

Curry Watersheds Partnership

Our Values

The Curry Watersheds Partnership values diversity and openness because it builds resilience, enriches life, and provides checks and balances. We believe that everyone has the right to clean and healthy lands and waters, and that all deserve a seat at the decision-making table. Ultimately, we are committed to the conservation and stewardship of natural systems and we understand that these values are inherently tied to this commitment.

Ecological diversity is an essential characteristic of a vital ecosystem. Every part of the system's needs are being met by a variety of different flora and fauna cohabiting the space and working together in symbiotic relationships. We believe humans are included in this essential characteristic of ecology. Just as a resilient stream bank best resists erosion with a diverse mix of plants with strong roots in the stream bank, human communities are most resilient with a diverse mix of people with strong-rooted relationships. We see thriving human systems as those which contain the diversity necessary for the health and sustainability of the cause they serve. To CWP, ecological diversity looks like a seat at the table for multiple voices, regardless from whom they originate, and also including those of the land.

Our work in restoration is often a process of trying to establish or reestablish an equitable balance between what the natural parts of the environment need and what our human communities need. Sometimes this requires us to change ways we've managed lands in the past that we now know are harmful to the environment. Similarly, in order to establish an equitable balance of the needs in our community, we need to change ways we've managed ourselves that can exclude or harm portions of our community. This means examining where power is held in both our organization and the community at large, where there are power imbalances, and what we can do to make the balance of power more equal.

Our mission is implicitly connected to equity and ultimately ecological justice. Supporting our communities with an equity-oriented approach recognizes that solutions to care for our lands will often be unique. Practicing equity within various contexts strengthens our organization, edifies our relationships within our community, and promotes a balanced approach to restoration and conservation. This "practice" continually builds our organizational "muscle memory" to include these conversations from the beginning, not as an afterthought.

History and Areas of Growth

CWP carries out work on lands historically and presently stewarded by Indigenous peoples, including the Coquille Indian Tribe, Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians, the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde, and the Tolowa Dee-ni' Indians. We recognize that in order to carry out our mission, the voices and wisdom of historically marginalized groups, including Indigenous peoples, non-land-owning community members, and children, who all depend on healthy lands and waters, must be integrated into our processes. The existence of CWP is in part a mechanism to acknowledge and correct historical and ongoing inequities.

The history of these watersheds IS the history of our communities. The ways the rivers flow, the ways the forests grow, and the flora and fauna that exist within them, have all been shaped and affected by how the human communities in these areas have lived in them over centuries. Even the wildest corners of this wild rivers coast have been affected either directly or indirectly by us. As our communities and our values change over time, so must the actions we impart on the watersheds. Our rivers, streams, forests, and wetlands are all literally shaped by our communities' values.

Our Commitments

- We are committed to serving as a bridging organization between the people and the land, and collaborating on the ecological and community-based work we carry out.
- We are committed to understanding who holds and has historically held the power to make key decisions that influence our watersheds.
- We are committed to continuous learning and intentional inclusion of those in our communities who are impacted by our work, but whose voices have been historically left out of key decisions.
- We are committed to collaborating with our tribal communities at a deeper level to better understand their traditional, ecological, and cultural values and build those into our projects.
- We are committed to considering our impacts on the individual and the whole, and our staff in a mission-focused culture, where our values are upheld.
- We are committed to embracing discomfort, and using our collective power to make meaningful changes across the landscape.
- We are committed to building more interdependence into our work to model and embrace the diversity we value in the environment.
- **We are committed to supporting local communities to care for our lands, now and into the future.**