



# ANNUAL REPORT

**JULY 1, 2022 – JUNE 30, 2023**

*Providing opportunities for stakeholders to cooperate in promoting and sustaining the health of the watershed and its communities.*

## Welcome new staff!

This past year was a major transition for staff. In 2023, North Santiam Watershed Council hired a new Executive Director Brandin Hilbrandt and Amy Knutson as part-time administrative support specialist. In one year, they filed two years' worth of overdue annual reports and taxes, working hard to keep the lights on for the council. They worked with accounting and bookkeeping partners to normalize and build efficiencies into operating procedures and processes that will help build a stronger capacity in the years to come.

The council also welcomed Wildfire Adapted Communities Specialist Marie Heuberger, who splits her time between the North Santiam and the South Santiam watershed councils. This additional capacity enabled both councils to better serve people in the Santiam watersheds affected by wildfires.

While the transition has been challenging, the staff feels privileged and excited to continue to build relationships with local and downstream communities and watershed partners statewide. Supporting and making possible ecological restoration within the North Santiam Watershed is a wonderful responsibility.



## Thank you so much!

The council wishes to recognize and express our esteem for the amazing restoration work, partnership development, and community engagement done over the past 12 years by long-standing Executive Director Rebecca McCoun.

We cannot thank her enough for the incredible dedication and tenacity to help the North Santiam communities, especially during and after the 2020 wildfires. She worked hard to strengthen the collaborative partnerships in the North Santiam Watershed that have been sustainable for over a decade.



# Major Program Accomplishments

## April 2023 Free Tree Giveaway

In partnership with Marion County and Santiam Long-Term Recovery Group, NSWC gave away 110,000 native plants and trees to over 177 landowners, most of whom were affected by the 2020 Labor Day Fires. These plants were donated from partner agencies BEF, All Collaborative Grow, ODF, and Marion County.



## Post-Wildfire Riparian Restoration

This river bank stabilization and erosion reduction project along the Little North Santiam and North Santiam Rivers involves 45 landowners, amounting to 3.1 stream miles and 31 acres that were highly impacted by the fires. In 2023, the Council contracted R. Franco Restoration to plant over 50,300 native shrubs and trees.



## Additional Plantings

The council facilitated an additional 91,500 Douglas Fir and Western Red Cedar planted by All Around Logging on 300 acres for assisting in post-fire restoration and wildlife habitat improvements. Eight landowners participated in this project, spanning across Marion and Linn Counties.

## Early Detection, Rapid Response Project

Over 100 properties were surveyed during the summer as part of the Early Detection, Rapid Response (EDRR) project. The council continues to assist with removal and management of knotweed, false brome, meadow knapweed, and yellow archangel invasive weeds in the Beachie Creek and Lionshead burned areas.

## Aquatic Invasives Survey & Treatment Phase 3

The council contracted with Integrated Resources Management to treat invasive Ludwigia and Yellow Flag Iris on 52.8 acres between Stayton and

Mill City. With the assistance of Fur Sure Outfitters and Marion Soil & Water Conservation District, four river miles downstream of Stayton to Buell-Miller Boat Landing were also surveyed.

## Advancing the Partners of the North Santiam

The council continues to facilitate and engage with 16 federal, state, and local partners as part of our Advancing the Partners of the North Santiam Project. GSI Solutions led efforts to update the 2018 Resiliency Action Plan and help identify and prioritize restoration projects within the watershed and across multiple partners. This will allow more funding opportunities to become available for projects within the North Santiam watershed.

## 12th Annual North Santiam Basin Summit

Collaborating with the City of Salem, the council hosted the 12th Annual North Santiam Basin Summit in October 2022 at Marion County Public Works. Just over 100 people participated, representing federal, state, county, cities, tribal, and non-profit organizations, as well as members of the public.

## Council of Water Leaders

The council worked with GSI Solutions to present the Council of Water Leader Symposium February 2023, partnering with the City of Salem and Santiam Water Control District. This is a forum that aims to create a pathway to improve water management in the basin and provide the latest information to decision makers.

# Financial Summary\*

REVENUE	
State	\$294,600
Local/Other	\$96,935
Foundation	\$149,194
Donations/ Fundraising	\$2,099
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$542,828</b>

EXPENSES	
Salaries	\$105,117
Operating Costs	\$61,248
Project Costs	\$433,605
*Values based on 2022-2023 IRS 990	
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$494,853</b>

## Program Partners

Marion County  
 Linn County  
 City of Salem  
 City of Albany  
 Santiam Water Control District  
 Marion Soil & Water Conservation District  
 Linn Soil & Water Conservation District  
 South Santiam Watershed Council  
 Mid-Valley Rivers Connection  
 Mid-Willamette Beaver Partnership  
 Bonneville Environmental Foundation (BEF)  
 Oregon Department of Agriculture  
 Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF)  
 Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife  
 Oregon Department of Environmental Quality  
 Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde  
 Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs  
 Bureau of Land Management  
 Natural Resources Conservation Service  
 USDA Farm Service Agency  
 U.S. Fish & Wildlife Partners Program  
 U.S. Forest Service  
 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
 All members of the Partners of the North Santiam

## Funding Sources

**State Government**  
 Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board  
 Oregon State Weed Board  
 Oregon Department of Forestry  
  
**Foundations**  
 Bonneville Environmental Foundation (BEF)  
 United Way  
 One Tree Planted  
 Arbor Day Foundation  
  
**Local/Other**  
 City of Albany  
 City of Salem  
 Marion County  
 Marion Soil & Water Conservation District  
 South Santiam Watershed Council  
 Santiam Water Control District  
 Business and Individual Donations



# NORTH SANTIAM WATERSHED COUNCIL

## Who we are

Members of the North Santiam Watershed Council share an interest in the health of the watershed and in partnering with similarly interested landowners and land managers. Using scientific assessments and best management practices, board and staff facilitate projects, partnerships, and actions that improve watershed health. The council is a non-advocacy, non-governmental 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

## How to get involved

The North Santiam Watershed Council meets the third Tuesday of every month (except December) from 6 to 8 p.m, hybrid through Zoom or in-person at the Old School Community Center In Lyons. For more information call (503) 930-8202 or email [council@northsantiam.org](mailto:council@northsantiam.org).

### Staff

#### Full-Time:

Scott Mischke, Executive Director  
8/1/2022 to 2/28/2023

Brandin Hilbrandt, Executive Director  
3/30/2023 to current

#### Part-Time/Temporary:

Amy Knutson, Administrative Support  
Specialist

Marie Heuberger, Wildfire Adapted  
Communities Specialist

#### Seasonal Interns:

Elijah Welch

Kyla Schmitt

### Board of Directors

Suzette Boudreaux (President)  
Little North Fork Santiam Subbasin  
Representative

Brent Stevenson (Vice-President)  
Irrigation District Representative

Jan Irene Miller (Secretary)  
Lower North Santiam Representative

Kathy Bridges (Treasurer)  
At-Large Representative

Rebecca McCoun  
General Representative

Jennifer Mongolo  
Incoming Board Member