

Our water originates in ...

# The Clackamas River Watershed

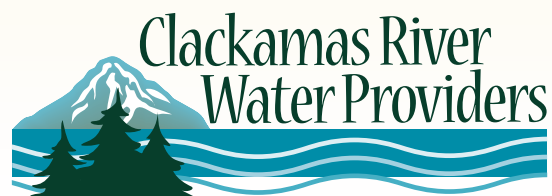
We are very lucky that the **Clackamas River** provides us with a high quality water source. However, unlike the City of Portland's Bull Run watershed, which is protected, the Clackamas is considered a multi-use watershed with various users and ownership throughout the watershed.

In addition to supplying high-quality drinking water to over 300,000 people in Clackamas County, the Clackamas River watershed also:

- Drains more than 940 square miles, and is made up of 16 subwatersheds
- Flows 83 miles from its headwaters on the slopes of Olallie Butte to its confluence with the Willamette River near Gladstone and Oregon City
- Crosses two counties and includes federal, state, and private land
- Is 72% public owned, 25% privately owned, and 3% tribally owned
- Is home to steelhead, Chinook and coho salmon, as well as lamprey and sea-run cutthroat trout
- Generates hydroelectric power
- Hosts many productive farms and nurseries
- Offers a wealth of recreational activities such as fishing, hiking, camping, white water rafting, kayaking, and hunting
- Provides important habitat for many plant, wildlife and aquatic species
- Sections of the River are designated as Federal and State Wild and Scenic Waterways

## What Can You Do?

- Properly dispose of, or recycle, motor oil, antifreeze, paint, solvents and other toxic materials.
- Wash your car on the lawn to prevent car wash water from entering storm drains.
- Reduce or eliminate your pesticide use to help prevent pesticide runoff.
- Clean up after your pet.
- Conserve water, especially in the summer months when river flows are at their lowest. The more water we save, the more water we can keep in the river for fish.
- Get involved! Attend a Clackamas River Water Providers, city council, or water board meeting.
- Call your water provider for more information.
- Join our local watershed council, the Clackamas River Basin Council. Visit [www.clackamasriver.org](http://www.clackamasriver.org).



*Working together to protect and conserve our drinking water.*

*For more information about our watershed and conservation programs please visit our website:*  
**[www.clackamasproviders.org](http://www.clackamasproviders.org)**

*or contact us at:*

**Clackamas River Water Providers**  
14275 S. Clackamas River Drive  
Oregon City, OR 97045

**(503) 723-3511**

**The Clackamas River Water Providers** serve the *City of Estacada, City of Gladstone, City of Lake Oswego, Clackamas River Water, Oak Lodge Water District, South Fork Water Board (Oregon City and West Linn), and Sunrise Water Authority (Happy Valley and Damascus).*

# The Clackamas River Water Providers



...is a coalition of water providers that get their drinking water from the Clackamas River.

We often take our drinking water for granted until it is threatened, either by drought, water main breaks, or some other emergency.

A safe reliable water supply, however, is critical to the success of any community. It creates jobs, attracts industry and investment, and provides for the health and welfare of citizens in ways ranging from disease prevention to fire suppression.

Because water flows instantly from our faucets we never think of how the water gets from the forest to our taps.

From the  
*forest*  
to the  
**tap**





# From the forest to the tap

**The Clackamas River** begins on the slopes of Olallie Butte. The watershed can roughly be divided in half, with the upper watershed flowing through forested areas over rugged terrain, while in contrast, in the lower watershed the river flows through agriculture and densely populated areas.

Water is taken out of the river and then treated for human consumption. Once water is treated it moves through a complex system of pipes, valves, and pumps to storage tanks or reservoirs. There it is stored until it is needed by homes and businesses in the community.

## The costs of bringing water to your tap

Everyone pays a water bill, either directly, or it is figured into rental costs. Most people have no idea what they are actually paying for.

- **Intake structures** - The *Clackamas River Water Providers* have five intake structures on the Clackamas River where water is taken out of the river. These facilities have to be maintained to function properly.
- **Treatment process** – We represent several different treatment processes - conventional treatment, direct filtration, slow sand, and membrane filtration. Treating and disinfecting water have costs associated with chemical use and electricity. There are also ongoing maintenance costs to ensure that these facilities continue to meet drinking water requirements. Both chemical and electrical costs have increased in the past few years.



- **Testing** – State and Federal drinking water regulations require water providers to meet over 100 different water quality standards. This includes testing done during the water treatment process as well as finished water within the distribution system. Sampling and testing can be very expensive.
- **Moving Water** – Electricity is used to power pumps which move water from the river through treatment and distribution systems.
- **Distribution Systems** – This unseen network of pipes, valves, reservoirs, and pumping stations that move water. Much of this infrastructure is old and needs ongoing maintenance, repair, and/or replacement, all of which costs money.

- **Water Management** – Water providers implement a number of programs to manage public drinking water systems. Two of these are water conservation and source water protection. Both aim to ensure we have plenty of high quality water for years to come.

**All of these things cost money, but we can still provide water at a cost of less than a penny per gallon.** When you compare that to the price of a bottle of water, you will realize what an amazing service our public water systems provide.

So next time you take a drink of water, remember what it takes to get that water to your faucet. Think of the dedicated professionals behind the scenes that make it all happen. Think of our high quality watershed.

## Sustaining a precious resource

Protecting the Clackamas River is one of our top priorities. Maintaining the high quality of our drinking water source can help minimize future treatment costs - allowing us to keep the cost of water low while continuing to protect public health and safety.

The region's water needs are constantly changing - population growth, cities' changing configurations, and ever-tightening State and Federal water quality standards must be met. Our long history of success allows us to face the future with confidence, secure in our ability to meet the challenges that lie ahead, while keeping the cost of water production as low as possible.

Protecting and conserving our drinking water play key roles in making the best overall use of the precious resource we share.

