

# The Clean Rivers Coalition

## Annual Report

2023–2024 (*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 2024, CRC laid the groundwork and implemented two campaigns: Follow the Water, a public outreach campaign, and What's Your Lawn Style, a pesticide-reduction project in collaboration with OSU Extension. 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.

In this fiscal year, with additional EPA funds, we developed two new projects to pilot test. Level Up Your Lawn for residents and a Latine Landscaper training in partnership with Northwest Center for Pesticide Alternatives. Both projects promoted behavior change around unsafe lawn care practices.

### 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
- **Nate Woodard**, Washington Department of Ecology
- **Jenny Ammon**, City of Keizer
- **Benjamin Poaster**, Rogue Valley Sewer Services



## Follow the Water

CRC created 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 continued posting to our social media channels on Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube to build community around water. We post several times a week, promoting important stories and values—simple everyday actions to protect water, river stewards who make improve their waterways or raise awareness, places to access water, and creatures that depend on river health.

We continued our collaboration with college students at Portland State University enrolled in water-related courses. CRC partnered with Dr. Alida Cantor's Water Resource Management class to engage students with the mission of Follow the Water. Our goal was to have students apply what they learned in creative projects that we share with our broader community.

A sample of some of our most popular posts is below.

### Top Performing Organic Social Media Posts



**#1: Say cheese! Lamprey are known for their distinctive...**

Platform: **Facebook**

Reach: **8,545**

Engagements: **1,425**



**#2: You are walking through the park in the...**

Platform: **Facebook**

Reach: **2,152**

Engagements: **80**



**#3: Exciting breakthrough from OSU: Researchers..**

Platform: **Instagram**

Reach: **1,686**

Engagements: **247**



**#4: Are you preparing to do some spring...**

Platform: **Facebook**

Reach: **1,630**

Engagements: **40**



"What's Up With Those Dam Salmon?" a social media post produced by PSU student Eleanor Garrett, received 61 likes on Instagram,

## Follow the Water Social Media Advertising

On Follow the Water's social media platforms, we advertised posts to reach a broader audience. We also used a small budget (typically \$50 - \$100 per post) to promote our most successful social media posts in terms of reach and engagement. We were able to receive 447K impressions through our advertising efforts.

Our summer engagement campaign, FTWConnect2024, encouraged people in Oregon and SW Washington to share their water-related adventures on social media. Entries were rewarded with some Follow the Water merchandise—eco-friendly T-shirts and water bottles. Over the summer, the campaign drew 134 user posts that deploy the #ftwconnect2024 hashtag.

### Annual Results

Impressions: **447K**

Reach: **328K**

Engagements: **17K**

Ad Spend: **\$3.2K**

### Top Performing Paid Social Media Posts



#### ***Willamette Falls is the second largest waterfall...***

Platform: **Facebook**

Impressions: **69K**

Reach: **49K**

Engagement: **4,009**

Cost: **\$100**



#### ***The largest and most visited state park here in..***

Platform: **Facebook**

Impressions: **53K**

Reach: **35K**

Engagement: **2,472**

Cost: **\$50**



#### ***The Klamath dam removal is the largest in...***

Platform: **Facebook**

Impressions: **29K**

Reach: **22K**

Engagement: **2,711**

Cost: **\$91**



#### ***Happy World Wetlands Day! Wetlands are often...***

Platform: **Facebook**

Impressions: **38K**

Reach: **20K**

Engagement: **1,426**

Cost: **\$100**

## Social Media Results

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**447K**

Social Media Impressions

**376**

# of posts in Meta

**1.6K**

Facebook Followers

**17K**

Social Media Engagement

**3.2K**

Instagram Followers

**328K**

Social Media Reach

**4.8K**

Social Media Followers

**51**

# of boosted posts

**340%**

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.

The video series can be found on our website and YouTube channel. Follow the Water promoted the videos on social media and at film screenings. The film series has been recognized at several film festivals and earned the Hometown Media Award in 2024.

### Annual YouTube Results



#### **Chapter 1: Connection**

Total Views: **624**  
Watch Time: **15.6 hrs**



#### **Chapter 2: Disconnection**

Total Views: **600**  
Watch Time: **23.3 hrs**



#### **Chapter 3: Reconnection**

Total Views: **384**  
Watch Time: **23 hrs**

### **Accolades**


Hillsboro Film Festival, 2024  
Hometown Media Award, 2024  
Best Oregon Documentary Film Winner,  
Oregon Documentary Film Festival 2023  
Portland EcoFilm Festival 2023  
Klamath Independent Film Festival 2023

## Follow the Water Website

CRC's website engages people on water issues in our region. It showcases our project, the Follow the Water and What's Your Lawn Style video series, a resources page with writing from across the community, and a shareable social media tool kit. 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: recreation, arts, people, river critters, how to protect water, water rights and accessibility, and water science. The tool kit is made up of seasonal content for all our partners to spread the word about our campaigns and positive behaviors that benefit our waterways. 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.

One of What's Your Lawn Style's two digital advertising campaigns led its audiences to the Follow the Water website. The Level Up Your Lawn questionnaire went live during this fiscal year as a part of the community-based social marketing campaign pilot. More information about these projects are on the following pages.


### Most Viewed Pages and Blog Posts



The screenshot shows the homepage of the 'Follow the Water' campaign. It features a large image of two children looking at water. The text 'follow the water' is overlaid on the image. Below the image, there is a quote: "Water is our first responsibility. When you have nothing else - water".

**Follow the Water Campaign Homepage**

Total Views: **2,800**



The screenshot shows the 'RESOURCES' page of the website. It has a blue header with the word 'RESOURCES' in white. Below the header, there are several small images and text blocks arranged in a grid.

**Follow the Water Resources Page**


Total Views: **388**



The screenshot shows the 'ABOUT' page of the website. It has a green header with the word 'ABOUT' in white. Below the header, there is a large block of text and several small images.

**Follow the Water About Page**

Total Views: **380**



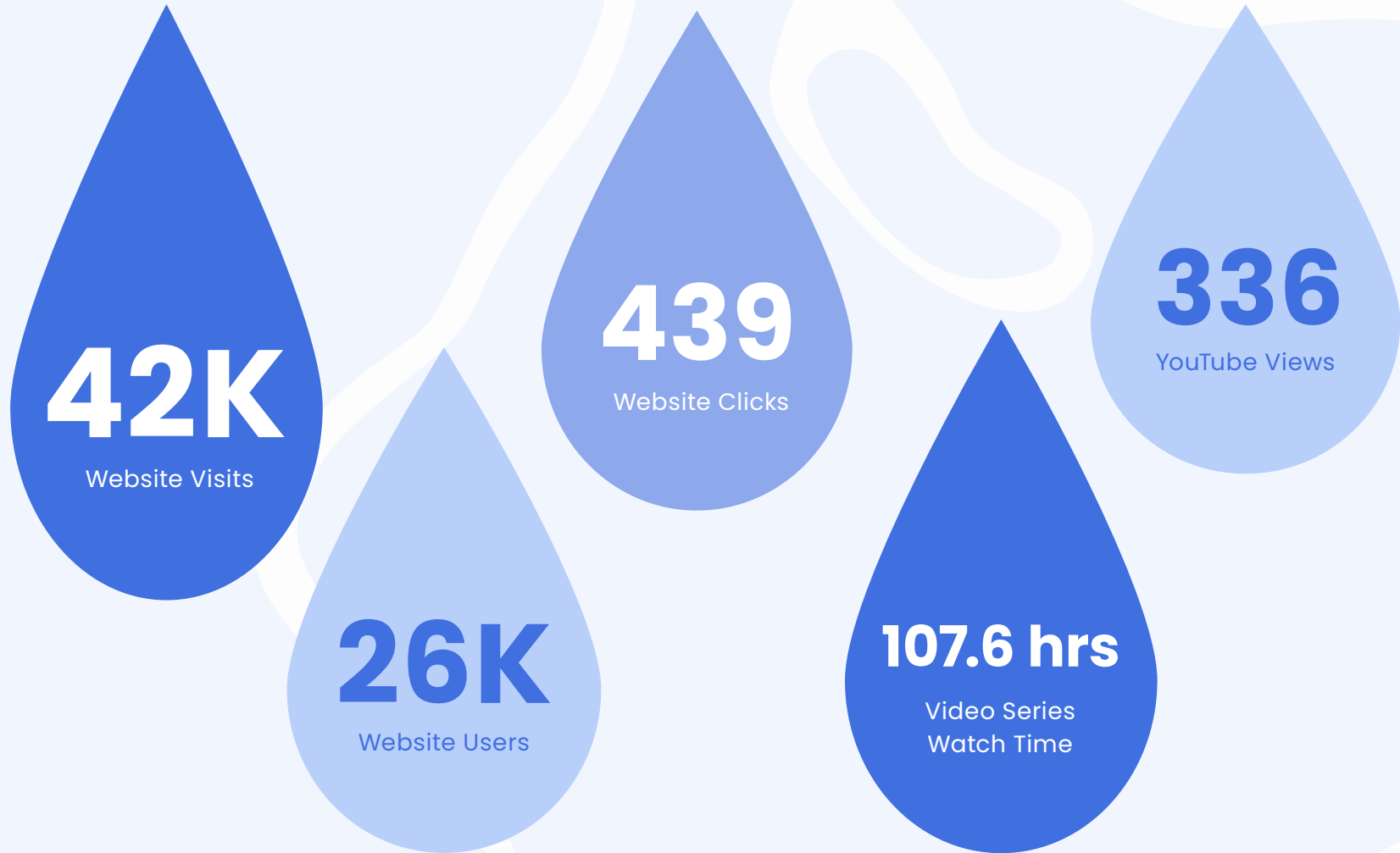
The screenshot shows the 'Follow the Water Video Series' page. It has a blue header with the text 'Follow the Water Video Series'. Below the header, there are several small images and text blocks.

**Follow the Water Video Series Page**

Total Views: **178**

## Follow the Water Website and Video Series Results

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## Level Up Your Lawn

Using EPA funding, we pilot-tested a community-based social marketing campaign in Salem, Eugene, and Clackamas areas to build on What's Your Lawn Style. The campaign promotes water-safe lawn care practices for people who want a green, weed-free lawn—with the goal to reduce use of weed-and-feed and other harmful chemicals. The project included additional market research on the psychographics of weed-and-feed users, which resulted in two personality types with two focused tag lines, “Level Up Your Lawn” and “Go Pro, Skip the Weed and Feed.” We created a questionnaire and five new landing pages, as well as two new videos: Overseeding and The Downsides of Weed and Feed. We launched the campaign during the spring lawn care season with a digital marketing campaign on Google Ads and social media. A report on questionnaire results and a follow-up survey are forthcoming. See the following pages for advertising results.

### Annual Results

Landing Page Visits: **8,708**

YouTube Views: **3,503**

Surveys Completed: **617**

Total Ad Spend: **\$10,487.20**



**LEVEL UP  
YOUR LAWN**

Looking for quick and easy routines that make short work of a lush green lawn?  
Fill out a few quick questions to get the best tips for you and your yard!

[leveluplawn.org](https://leveluplawn.org)



Oregon State University  
Extension Service



## Level Up Your Lawn Digital Media Advertising

The community-based social marketing pilot launched during the spring lawn care season, March–June 2024. Digital advertising directed people to the Level Up Your Lawn questionnaire where they were matched with a lawn profile based on their responses.

The Google Ads campaigns targeted homeowners ages 35-55 in Marion, Clackamas, and Lane Counties who were enthusiastic about keeping their lawn healthy and free of weeds. Ads were shown across the internet including various home and garden websites, in addition to Google Search.

We plan to launch the same ad campaigns for the upcoming fall lawn season.

### Campaign Results

#### Annual Results

Impressions: **339K**

Clicks: **13,781**

Conversions: **361**

Average Cost-per-Click: **\$1.37**

Google Ads Spend: **\$7,797.42**



#### Be A Pro

Impressions: **129K**

Cost: **\$2.7K**

Clicks: **2.6K**



#### Level Up Your Lawn

Impressions: **122K**

Cost: **2.8K**

Clicks: **2.2K**



#### Be A Pro Search

Impressions: **86.9K**

Cost: **\$2.2K**

Clicks: **870**

## Level Up Your Lawn Social Media Advertising

The community-based social marketing pilot launched during the spring lawn care season, March–June 2024. The digital advertising campaign included boosting posts on social media. We created a new social media pages on Meta and targeted homeowners ages 35-55 in Marion, Clackamas, and Lane Counties who were enthusiastic about keeping their lawn healthy and free of weeds. The campaign reached 114,928 people on Facebook and Instagram with a budget of \$2,689.78.

We plan to launch the same ad campaigns for the upcoming fall lawn season.

### Annual Results

Reach: **115K**

Clicks: **4.2K**

Post Engagements: **4.2K**

Meta Spend: **\$2,689.78**

### Top Performing Boosted Posts



**#1: Are you lawn-chalant or a weed warrior? Take the Level...**

Reach: <b>53,533</b>	Clicks: <b>986</b>
Engagements: <b>762</b>	Cost per Click: <b>\$0.51</b>



**#2: Pro tip: In spring, mow weekly when grass is...**

Reach: <b>47,442</b>	Clicks: <b>1,595</b>
Engagements: <b>665</b>	Cost per Click: <b>\$0.31</b>



**#3: Did you know it can be cheaper and easier to skip out..**

Reach: <b>23,384</b>	Clicks: <b>1,035</b>
Engagements: <b>899</b>	Cost per Click: <b>\$0.48</b>



**#4: Spring is here—time to mow, weed, and seed your...**

Reach: <b>31,559</b>	Clicks: <b>935</b>
Engagements: <b>761</b>	Cost per Click: <b>\$0.52</b>

## 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 using EPA funding. The campaign was launched in June 2022 on WhatsYourLawnStyle.org. We continue to promote the series with short commercials through digital advertising.



## 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.

### Top-Performing Commercials



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

Impressions: **133K**  
Views: **18K**  
Clicks: **173**



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

Impressions: **127K**  
Views: **18K**  
Clicks: **403**



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

Impressions: **67K**  
Views: **7.6K**  
Clicks: **217**



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

Impressions: **3K**  
Views: **256**  
Clicks: **57**

### Annual Results

Impressions: **3M**

Video Views: **71.8K**

Clicks: **25K**

Average Cost-per-Click: **\$0.27**

Cost per Conversion: **\$0.11**

Total Spend: **\$6.9K**

## What's Your Lawn Style YouTube

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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.

### YouTube Annual Views




**Low Maintenance**

Total Views: **355**  
Watch Time: **9.4 hrs**



**Medium Maintenance**

Views: **138**  
Watch Time: **6 hrs**



**High Maintenance**

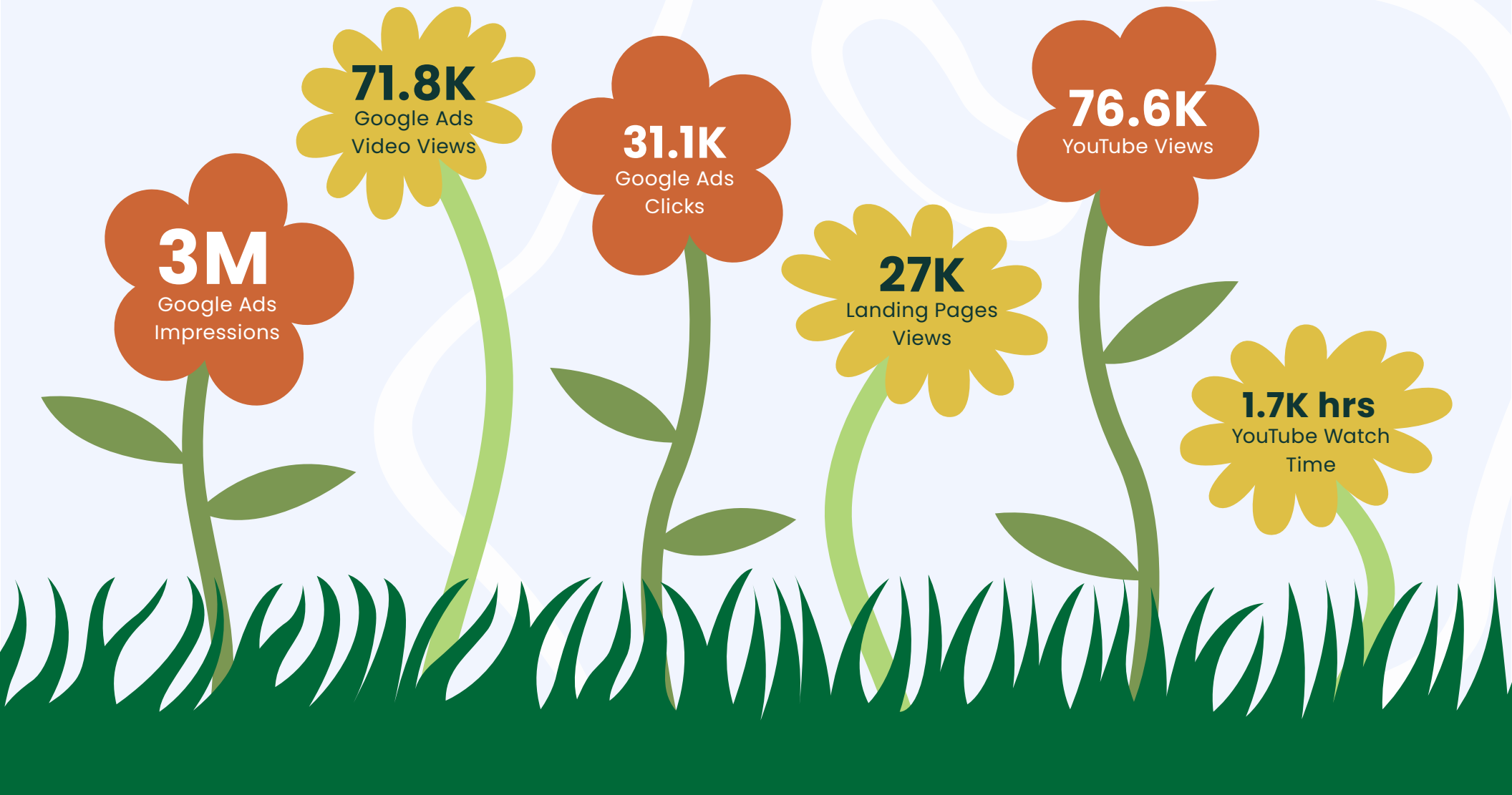
Views: **93**  
Watch Time: **3.3 hrs**



**Lawn Goals**

Views: **28K**  
Watch Time: **1,379 hrs**

## Level Up Your Lawn and What's Your Lawn Style Results



## Landscaper Pilot Project

With EPA funding, CRC passed through \$35,000 to the Northwest Center for Alternatives to Pesticides (NCAP) to conduct a pilot project in collaboration with Metro in Clackamas and Multnomah County. CRC and the City of Gresham hired Somos Media to create a three-video series for Spanish-speaking lawn care companies to be trained on best practices to minimize risk to themselves, customers, pets, and waterways. Producing twelve minutes of video footage cost another \$35,000. Four workshops were held which were well received and resulted in many landscapers pledging to use safe practices. Metro and NCAP plan to continue this work and report is forthcoming.

### YouTube Annual Results

#### **Annual Results**

Videos Produced: **3**

Workshops Held: **4**

Total Workshop Attendees: **84**

Total Youtube Views: **205**

Total Cost: \$ **\$113K**





## 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**

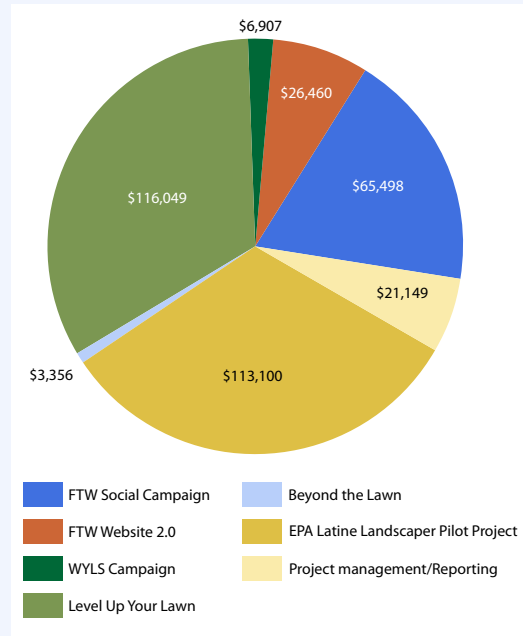
- KPTV Fox 12 Around the House NW | August 2023 | What's Your Lawn Style Feature
- Klamath Independent Film Festival | September 2023 | Follow the Water Film Series Screening
- Oregon Documentary Film Festival | October 2023 | Follow the Water Film Series Screening
- Portland State University Water Resource Management Class | 2024 | Collaboration with Follow the Water
- Urban Ecology Research Consortium - Annual Symposium | March 2024 | Follow the Water Film Series Screening
- Clean Rivers Coalition Annual Forum | June 2024 | 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 budget breakdown of funds used to promote Follow The Water and our multiple lawn campaigns in this fiscal year.

### Annual Spending FY 2023–2024



<b>Budget Item</b>	<b>Amount Spent</b>
FTW Social Campaign	\$65,498
FTW Website 2.0	\$26,460
WYLS Campaign	\$6,907
EPA Level Up Your Lawn	\$116,049
Beyond the Lawn	\$3,356
EPA Landscaper Pilot Project	\$113,100
Project management/Reporting	\$21,149
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$402,519</b>

## What's Next for the Clean Rivers Coalition

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

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

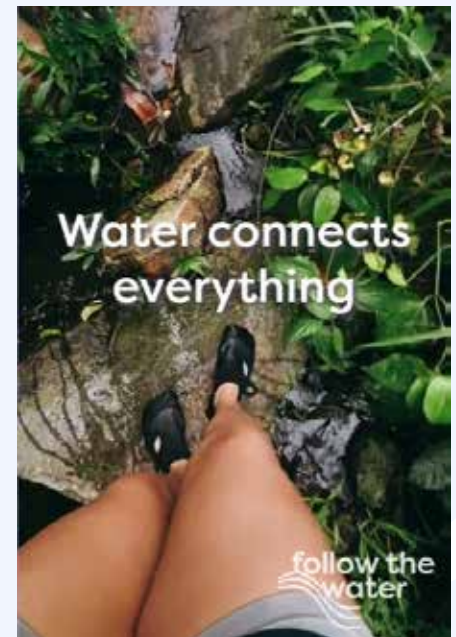
We are in the process of planning an extension of the lawn campaign for a more environmentally engaged audience in collaboration with Soil and Water Districts. The video series, "Beyond The Lawn," would be for households who are contemplating eco-lawns, gardens, meadow-scaping, and other lawn alternatives. Pre-production is underway with filming slated for 2026.

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

We plan to extend our community-based social marketing (CBSM) campaign from the pilot that was implemented in Salem, Eugene, and Clackamas County. We will use what we learned from WYLS and LUL to roll out a similar campaign in Clark County, partnering with Washington State University with funding from the Washington Department of Ecology. An evaluation report will share results and how it can be rolled out across Oregon and SW Washington for 2025.

### **Follow the Water Social Media**

We are working on producing short-form video content that covers our core values, fun places to visit water, and simple ways to protect the rivers we love that will be posted across our social media channels. We're also working Instagram highlights section to better engage our followers and showcase who we are.



## Thank You to Our Stakeholders!

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- 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.