



LYRA FONTAINE/CANNON BEACH GAZETTE

Haystack Rock Awareness Program coordinator Melissa Keyser educates beachgoers on how microplastics harm sea birds and other marine life.

Protecting turtles from nurdles

Groups partner for microplastics cleanup event

By Lyra Fontaine
Cannon Beach Gazette

What’s in the sand and how it impacts beach life is a matter of concern for environmentalists and nature-lovers. Haystack Rock Awareness Program and Sleepy Monk Coffee partnered with Sea Turtles Forever to start what they hope will become a monthly microplastics cleanup event, which would be open to the public and at different beach locations.

Participants from Sleepy Monk Coffee and Haystack Rock Awareness Program were hard at work filtering sand for microplastics — tiny plastic bits that can harm sea mammals or sea birds when ingested.

On Aug. 10, the small team used a microplastics filtration

system with static-charged technology. The screen helps make filtering for tiny plastics easier and is patented by Marc Ward, president of Sea Turtles Forever, a nonprofit organization dedicated to marine turtle conservation.

When curious passerby stopped at the education stand on the beach, Haystack Rock Awareness Program coordinator Melissa Keyser helped them learn about nurdles, tiny pellets of raw plastic that float and look like food to birds and fish. Keyser educated beach visitors on both the problem of plastic debris and solutions.

The group worked near Haystack Rock, but some areas on the beach, like Whale Park, have a denser amount of debris.

“We picked up as much as we can,” Frances Holtman, Haystack Rock Awareness Program volunteer coordinator, said. “A lot of people learned about microplastics today.”

The next cleanup is on Sep. 28.

Thirty years of success

Land trust celebrates its achievements, anniversary

By Dan Haag
EO Media Group

Whether you live on the North Oregon Coast or just visit from time to time, it’s easy to take the area’s natural beauty for granted. Surrounded as we are by pristine beaches, swaths of forest and mountain vistas, we often assume it has always been and will always be this way.

But without attention to conservation and action by passionate local advocates, forests and fields could be covered in housing developments, high rises and clear cuts.

As the North Coast Land Conservancy prepares to celebrate 30 years of conserving natural landscapes on the Oregon Coast, the nonprofit land trust knows its best works are yet to come.

Time to celebrate

For three decades, North Coast Land Conservancy’s focus has been on stewardship actions with a mission of conservation at its core. It’s a mission with multiple facets: land acquisition projects, facilitating habitat development, and participating in community outreach programs.

The goal of all of this has always been a fully functioning coastal landscape where people, plants and wildlife thrive.

From its grassroots beginnings, NCLC has evolved into



DANNY MILLER/EO MEDIA GROUP

Jon Wickersham, associate director of North Coast Land Conservancy, and Lynette Villagomez, administrative and outreach assistant, walk the trail at NCLC’s Circle Creek Habitat Reserve in Seaside.

an organization that is responsible for coastal property from Astoria to Lincoln City.

Jon Wickersham, associate director of NCLC, says the organization now manages over 3,000 acres north to south, from the tip of the coast range into the ocean.

That includes the newly enhanced 365-acre Circle Creek Habitat Reserve property in Seaside and the recently acquired 340-acre Boneyard Ridge on Tillamook Head, which shares a mile-long border with Circle Creek.

With those projects coinciding with the 30-year anniversary of NCLC, the time seemed right to share the celebration.

‘Right path forward’

NCLC is especially proud of the Boneyard Ridge property and with good reason; it is the culmination of nearly five years of work by staff and volunteers.

“We’re all very excited about this one,” Wickersham says. “The sweet spot is usually about three years or so to do a project, depending on complexity and the price tag.”

Not only was Boneyard Ridge one of the most time-consuming projects NCLC has tackled, it was also the most expensive, coming in at \$1.3 million.

“As you can imagine, it took us awhile to figure out the right path forward,” Wickersham says.

Conservancy honored with national distinction

North Coast Land Conservancy, headquartered in Seaside, announced it has achieved accreditation.

North Coast Land Conservancy has been working since 1986 to conserve and connect the landscape of the Oregon Coast. To date NCLC has conserved nearly 4,800 acres of forest, wetland, and coastal prairie habitat.

NCLC was among 38 land trusts across the United States to achieve accreditation or to have accreditation renewed in August. The Land Trust Accreditation Commission awarded the accreditation.

The land was purchased from Greenwood Resources, and monetary support was garnered from more than 120 private donations and a \$524,000 grant from the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board, the funding agency for acquisitions and protection of watersheds in the state.

“There’s no way we could have done this without private donations or the help of Greenwood,” Wickersham says.

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