



COASTVIEW

NORTH COAST LAND CONSERVANCY

SUMMER 2026



10 YEARS OF WEED WARRIOR WEDNESDAYS

The idea came about organically back in 2016. The prior two years, North Coast Land Conservancy had received grants to bring on crews to help with stewardship during the summer season.

Without a crew or funding for it during the summer of 2016, NCLC's stewardship team brainstormed a different approach to increase capacity. And that was the origin of Weed Warrior Wednesdays, a weekly

program wherein volunteers join NCLC's stewardship staff in the field, working on various projects. There's no sign-up required, except to get on the email list to learn about where and when that week's activity will be held.

"That's a really nice, low barrier for volunteering," says Stewardship Manager Eric Owen. "You don't have to commit. You can decide that morning, day of.

And from NCLC's perspective, since the stewardship staff is already doing the field work, Weed Warrior Wednesdays are a low-key and cost-effective way to "get a little bit more done," using any or all volunteers available that week, Eric says. "Any given person can show up on any given day." Yet, the results have been outstanding.

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WATCHING OVER THE SEA STARS

For five summers, volunteers have been diligently visiting Short Sand Beach, along the Cape Falcon Marine Reserve, to monitor sea star populations residing on prominent boulders within the tidepools.

They carefully count the sea stars on the rocks, measure them, and take photographs of any stars

that seem to be suffering from Sea Star Wasting Syndrome (SSWS)—or sea star wasting disease. Information on the sizes and types of sea stars, as well as whether they are sick or healthy, is sent to the Multi-Agency Rocky Intertidal Network (MARiNe), a large consortium of research groups

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Volunteers conduct sea star surveys at Short Sand Beach, along the Cape Falcon Marine Reserve.

INSIDE

Expanding Critical Habitat in the Rainforest Reserve

REMEMBERING TOM HORNING: DEVOTED FRIEND, VOLUNTEER, AND BOARD MEMBER

North Coast Land Conservancy lost not just a great friend but its longest-standing board member when Seaside geologist Tom Horning died May 29 after a series of surgeries for aneurysms. He was 72.

Surely you've met Tom. If you're of a certain age, he may have delivered your newspaper. Maybe he was your Seaside city councilor or planning commissioner. Perhaps you joined an NCLC-sponsored geology walk or heard Tom present a talk about the unusual geology of the 3,500-acre Rainforest

Reserve above Arch Cape that he helped conserve. Maybe you were lucky

enough to overhear him at Gearhart's former Pacific Way Café some weekend morning as he reclined against the wall and shared his memories of the 1964 tsunami from Alaska, how it nearly

'[TOM] NEVER MISSED AN OPPORTUNITY TO PROMOTE NCLC'S ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND VISION AND TO ENCOURAGE ITS SUPPORT.'

swept him and his brother out to sea as it surged into the Necanicum River and up Neawanna Creek, surrounding his family home.

Tom lived his first five years in the forest at Crown Camp, moved briefly to Milwaukie, then grew up in the Venice Park neighborhood of Seaside and

attended Seaside High School. At Oregon State University, after studying chemistry and nuclear engineering,

he discovered a passion for geology, earning bachelor's and master's degrees. After college he prospected all over the Western Hemisphere, from Peru to British Columbia and east as far as Pennsylvania

and Georgia, but he loved his home state and hometown. In 1994 he moved back into his childhood home in Seaside, which he came to share with his wife Kirsten, and opened his own geological consulting service. By then scientists had identified a major fault lying off the Pacific Northwest coast: the Cascadia Subduction Zone. Tom was ideally suited, by education and disposition, to become a leading voice urging the community to take earthquake and tsunami preparation seriously.

In 1996, Tom joined the NCLC Board of Directors. In his 30 years with NCLC, he served on nearly every committee and as president, vice-president, and secretary. He never missed an opportunity to promote NCLC's accomplishments and vision and to encourage its support.

- By Bonnie Henderson



IS CONSERVATION PART OF YOUR LEGACY PLAN?

If you have included NCLC in your estate plans, we'd love to know so we can include you in our Coast Legacy Circle! Please email us at nclc@NCLCtrust.org or call 503-738-9126.

SEA STARS

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working together to collect data that is entered into a centralized database hosted by the University of California, Santa Cruz. From there, researchers can assess the long-term, broad-scale impact of the disease and make predictions about recovery.

Sea stars are a keystone species, or an organism that helps hold marine ecosystems together. Kathleen Callan, a long-time volunteer for the

program, says it's moving to "witness this balance that happens in nature and how it's all important to the beauty of our planet."

The Cape Falcon site was established in the spring of 2022. Each year, from May to October, volunteers with NCLC's program, like Kathleen, visit Short Sand Beach, in Oswald West State Park, at least once per month for data collection. They focus primarily on ochre sea stars, which are found in the rocky intertidal area and don't

require special equipment to survey—just a low tide.

"There is definitely still evidence of disease that we see every time we make observations, but it is encouraging to now see more healthy than diseased stars," Marine Program Manager Angela Whitlock says. "I've also been very encouraged by the amount of juvenile star recruitment. I often find baby stars tucked away in the protection of mussel beds."

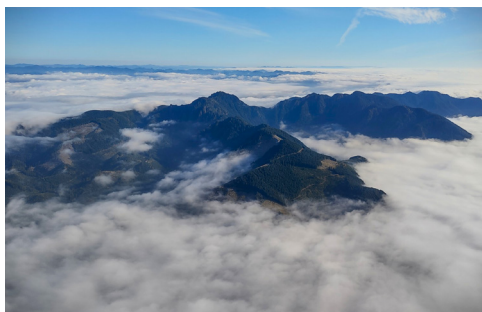
Read more at nclctrust.org/news/sea-star-surveys-2026.

NCLC EXPANDS THE RAINFOREST RESERVE

The Rainforest Reserve, situated in the Oregon Coast Range between Cannon Beach and Manzanita, is home to a diverse array of rare and precious plants and wildlife, in addition to providing a natural backdrop for communities along the North Coast.

Originally conserved in October 2021, after a five-year fundraising campaign, North Coast Land Conservancy has now expanded this 3,500-acre reserve by an additional 80 acres, purchased on Jan. 7, 2026. This newly conserved land is located on the southeastern border of the Rainforest Reserve and features a similar abundance of upland forest and rocky outcroppings.

Located adjacent to Oswald West



Onion Peak and the Angora Peak Complex are the main fixtures within the Rainforest Reserve. Photo by Randall Henderson

State Park and above Cape Falcon Marine Reserve, the Rainforest Reserve is part of an uninterrupted 32-square-mile conservation corridor that stretches from the summits of 3,000-foot peaks

within the Oregon Coast Range to Short Sand Beach and the sandy seabed and rocky reefs of the nearshore ocean. The entire corridor is brimming with critical habitat for a wide array of wildlife and plant species, to help them adapt to a changing world, while also supporting the surrounding communities.

Since acquiring the Rainforest Reserve, NCLC has been active in conserving adjacent lands and waters to expand the existing corridor and enhance habitat connectivity. The new 80.57-acre property, in particular, has been a priority, as its conservation further protects Onion Peak, which contains uniquely sensitive habitats and rare species, such as the ancient black petaltail dragonfly.

A TRAJECTORY OF HEALING: REMOVING ROADS TO REWILD THE RAINFOREST

North Coast Land Conservancy has completed the first phase in an ongoing project to decommission roads in the Rainforest Reserve to help rewild the landscape and prevent erosion that can have detrimental impacts on the watershed.

As a former timber farm, the Rainforest Reserve included roughly 16 miles of logging roads when NCLC acquired it in 2021. An ecological assessment of those roads found that without intervention, the roads and associated culverts posed a significant risk to fish and amphibian habitat, as well as community drinking water sources below.

As a result, a broadscale roads assessment was completed as part of management planning for the reserve. The goal was to identify which roads are necessary and which pose the greatest risk. For several decades, it's been known that deteriorating roads in the mountains can have a negative impact, particularly if they cross a stream or river.

"You bring crushed gravel and

put millions of pounds of it on the mountainside," NCLC Stewardship Manager Colin Meston explains. "It causes this ongoing erosion."

A landslide can cause sediment and debris to fall into the water, creating downstream problems throughout the watershed. Meanwhile, maintaining a road along a steep mountain, which involves replacing culverts, is costly.

Once the roads assessment was completed, the first phase of decommissioning began last fall in partnership with the Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) and Arch Cape Community Forest staff. NCLC elected to remove the culverts and then unpack the road materials and recontour them to mimic the natural angles of the mountain slopes.

"When you don't have that shelf, it's less likely it would erode," Colin says. The team also has replanted diverse species of trees, shrubs and wildflowers to stabilize the new bank.

Read more at nclctrust.org/news/road-decommissioning-rainforest.



40th Anniversary Celebration

Noon to 3 p.m.
Saturday, Oct. 3
Circle Creek Conservation Center

We're hosting a party to celebrate 40 years of conservation on the Oregon Coast. Join us for food, beverages (courtesy of Public Coast Brewing), dessert, music, a guided walk, and other activities for all ages, and more! We look forward to sharing this special occasion with all of you.



*Helping to
conserve Oregon's
coastal lands and
waters, forever.*

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WEED WARRIORS

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"We get so much done and we're very productive," Eric says. "We're able to accomplish a lot."

This past July, the team celebrated 10 years of Weed Warrior Wednesdays with a stewardship activity, followed by a party at the Circle Creek Conservation Center. About 30 individuals participated, including NCLC staff, longtime Weed Warriors, new volunteers, and staff from the U.S. National Park Service and the Lewis and Clark National Historical Park.

It was a chance to look back on the program and what it has accomplished. During that time, Weed Warriors have worked on 20 out of NCLC's 35 habitat reserves. They've treated at least 19 invasive weed species, including purple loosestrife, English ivy, holly, yellow iris, reed canary grass, Scotch broom, and knotweed, to name a few.

Throughout the years, the program has occasionally engaged with eight different partners, including nonprofit organizations, municipalities, federal and state agencies, and individual landowners.



Read more at
[nclctrust.org/
news/W3-10-
years](http://nclctrust.org/news/W3-10-years)



*Above: Volunteers at a
Weed Warrior Wednesday in 2016, the year
the program was started. Left: A new
generation of Weed Warriors joined the 10th
anniversary outing in July 2026.*

Additionally, although named Weed Warrior Wednesdays, volunteers have tackled at least 11 different types of projects, from native plantings and seed collection to community cleanups, fence building, and trail maintenance. As Eric explains, the volunteers allow for a balanced approach that includes tackling known recurring weed work that has to be done

seasonally (such as Scotch broom in May and June, policeman's helmet in July, and purple loosestrife in August) and also providing the flexibility to work on unexpected or urgent stewardship activities as they arise.

What started as 22 volunteers on the email list in 2017 has grown to 221 volunteers in 2026, and there's never been a week where no one showed up. The program also has expanded from being seasonal (May to September) to year-round, with occasional breaks for holidays or when staff is occupied with larger projects.

"It's cool there's that much momentum and interest and attendance," Eric says.

He notes that the concept is not necessarily unique to NCLC, or something they invented, "but it is a successful program and a great example of what organizations can do if they build up volunteer support and capacity."

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