

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

We are excited to start a new section in NAO's Membership Newsletter. The objective of this section is to highlight representative NAO nonprofit members of various sizes, geographic locations and subsectors to showcase the great work our members are doing across Oregon!



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What does your organization do? Who does it serve:

PBWC works with members of the community to facilitate management of water resources in a way that meets the needs of as many people as possible. We work with landowners, city and county government, farmers, ranchers, recreationists, environmentalists, state regulatory agencies, federal land management agencies, schools and anyone who has an interest in the lakes, streams and rivers of Baker County. Examples of projects include collection of water quality data, native fish habitat surveys, publication of watershed assessments, water efficiency improvement projects, stabilization of streambanks, fish habitat enhancement, outdoor curriculum for school children and educational presentations for the community.

What has been your organization's biggest accomplishment this year?

This year PBWC completed data collection on a five-year effort to establish baseline water quality conditions at 72 sampling sites spread throughout the Powder Basin. Measurements at each site included acidity, water temperature, salt content, water clarity and dissolved oxygen. This data will be used to identify priorities for future projects and allow us to assess how conditions are changing within the waters of the Basin over the long-term.

How has being an NAO member helped you succeed in furthering your organization's mission?

Since we are located in far-eastern Oregon, it is really important for us to stay connected with what is happening in the rest of the state and with other non-profits. NAO has helped us network with other professionals in the field through conferences and trainings. Also, the updates on pertinent legislation from Salem have been very useful for staying up to date with current events.

Anything else you'd like to share?

The saying "Whiskey is for drinking and water is for fighting" may still be true throughout most of the West, but Oregon's Watershed Councils have shown that through collaboration and communication, the management of water resources can actually help build communities as people learn about what their neighbors need to thrive, work together to find solutions and begin to advocate for each other. Water will always be scarce in eastern Oregon, but communities that work together stand the best chance of supporting productive streams, maintaining healthy economies and withstanding both droughts and floods.

*Special thanks to Christo Morris,
Executive Director, Powder Basin Watershed Council*