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The Citizens of Rockaway Beach, Oregon - How One Community Started to Fight for Their Drinking Water and Ended Up Fighting for Us All, Presented by: Nancy Webster, Citizens for Rockaway Beach Watershed Protection; Kate Taylor, Frigate Adventure Travel; Steve Perry, Citizens for Rockaway Beach Watershed Protection; Jason Gonzales, Oregon Wild.

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the line of least resistance.” From 1850 until 1903, California landowners possessed absolute ownership of the groundwater under their land. After 1903, California adopted a correlative rights system for groundwater use. Until 2014, California only regulated its groundwater through local agencies, groundwater ordinances, and basin adjudications.

SGMA is California’s first statewide groundwater management act, and it provides a long-term framework for sustainable management in California by requiring the establishment of Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (“GSAs”) in each county by June 30, 2017. GSAs may be formed in a variety of ways, including: (1) as local public agencies; (2) as a public water agency, county, or municipality; and (3) through a Joint Powers Agreement (“JPA”) or Memorandum of Agreement (“MOA”) between multiple agencies. Each GSA has wide authority to manage the sub-basin(s) on which it sits. GSAs may regulate groundwater well registration, measurements of groundwater extraction and metering, filing of annual reports, well spacing, and basin boundaries. GSAs may also establish sub-basins, limit groundwater extraction, and establish recharge, conjunctive management, or pumping reduction programs. However, to manage sub-basins and basins, GSAs must submit a Groundwater Sustainability Plan (“GSP”), which must include a description of the aquifer, historical data, a discussion of historical and projected water demand and supplies, a detailed map of the basin’s boundaries, and a map identifying existing and potential recharge areas.

Divine discussed how eleven counties in the Sacramento River Hydrologic Region had adapted to SGMA’s requirements by March 2017. For several of these counties, jurisdictional challenges have inhibited progress. With so many applications, it may be hard for these counties to come to a consensus on which GSAs to select. At the same time, however, two counties have received no GSA applications, and another has only received one. Without having a defined GSA before June 30, 2017, several counties will not be able to submit a GSP. Yet, other counties in the region have had more progress. Butte County, Tehama County, and Colusa County have all experienced higher levels of success in preparing for SGMA’s early deadlines. These counties provide an example of what effective, long-term, and local management of groundwater may look like in California.

THE CITIZENS OF ROCKAWAY BEACH, OREGON—HOW ONE
COMMUNITY STARTED TO FIGHT FOR THEIR DRINKING WATER, AND
ENDED UP FIGHTING FOR US ALL, PRESENTED BY: NANCY WEBSTER,
CITIZENS FOR ROCKAWAY BEACH WATERSHED PROTECTION; KATE
TAYLOR, FRIGATE ADVENTURE TRAVEL; STEVE PERRY, CITIZENS FOR
ROCKAWAY BEACH WATERSHED PROTECTION; JASON GONZALES,
OREGON WILD.

This panel featured citizens of Rockaway Beach, Oregon who experienced the destruction of their local watersheds by clearcutting. The panelists spoke about their experiences throughout the clearcutting process, including their frustrations with inaction from both local and state governments.

Rockaway Beach, a small town on the northern Oregon coast, relies on Jetty Creek for its freshwater supply. One panelist described the creek as “a

crevice between hills, but it's our lifeline." Yet, from 2003–2014, timber companies removed eighty-two percent of the trees around Jetty Creek. Overall, timber companies have removed ninety percent of the trees from Jetty Creek. Often, these companies performed aerial sprays of "chemical cocktails" over the trees before and after clearcutting. The State of Oregon does not require timber companies to release information about what chemicals these sprays contain, nor does the state provide notice to locals before sprays occur. The Oregon Forestry Practices Act contains almost no requirements for watershed protection. Furthermore, the City of Rockaway Beach, the municipality with regulatory authority of Jetty Creek, does not require any notification or information on the contents of chemicals.

The combination of a lack of regulatory oversight and an acquiescence to the timber industry has effectively ruined Jetty Creek. Since clearcutting began, levels of trihalomethanes in Jetty Creek have rapidly increased and are far beyond the EPA's suggested levels. Panelists spoke about how logging practices have, among other things, increased turbidity of the creek, harmed local animal populations, left the town with no reliable source of drinking water, and negatively impacted the local water-tourism industry. When trying to seek the help of the local and state official on these issues, panelists said they were met with defensiveness, inaction, and industry protectionism.

Frustrated with the state and city, the citizens performed "citizen science" to prove to regulators that the logging industry has been negatively affecting watersheds. Through citizen action, the panelists and other members of the public have created a series of legislative proposals to limit aerial spraying in the timber industry. Oregon Democratic State Senator Michael E. Dembrow recently sponsored Senate Bill 892, or "The Timber Aerial Spray Right to Know" bill. This bill was accompanied by Senate Bill 500, which provides agriculturalists with a cause of action for damages resulting from timber companies that conduct aerial sprays.

Overall, any short-term gains in the legislature will prove insufficient. The panelists warned that other parts of the Oregon coast, notably Short Sands Beach, are in imminent danger of succumbing to the same fate as Jetty Creek. The only true way to prevent watershed destruction in Oregon, the panelists contended, is to fundamentally reshape the state's approach to the timber industry.

FILM PRESENTATION OF *PAYA: THE WATER STORY OF THE PAIUTE*, FOLLOWED BY A QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION WITH: JENNA CAVELLE, DIRECTOR; HARRY WILLIAMS, BISHOP PAIUTE TRIBAL MEMBER & ACTIVIST; JACKLYN VELASQUEZ, BIG PINE PAIUTE TRIBAL MEMBER & VERMONT LAW SCHOOL; AND CHRIS MORROW, VITERBI GRADUATE SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING.

The landscape in Owens Valley—in arid Inyo County—contains evidence of long-standing irrigation practices predating the American West's colonial era. These dried up channels and diversions come from the people who traditionally inhabited Owens Valley. Today, the descendants of those people belong to the Bishop Paiute, the Big Pine Paiute, and a number of other tribes in the area. The film *Paya: The Water Story of the Paiute* explores a series of extensive pre-historic irrigation systems in the Owens Valley and how evidence of