OREGON COUNCIL OF TROUT UNLIMITED

2025 ANNUAL REPORT



OREGON COUNCIL TROUT UNLIMITED

EVERY RIVER NEEDS A
CHAMPION

CHAIRMAN, MARK ROGERS

Update from the Oregon Council of Trout Unlimited

It is Fall again and salmon and steelhead return with the rain to their natal streams. People, wildlife and forests are replenished by the nutrients the big fish bring from the sea. I never cease to be amazed at this age-old process so vital to the Pacific Northwest.

In his Oct 22nd TU Blog post TU's Kirk Deeter quotes his fishing companion, Dana Milbank, columnist for the Washington Post: "If you care about the future of our planet, one of the best things you can do is go fishing. Better still, take your child or grandchild."



Fishing is largely a family thing for me. When I was a child, family members gathered in North Central Washington in the summer to camp, fish and talk. I learned to fly fish with my grandfather and his mother, my Grama Gram. Born in Pennsylvania in 1869, she came west with her father at the age of 12. She told me that she walked much of the way because she got "car sick in the swaying covered wagon". She was not one to exaggerate. Well, maybe a little, around the campfire. I vividly recall her standing in the middle of a stream, ball cap, baggy blue jeans, Converse sneakers, all of 5 foot tall, master of rod, reel and line and pretty much everything else. Five generations on, we continue the tradition of family camping, fishing and storytelling.

I volunteer because TU cares about the kinds of things that are important to me, simply expressed in the TU mission statement: "To bring together diverse interests to care for and recover rivers and streams so our children can experience the joy of wild and native trout and salmon".

This fall, after 7 years, I am stepping down as chair of the Oregon Council. This is not to say farewell; I will continue to focus on advocacy and communications for Oregon TU as long as I can be helpful. I have lived through several periods when national politics seemed to turn against my beliefs, though disappointing, frustrating and sometimes anger provoking, what else is there to do but redouble our efforts. On the positive, I get to work with a great team: TU staff, Council officers, Chapter leaders and member activists working to meet our mission.

To keep you apprised of what we are hearing and doing, OCTU volunteers maintain an active website, post on Facebook and Instagram, publish our monthly digital newsletter, Holding Waters and this Annual Report. We reach out to over 4500 individuals, in Oregon and beyond. We urge you to check it out in whatever vehicle works for you. Above all participate in your chapters, attend an event, plant a tree and volunteer on your chapter board. **We need you.**

Please consider donating. Funds donated to the Council stay in Oregon to support local chapters, in-state projects, and Council initiatives.

Thank you for your support,

Mark

DONATE

OCTU STAFF REPORT

Milestones and Progress in the Klamath Basin

One year after the removal of the Klamath Dam, fall Chinook salmon have been found in every major tributary to Upper Klamath Lake. This remarkable milestone in anadromous fish recovery came sooner than many fish biologists expected. These resilient Chinook navigated past the sites where the four mainstem dams were removed in 2024, overcame the fish ladders on Keno Dam and Link River Dam, and traversed the challenging water quality in the Keno Impoundment and Upper Klamath Lake. Their incredible persistence has allowed them to return to their upstream habitat.

Despite this success, there is still much work to be done. Ensuring that the remaining dams do not hinder fish passage and maintaining the spawning, rearing, and migratory habitats upstream of Upper Klamath Lake are critical tasks. Trout Unlimited (TU) is collaborating closely with Tribal, federal, state, and agricultural partners to achieve these goals.



In 2025, an exciting project was completed in the Klamath Basin: the demolition of an obsolete concrete dam on Jenny Creek using explosives. Jenny Creek, a tributary to the Klamath River near the old Iron Gate Reservoir, now offers nearly a mile of new habitat for anadromous salmonids. This project was a collaborative effort with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), Shasta Indian Nation, The Yurok Tribe, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and Resource Environmental Solutions (RES). The progress made this year lays a strong foundation for future successes in the Klamath Basin and beyond.



Advocacy and Policy

TU has also been active in state and federal policy in Oregon this year. During the 2025 state legislative session, TU supported efforts to increase the number of boat check stations to protect Oregon's fisheries from aquatic invasive species. They also ensured that state agencies maintained funding for core fish and water programs, such as the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife's (ODFW) Klamath Fish Reintroduction team. Additionally, TU backed a bill to create a new pathway for Oregon to declare waterways as "navigable," which has significant implications for public access and use of Oregon streams.

The 2025 Oregon legislative session also saw TU working with the Oregon Water Partnership and the Governor's office to address a long-standing loophole in state water law. This loophole allows water right holders to change a water right without state review of the effects on fish or water quality. Although the concept did not pass this year, important progress was made in bringing attention to the issue for future legislative sessions.

At the federal level, TU staff collaborated with the Oregon Council and all seven TU Chapters in Oregon to submit public comments on the Forest Service's proposed rescission of the Roadless Rule. This rule mostly prohibits new road-building on over 45 million acres of public land, including many special fish habitats in Oregon. In November, Oregon TU staff joined colleagues from other western states for meetings in Washington, D.C., with Congressional leaders on public lands issues, including public land sales, the Land and Water Conservation Fund, the Roadless Rule, and Wild & Scenic Rivers legislation.

Looking ahead to 2026, TU is committed to continuing its efforts to safeguard important resources and advance new conservation campaigns.

OREGON COUNCIL OF TROUT UNLIMITED

OCTU Provides Financial Support Across the State

The Council leadership approves a budget for grants to chapters and also provides start up support for new chapters.

In the last year, we awarded funds to chapters for the following projects:

- Matched a Clackamas Chapter award to "The Wilderness Calling Collective" for tracking Steelhead Ocean Migration.
- Matched a Clackamas Chapter expense supporting a dam removal on the N. Fork of Eagle Creek in the Lower Clackamas.
- Matched a Deschutes Chapter grant supporting an eDNA study in the lower Donner & Blitzen River. This will lead to removal of the Page Springs fish weir, a fish passage barrier in the lower Blitzen.
- Matched a Bluebacks Chapter grant supporting steelhead surveys in the Siletz.
- Provided some start-up funds to the newly formed Klamath/Rogue Chapter in Ashland.

Your donations to the Oregon Council of TU help us support chapters in their local conservation efforts. Please consider OCTU in your giving plans.

Three Ways to Donate

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Oregon Council TU
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Gladstone, OR 97027

Welcome to the Rogue-Klamath Chapter

Why a Trout Unlimited Chapter Matters in Southern Oregon

For years, volunteers across Southern Oregon quietly dedicated themselves to the rivers they loved—watering young streamside trees through summer heat, tossing salmon carcasses to nourish future smolts, monitoring fish traps, and helping ODFW biologists with projects to support native Chinook. Their efforts were heartfelt, but scattered. Despite being home to the Rogue, the Klamath, and both forks of the Umpqua—some of Oregon's greatest cold-water fisheries—our region lacked something essential: a unified Trout Unlimited chapter.

That changed on June 17, 2025, when Oregon Council Vice Chair Terry Turner convened a meeting at the Ashland Public Library. The room was packed with TU members who knew the time had come to give our local conservation work a permanent home. That night, the Rogue-Klamath Chapter #541 took shape, electing officers and launching a new era of organized cold-water stewardship in Southern Oregon.

The timing couldn't have been better. With the historic removal of four Klamath River dams completed, the region entered a new chapter of ecological possibility—one that requires ongoing local involvement. Presentations from TU staff highlighted the importance of improving fish passage at Keno Dam, where salmon have already begun challenging the barrier. For projects of this scale, our communities need a strong, coordinated voice.

Since forming, our chapter has hit the ground running. We've held board meetings, organized a well-attended Pint Night, and prepared for our second general meeting featuring fisheries scientist Jack Williams. Our volunteers have worked on restoration and monitoring projects throughout the Rogue Valley and Klamath Basin and have strengthened partnerships with ODFW and other local nonprofits. Members have also stepped into advocacy, submitting opinion pieces on regional conservation issues and meeting with TU staff and partners in Klamath Falls.

Before this chapter existed, we were simply a group of friends and neighbors trying to make a difference where we could. But becoming an official TU chapter has given our efforts structure, continuity, and credibility. It allows us to mobilize more volunteers, support larger projects, and serve as a trusted source of conservation leadership for the community.

EVERY RIVER NEEDS A CHAMPION

Our motivation is simple: **Southern Oregon's cold-water fisheries need champions.** They need people willing to show up, get their hands dirty, and speak up for habitat restoration, science-based management, and long-term stewardship. Trout Unlimited gives us the tools, expertise, and network to do exactly that.

The Rogue-Klamath Chapter is more than an organization. It is an extension of who we are—community members dedicated to restoring our rivers, revitalizing our watersheds, and ensuring that native trout and salmon continue to define this beautiful region for generations to come.

We've already built momentum. Now, we hope to grow our circle and welcome anyone who shares our passion for healthy rivers, thriving fisheries, and a resilient natural future. Whether you can give a few hours a month or play a bigger role, there is meaningful work waiting for you.

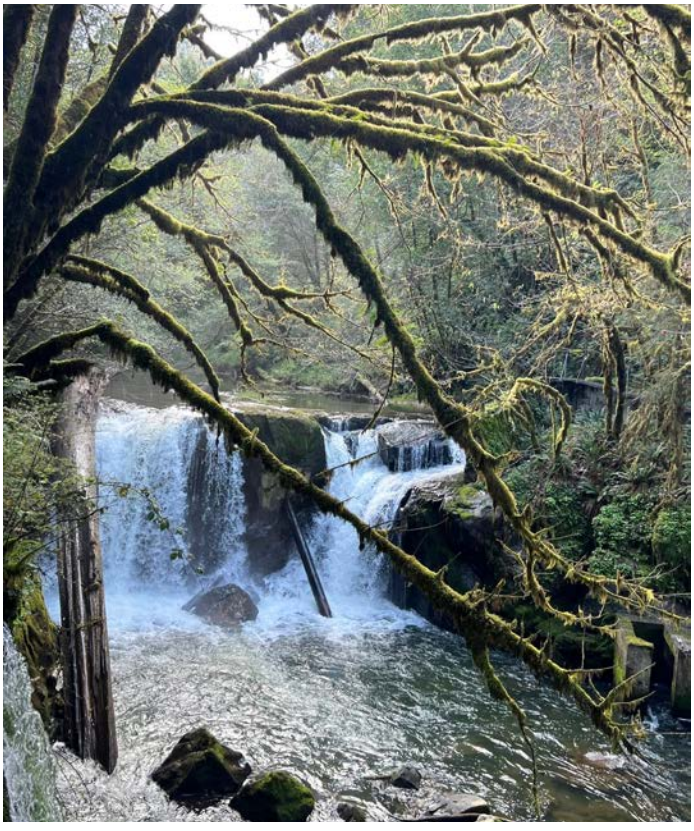
Southern Oregon's rivers are recovering. Together, we can help them thrive.

CHAPTER REPORT

South Coast Cutthroat Chapter

This has been a uniquely challenging year for our chapter. Some of our most active members and leaders work in natural resources for the BLM or ODFW. All had their positions listed to be cut, cut then reinstated, or furloughed. Unsurprisingly it made it difficult for our chapter to accomplish as much as we had wished for the year. However, we were still able to complete one river cleanup, host a "learn to fly fish" event, submit a letter in support of the roadless rule, and help out with other local conservation group events.

During our river cleanup, the chapter focused on the North Fork Coquille River and some of its larger tributaries, Woodward Creek and Middle Creek. These streams are in areas that experience significant recreational usage and are also known dumping spots. We were able to clean up several trailer loads of trash during the event, making a significant impact in the areas. We'd again like to thank the Coos County Beaver Hill Disposal Site for allowing us to dispose of the trash free of charge.



The "learn to fly fish" event, my favorite event we put on, was also successful. The event was held at Laverne County Park on the North Fork Coquille River, where participants learned river safety, reading water, fly section, knot tying, and fly casting. We blocked out a few hours in the morning for instruction and then allowed participants to fish in the afternoon. We filled all 16 openings in the class and a few participants even caught fish afterwards.



Our chapter also participated in other conservation groups' events, such as Oregon Bay Area Beautification (OBOB) cleanups and South Slough Reserve tree plantings. We also submitted a letter in support of keeping the Roadless Rule.

We've had a few new members join our chapter and they seem very excited to volunteer . With their help, and a lot of hope that 2026 isn't as difficult as this year has been, we're planning on being more active in the community. We are currently planning a fishing gear swap event for the end of February. This will be a fundraising and outreach event, with hopes of getting more people involved with TU.

Travis Landon

CHAPTER REPORT

Tualatin Valley Chapter - Portland Metro West

For nearly 30 years the Tualatin Valley Chapter of Trout Unlimited (TVTU) has been a very active and successful chapter dedicated to Trout Unlimited's mission to conserve, protect, and restore coldwater fisheries and their watersheds.

Chapter members have supported various fishing and conservation events including the Clackamas River Chapter's Summer Kids Camp and Fall River Outing and those offered by the Tualatin River Keepers and Project Healing Waters. Together with the Native Fish Society, TVTU offers two Wild Fish for All Academic Scholarships for students in Fisheries Conservation.

The chapter's new website (https://tualatinvalley.tu.org/) includes the monthly meeting speaker schedule, conservation opportunities, and ways to support the chapter and TU National. In addition, our comprehensive newsletter keeps chapter members and supporters informed about the chapter. And our Facebook page (https://www.facebook.com/tualatinvalleyTU) highlights local, state, regional, and national conservation topics.

An active board of directors and diverse members and supporters help to ensure that the TVTU chapter remains a financially strong and vital advocate for the conservation of coldwater fisheries and their watersheds throughout the region.

Board of Directors

President, Jason Rogers
Vice President, David Cook
Secretary, Steve Young
Treasurer, Tom Delegarde
Members: Kim Swartz, Steve Young, Colter Terrel

Meetings

The TVTU meetups happen at the Old Market Pub on SW Multnomah on the 2nd Wednesday of the month. Our presenters an engaging mix of conservation and fishing guides and industry experts. Come join us!



CHAPTER REPORT

Redsides Chapter - Eugene

The Redsides continue to stay connected with our community, sending monthly chapter emails to more than *550 subscribers* and maintaining strong engagement across our communication platforms.

While the board continues to navigate limited volunteer bandwidth and ongoing recruitment challenges, the chapter has nonetheless achieved several meaningful milestones this year—and built a foundation for even greater progress ahead.



Community Engagement & Volunteer Events

Middle Fork Willamette River Cleanup (July 13): We organized a successful cleanup on the upper Middle Fork Willamette River, bringing together seven dedicated volunteers to improve this important watershed.

McKenzie River Cleanup Promotion (Sept. 27): Redsides actively supported the McKenzie Watershed Council's annual event, with chapter members joining the effort and helping broaden community awareness.

In-Person Chapter Gatherings: We reestablished in-person happy hour meetings at Springfield's PublicHouse in May and June, strengthening community ties and rebuilding chapter visibility. Our partnership with PublicHouse continues to grow, providing a welcoming and reliable meeting venue. We are planning a pre-holiday gathering in early to mid-December.

New Volunteer Opportunities & Partnerships

The Redsides initiated a new hands-on volunteer opportunity with McKenzie River Trust, this November at the iconic Green Island property. We recruited nearly 30 volunteers—an exciting opportunity to showcase our chapter's capability to mobilize community support for conservation work. Events like these combine fun fishing opportunities with meaningful conservation work and partnership with *McKenzie River Trust.*

Building Leadership & Capacity

Chapter leadership development is gaining traction. Jesse recently connected with a second-year law student—who previously interned with TU staffer James Fraser—who is enthusiastic about joining the board and helping strengthen ties with the University of Oregon. In addition, a newly arrived TU staff member in Eugene has expressed interest in supporting the chapter's work.

Poised for Growth

Despite bandwidth challenges, the Redsides are well positioned for a strong year ahead. We have:

A modern, fully functioning website integrated with our email platform

Google for Nonprofits tools in place

A healthy financial base

An expanding email distribution list

Active social media channels

Strong relationships with partner organizations

And, of course, some of the most beautiful rivers in Oregon right in our backyard

With these assets and renewed energy from emerging volunteers and partners, the Redsides are ready to build momentum and expand our impact in the coming year.

CHAPTER REPORT

Clackamas River Chapter - Portland Metro East

The Clackamas River is a critical watershed in the Columbia Basin. It supports one of the last remnant populations of late winter Coho, as well as spring Chinook and Winter Steelhead. One of the primary limiting factors in species recovery is the loss of side channel and floodplain rearing habitat.

In 2024, The Clackamas Chapter of Trout Unlimited and the U.S. Forest Service strengthened a long-standing partnership through the successful implementation of the **Cub Creek Stage 0 Restoration Phase II project,** an ambitious effort to restore natural stream and floodplain processes in the lower Cub Creek watershed. Conducted under the Challenge Cost Share Agreement, this project demonstrates the power of collaborative conservation, leveraging TU's project management capacity and the Forest Service's technical expertise and on-the-ground support to achieve outcomes neither organization could accomplish alone.

Construction activities took place from mid-July through early September and included reshaping the 10-acre project area to reestablish a naturally functioning floodplain. Working closely with the Forest Service, TU coordinated contractors and ensured that implementation followed ecological design principles aimed at benefiting native fish and improving watershed resilience. Approximately 25,000 cubic yards of alluvium were redistributed to reconnect side channels and restore Stage 0 conditions, effectively reopening 17.1 acres of habitat.

The project team also added over 800 pieces of large wood sourced from fire-damaged onsite trees, meeting USFS wood loading standards and improving habitat complexity for aquatic species.

Beyond in-stream work, the partnership facilitated extensive replanting to stabilize soils, deter invasive species, and support long-term recovery of the burn-impacted riparian corridor. Forest Service-supplied native seedlings were planted by Clackamas River Chapter Volunteers and Forest Service personnel, underscoring the shared stewardship ethos central to the project's success.

Monitoring conducted by both partners has already documented gravel deposition, small pool formation, and early signs of floodplain reconnection—promising indicators that project objectives are being achieved. Juvenile coho and resident rainbow trout have already been observed using the new rearing habitat.

The Cub Creek Phase II project highlights how coordinated planning, shared resources, and joint commitment between Trout Unlimited and the U.S. Forest Service continue to drive meaningful, durable watershed restoration across the Mt. Hood National Forest.

TROUT UNLIMITED
CLACKAMAS RIVER

In our spare time, we continue our core activities. This year our annual **Youth Fly Fishing and Conservation Camp** served 11 children aged 10-14. Our camp teaches fly fishing, fly tying and watershed education in a 4-day, 3-night setting. See pictures on the following page.

Finally, we invite you to join us for some of our activities. These include **monthly education meet ups** and networking activities, special sessions on topics such as fly tying and casting, or come fish with us on an outing!

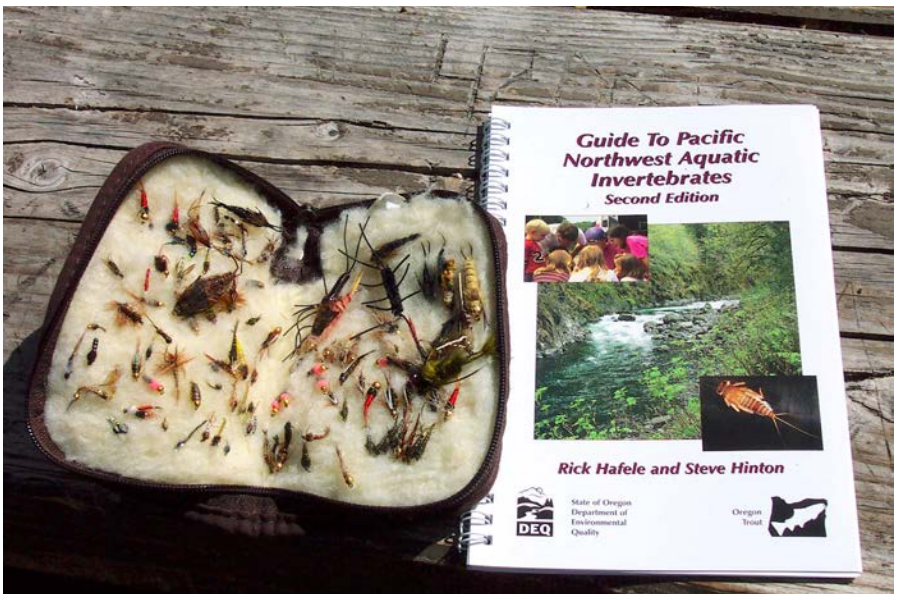
Check out our website at clackamasrivertu.org.

Scenes from Youth Fly-Fishing and Conservation Camp, 2026









TROUT UNLIMITED

CHAPTER REPORT

Blueback Chapter - Corvallis

5 Rivers Club – Oregon State University

The OSU 5 Rivers Club continues to grow and make a meaningful impact. The chapter now has five new rod-and-reel setups available, giving students and beginning anglers hands-on opportunities to learn fly fishing. OSU students Kellen Woodcock and Alec Ramirez have joined the Bluebacks board, strengthening our connection with the campus community. Students participated in the South Santiam River Cleanup in June and supported the Clackamas Chapter Youth Camp. The Bluebacks also hosted two casting clinics to help new anglers build skills and confidence.

Luckiamute Steelhead Redd Surveys

Planning is underway for the 2026 winter redd surveys. Bluebacks leadership has met with the new officers of OSU's Hydrophile Club to coordinate volunteer participation and explore additional joint activities that will expand student engagement in fisheries science and restoration



Policy Engagement

Over the past six months, the Bluebacks have continued to be a strong voice for fish and watershed protections. The chapter submitted letters:

Opposing rescission of the "Definition of Harm" under the Endangered Species Act (May 2025)

Supporting HB2977, the 1% for Wildlife Bill (May 2025)

Supporting continued protections for existing Roadless Areas (September 2025)

Community Outreach and Education

Bluebacks and TU staffed a booth at the OSU Science Festival on May 10 as part of the National Science Foundation's anniversary celebration, engaging hundreds of visitors in conversations about conservation and coldwater fisheries.

Embrace-a-Stream Project

Sampling efforts in Corvallis-area streams continue to move forward. OSU student Gavin Jobe is developing an interactive Story Map to showcase the project's purpose, methods, and results. The Story Map is expected to be completed by December and will serve as a valuable public-education tool.

Youth Engagement

Two Bluebacks volunteers joined OCTU members at the Clackamas Chapter's June Youth Camp, helping introduce young anglers to conservation, fly fishing, and stewardship.

Fundraising

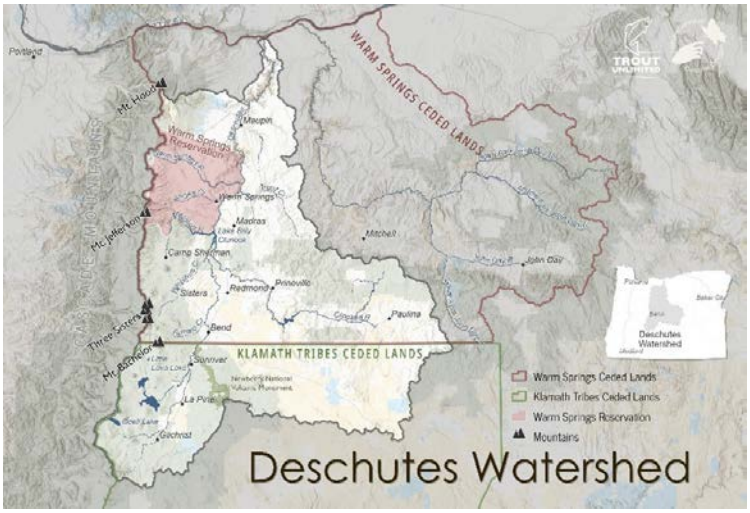
The Bluebacks again held its annual F3T Fundraiser in November. Attendance was above last year and we had a chance to engage the community about our chapter work.

We are always seeking new board members and leaders to help spread out the tasks of running the chapter and hosting volunteer engagement events. A strong leadership base provides capacity for succession planning, and training new leaders. A solid leadership team also ensures we can support our connection with the OSU 5 Rivers Chapter and other member engagement events. Come join us!

KATHRYCE DANZUKA

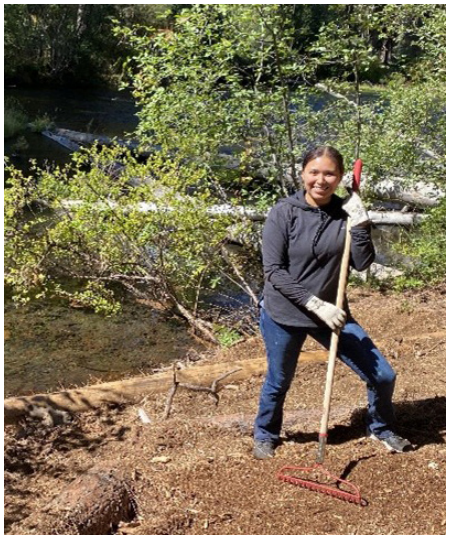
Trout Unlimited Intern Report

My name is Kathryce Danzuka, I am a tribal member of the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs. I am currently studying biology at Oregon State University. This summer I was an intern with Trout Unlimited, where I participated in and learned about river projects throughout Central Oregon. Going into this internship, I was excited to be able to learn more about the ceded lands and river systems that flow near our reservation. I have learned the importance of water quality since I was young and how human impacts have affected the aquatic ecosystems over the years. I hope to help improve water quality so that our fish can naturally travel with little complications along their ancestral routes



Map of the Deschutes Watershed, highlighting the ceded lands for the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs and Klamath Tribes.

Clean water is vital for healthy ecosystems, cultural survival, and our connection to the land. I have always had a passion for the world around me and strived to make positive change where I can. One of the first places that I was particularly interested in was the Metolius River because it is the cleanest river in the Deschutes watershed. The Metolius River is a spring-fed river, making it a vital ecological source. This river is also on the southern border of the Warm Springs reservation, making this river not only ecologically important but culturally important as well.



My biggest takeaway from this summer was learning about the water systems and how water is distributed throughout Central Oregon, as well as the efforts that are made to make sure that the water remains healthy for all life. Efforts such as managing and monitoring the health of the water systems for those that depend on them. I hope to carry over the practices that I have learned to help the water as I move forward and encourage others to do the same. I feel that there is always a way to help one another understand how to use water, protect it, improve the quality and overall appreciation of the water as a living part of the land.

One of my favorite trips during this internship was with a bilingual after school program called Jugamos Afuera. We led four field days to different rivers and streams in our region. I felt that those few days were the most interesting for me because they included outdoor educational fun and I was able to connect with some of the students during that time. I loved that they were able to engage and make connections with nature during the lessons and have fun at the same time. These experiences helped me realize how important it is to teach students the benefits of nature and guide their curiosity.

continued...

Another memorable experience this summer was my first trip to the Ochoco Mountains, where we met staff from the Ochoco National Forest and visited the North Fork of the Crooked River. We joined hydrologists from the Forest Service and learned about multiple projects that were being carried out. I was able to see firsthand the project in process, learned the importance of what was being done, and how it would improve the environment and stream health in the most natural way possible. These trips to different rivers within the Deschutes watershed have really broadened my perspective and deepened my understanding of the interactions between multiple ecosystems and how they help one another.



Jugamos Afuera enjoying the cold water of Soda Creek on a hot summer day.



As an intern, I enjoyed being around people with similar passions who were eager to share their knowledge and answer any questions that I had. This internship strengthened my academic interests and personal commitment to protecting the surrounding water source. I am excited to continue my journey in education and explore this field further for the benefit of our lands and communities.

Trout Unlimited is the nation's leading conservation organization working to care for and recover rivers and streams and their trout and salmon populations. We bring people together across the country to be champions for their rivers and help make our water cleaner and our communities healthier. Founded by a small band of Michigan anglers in 1959, we have grown into a national organization with more than 350 staff, 400 chapters, and 300,000 members and supporters. We bring science-driven restoration know-how, state and national policy muscle, and local volunteer energy to bear on behalf of clean water, healthy trout and salmon and thriving communities.

OREGON COUNCIL OF TROUT UNLIMITED

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