



*Promoting ecologic and economic resiliency in
the Coquille watershed.*

September 22, 2021
Coquille Indian Tribe, c/o: Chair Meade
3201 Tremont St.
North Bend, OR 97459
RE: Salmon Recovery in the Coquille Watershed

Dear Chair Meade,

Please accept our letter of support regarding the Coquille Indian Tribe's efforts to support salmon recovery in the Coquille watershed. We recognize that the Coquille people have lived on this land and maintained a deep relationship with salmon since time immemorial. We truly value and appreciate your leadership on this topic and for providing a strong voice and perspective on a vision for the future. We are eager to partner on salmon recovery initiatives. Currently, coho and Chinook salmon are in a perilous state. In the face of climate change, land use and water quality issues, it is critical to act now to reverse alarming trends in the watershed. **By working together as a coalition in support of the Coquille River, we can optimally leverage resources, learn from each other, and identify solutions that meet the needs of the communities that live and work in the Coquille watershed.**

Our mission at the Coquille Watershed Association (CoqWA) is to work collaboratively with private landowners and stakeholders to support watershed health and our local natural resources economy. For the last 25 years, we have implemented restoration projects on private working lands to support salmon recovery. Yet, there is still much to accomplish in the Coquille to recover populations. **Habitat and water quality improvements are a critical aspect of recovery that must continue for decades to come** to address the legacy of past practices that has played a role in the diminished populations. Core actions that CoqWA and partners continue to implement include (but are not limited to): planting riparian vegetation to reduce high water temperatures that are lethal for juvenile salmonids and allow invasive bass to thrive, improving access and habitat quality in the tidal floodplains of the estuary, and enhancing spawning habitats in headwater streams through large woody debris and boulder placement.

A core element required to implement these actions is successfully recruiting willing private landowners. This is one of the most challenging aspects of our work, building trust and working together with a diversity of landowners across the watershed takes considerable time and resources before a project is even developed. CoqWA specializes in working with landowners to accomplish restoration on working landscapes such as ranches and forests. Once we have established a relationship with landowners, we brainstorm solutions that meet needs of production and watershed health. **We believe that partnering with the Coquille Tribe, ODFW, and others on strategic engagement efforts will result in impactful outcomes that bring us closer to salmon recovery goals. Moreover, we can work together to strategize on bolstering incentives for landowners to implement habitat improvement on their properties.**

The Coquille Indian Tribe has been a long standing partner. We have always been deeply appreciative of our collaborations and proud of what we have accomplished together. We look forward to continuing our partnership on salmon recovery initiatives such as the Coquille River Strategic Action Plan for Coho Recovery, South Fork Stakeholder Engagement project, and restoration projects such as the Leslie Wetland Enhancement project. Please know you have our strong support and we look forward to working together on improving the health of the watershed and salmon recovery for years to come. Lastly, we are eager to learn how we can best support your leadership on this important work over the coming years.

Thank you,

Melaney Dunne

Melaney Dunne
Executive Director

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