



**TUALATIN
RIVERKEEPERS®**

STRATEGIC PLAN 2025 – 2029



Tualatin Riverkeepers Strategic Plan

Mission:

Tualatin Riverkeepers protects, restores and expands access to the Tualatin River watershed through advocacy and fostering broad community engagement.

Vision:

We envision a thriving Tualatin River watershed sustained by an engaged community that protects, restores, and enjoys this vital resource.

Values:

Passion. We bring enthusiasm, excitement, dedication, and commitment to our work, overcoming challenges with determination and teamwork.

Leadership. Our leadership means sharing what we know, advocating for what's right, and inspiring action for a thriving Tualatin watershed and community.

Belonging. We strive to cultivate a sense of belonging, particularly for groups who have been historically marginalized. We use an equity and inclusion lens to address barriers and promote access.

Integrity. We recognize our responsibility to the community, and seek to be transparent, responsive, and connected to those who live, work, and play in the watershed.

Collaboration. We know our vision is bigger than us and we strive to be good partners, working with others to achieve mutual goals.



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Land Acknowledgement

Washington County was originally inhabited by the Tualatin Band of Kalapuya (also known as the Atfalati, Twalaty, Twalatin, Quality, Tualaty, or Twalati).

It is fair to say the Tualatin Band of Kalapuya inhabited the entirety of Washington County at one time or another, but their most valued homeland was at Wapato Lake, near modern day Gaston. Wapato Lake supplied large amounts of wapato (an aquatic plant with a nutritious tuber much like a potato) to the Tualatin people, who grew camas and oak acorns as well. The Tualatin Band of Kalapuya traded extensively with their neighbors, and also traded with Euro-American settlers. In 1851 the Tualatin Band of Kalapuya signed a treaty which would have retained for them a reservation surrounding Wapato Lake, but it was never ratified by Congress. Instead the Willamette Valley Treaty of January 22, 1855 (which the Tualatin Band of Kalapuya also signed) was ratified by Congress, which provided other rights and benefits for them but not their own reservation. Chief Ki-a-cuts was the treaty signer for the Tualatin Band of Kalapuya, and he was later elected Head Chief at the Grand Ronde Indian Reservation.

As with most of the tribes and bands of western Oregon, disease epidemics brought by Euro-Americans devastated the populations of these peoples, and in some cases their surviving members and/or descendants had either incorporated into neighboring bands or assimilated into the larger settler population out of necessity by the 1850s. After the signing of the Willamette Valley Treaty in 1855 (through which the entire Willamette Basin was ceded to the U.S. in exchange for certain rights and benefits), many of them were moved onto small temporary reservations, and later to the Grand Ronde Indian Reservation where they became members of the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde. Their descendants live on as Tribal members today, carrying on the traditions and cultures of their ancestors, the original people of this land.



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Our Programs

Advocacy

As a proud member of the international Waterkeeper Alliance, our work to protect clean water in the Tualatin River watershed is at our core. Tualatin Riverkeepers is the organization dedicated to advocating for water quality, ecosystem sustainability, and the overall health of the Tualatin River watershed. While advocating for policies and legislation that prioritize environmental concerns, we strive to include livability, affordability, and sustainability in all that we do so that we can create collaborative, community-based solutions that are implementable for everyone.

River Experiences

Most residents know about Tualatin Riverkeepers through our river experiences program. We rent paddle craft at Cook Park in Tigard and Rood Bridge Park in Hillsboro throughout the summer months, and host more than 2,000 paddlers annually. Our guided paddle trips focus on engaging residents of the watershed - often through partnerships with community organizations - who are unlikely to have experienced the river prior to coming out with us. A primary component of our River Experiences program is our Equitable Access work, an ongoing initiative to work with communities - primarily in the upper watershed - to create additional launches and connections to the river where community members can enjoy the river, whether they paddle or not.

Restoration

TRK partners with land management agencies throughout the watershed, hosting dozens of habitat restoration projects annually. We engage in restoration work not only to remove invasive species and plant native species, but to engage both young people and organizations that serve community members who will be most impacted by our changing climate. We seek out partnerships with schools and organizations that serve young adults, and our Restoration Leader program trains volunteers to lead these diverse groups in a safe, culturally appropriate manner.

Goals

Goal 1

Strengthen and focus advocacy efforts to be responsive to existing and emerging watershed threats

Goal 2

Expand engagement with and access to the Tualatin River

Goal 3

Grow programs that care for the land by engaging residents and partners

Goal 4

Strengthen our revenue sources and financial systems

Goal 5

Build an inclusive organization that attracts and retains a diverse staff, board, and core volunteer team

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Goal 1: Strengthen and focus advocacy efforts to be responsive to existing and emerging watershed threats

Strategy 1: Work with community partners, including CPOs and NGOs, to educate residents on emerging risks to the watershed and Tualatin Riverkeepers' role in advocating for clean water. .

Strategy 2: Consistently engage with elected officials and decision makers to increase their awareness and knowledge of issues impacting the watershed.

Strategy 3: Establish a strong presence of Tualatin Riverkeepers staff, board, and members on civic committees that impact on key issues of concern for the watershed.

Goal 2: Expand engagement with and access to the Tualatin River

Strategy 1: Define and grow the Tualatin River Water Trail while expanding river access

Strategy 2: Broaden volunteer leadership in TRK paddling programs and initiatives.

Strategy 3: Strengthen partnerships with organizations that serve community members who have been historically excluded from river experiences.

Goal 3: Grow programs that care for the land by engaging residents and partners

Strategy 1: Use a climate resilience and future impact lens to plan projects on strategic sites in the watershed.

Strategy 2: Build a volunteer ambassador core with a strong baseline knowledge of the watershed, and Tualatin Riverkeepers' work to protect and restore it.

Strategy 3: Expand partnerships with culturally specific organizations that provide experiences for young residents to learn about restoration and outdoor recreation in the watershed.

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Goal 4: Strengthen TRK's financial position and long-term sustainability

Strategy 1: Grow revenue, with an emphasis on increasing general operating support, ensuring that TRK can attract and retain talented staff.

Strategy 2: Increase transparency of TRK finances and financial systems, with a strong volunteer oversight committee.

Strategy 3: Build collaborative grant opportunities that enhance watershed restoration.

Goal 5: Build an inclusive organization that attracts and retains a diverse staff, board, and core volunteer team

Strategy 1: Create and strengthen internal operations, systems, and policies to be equitable, inclusive, responsive, and adaptive.

Strategy 2: Strengthen internal committees and working groups, engaging residents with a range of perspectives and experiences.

Strategy 3: Engage in ongoing and regular equity, inclusion, and environmental justice learning to deepen our organizational equity, inclusion, and environmental justice lens.

