

# The Clean Rivers Coalition

Annual Report

2022–2023 *(July 1 – June 30)*

Prepared by



**PARACHUTE STRATEGIES**

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## About The Clean Rivers Coalition

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The Clean Rivers Coalition (CRC) formed in 2016 to build a bridge between clean water and healthy communities through education and engagement. With over 60 partners—local municipalities, watershed councils, state and federal agencies, soil and water conservation districts, and water-related nonprofits—we aim to develop a connection between people and their local waterways. Our vision is that diverse communities in Oregon and Southwest Washington will actively engage in creating and enjoying clean water.

From 2016 to 2022, CRC laid the groundwork for two campaigns: Follow the Water, a public outreach campaign, and What's Your Lawn Style, a pesticide-reduction project. With funds from the EPA, the Meyer Memorial Trust, and municipal funds from 22 local governments, we were able to conduct research and produce a video series for each of these projects. For more details on our funding and budget, see page 14.

In this fiscal year, we rolled out two campaigns, Follow the Water and What's Your Lawn Style.

### **Steering Committee**

- **Lara Christensen**, Oak Lodge Water Services
- **Kathy Eva**, City of Eugene
- **Erinne Goodell**, Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership
- **Keri Handaly**, City of Gresham
- **Roy Iwai**, Multnomah County – Steering Committee Chair
- **Eric Lambert**, Clark County
- **Katie Meckes**, East Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District
- **Brooke Mossefin**, City of Springfield
- **Deborah Topp**, City of Salem
- **Kaileigh Westermann**, City of Keizer
- **Nate Woodard**, Washington Department of Ecology



## Follow the Water

CRC launched Follow the Water to connect people to their rivers, connect people's behavior to the rivers, and promote actions that protect water. The campaign aims to build a culture of appreciation and knowledge of local water resources. Follow the Water is built on the idea that people who connect with their local waterways are more likely to take action to protect them.

Follow the Water created social media channels to build community around water and began posting several times a week, as well as promoting the video series and our content. We launched a website that features stories, blog posts, and seasonal resources.

Follow the Water features water content on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube. We worked closely with our partners to define Follow the Water's voice, values, and audience. We created social media channels that reflect our vision, with posts that provide simple everyday actions to protect water, demonstrate a commitment to diversity, and highlight river stewards, places to access water, and creatures that depend on river health. A sample of some of our most popular posts is below.

### Top Performing Social Media Posts



**#1: Did you know that the Columbia South Shore Well..**

Platform: **Instagram**  
Reach: **703**  
Engagements: **139**



**#2: Did you know that lamprey is a first food...**

Platform: **Instagram**  
Reach: **630**  
Engagements: **172**



**#3: Many families celebrate the season by bringing a...**

Platform: **Instagram**  
Reach: **585**  
Engagements: **175**



**#4: Are you considering getting rid of your lawn...**

Platform: **Instagram**  
Reach: **527**  
Engagements: **41**

## Follow the Water Social Media Advertising

On Follow the Water's social media platforms, we advertised posts to reach a broader audience. We promoted the Follow the Water film series as a whole and each video. We also used a small budget (typically less than \$50 per post) to promote our most successful social media posts in terms of reach and engagement. We were able to receive 1.5 million impressions through our advertising efforts.

CRC also experimented with advertising What's Your Lawn Style on social media but found that advertising on Google Ads was more successful. See the What's Your Lawn Style section for more information.

### Annual Results

Impressions: **1.5M**

Reach: **500K**

Engagements: **23K**

Total Spent: **\$9.3K**

### Top Performing Paid Posts



***We've heard from a thousand folks around...***

Platform: **Facebook**

Impressions: **88K**

Reach: **46K**

Engagement: **3,850**

Cost: **\$500**



***Follow the Water is about our relationship with...***

Platform: **Facebook**

Impressions: **14K**

Reach: **8,617**

Engagement: **762**

Cost: **\$105**



***The pond's funkier creature is the rough...***

Platform: **Instagram**

Impressions: **680**

Reach: **6,550**

Engagement: **448**

Cost: **\$50**



***It's quite rare to go smelt dipping...***

Platform: **Instagram**

Impressions: **445**

Reach: **6,130**

Engagement: **180**

Cost: **\$49.95**

## Social Media Results

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**1M**

Social Media Impressions

**44K**

Twitter Impressions

**591**

Facebook Followers

**17K**

Social Media Engagement

**1.2K**

Instagram Followers

**509K**

Social Media Reach

**1.9K**

Social Media Followers

**73**

Twitter Followers

**436%**

Follower growth across all platforms

## Follow the Water Video Series

Our video project explores the idea of connection with water in three parts: connection, disconnection, and reconnection. The series recounts personal stories about the powerful connection we have with water, featuring water scientists, local creatives, and Indigenous water experts.

The videos were created in partnership with members of the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission and filmmakers at MetroEast Community Media, and production cost \$25,000.

Follow the Water used social media channels to promote the video series. We added the videos to Follow the Water's website and YouTube channel, and we advertised them on Facebook and Instagram.

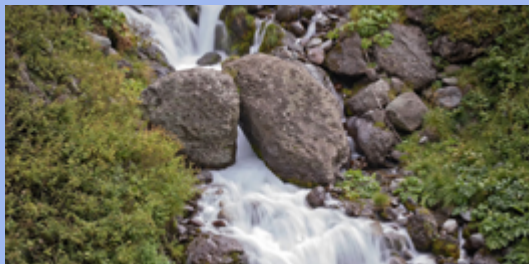
### Annual YouTube Results

#### Accolades

Best Oregon Documentary Film Winner,  
Oregon Documentary Film Festival 2023

Portland EcoFilm Festival 2023

Klamath Independent Film Festival 2023



#### Chapter 1: Connection

Total Views: **440**

Watch Time: **11.7 hrs**



#### Chapter 2: Disconnection

Total Views: **541**

Watch Time: **20.2 hrs**



#### Chapter 3: Reconnection

Total Views: **338**

Watch Time: **19.7 hrs**

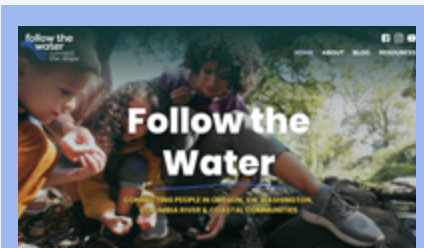
## Follow the Water Website

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CRC created a website to engage people on water issues in our region. It showcases our video series, a timely resources page covering topics from recreation to water health, and writing from across the community for our clean-water blog. Creating the resources page was a joint effort on behalf of all of our partners to find the best tools, information, and guides to share on our key topic areas: the outdoors, plant and wildlife, water science and water health. The website also adds to our digital footprint, giving us credibility and acting as a centralized place to find out about the coalition and our projects.

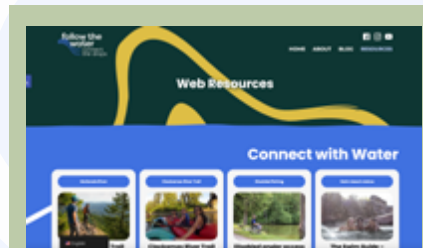
What's Your Lawn Style ran two digital advertising campaigns that led some audiences to the Follow the Water website, which was a large share of the site's traffic. More information about this project are on the following pages.

### Most Viewed Pages and Blog Posts



***Follow the Water Campaign Homepage***

Total Views: **3,649**



***Follow the Water Resources Page***

Total Views: **617**



***"Good Things Come From Small Places" Blog Post***

Total Views: **123**

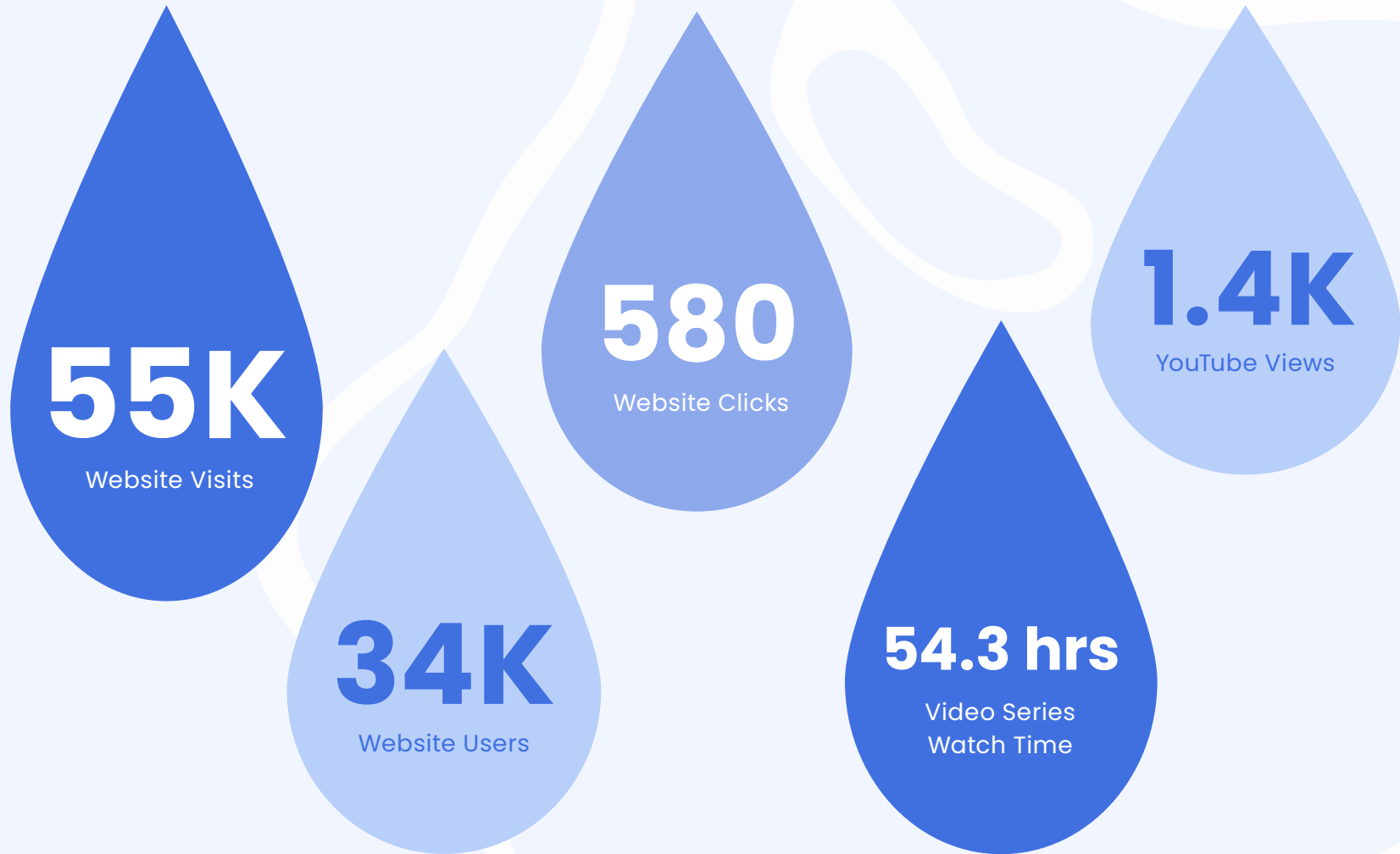


***"An Invitation for People of Color" Blog Post***

Total Views: **80**

## Follow the Water Website and Video Series Results

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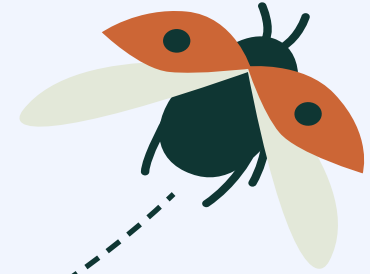




## What's Your Lawn Style

What's Your Lawn Style shares water-safe lawn care information with homeowners in Oregon and Southwest Washington through fun and informative videos in English and in Spanish. With trusted experts at the OSU Extension Master Gardener program, we created regimens for different styles of lawn.

We produced a series of instructional videos in the previous fiscal year with MetoEast Media on a budget of \$25,000. The campaign was launched in June 2022 on [WhatsYourLawnStyle.org](https://WhatsYourLawnStyle.org). We promoted the series with short commercials through digital advertising.



## What's Your Lawn Style YouTube

The What's Your Lawn Style campaign consists of three instructional videos to meet homeowners where they are in terms of effort. The videos are available to watch on YouTube, and the series is available to watch on OSU Extension Master Gardener's website to inspire trust. Our goal was to receive 14,000 views from audiences most likely to have a lawn and use pesticides.

When the campaign launched, we quickly achieved our goal in terms of views. Most people were drawn to the low maintenance video, however, and we wanted to reach lawn enthusiasts as well. We introduced an alternative high-maintenance video with the same content, but under an alternate title, "Lawn Goals: How to Get Green Grass." The video gained traction in the first month with 46,000 views. We also wanted to reach environmentally minded homeowners, so we added a page on Follow the Water's website and framed the series as water-friendly tips.

### YouTube Annual Views




**Low Maintenance**

Total Views: **51K**  
Watch Time: **1,575 hrs**



**Medium Maintenance**

Views: **1,220**  
Watch Time: **50 hrs**



**High Maintenance**

Views: **1,365**  
Watch Time: **49 hrs**



**Lawn Goals**

Views: **105K**  
Watch Time: **5,158 hrs**

## What's Your Lawn Style Advertising

CRC promoted What's Your Lawn Style in two key lawn care seasons, late summer and early spring. Through four short video commercials (shown below), we directed the majority people to our videos on the OSU Extension Master Gardener website. For a more environmentally engaged audience, we directed people to a page on Follow the Water's website. On both pages, audiences can find the three how-to videos, along with tips and resources for lawn care.

The campaign was incredibly successful, and as we noted on the previous page, we quickly reached our goal of 14,000 views. We then pursued other goals, such as reaching lawn enthusiasts. We reframed the high maintenance video by using a different title "Lawn Goals: How to Get Green Grass" with minimal changes to the content and garnered 46,000 views in less than four weeks.

### Annual Results

Google Ads Impressions: **6M**  
Google Ads Views: **357K**  
Google Ads Clicks: **48.5K**  
Average Cost-per-Click: **\$0.48**  
Cost per Conversion: **\$0.29**  
Total Spent: **\$23,363**

### Top-Performing Commercials



#### Grab the Baby! Tips for a Safe Lawn (0:53)

Impressions: **550K**  
Views: **119K**  
Clicks: **11K**



#### Less Yard Work, More Time on the River (0:20)

Impressions: **308K**  
Views: **49K**  
Clicks: **3K**



#### Manscaping - It's All Natural (0:20)

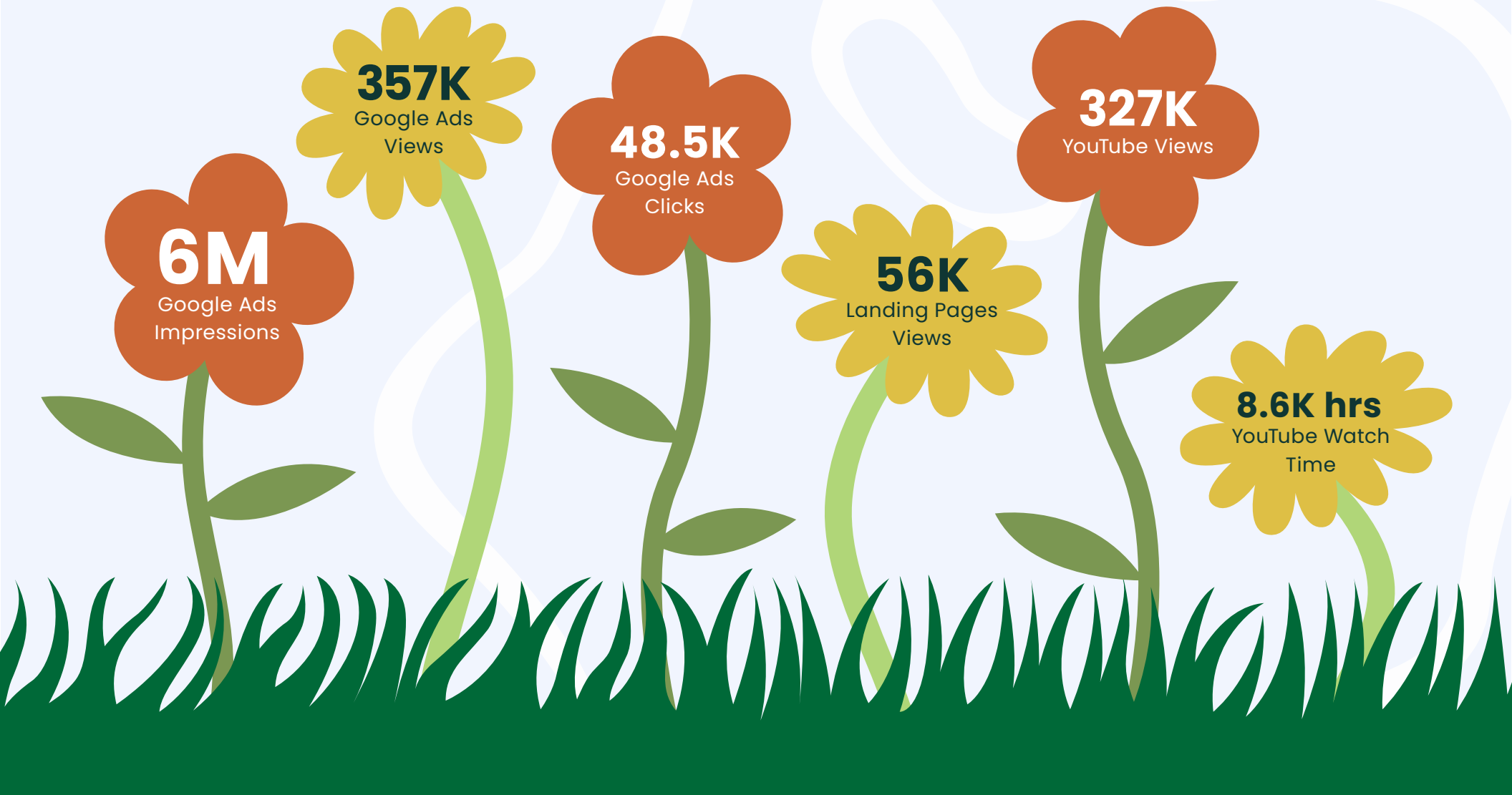
Impressions: **173K**  
Views: **17K**  
Clicks: **315**



#### What's on Your Lawn? (0:37)

Impressions: **59K**  
Views: **7K**  
Clicks: **886**

## What's Your Lawn Style Results



## Clean Rivers Coalition Public Relations

CRC promoted Follow the Water and What's Your Lawn Style at several events and broadcasts throughout the region, taking our message directly into our communities. Social media and digital advertising are great for reaching new audiences, but we wanted to engage with people face to face. We believe that in-person engagement is valuable to demonstrate commitment and foster meaningful connections within the community. By participating in events and presenting our ideas, we hope to bring the campaigns to life through hope, curiosity, and inspiration.

### ***Selected Presentations and Media Appearances***

- KOIN 6 AM Extra | July 2022 | What's Your Lawn Style Feature
- OCEAN Connect+ Conference | September 2022 | Presentation on Follow the Water
- Clean Rivers Coalition Annual Forum | January 2023 | Presentation on Follow the Water
- Portland State University Water Resource Management Class | January 2023 | Collaboration with Follow the Water
- Beyond Your Front Door Podcast | February 2023 | Follow the Water and What's Your Lawn Style Feature
- Portland EcoFilm Festival | April 2023 | Follow the Water Film Series Panelist Discussion
- Watershed Alliance Film Screening | June 2023 | Presentation on Follow the Water



## The Clean Rivers Coalition Budget

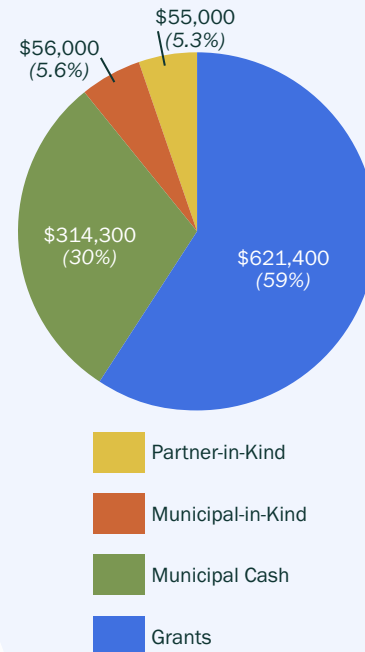
To support our vision and projects, CRC has been awarded over \$1 million since 2017. We garnered \$314,300 from local municipalities interested in funding our coalition's work. We were awarded \$100,000 in grant money from Meyer Memorial Trust's Willamette River Initiative. We also received Environmental Protection Agency grant funds that were partially matched by local municipalities and nonprofit organizations.

You can find a chart and graph of our funding sources below, along with a budget breakdown of funds used to promote Follow The Water and What's Your Lawn Style in this fiscal year.

### Total Funding 2017–2023

Contributor	Funding Supplied
Municipal Cash Contributions	\$314,300
Meyer Memorial Trust Grant	\$100,000
EPA Grant I	\$174,000
<i>Municipal-in-Kind Match to EPA Grant I</i>	\$12,500
EPA Grant II	\$347,400
<i>Municipal-in-Kind Match to EPA Grant II</i>	\$43,500
<i>Partner-in-Kind Match to EPA Grant II</i>	\$55,000
<b>Total Budget</b>	<b>\$1,046,700</b>

### Funding Sources 2017–2023



### Annual Spending FY 2022–2023

Budget Item	Amount Spent
Content Management	\$46,708.01
Planning and Evaluation	\$32,745.10
Digital Advertising	\$23,011.51
Content Development	\$15,486.85
Ad Production and Management	\$15,460.79
TV and Theater Advertising	\$15,250.00
Website	\$13,051.15
Social Media Advertising	\$10,557.99
Lawn Campaign Outreach	\$7,072.63
Software and Infrastructure	\$2,546.00
Public Relations	\$364.70
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$181,616.51</b>

## Future Plans for the Clean Rivers Coalition

CRC has several projects on the horizon, in addition to continuing both of our campaigns. The following projects are already underway.

### **Community-Based Social Marketing**

We are collaborating with a community-based social marketing (CBSM) firm to implement the behavior change aspect of our lawn campaign, creating a pilot program that will begin in 2024. The pilot will be tested in Salem, Eugene, and Clackamas County, and digital ads will use the video series and a survey to learn more about residential lawn care habits, especially among weed-and-feed users. We have plans to adapt the video series based on our research, and an evaluation report will share results and how it can be rolled out across Oregon and SW Washington.

### **Latinx/e/a/o Landscaper Project**

CRC partnered with Northwest Center for Alternatives to Pesticides and Metro to create a lawn care video series for Spanish-speaking landscapers that highlights best practices for worker, customer, and water safety. Corresponding workshops will be offered in Multnomah and Clackamas Counties. An evaluation report will describe what we learned and how this can be replicated across Oregon and SW Washington.

### **Eco-Lawn Video Series**

We are in the process of planning an extension of the lawn campaign for a more environmentally engaged audience called "Beyond the Lawn." The video series would be for households who are contemplating eco-lawns, gardens, meadow-scaping, and other lawn alternatives.

### **Follow the Water Website**

The Follow the Water website is also growing. We hope that with expanded content and engaging resources, we can encourage more people to visit again and again.



## Thank You to Our Stakeholders!

- Benton County
- Benton Soil and Water Conservation District
- City of Albany\*
- City of Bend
- City of Camas\*
- City of Corvallis
- City of Creswell
- City of Eugene\*
- City of Gladstone\*
- City of Gresham\*
- City of Keizer\*
- City of Lake Oswego\*
- City of Milwaukie\*
- City of Oregon City\*
- City of Portland\*
- City of Salem\*
- City of Silverton
- City of Springfield\*
- City of Tigard\*
- City of Troutdale\*
- City of West Linn\*
- City of Wilsonville\*

- City of Wood Village
- Clackamas County Water Environment Services\*
- Clackamas River Basin Council
- Clark County\*
- Clean Water Services\*
- Coast Fork Willamette Watershed Council
- Columbia Slough Watershed Council
- Corvallis Sustainability Coalition
- East Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District
- Eugene Water & Electric Board
- Hood River Watershed Group
- Johnson Creek Watershed Council
- Luckiamute Watershed Council
- Marion County

- Marion Soil & Water Conservation District
- Mary's River Watershed Council
- McKenzie Watershed Council
- Meyer Memorial Trust
- Willamette River Initiative
- Multnomah County\*
- North Santiam Watershed Council
- NW Center for Alternatives to Pesticides
- Oak Lodge Water Services\*
- Oregon Department of Agriculture
- Oregon Department of Environmental Quality
- Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife
- Oregon Department of Parks & Recreation
- Oregon Environmental Council
- Oregon State University

- Polk County Community Development
- Port of Portland
- Rogue Valley Council of Governments
- Rogue Valley Sewer Services\*
- Sandy River Watershed Council
- SOLVE
- South Santiam Watershed Council
- Tualatin Riverkeepers
- Tualatin Soil & Water Conservation District
- US Environmental Protection Agency
- US Geological Survey
- Wasco County Soil & Water Conservation District
- Watershed Alliance of SW Washington
- Willamette Partnership
- Willamette Riverkeeper

\* Contributed funding



## Glossary

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### **Impressions**

How often an ad or post is shown. An impression is counted each time one is shown.

### **Reach**

The number of people who have seen an ad or post. Since one person can be shown a post multiple times, impressions are a larger number than reach.

### **Engagement**

Engagement includes all actions that people take, including reacting to, commenting, sharing, viewing a photo or video (for at least 3 seconds), or clicking on a link.

### **Views**

When a viewer initiates intentional play of a video. For instance, short commercials (six seconds) are unskippable, so they often receive zero views because the user didn't initiate play.

### **Organic**

Unpaid efforts such as social media posts that aren't advertised.

### **Google Ads**

Google Ads is Google's online advertising program. We used a combination of Search, Display, Video, and Performance Max campaigns.

### **Average Cost-Per-Click**

The average amount charged for a click on an ad. Average cost-per-click (avg. CPC) is calculated by dividing the total cost of clicks by the total number of clicks.

### **Cost per Conversion**

The average amount charged for a conversion. Conversions are pre-defined actions, such as clicking and scrolling on the webpage, that we have identified as valuable to our campaign.