TUALATIN RIVERKEEPERS

HeronNow! Newsletter

JANUARY 2025

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2024 in Review: Milestones and Momentum

TRK had quite a ride in 2024, a year that saw paddlers continue to flock to the river and development pressures ramp up in our watershed. From a significant increase in our efforts to restore vital natural spaces to strengthening partnerships for watershed protection to hosting unforgettable paddle experiences, we've worked tirelessly to connect people to the river and ensure the future of our watershed.

Thanks to the dedication of hundreds of volunteers and supporters, we've laid the foundation for an even greater impact in 2025. Together, we are creating a healthier, more vibrant Tualatin River watershed—one that will thrive for generations to come. Thank you for being an essential part of our journey!

Upcoming Events

Jan 18, 1pm
Habitat Restoration at Dirksen Nature Park

Jan 30, 6pm
Become a Tualatin Riverkeepers Restoration Crew Leader!

Feb 8, 10:30am
Annual Members + Meeting @ Tualatin Hills Nature Center

Your Voice, Your Impact: Serve on a TRK Committee

Happy New Year from all of us at Tualatin Riverkeepers! Did you make the year-common resolution to join a committee at your favorite nonprofit organization? Well, we have the place for you! We're looking for passionate and dedicated volunteers to join our committees and help guide our work to protect and restore the watershed. If you're eager to make an impact and have expertise, ideas, or just enthusiasm to share, we'd love for you to consider joining one of the following committees:

Finance Committee
Help ensure the financial sustainability and oversee budgeting and fundraising efforts.

Advocacy Committee
Support TRK's mission by helping to advance policies that protect the Tualatin River watershed.

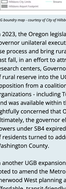
Trips & Tours Committee
Collaborate with staff to plan and lead engaging, educational, and fun experiences that connect people with the river.

Joining a committee is a fantastic way to contribute your skills, meet like-minded individuals, and play a vital role in the success of Tualatin Riverkeepers.

Interested?
Visit our website for more in-depth descriptions, contact information, and a list of upcoming meetings. Together, let's make 2025 a year of positive impact for the Tualatin River!

Find Out More

Urban Growth Pressures Strain Washington County, Unite Residents



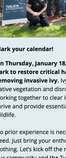
UBG boundary map - courtesy of City of Hillsboro

In 2023, the Oregon legislature passed Senate Bill 4, which gives the governor unilateral executive power to circumvent Oregon's sacred land use process and bring rural land into the urban growth boundary (UGB). Last fall, in an effort to attract one of three national semiconductor research centers, Governor Kotek began the process of bringing 373 acres of rural reserve into the UGB in Hillsboro. The decision was met with quick opposition from a coalition of farmers, residents, and conservation organizations - including Tualatin Riverkeepers - who argued that ample land was available within the urban growth boundary and who were rightfully concerned that Oregon's land use laws were being bypassed. Ultimately, the governor elected not to bring the land into the UGB. The powers under SB4 expired at the end of the year, as this growing coalition of residents turned to address a host of additional growth pressures in Washington County.

In another UGB expansion attempt, late in the year the Metro Council voted to amend the Metro regional UGB to add 1,291 acres designated as Sherwood West planning area. In a region desperately in need of affordable, transit-friendly housing, the Sherwood West - contiguous to the Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge and Chicken Creek - would add primarily market-rate housing. Similar to the coalition in Hillsboro, the proposed Sherwood West expansion galvanized a diverse group of organizations - including farm and winery owners and affordable housing advocates - to oppose an expansion that will damage natural resources and add expensive, auto-dependent housing, the opposite of what our region needs. TRK has joined partners - including 1000 Friends of Oregon and West of Sherwood Farm Alliance - in formally requesting the Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD) to remand Ordinance No. 24-1520 back to Metro.

Read About the SB4 Decision

Habitat Restoration at Dirksen Nature Park



Mark your calendar!

On Thursday, January 18, we invite you to join us at Dirksen Nature Park to restore critical habitat for local wildlife and plants by removing invasive ivy- ivy is more than just a nuisance – it smothers native vegetation and disrupts the delicate balance of our ecosystem. By working together to clear it out, we'll create space for native plants to thrive and provide essential resources for birds, pollinators, and other wildlife.

No prior experience is necessary – we'll provide the tools and guidance you need. Just bring your enthusiasm, sturdy shoes, and weather-appropriate clothing. Let's kick off the new year with action that supports the health of our community and the Tualatin River watershed.

Details
📅 Date: Thursday, January 18
🕒 Time: 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM
📍 Location: Dirksen Nature Park, Tigard, OR

Register Here!

Save the Date: TRK Annual Member Meeting!

Join Us for the Tualatin Riverkeepers' Annual Member Meeting!

Meeting Details
📅 Date: February 8, 2025
🕒 Time: 10:00 AM – 12:30 PM
📍 Location: Tualatin Hills Nature Park, Beaver Den Room

Special Guest Speaker
We are honored to welcome Peter Hayes, a passionate steward of sustainable forestry, as our featured guest speaker. Peter and his family own and care for Hyla Woods in the Oregon Coast Range. With his experience on the Oregon Board of Forestry (2007–2011), he brings invaluable insights into forest conservation and sustainable land management. "Insights from Hyla Woods and Beyond" promises to be a thought-provoking presentation on the role of forestry in a healthy watershed.

Details
In addition to learning about our current work, TRK members will vote for a slate of Board of Trustees and revised mission and vision statements. Our Executive Director and Board Chair will also present TRK's newly-adopted 2025-2029 Strategic Plan.

Enjoy coffee and heavy snacks during the meeting, and don't miss the debut of our new Tualatin Riverkeepers sweatshirt and the return of our fan-favorite embroidered hat—both available for purchase in limited quantities.

⏰ **Please RSVP by February 3, 2025** ⏰

RSVP Now!

Become a Member
Tualatin Riverkeepers is unique in that we're a fully member-driven organization. TRK members help guide the direction of the organization by electing board members, voting on changes to bylaws and policies, and supporting TRK financially. It isn't too late to renew your membership or become a new member. Membership levels begin at $50. Become a member and join us in February!

Thank You for Your Year End Support

We are overwhelmed with gratitude for the incredible support we received during this year's GiveGuide campaign! Thanks to you, our amazing community, we raised an astounding $14,742.44 from 170 donors.

Your generosity fuels our efforts to protect and restore the Tualatin River watershed, provide meaningful outdoor experiences, and engage our community in conservation efforts. Every dollar and every donor contributes to the health of our local environment and helps us build a stronger, more connected community .

From all of us at Tualatin Riverkeepers, **thank you for believing in our mission and standing with us.** Here's to an impactful year ahead, made possible by your unwavering support. See you on the river!

Calling All Restoration Crew Leaders

Are you passionate about getting outside and making a difference, while learning more about native habitat and restoration work? Consider becoming a Restoration Crew Leader for Tualatin Riverkeepers.

Our Restoration Crew Leader program trains volunteers in plant identification, invasive species removal, and planting techniques so they can lead groups of volunteers on our growing number of restoration projects. In exchange for the training and some snazzy gear, we ask that Restoration Crew Leaders commit to participating in four projects over the course of the year.

Our Restoration Crew Leaders allow us to be in multiple places at once as we grow our restoration efforts in our watershed!

Join us for an online training session:
Thursday, January 30, 6-7pm

Hands-on training sessions (both in Tigard Parks):
Saturday, February 1, 10am-1pm
Sunday, February 9, 1-4pm

After an initial online training, an in-person event training, and shadowing with TRK staff during at least one community volunteer event, you will have all the tools you need to organize and lead groups of volunteers in projects that care for the land! As a TRK Restoration Crew Leader, you will increase capacity for habitat restoration in the Tualatin River Watershed, and play an important part in sustaining the health of community accessible natural areas.

For questions, email volunteer@tualatinriverkeepers.org.

Don't have any previous involvement with volunteer leadership or habitat restoration? No problem; we'd still love to have you participate!

Register to Volunteer