



# OREGON WATER COALITION

---

## Spring 2017 Updates and Announcements

The Oregon Water Coalition has recently undergone a series of exciting changes. This newsletter will provide updates on these changes, as well as a look ahead to upcoming events. We encourage you to attend our annual meeting on May 25 to learn more about these recent organizational changes and hear from locals and experts about relevant water issues in the region. Enclosed you will also find your invoice for 2017 membership dues. These contributions allow the Oregon Water Coalition to continue to advance its mission, and your support is greatly appreciated.

In January, the Coalition hired Marika Sitz as coordinator to handle day to day operations. Marika was born and raised in Pendleton. She graduated from Pendleton High School in 2011 and from Stanford University in June 2015 with a degree in Human Biology, concentrating on Food and Agriculture Systems. After graduating from college, she spent a year working at Stanford's Bill Lane Center for the American West as a program associate. In this role, she ran the internship program and coordinated events and general outreach. Additionally, her time at the Center allowed her to interact with researchers working on issues related to groundwater, energy development, and the rural-urban divide. In her new position as coordinator, Marika will strive to make the Oregon Water Coalition relevant for members.

In February, the Board of Directors voted to begin the transition of the OWC from a 501(c)(6) to a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. This status change will increase the Coalition's eligibility for grant funding while allowing it to continue its mission of promoting education about water and agriculture issues and ensuring that northeast Oregon isn't a forgotten voice in state legislation and issues.

In March, an updated website was launched to track regional water news, legislation, and grant funding opportunities. View the new website by visiting [oregonwatercoalition.org](http://oregonwatercoalition.org). You can also find us on Facebook at [facebook.com/oregonwatercoalition](https://facebook.com/oregonwatercoalition). In this time of change, you are strongly encouraged to reach out to Marika with comments, ideas, or feedback: [marika@oregonwatercoalition.org](mailto:marika@oregonwatercoalition.org).

### **ANNUAL MEETING: MAY 25, 2017, 8:00AM - 12:00PM**

The Oregon Water Coalition will hold its annual meeting on Thursday, May 25 from 8:00am-12:00pm. This meeting will be held jointly with the Northeast Oregon Water Association (NOWA), and members from both organizations will be in attendance. This half-day event will be held at the Hermiston Chamber of Commerce and will begin with a breakfast. The meeting will serve as a forum to provide updates about the Oregon Water Coalition and NOWA, as well as host speakers to address local issues of interest. The full agenda will be posted at [oregonwatercoalition.org/events](http://oregonwatercoalition.org/events) in the coming weeks. To RSVP or ask questions, please contact Marika ([marika@oregonwatercoalition.org](mailto:marika@oregonwatercoalition.org)) or 541-969-8938.

## Online News and the Newsletter

In the past, the OWC website curated a rotating selection of relevant articles from regional publications. Although that website is no longer in use, our Facebook page now serves a similar purpose. On Facebook, we share water-related articles from *Capital Press*, the *East Oregonian*, *The Statesman Journal*, and other sources. If you are on Facebook, and you “like” or “follow” our page, you’ll be able to see the articles the OWC shares on your own newsfeed. You can also visit the home page of our website for links to all the articles: [oregonwatercoalition.org](http://oregonwatercoalition.org)

After publishing a monthly newsletter for many years, the Oregon Water Coalition took a hiatus last year. The OWC will be introducing a new electronic newsletter which will be sent out via email. If you would like to subscribe and stay in the loop, please visit [oregonwatercoalition.org/newsletters](http://oregonwatercoalition.org/newsletters) or email Marika ([marika@oregonwatercoalition.org](mailto:marika@oregonwatercoalition.org))

## New Projects and Initiatives

Since January, the Oregon Water Coalition has been working to lay the groundwork for its new endeavors. The newly launched website features a selection of irrigation and agriculture fact sheets created through a collaboration with the SAGE Center. We hope to continue working with the SAGE Center in the coming months.

In April, the OWC applied for a grant from the Wildhorse Foundation to support the ‘Sustainable Ag Blast’ conference. The goal of this conference is to bring representatives of media sources and environmental groups from the western side of the state to Eastern Oregon for an immersive three-day conference focusing on the economic value of agriculture to the region, and the developments in water use efficiency in the Basin. More details on this event will be forthcoming.

In late 2017 or early 2018, the Oregon Water Coalition will host a Water Summit geared towards Coalition members and citizens of northeastern Oregon. The aim of this conference will be to bring together farmers and business from beyond the Umatilla Basin to discuss regional water challenges and potential solutions. Details of this event will also be forthcoming.

### BOARD MEMBERS

Bill Porfily, President  
Ray Kopacz, Vice President  
JR Cook, Secretary/Treasurer  
Gibb Evans  
Greg Juul  
Jake Madison  
Mike Wick  
Tammie Williams

### CONTACT INFORMATION

*Address*  
243 SE 4<sup>th</sup> Street  
Pendleton, OR 97801

*Coordinator Contact*  
Marika Sitz  
[marika@oregonwatercoalition.org](mailto:marika@oregonwatercoalition.org)  
541-969-8938