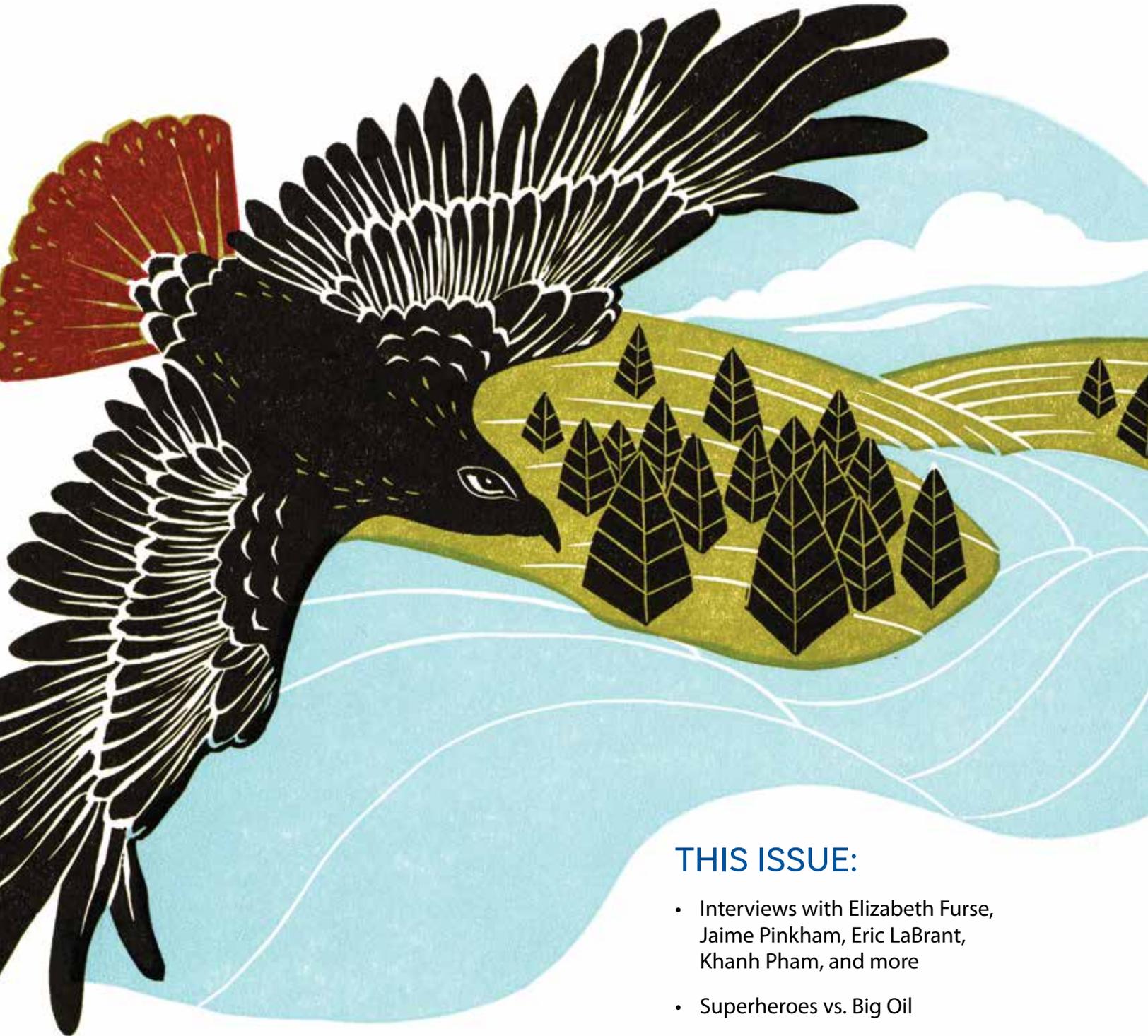


COLUMBIA RIVERKEEPER

RIVER CURRENTS | 2018 Issue 3

THE INTERVIEW EDITION



THIS ISSUE:

- Interviews with Elizabeth Furse, Jaime Pinkham, Eric LaBrant, Khanh Pham, and more
- Superheroes vs. Big Oil
- How Penalties from Columbia Riverkeeper Lawsuits Restore, Protect Clean Water

Columbia Riverkeeper protects and restores the water quality of the Columbia River and all life connected to it, from the headwaters to the Pacific Ocean.

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Join the conversation and keep up with the latest from Columbia Riverkeeper!



RIVER NOTES

A LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

It's hard to read the news each day. I try to stay positive, but these are dark days in Washington D.C. for social justice and the environment. Yet, we are winning major victories for the Columbia River and our climate despite a hostile Trump administration. How? By convincing our state and local governments to do more. By holding polluters accountable. By working together to protect what we love.

This newsletter features interviews with local people who shine brightly through the darkness: a Vancouver resident who bucked the establishment and ran for port commissioner because he wanted to protect his community from a dangerous oil terminal; a middle-school teacher whose students' testimony helped ban new fossil fuel infrastructure; and a Yakama Nation elder who works to clean up Hanford so our great-great grandchildren will be able to walk these lands again. I think our board member, Rudy Salakory, speaks for many of us on page seven: "Every stream I work on, every creek I cross, drains into the Columbia. Its course runs down the center of my world, and I'll never stop trying to protect it."

Your handiwork also graces these pages in a month-by-month list of victories you earned in 2018. Thank you for making a difference in your community. The majority of Riverkeeper's funding comes from members like you. Your donation of \$50, \$100, or \$1000 makes a big difference because it is combined with donations from thousands of other members to fuel strategic action.

You support, for example, our on-the-ground work with communities up and down the Columbia. It makes a huge difference to have staff available to organize a phone bank for a public hearing or help activists pound out a strategy and action plan for their local issue. You make this happen. Your support also powers Riverkeeper's staff attorneys who use our bedrock environmental laws like the Clean Water Act and Clean Air Act to fight fossil fuel infrastructure, protect salmon habitat, and stop toxic pollution. Check out pages 12-13 to see how Riverkeeper's enforcement actions halt illegal pollution and support non-profit organizations. A win-win.

Brett VandenHeuvel
Executive Director



Columbia River Gorge at Tom McCall Nature Preserve, photo by Mike Voyt.

COVER: "Red-Tailed Hawk, Angels Rest Year" 2017 Limited Edition linoleum cut print by artist Clare Carpenter (www.tigerfoodpress.com).

BACK: Columbia Gorge Community College students learning about Riverkeeper's restoration efforts at the Nichols Natural Area in Hood River, OR; Aug. 23, 2018.



Photo by Alex Milan Tracy.



Photo by Thomas Patterson for Earthjustice.

SUPERHEROES VS. BIG OIL

*SPOILER ALERT: SUPERHEROES WIN

*Interviewed by Lauren Goldberg,
Legal & Program Director*

On January 29, 2018, Washington Governor Jay Inslee rejected the largest proposed oil train terminal in the United States. Riverkeeper's Lauren Goldberg sat down with Port of Vancouver USA Commissioner Eric LaBrant, who ran for office in part to protect Vancouver from Tesoro's oil-by-rail project, and community activist and former Fruit Valley Neighborhood Association Secretary Linda Garcia, to reflect on the epic victory.

After the Tesoro victory, you said, "Their first mistake was in trying to talk down to us." How did you respond?

Linda Garcia: I fought back. Fruit Valley [located near the proposed oil-by-rail terminal] demographics have traditionally been very diverse and low-income. Blue collar does not mean inarticulate; it means we're in lines of work that don't pay as well as others. The root of the entire battle was money. Tesoro had it. They used money to gain favor and control. Tesoro assumed people who weren't wealthy weren't capable of resources. They learned a large and very public lesson about making assumptions.

What was the top reason you fought the Tesoro Savage proposal?

Eric LaBrant: Having worked in an offshore oil field years ago, and knowing that the site was just a mile from my house, I had some very specific questions about health and safety. Originally, I just wanted a candid discussion about safety, but that turned into flat-out opposition when I couldn't get clear answers to basic questions.

What's your favorite memory from the Tesoro fight?

Linda Garcia: Dan [Serres, Riverkeeper's conservation director,] drove several of us in a van to Olympia to hear the Energy Council's recommendation to Governor Inslee. We were a quiet bunch on the drive up. When the Council voted unanimously to send the 'no' recommendation to the governor, it was the first time in five long, exhausting years that I saw a glimmer of hope. Alona, another community activist, and I started crying and hugging each other. I thought, "Wow, we made a difference."

As an elected official who listens to public testimony, what tips do you have for Riverkeeper's members?

Eric LaBrant: The most important thing to remember is that your voice matters! You don't have to be smooth or polished to make a difference. We want to understand real-world impacts, and that's tough to get from looking at revenue forecasts and job numbers. Sharing your perspective helps us make better decisions.

What are your views on Riverkeeper's approach to protecting the Columbia from fossil fuels?

Linda Garcia: Riverkeeper—they are the true heroes. They didn't just care about the Columbia River, they cared about the community. They worked in our community, mobilizing volunteer help and providing resources and support that we wouldn't have had otherwise. They stepped up in an incredibly bold way. They were there for us through it all.

To read the full interview, visit columbiariverkeeper.org/newsletter.



Photo by Alex Milan Tracy.

A CHAMPION FOR COLUMBIA RIVER TREATY TRIBES: JAIME PINKHAM

Interviewed by Lauren Goldberg, Legal & Program Director

Jaime A. Pinkham took the helm as executive director for the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission (CRITFC) in April 2017. CRITFC supports the Yakama, Warm Springs, Umatilla, and Nez Perce tribes by coordinating management, policy and technical services.

From 1990 to 2002, Pinkham worked for the Nez Perce Tribe, where he was elected twice to the tribe's governing body. He also led the tribe's natural resource programs and was involved in salmon restoration, water-rights negotiations, wolf recovery, and land acquisition. Pinkham currently serves on the Governing Council of The Wilderness Society and the Board of Directors of American Rivers.

What was going through your mind when you got the call asking you to lead CRITFC?

The timing was good for two reasons. First, I spent much of my career advocating for tribal sovereignty, treaty rights, and self-determination. At CRITFC, I could combine my passions for natural resources and self-determination. Second, a selfish reason: I could move from St. Paul, Minnesota, after eight years working for a private foundation, and live close to my three grandkids.

What are your highest priorities at CRITFC?

Relationships. Particularly strengthening relationships with partners in the public, private, and non-profit sectors.

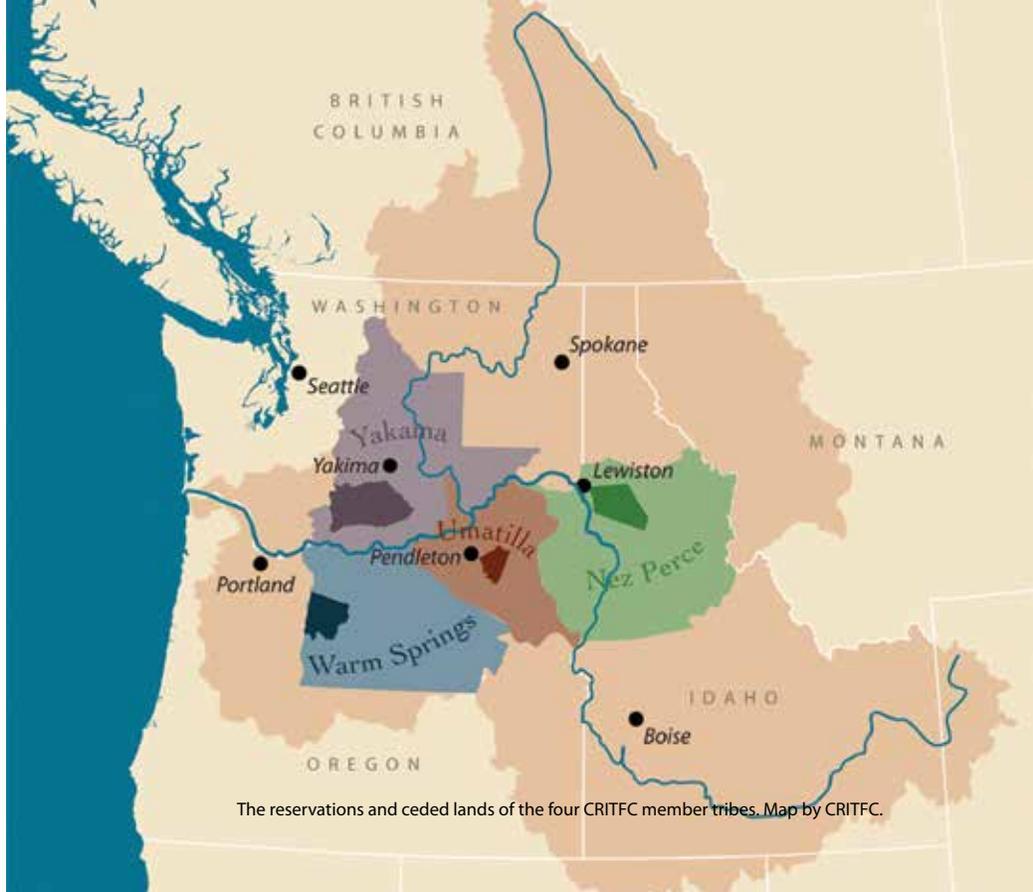
How has the Trump administration impacted CRITFC's work and your priorities as Executive Director?

Think of how many winters and political pendulums Indian Country has gone through in U.S. history. Tribes have built political and technical capacities to help withstand different political climates. With the current administration, we cannot forget Congress' role in our work. Congress has helped temper the administration's agenda. And many career agency officials remain who recognize our accomplishments and support the work that we do.

Tribes suffered the most in the destruction of the natural world. Yet, in a turnabout, we made tremendous contributions to rebuild and safeguard the environment. We're capable co-managers of our shared natural resources. For example, we're leading restoration of endangered species, partnering with the public and private sector to renovate watersheds, operating production facilities, and even running a fishery genetics lab. We're standing toe-to-toe with our federal and state counterparts.

Columbia Riverkeeper has worked with CRITFC and member tribes to protect the Columbia from Hanford, fossil fuel projects, and other threats. Please share your thoughts on how Riverkeeper works in solidarity with CRITFC.

Riverkeeper does it right. Riverkeeper recognizes tribes as political institutions—and partners with us in that way. We see Riverkeeper as an important member of our partner community. We may not always agree, but we'll continue to work on areas where we have common ground.



What people inspired your career at the intersection of tribal sovereignty and natural resources?

My love for the natural world came from my father and grandfather. My earliest memories are of following them deep into the mountains hunting on the breaks of Snake River country. No trails. Dad cut blazes on trees for us to find our way back. We sat around the campfire, listened to elk bugle, fell asleep under the stars. Later, I would go with my Yakama grandmother to help set up her tepee and we'd camp near Mount Adams to pick huckleberries. It sounds like an adventure, but it taught me that my life and responsibilities were in response to the change of seasons and the natural cycles of the land and waters.

I can't say I'm Nez Perce without a connection to place and this way of life. It is fundamental to my identity.

You describe yourself as someone with a passion for "wildness." What drives that passion and where do you seek out wildness?

It comes from those early experiences. Wildness is freedom. Sometimes it isn't so much a place, but a feeling in a place, like when I'm back home on the Rapid River, wading waist-deep with my dip net. When the salmon return home, so do I. Wild salmon and wild rivers provide the freedom to be like my ancestors.

Given the breadth of your professional experience—including working for the Nez Perce Tribe, for a foundation, and CRITFC—how do you think environmental groups can improve how they engage and interact with tribal nations?

Don't rely on tribes for romantic notions or think all tribes are alike. Tribal governments can be the most misunderstood governments. Environmental groups need to have faith in tribal nations' political and legal institutions.

You work for four sovereign tribal nations. You manage an organization with more than 100 employees. How do you stay inspired to take on the critical—and incredibly challenging—issues CRITFC tackles?

I get to work with dedicated, talented people within CRITFC and at the tribes. I also get inspired feeling at home among the tribes. I'm Nez Perce, but I grew up on the Yakama Reservation and used to work and live in Warm Springs. My siblings and my parents' siblings married into each tribe so I have family wherever I go. These four tribes have taken good care of me for 60-plus years.

I'm also inspired by my grandkids. I'm coming to the end of my political career and my grandkids gave me a new perspective. When my first grandchild was born I could imagine her telling me, "Grandpa, don't disappoint us." I realized when the best time of my life will be. It will be long after I'm gone when my grandkids will enjoy the successes in my life in their future.

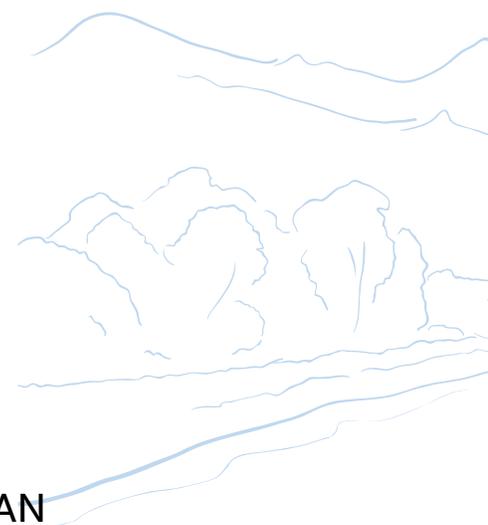
Looking back to the start of your professional journey, where did you think it would lead?

I started out a forester. Sure I had dreams. I never dreamed I would testify before Congress or be elected to Tribal Council or work in philanthropy. I'm happy with this trail and can't wait to see where it leads next.

To learn more about CRITFC and member tribes, visit critfc.org.

WHY DO I ENGAGE?

Your voice for clean water is amplified as a Columbia Riverkeeper member. Today we are more than 16,000 members and 300 volunteers strong. Here are the reasons why your fellow members contribute their time, resources, and creativity to the Columbia River.



KATE GOODNIGHT

Volunteer E. coli Technician, Hood River, OR



No matter what type of background we come from, clean water is key to everything we hold dear, whether it's the health of our human and natural communities or our regional economic vitality related to fishing, recreation, and tourism.

It's marvelous to go out early in the day to collect water samples and see the chang-

ing conditions and bird life. One early summer morning there were more than 60 Canada geese (including goslings), three mergansers, and a couple of killdeer at the Nichols Natural Area. Later in the season, there were more goldfinches and songbirds flitting about as the restored vegetation filled out.

I love the impressive work Riverkeeper is doing to protect our communities from threats like the oil and coal trains and the impending Hanford nuclear-waste crisis, while also positively engaging a diverse spectrum of students and adults in learning about water quality, habitat restoration, and ways they can get involved. It's nice to know Riverkeeper is acting as a watchdog on our behalf, and it's been rewarding to play a role in the E. coli monitoring program, since it helps to keep people who use the river safe, and provides an early warning indicator if things get out of balance.

Being a third-generation Hood River resident, the Columbia River embodies "home" to me, a sense of connectedness not just with family but with the evolving history, geology, climate, plants, and wildlife of the area. Like an old friend, you can lean into it and be constantly surprised by the untold stories and new discoveries!

JAN ZUCKERMAN

Fossil Fuel Activist, Portland, OR



My favorite memory from the Portland Fossil Fuel Ordinance was when my Sunnyside Environmental School 8th grade Climate Change Cohort testified and delivered awards to the city commissioners for doing the right thing. The looks on their faces were priceless. Afterwards, the celebration was unforgettable too!

I fight for clean water because we are made mostly of water and water is everything. Without clean water we will die. I have been so fortunate to be able to drink clean water and play in the Columbia River without being poisoned. This is not the case for so many people. I fight for clean water so that organisms of all kinds can live and grow and thrive, like I have been able to do.

I support and volunteer with Riverkeeper because experience has shown me that they get work done. I can't imagine a better way to invest my time and money than to give it to knowledgeable and skilled folks who spend 24/7 protecting our river through education and action.

WANT TO SHARE YOUR STORY?

Tell us why you're a member of Columbia Riverkeeper. Email **info@columbiariverkeeper.org** and include a photo.



JOSE MAYA

Nichols Natural Area Leadership Team Member, White Salmon, WA



Clean water is a guarantee of healthy communities, it is an individual's right.

My favorite experience was being at a meeting surrounded by very knowledgeable individuals willing to share their expertise for the good of our community.

Riverkeeper is a great agency with a great cause; it deserves all the support we can provide.

Why I love the Columbia River: The Gorge is my home, the Co-

lumbia area is one of the most beautiful places on Earth, we need to preserve and cherish it.

KATHLEEN SULLIVAN

Activist and Volunteer, Astoria, OR



I moved to Astoria in 2007 and became involved with Columbia Riverkeeper soon after because my sister and her family were involved with the anti-LNG fight. Joe and Iris were just beginning the Blue Scorcher Bakery & Cafe at the time.

I have so many wonderful memories from being part of the fight against LNG. It was transformative for me. It linked me to other folks with hearts dedicated to community service. I learned so much. The experience inspired

me to run for office. I now serve as a Clatsop County Commissioner.

Riverkeeper's dedicated, talented, resourceful staff have proven themselves effective advocates for the river.

RUDY SALAKORY

Secretary, Board of Directors, Portland, OR



Clean water is a collective action problem worth working hard for, because having clean available water is essential for human and ecosystem health. Protecting this shared resource benefits everyone at little or no cost relative to treating water for contaminants or remediating brownfields. Water is the source and nourisher of all life, and it's far too easy to take it for granted that someone else is going to take care of it. We'll all need to lend a hand to make sure there's enough for everyone now and into the future.

Every time I get together with my fellow board members I am amazed and inspired at the passion, dedication, and creativity that is put into this cause. It's really hard to think of a specific occasion that stands above the others, but most recently, I was very moved by joining board members and staff at Horsethief Lake in the Columbia River Gorge, where we were able to celebrate the restoration of sockeye runs to Lake Cle Elum. We were treated to a tour and a chance to talk to tribal staff and elders about the importance of the return of these fish to those waters.

My work is restoring and conserving habitat and habitat-forming functions and processes throughout the lower Columbia Basin. My work as a board member allows me to participate in outreach and advocacy, and allows Columbia Riverkeeper to continue to hold impactors responsible for their effects on the health of the waters of our home. I've lived most of my life within 10 miles of the Columbia. My children and their children depend on this river. Every stream I work on, every creek I cross, drains into the Columbia. Its course runs down the center of my world, and I'll never stop trying to protect it.



Photo by Alex Milan Tracy

HANFORD CLEANUP ADVOCATE ALFRIEDA PETERS

Interviewed by Lauren Goldberg, Legal & Program Director

Alfrieda Peters serves as the education and outreach specialist for the Yakama Nation Environmental Restoration and Waste Management (ERWM) Department. Peters began her career working for the late Dr. Russell Jim, founder of the Yakama Nation ERWM, who was instrumental in giving the nation a voice at the congressional table on nuclear waste cleanup.

What motivates you to engage Yakama Nation citizens to protect the Columbia from Hanford's nuclear legacy?

The long history of our ancestral lands started prior to Hanford's establishment. There needs to be a reminder that Yakama Nation was here before Hanford, before Washington became a state, before the Treaty of 1855 at Walla Walla, and before Lewis and Clark. Now there is an overlapping and combined history between Yakama Nation and Hanford. The public must realize that Hanford is within Yakama Nation ceded-area lands, and we still have ceded-area rights. The Columbia River, the lands, and the salmon tie us to Hanford.

What are your thoughts on how Columbia Riverkeeper works in solidarity with Yakama Nation on Hanford cleanup?

On a personal level, I appreciate that Riverkeeper has a great interest in impacts not only on the river, but on the lives of all people in the area, up and down the river. And Riverkeeper is willing to put themselves out there and meet the individuals—whatever their background. Riverkeeper

worked in solidarity with Yakama Nation on a proposal to barge garbage and on coal export. We have some common concerns in our protection of the river, and Riverkeeper has proved to be a partner that we can trust.

Do you have a favorite spot on the Columbia River?

I find myself returning over and over to my birthplace: Celilo. Even though Celilo Falls is underwater, I feel the pull and reminisce. I remember the sound and mist from the water. The activity of the fishermen. Families filleting fish. I remember my grandmother's dried salmon in the smoke sheds—the aroma was very inviting. I knew there would be many enjoyable meals. Now I go down to the water and revitalize myself, wash myself with the water from the river. It is my own spiritual feeling—home.

What keeps you inspired to work on Hanford cleanup?

That our great-great-grandchildren will be able to walk these lands sometime in the future. That they will continue to share ancestral history, identify ancestral elders, and the legends, and the unborn generation will carry it forward. We've heard about the pre-history, the stories of how the Big Flood—what you call the Missoula Floods—created the Columbia River. Now we come to the present day and our history is added to those accounts. This includes the eloquent articulation of our former director, Atwai Dr. Russell Jim. When I am speaking to the public, I acknowledge and honor his acute insight on the consequences of the Hanford Nuclear Site in our backyard and his testimony that ensured the Yakama Nation and other tribes have an active voice and input in the cleanup. When we speak about Yakama Nation and Hanford, it is the message of Atwai Dr. Jim's, now an ancestral elder, that goes forward.

To read the full interview, visit columbiariverkeeper.org/newsletter.



Portlanders: This is your chance to fight climate change while tackling inequality!

Please vote YES on measure 26-201

Ballots are due on November 6, 2018.

Want to help get this initiative across the finish line? Volunteer through November 6. Visit PortlandCleanEnergyInitiative.com to get involved.

Photo by Rick Rappaport.

MAKE HISTORY IN PORTLAND: KHANH PHAM TALKS PORTLAND CLEAN ENERGY INITIATIVE

Interviewed by Jasmine Zimmer-Stucky, Senior Organizer

Columbia Riverkeeper is proud to partner with frontline communities leading the charge on the Portland Clean Energy Initiative, which would raise more than \$30 million per year to support renewable energy projects, energy-efficiency housing upgrades, and other climate resiliency efforts. Khanh Pham, manager of Immigrant Organizing with the Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon (APANO), shares her thoughts on a historic opportunity for Portland to take a stand on climate change and inequality.

Why is APANO supporting the Portland Clean Energy Initiative?

Asians and Pacific Islanders are the first and hardest hit by climate change. Many of our members, particularly our immigrant members, are struggling to find living-wage work. This ballot initiative allows us to tackle both climate change and growing inequality at the same time.

Tell us about the early days of the Portland Clean Energy Initiative. How did an idea turn into a ballot measure?

It started in the basement of a church, when APANO, Verde, NAYA and Coalition of Communities of Color first met

with NAACP and 350PDX to discuss this concept. It was a scrappy unfunded group then, and has been largely an all-volunteer effort the whole time. It's incredible what a small (and now much larger) group of passionate people can accomplish.

Social justice and environmental groups are working closely on the Portland Clean Energy Initiative. How does this alliance influence the campaign?

This alliance is building relationships that are not just transactional. It's based on shared values, and we're building an alliance that will last well beyond November. This alliance is shifting the balance of power in Portland, and I look forward to continuing to work with these groups as we advance a just transition in Portland and beyond.

In 10 years, what do you think the Portland Clean Energy Initiative can accomplish if Portland voters approve the measure?

In 10 years, I hope we will have put solar on every school building in Portland, and that at least 100 multi-family apartment buildings will have been weatherized.

What motivates you to be an organizer?

Love. I love the rice fields in Vietnam. I love the Columbia River and the salmon who know how to follow their instincts to go home. I love my family and friends, and my little chickens, and I love my daughter and also my future grandchildren and great grandchildren. Being able to contribute toward a movement for social and ecological justice is what gives my life meaning.

To read the full interview, visit columbiariverkeeper.org/newsletter.



JANUARY

Court Rules Portland Fossil Fuel Ordinance Constitutional

"People fight to defend what we love from dirty fossil fuel projects like oil train terminals. The City of Portland made history when it adopted the fossil fuel ordinance. With these challenges from the oil industry and the Portland Business Alliance out of the way, Portland can move forward toward putting this policy into practice." - Dan Serres, Conservation Director. (Photo by Rick Rappaport.)

FEBRUARY

Oil-by-Rail Victory!

Backers of the Tesoro Savage oil terminal in Vancouver, WA, pulled the plug on North America's largest oil-by-rail project. You made Tesoro Savage the most opposed project in the history of Washington's Energy Council.

MARCH

11,000 People Say NO to Fracked Gas-to-Methanol Refinery

Community members achieved a milestone, delivering more than 11,000 public comments to government decision-makers.

2018: YOU POWERED SUCCESS

JULY

Victory! Oregon Acts to Shut Down Mega-Dairy

Thousands of Riverkeeper members and our coalition partners called on Oregon Governor Kate Brown and state agencies to protect the Columbia River and rural communities from factory farm pollution. In July, Oregon revoked the mega-dairy's permit to pollute. (Photo by Paloma Ayala with aerial support from LightHawk.)

AUGUST

Legal Victory for Clean Water

Riverkeeper and the Northwest Environmental Defense Center reached a legal settlement with the State of Oregon to improve a permit that regulates toxic stormwater pollution from more than 800 industrial sites. "With a new permit, the State of Oregon can keep thousands of pounds of toxic pollution out of our rivers—a huge win for people who jump in the Columbia on a hot day or feed their kids fish." -Brett VandenHeuvel, Executive Director.

SEPTEMBER

One-Year Anniversary: Conoce tu Columbia, Spanish-Language Radio Show

Through inspiring interviews, music, and commentary, the program shares stories of people who protect our health and water from pollution. "Our listeners are responding to the show and want to participate in the protection of our natural resources." -Ubaldo Hernández, Community Organizer.





APRIL

Millennium Coal Loses—Again

A state appeals board upheld the Washington Department of Ecology’s decision denying permits for Millennium. “Building the largest coal export terminal in North America would cause unavoidable harm to people and the Columbia River. It is time to close the coal export chapter and protect the health of local communities and our climate.” -Jasmine Zimmer-Stucky, Senior Organizer and Co-Director of the Power Past Coal Coalition.

MAY

More than 600 Students Experience Nichols Natural Area in Spring 2018

“During one classroom presentation, we learned that many students had never been to the Hood River waterfront. Despite living so close to the Columbia River, their most identifiable experience with the river was driving on I-84. At Riverkeeper’s Nichols Natural Area, students explore, test water quality, and play nature-inspired games.” -Lorri Epstein, Water Quality Director.

JUNE

Let the People Swim!

Riverkeeper celebrated our twelfth year monitoring water quality at 20 popular recreation sites along the Columbia River. Check out Swim Guide, a user-friendly app that makes it easy to find and learn about local beaches.

OCTOBER

Support Mounts for Portland Clean Energy Fund Initiative

From U.S. Senator Jeff Merkley to national green energy leader and author Van Jones, more than more than 200 businesses, labor unions, faith organizations, and housing, environmental, and social justice nonprofits endorsed the Portland Clean Energy Initiative. The attacks on clean energy and our environment coming out of Washington D.C. seem endless. The good news: You can take climate action that protects clean water and creates clean energy jobs in Portland. Turn in ballots by November 6. (Photo by Madison Rowley.)

NOVEMBER

Thousands of People Tell Trump: Clean Up Hanford

The Trump administration wants to shortcut cleanup at the nation’s most contaminated cleanup site, Hanford. Not so fast. Thousands of people have already signed petitions urging the administration to scrap a proposal to re-label high-level radioactive waste as low-level. “With a new label, the government can save money and leave very dangerous waste in Hanford’s tanks, soils, and groundwater. We are prepared to challenge the Trump administration in court if the government fails to protect people and salmon from Hanford’s nuclear legacy.” -Simone Anter, Associate Attorney.

DECEMBER

People-Powered Legal Action Gets its Day in Court

We filed an appeal challenging Columbia County’s second attempt to open 837 acres of high-value salmon habitat and agricultural land along the Columbia River to industrial development. We expect an opinion from the Oregon Land Use Board of Appeals in December.





STOP. DETER. RIGHT THE WRONG. HOW PENALTIES FROM COLUMBIA RIVERKEEPER'S LAWSUITS RESTORE, PROTECT CLEAN WATER

Interviewed by Lauren Goldberg, Legal & Program Director

Columbia Riverkeeper cracks down on illegal pollution by enforcing the Clean Water Act. Our top priority: Stop the pollution. Our second goal: Deter industry from violating the law in the first place. How? Our settlements require the offending company to pay a penalty. As part of the lawsuit settlement, the penalty funds support projects by other organizations that benefit water quality.

In the last decade, penalties from Riverkeeper's Clean Water Act lawsuits supported dozens of important projects to protect and restore water quality. We sat down with four organizations that received funding through a Riverkeeper lawsuit to find out how penalty funds are fueling important work to protect salmon, educate the next generation of river stewards, and reduce pollution.

ALISON CABLE, TRI-CITIES PROGRAM MANAGER, FUTUREWISE

In 2017, Futurewise—a non-profit that works to prevent sprawl to protect Washington state's resources and make our urban areas livable and available for all—received a \$400,000 grant through a Columbia Riverkeeper settlement.

Why fight sprawl in the Tri-Cities?

Last year, Franklin County was the fastest-growing county in Washington state, and cities in Benton County weren't far behind. There are lots of contributing factors—everything from good weather, job opportunities, and lower housing prices—and there is also a lot of open land, which makes it seem as if sprawling development is the answer to the region's growth challenges. However, we know that low-density development is unsustainable economically in the region, leads to over-allocation of groundwater, and contributes to increases in surface water pollution and a loss of agricultural land, an important part of the local economy.

How did funds from Riverkeeper's Clean Water Act settlement support Futurewise's work?

While Futurewise has worked on issues in the Tri-Cities in past years, the funding from Riverkeeper allowed us to hire

local staff for the first time. For an organization like ours that is a resource for technical and policy support on complex land-use issues, having a local person in the community who can help educate and inform interested residents significantly broadens and deepens the impact of our work.

SUNRISE O'MAHONEY, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, WATERSHED ALLIANCE OF SW WASHINGTON

The Watershed Alliance of SW Washington works to educate and engage community members to be active stewards of the southwest Washington area's natural legacy, with a focus on creeks, lakes, and other water bodies.

In 2016, Columbia Riverkeeper approached the Alliance about supporting on-the-ground work to improve water quality in Vancouver. Why did you choose Fisher Creek?

In just three decades, this creek system has seen dramatic changes to water quality, flow level, and plant species. Many areas were dominated by invasive plant species. Fisher Creek flows directly into the Columbia River. It's a great place to increase native plant diversity, stabilize the creek banks, and educate the surrounding neighborhood.

Share your favorite story from the restoration project.

The first homeowners association that signed up for the project, The Lakes at Fisher's Landing, was very eager to participate. Some of the neighbors had tried to pull weeds on their own over the years, but there was no coordinated effort. After Tom (from our staff) spoke at their neighborhood meeting, he had a list of interested neighbors who committed to be the caretakers of the site, watering the plants throughout the dry season. That kind of community partnership makes project like this a success for years to come.



Volunteers plant trees as part of the Fisher Creek restoration project.
Photo by Watershed Alliance of SW Washington.



Volunteers plant trees as part of a project funded by the Fish Recovery Board to reduce stormwater pollution in urban areas. Photo by Friends of Trees.

MARÍA HERNÁNDEZ SEGOVIANO, COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COORDINATOR, OPAL ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE OREGON

Founded in 2006 by and for low-income people and people of color, OPAL Environmental Justice Oregon is the membership-driven hub at the center of our region's movement for environmental justice.

Earlier this year, OPAL received a grant funded through a Riverkeeper Clean Water Act lawsuit. Tell us about the project.

The grant will bring together people impacted by Columbia River pollution and fossil fuels to engage a curriculum exploring environmental justice and a just transition from fossil fuels. Our goal is to uplift issues communities experience right now.

At the end of the project, people will have direct access to share their perspectives with the Oregon Governor's Task Force on Environmental Justice. Why the Task Force?

The Task Force provides advice to the Governor on environmental injustice issues and offers a powerful avenue for community members to raise their concerns and demand action. For example, the Task Force had a meeting in Medford and members of the Oregon Just Transition Alliance attended to talk about the (Jordan Cove) LNG pipeline. Ultimately a letter went out from Task Force to the Governor on the LNG pipeline.

How can Columbia Riverkeeper members support OPAL's work?

Go to OPAL's website and donate. We organize people. Our movement must sustain itself—we can't be dependent on big corporations and big foundations. We can also coordinate as partners, like Riverkeeper and OPAL's partnership on the Portland Clean Energy Initiative. Reach out to me to talk about organization partnerships—happy to chat.

STEVE MANLOW, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, LOWER COLUMBIA FISH RECOVERY BOARD

In 2013, Columbia Riverkeeper, the Rosemere Neighborhood Association, and the Northwest Environmental Defense Center challenged Clark County's violation of laws designed to protect salmon and reduce pollution. After losing several rounds of litigation, the county agreed to address the problem and pay a \$3 million penalty to the Lower Columbia Fish Recovery Board for projects to protect and restore rivers and streams harmed by stormwater pollution.

Why invest in habitat restoration in the Lower Columbia?

The Lower Columbia has the highest number of Endangered Species Act-listed salmon and steelhead populations—74 to be exact—in Washington state. Our job is to facilitate recovery of these populations to healthy and harvestable levels. Unless we protect and restore habitat, we won't meet our goals. In rapidly developing communities like Clark County, this includes mitigating the effects of stormwater runoff.

What types of projects did the Board fund with the \$3 million Clean Water Act settlement?

The Riverkeeper settlement was the largest in our history, and to date we've awarded 11 grants to support a range of projects. They include a combination of water quality improvement, outreach and education projects. For example, last year we funded the "Don't Drip and Drive" project—an innovative partnership between Clark County, Vancouver Watersheds Council, Stormwater Partners of SW WA, and the automobile industry—to reduce oil pollution.

To read the full interviews, visit columbiariverkeeper.org/newsletter.



The Dalai Lama and Elizabeth Furse. Elizabeth said, "I keep this photo on a table near my front door. I had the honor to meet the Dalai Lama several times. He inspires me."

WORDS OF WISDOM FROM FORMER CONGRESSWOMAN AND COLUMBIA RIVERKEEPER CO-FOUNDER ELIZABETH FURSE

Interviewed by Lauren Goldberg, Legal & Program Director

Raised in South Africa, Elizabeth Furse's activism against apartheid set the stage for a life of activism and commitment to civil rights. Furse served three terms in Congress before retiring in 1998 and devoting her life to many progressive causes. In 2000, Furse played a pivotal role in bringing together local Columbia River nonprofits to form Columbia Riverkeeper—the first environmental nonprofit dedicated to protecting the Columbia, from the headwaters to the Pacific Ocean.

Tell us about the early days of Columbia Riverkeeper.

I found the Riverkeeper model fascinating: bringing together people at the neighborhood level and then connecting neighborhoods to other neighborhoods, eventually building a chain of river communities.

I was invited to dinner with Bobby Kennedy Jr. in Portland, and he asked if I would consider pulling together local river groups to start a Columbia Riverkeeper. I thought it was a great idea. We convened a small board, including John Platt, Thane Tienson, Don Sampson, and others. Columbia Riverkeeper is not an ancient organization, and I've been so impressed by the accomplishments in that relatively short time.

You lived in California in the 1970s and became active in the United Farm Workers movement led by César Chávez. What lessons did you draw from that experience?

You must listen to people on the frontlines. César Chávez did that. He knew what a farmworker experiences. I had the opportunity to meet Mr. Chávez and was incredibly impressed. When I came to the Pacific Northwest, I drew on the lessons I learned in California, and South Africa, and became intensely involved with the tribal fishing-rights struggle.

What advice do you have for Riverkeeper members who want to influence a member of Congress?

Be persistent and well-organized. Do your research. And get to know a staff person.

How did Hanford's nuclear legacy influence your work on nuclear non-proliferation?

Tribal nations came to me and were terribly concerned about the Hanford Reach—a huge fishing area. They alerted me about what they saw. Unfortunately so many elected officials don't listen to tribal nations even though they've been here for thousands of years.

Share your darkest, most disappointing moment as a legislator. How did you overcome defeat?

Our failure to stop the salvage logging rider, an open door to more old-growth cutting. When we lost, I said to myself, "How do you help the people who worked so hard on this—and how do I recover and go back?" My mother taught me that, wherever you are, there is an issue that needs help, and it is your duty to do something about it. Our work is never done.

What's your advice to young activists?

You get so much more out of activism than you give. And you meet the most amazing people. Nelson Mandela. Martin Luther King. César Chávez. I would not have met them but for my activism. I've seen amazing change in my life—change I never imagined possible. I went to Nelson Mandela's inauguration. As a child growing up in South Africa, I never thought such a day would come without blood in the streets. Activism is an amazing life.

MEET SANDY WRIGHT, RIVERKEEPER'S DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

Interviewed by Lauren Goldberg, Legal & Program Director

Sandy joined Riverkeeper in September 2018 after nine years leading the development team at Friends of the Columbia Gorge.

You studied chemistry and worked on water quality issues early in your career. What inspired your leap from the private sector to nonprofits?

I started off working on environmental cleanup sites. One day the CEO of the company mentioned they had a senior-level retreat and discussed whether they were in the business just to make money or for the good it was doing. They came down on the making-money side. I knew I was in the wrong place.

Earlier this year you spent a month in British Columbia and visited the Columbia's headwaters. What most surprised you?

The visceral sense of the magnitude of connectedness we share through the landscape. The icefields of the Canadian Rockies feed three oceans: the Arctic, the Atlantic (through Hudson Bay) and the Pacific. A huge amount of life depends on the water from the icefields, from the tiniest creatures to the largest cities along the rivers and bays. It was shocking and sad to see how far the glaciers have already receded.

What excites you about taking the helm as Riverkeeper's Development Director?

The people! I have already met many of the amazing people who are making our work possible, and I look forward to meeting many more. I am excited about connecting with these heroes and helping them in their philanthropic goals.

Sandy Wright, and her dog, Lola, hiking Athabasca Glacier, in Alberta, Canada.

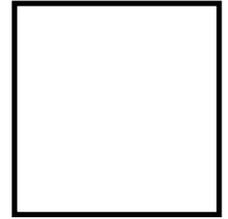


Columbia Riverkeeper attended a ceremony with the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde to receive a grant check from the Spirit Mountain Community Fund (SMCF). We are pleased to partner with SMCF to clean up toxic pollution. Pictured left to right: Denise Harvey, trustee, SMCF and tribal council member; Ron Reibach, trustee, SMCF; Sandy Wright, development director, Columbia Riverkeeper; Brett VandenHeuvel, executive director, Columbia Riverkeeper; and Mychal Cherry, executive director, SMCF.



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