retirement in 2001. Over the course of his career, Jerry welcomed biologists, filmmakers, and writers to his home from around the world. His self-described “flophouse for indigent biologists” became a comfortable place to relax and unwind. Before Jerry retired, he worked nearly exclusively on the acquisition of the North Bank Habitat Area where secure habitat for the Columbia White Tailed deer was finalized. Jerry’s knowledge and expertise of the natural world includes mushrooms and fungi, amphibians and reptiles, bats, and birds, and many others. He has volunteered for ODFW to work with White Tailed Deer radio tracking. We thank Jerry for his donation to continue to educate youth in our county about the natural world.
UNLSH is off and running ... Janice Reid & Cindy Haws

Umpqua Natural Leadership Science Hub (UNLSH) is a non-profit organization started by former UW Executive Director, Cindy Haws. UNLSH’s mission is to provide hands-on science learning and leadership opportunities to students and communities in Douglas County, Oregon.

Due to data gaps in life history, habitat use, relationships to hydrology, and impacts from invasive species such as bass and catfish, UNLSH has been conducting surveys of Northern Red-legged Frog (Rana aurora, NRLF) at Drew Lake in the Umpqua National Forest and Susan Applegate’s pond near Yoncalla, Oregon. Susan Applegate is a long time Umpqua Watersheds supporter and member of the Wilderness Committee.

The NRLF, a true frog, occurs from southwest British Columbia to Northern California and is protected in Oregon & California. This frog requires structurally complex ponds and wetlands both permanent and ephemeral for breeding and moist forest habitats (abundant canopy cover, downed wood and litter) below 1200m (4000 ft) elevation in a suitable spatial configuration to complete its life cycle and maintain populations. These frogs move considerable distances to and from their breeding ponds (as much as 4.8 km (3 miles) CaliforniaHerps.com, 2021). This species, like other pond/wetland breeding amphibians, evolved a strategy to avoid predation of their offspring by depositing their eggs in what historically were fishless ponds and wetlands across the landscape. NRLFs begin mating and depositing their eggs in January (low elevation) through early March (high elevation) in the Umpqua Basin. Females can produce 200 to 1100 eggs per season, attaching the egg masses to submerged vegetation or other structures well below the pond surface.

Their adult food source consists mainly of terrestrial insects, but they will also eat small snails and crustaceans, worms, tadpoles, small fish and even small frogs of other species. The tadpoles eat periphyton (assemblages of algae and other microorganisms attached to submerged surfaces in the wetland) and are therefore important players in wetland nutrient cycling.

This frog evolved in the absence of introduced species such as bass, bullhead catfish, bluegills, and bullfrogs in their breeding ponds. Presence of these invasive non-native species in their breeding ponds along with the extensive loss & fragmentation of wetlands and forests due to urban development, agriculture, logging, and roads has caused substantial declines to NRLF populations as well as other wetland dependent species. Emerging diseases such as chytridiomycosis and climate change are exacerbating population declines. Some wetlands with these invasive species are also becoming eutrophic and therefore causing further impacts to water quality and CO2 emissions.

The purpose of the surveys conducted by UNLSH is to collect information on NRLF population conditions both before and after the removal of the invasive fish and bullfrogs to determine the efficacy of the restorative efforts. These invasive species affect not only the NRLF populations but also other pond breeding amphibians and the regions, such as the Western Pond turtle (hatchling turtles which are the size of an Oreo cookie) are susceptible to predation by these fish and bullfrogs. Strategies are being developed for elimination of the fish and possible elimination of the bullfrogs while maintaining the favorable conditions for native wetland species. Surveying for the NRLF egg masses over a period of years before and after treatment of a wetland to remove the invasive species is a relatively easy way to estimate population responses to the treatment. After several years of effort at Drew Lake Wetland we have found a positive increase in numbers of adult females. But these efforts are not easy and we need support to accomplish them. UNLSH is currently working on acquiring grants to help with equipment, supplies, and other costs associated with this conservation effort. If you would like to help, email Cindy@umpquawatersheds.org.
TAKE ACTION

Take Action and Protect the Beavers

HB 2843 would reduce the only cause of beaver mortality that humans can control—trapping and hunting by the public. Please send a letter to your legislators asking for a hearing on this bill.

https://www.kswild.org/get-involved/actionalerts

House Bill 2610 - Wild fish passage

https://olis.oregonlegislature.gov/liz/2021R1/Downloads/MeasureDocument/HB2610

HB 2610 would weaken essential protections for fish passage requirements for repairing or replacing stream barriers that are less than eight feet tall, such as culverts and tide gates, or if providing fish passage would increase the total cost of the project by more than 10%. Please let your legislators in the House know your opposition.

Stop Post-Fire Logging in the North Umpqua River Watershed!

Your voice is needed to let the Bureau of Land Management know we oppose clearcutting in the North Umpqua River watershed!


HOW DO YOU SOLVE A PROBLEM LIKE... TODD VAUGHN?

For several years, Umpqua Watersheds has been the target of bizarre attacks by Todd Vaughn in our local newspaper and elsewhere. Some of you who still read the News Review may be wondering why we have never responded to him.

The UW board has steadfastly chosen NOT to respond because these rants are so paranoid and outlandish that we have just laughed them off as inept cartoons, and assume that most other thoughtful readers do the same. The UW board believes that it is best to ignore his increasingly unhinged diatribes.

Vaughn clearly craves attention and fancies himself to be some sort of clairvoyant analyst—he often builds elaborate historical houses of cards to make his convoluted case, but never cites any evidence. He jumps from far-right conspiracy to illogical non-sequitur, then proclaims “voilà”, case closed—leaving us all saying “Huh? What the heck is he talking about?” Responding to him would likely also bring a gaggle of other crazies out of the woodwork, and things could go south rapidly. We’ve all heard the wise advice about mud-wrestling with pigs.

So – how do you solve a problem like Todd Vaughn? Let him rant, have a good chuckle, and then ignore him.

Ken Carloni, President, Umpqua Watersheds

Want to help?

KQUA is in need of App developers. If you have skills in developing Google Play Apps and/or iPhone Apps and would like to help, please contact us at kqua@umpquawatersheds.org.

If you are a non-profit organization and would like to have airtime on our low power community radio station, KQUA, you are eligible. KQUA is always seeking underwriters. Email us at kqua@umpquawatersheds.org

Businesses can also become an Umpqua Watersheds Business Member on our website:

Go to umpquawatersheds.org

Click Get Involved, Become a Member

Select Other (amount) enter $125.00
AmeriCorps: Education Spotlight...

Spring is coming quickly, and with it lots of exciting events from Umpqua Watersheds!

Learning in the Umpqua Watershed: Engaging K-12 Students through Nature Connections & STEAM Activities:
Wednesday, March 24th @9am – We are excited to be offering a professional development opportunity for Douglas County teachers. Workshops that day will cover information about how and why to teach about local environmental challenges and climate change, how to get kids outside and learning, nature journaling and creative problem solving/STEAM, as well as a number of offerings from other organizations in Douglas County. This training is funded through a grant we were awarded by the Clif Bar Family Foundation; the grant will cover the cost of various resources we’ll be providing to the teachers and allows us to give each participant $100 upon completion of the program. We are so appreciative to have received this grant so that we can offer this training for free to 10 local educators. There is a lot of interest in this event, and we are quickly surpassing our maximum number of participants! If you’d like to increase the number of teachers we can reach with this training, you are welcome to donate!

Toward the end of April, we’ll be holding a “Weekend of Service” April 24th and 25th, which will include a plethora of ways to get involved.

River Clean-Up: Saturday, April 24th @11am – This event will look a little different this year, in an effort to reduce everyone’s exposure to the virus. We are encouraging everyone to sign up in family groups, or alongside people with whom you already come into contact regularly. Each group will be assigned a particular stretch of the Umpqua, and we’ll have a few people shuttle the garbage from those sites to a dumpster for disposal. A few ways you can help out with this event:

- **Become a Team/Site Leader** – This person is the main contact for a group and as such is responsible for picking up supplies from Umpqua Watersheds, as needed, and returning those supplies after the event.

- **Donate** – COVID is limiting our ability to provide food the day of the event, but we would love to offer each of the ten groups a gift certificate to a local restaurant as a thank you for participating.

Turning Over a New Leaf Book Club: Saturday, April 24th @6pm – We will have a virtual discussion of the book Unbowed, by Wangari Maathai, founder of The Green Belt Movement. (Attend our March 27th discussion of Jane Goodall’s Seeds of Hope to have a chance to win a free copy of Unbowed.)

Eco Innovations Challenge: Sunday, April 25th @2pm (with opportunities to join earlier in the month) – Is there a local environmental issue you wish you could solve? The Eco Innovations Challenge offers a chance to do just that! Submit a proposal for an “eco challenge” and you might be selected to present on 4/25, with a chance to gain financial and volunteer support to put your plan into action! Ways to get involved:

- **Submit an Application** – These are due no later than Friday, April 2nd and are available via both printable PDF and an electronic Google Form.

- **Volunteer for the Selection Team** – This group will review all applications received, offer feedback, and determine which are high enough quality to present during the April 25th event.

- **Donate** – We would like to fund at least part of two projects (youth and adult) that come out of this competition. Your donation can help us make this dream become a reality!

Additional Opportunities

Radio – Our new radio program, Living Downstream began airing in January! If you have environmentally-themed music you would like to contribute to the show, or would like to be interviewed for an episode, let us know!

Volunteer Training – Are you interested in helping out with our educational programs, radio station, river monitoring, or other activities? Stay tuned for a volunteer training, which will take place in May 2021.

Seeking Photos for “Scenes of the Umpqua” – If you have a photograph which captures the beauty and magnificence of nature in the Umpqua watershed (Douglas County), please send them our way! We will be compiling some of the photos we receive into a calendar as a fundraiser for the organization.

Please email our AmeriCorps member, Ryan, who is serving as Environmental Education & Outreach Leader if you’d like to learn more or get involved with any of these initiatives. You can reach her at ryan@umpquawatersheds.org.

Umpqua Watersheds could use your skills!

Are you unable to contribute to Umpqua Watersheds monetarily? Do you have skills related to construction, electrical, remodeling, plumbing, building maintenance, or property management? You can contribute your skills! Don’t have any particular skill but would still like to help? Not to worry. We have many projects that don’t require any skills as long as you are willing to learn. Your contributions can be tax-deductible. We could use you! Email: kasey@umpquawatersheds.org or mark@umpquawatersheds.org.
Wyden’s rivers bill comes to life

After over 2 years of research, many town halls and public meetings, and 15,000 nominations from Oregonians across the state, Senator Ron Wyden’s River Democracy Act of 2021 has come to life.

Senator Wyden put out the call for Oregonians to nominate their favorite rivers and streams for consideration in a new river protection bill. You spoke up, and he listened! The River Democracy Act of 2021 was introduced with Senator Jeff Merkley as cosponsor, this legislation is great news for anyone who values clean drinking water, fish and wildlife, and public lands recreation!

The River Democracy Act of 2021 includes important protections for nearly 4,700 miles of rivers and streams, increasing the percentage of protected waterways from 2% to 6%. The Act includes sections of the upper North Umpqua River tributaries like Big Bend Creek which is very important for cold water to help Summer Steelhead in the Frank and Jeanne Wild Steelhead Sanctuary. Please ask Senator Wyden to include the upper South Umpqua River and its tributaries, this is the headwaters and deserves protection. Nearly all of the towns in South Douglas county rely on municipal and clean drinking water from the South Umpqua river. Wild and Scenic designation does more than just protect rivers against dams - it also has significant benefits for protecting wildlife habitat & migration corridors, and forests alongside rivers which store vast amounts of carbon.

Please send Senators Wyden and Merkley a thank you message, or make a quick call?

You can also leave a quick thank you message with their staff at:

Senator Ron Wyden’s office: (202) 224-5244
Senator Jeff Merkley’s office: (202) 224-3753

Write a letter to the editor thanking Senator Wyden and Senator Merkley (like Frank Moore did, see next).

When I came back from World War II, I found healing and tranquility in fishing the North Umpqua River. This past year has once again shown the importance of the essentials in life, like having a roof over your head, family and friends, and a healthy river to fish. I hope that 2021 is a better year for all Americans. And for rivers and fish too.

Thanks to the leadership of Senator Ron Wyden, there is much to be hopeful for in 2021. He and Senator Merkley recently introduced the River Democracy Act, historic legislation that will protect 4,700 miles of rivers throughout Oregon under the Wild & Scenic Rivers Act, including some fantastic tributaries in the North Umpqua. Their bill addresses some of the most important issues facing Oregonians today - clean water, wildfire, revitalizing rural economies, and climate change. As the name of the legislation suggests, Oregonians from all walks of life helped Senator craft this bill. I highly commended him for his vision, leadership, and commitment to the values that make Oregon and America great.

The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act has been a valuable tool in protecting the health of the North Umpqua, its fish, and the tourism economy generated by this special place. And it can be for other rivers too, like the South Umpqua and its tributaries. The addition of several important North Umpqua tributaries in Wyden’s bill will help ensure the North Umpqua’s future as a source of clean water, healthy fish and wildlife, and a place for people to find the joy and peace of nature, like my lovely wife Jeanne and I have done throughout our life All streams matter.

Democracy is fragile. We must all participate to ensure our elected leaders represent the values we cherish and depend on to build a thriving, inclusive, and sustainable America. I was heartened to hear that the Senator received 15,000 stream nominations from 2,500 Oregonians while doing his homework preparing the legislation. The River Democracy Act represents the best of Oregon and Oregonians. I encourage Oregon’s members of congress to look to a brighter future, and help pass this legislation in 2021.

Sincerely,
Frank Moore
Wilderness Committee Update... Robbin Schindele

After a tumultuous 2020, the Wilderness Committee is looking forward to getting back to in-person activities without fearing for our health and well-being as more and more of our friends, neighbors, and families get vaccinated. But until that happens we’ll be working under the governor’s social distancing restrictions and continue to communicate with you through online activities and written communication.

Tony Cannon is the new Wilderness Committee chair replacing Diana Pace who has done an excellent job for the past 2 years. She’s continuing as a Wilderness member and will still be doing many of the activities we have relied on her to do over the years. I want to give a huge shout-out to Diana for everything she does, the committee couldn’t do without her help and constant support.

Tony has been a stalwart member since joining the committee in 2019 and brings a broad range of experience and knowledge to the table, as well as enthusiasm and a commitment to the cause. He is an ardent environmental explorer searching off the beaten path to find beautiful and unique places in our forests. You can see great photos and videos of his expirations on his website: www.wildumpqua.com. Please tell Tony thanks for taking on the job.

The committee also will be extensively promoting the Crater Lake Wilderness Proposal through a series of short (5 min) videos on social media sites such as Facebook, Vimeo, and Instagram. The videos are meant to inform a wide audience about the proposal and the benefit of protecting the precious resources within the proposed area.

We hope to address the issues that make protection important to Oregonians and the world. We’ll address issues such as wildfires in wilderness, regrowth after wildfires, wilderness effects on water quality, the human dependence on water from wilderness, the effects of salvage logging, biodiversity in mature forests, everything in a forest is the forest, wilderness effects on human mental health, and the importance wilderness has in carbon sequestration and helping to abate global warming. We’re also planning to restart our grassroots postcard campaign and to restart our public hikes during the summer months.

It was 3 years ago this month that we erected our signs promoting support for the proposal along Hwy. 138 in Glide. I am happy to say they are still there and still looking great. They have endured in good shape longer than I thought they might. If you support the campaign and have a piece of ground along a busy road we’d be glad to create and erect a sign on your property. The committee will pay for the sign and erect it at no charge to you. If you’re interested contact: robbin@umpquawatersheds.org or diana@umpquawatersheds.org. Or call the office at 541.672.7065.

Another way you can help, if you are a business owner, is to show your support by becoming a business endorser. There’s no cost and it will help a great deal with our federal legislators. We have strong grassroots support in Douglas County but the legislators want to know we have local business support as well.

The Wilderness Committee has some early plans for 2021. At 6:00 PM on Monday, March 29, Tony and I will hold an online presentation called “Exploring Wilderness Using LIDAR Imaging.” LIDAR (Light Detection and Ranging) is a remote sensing method that uses light in the form of a pulsed laser to measure ranges (variable distances) to the Earth. These light pulses—combined with other data recorded by its airborne system — generate precise, three-dimensional information about the shape of the Earth and its surface characteristics.

The presentation focuses on how to use available online resources to learn more about Oregon’s wild places than is available from other mapping resources. The event will also feature real-time interaction with the audience. Please join us for this interesting event. You can register for the event on Umpqua Watersheds website: www.umpquawatersheds.org.
Look for information about our virtual banquet coming soon.