

Annual Report 2017-2018

W.A.T.E.R.

WE ADVOCATE THOROUGH

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW



IT'S NOT JUST A DROP IN THE BUCKET



Mount Shasta, California

Table of Contents

Mission Statement.....	2
Letter from the Board Chair.....	2
Strategies and Accomplishments.....	3
Strategy 1: Utilizing the Power of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)	3
Strategy 2: Engaging the Community..	4
Strategy 3: Building Collaborative Efforts to Influence Environmental and Economic Policies	7
Financial Report.....	8
Board of Directors.....	9

Mission Statement

The primary objectives and purposes of W.A.T.E.R. shall be to:

- 1) advocate for preservation of natural resources and a healthy environment;
- 2) advocate for long-range community planning and regenerative practices to protect all citizens and to promote a thriving community;
- 3) communicate these concerns to local government officials and agencies;
- 4) encourage community-wide participation through educating the public about these issues;
- 5) defend these issues with public interest litigation activities if necessary.

Dear Friends and Supporters,

What do citizens do when a corporation proposes to build an industry that may be harmful to our community? We organize! W.A.T.E.R. started in response to Crystal Geyser Water Company's proposal to start a beverage bottling operation just outside the City of Mt. Shasta because it has the potential to negatively impact our environment and economy. We have been challenging this project for 5 years and have also become involved in other water issues around the volcano known as Mount Shasta. As revealed in our mission statement above, we believe it is essential to protect our natural environment in order to support positive community and economic progress. Ironically, this puts us in direct conflict with an economic system that is designed to prosper off of exploitation and destruction of the natural environment. Thus we are on a journey to protect our invaluable natural resources, especially water, while building a community and economy that restores and sustains a healthy environment.

We are grateful to the many community supporters who have joined us on this journey by donating time, skills, and financial resources. We would not succeed without you--our accomplishments are yours! We invite you to continue with us into the future.

Sincerely,

Bruce Hillman

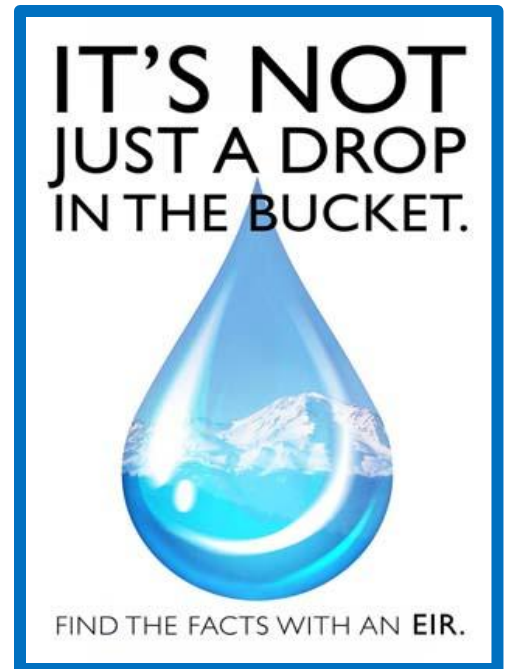
W.A.T.E.R. Board Chair



Key Strategies and Accomplishments

Strategy 1: Utilizing the Power of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

CEQA law provides opportunities for public involvement in the environmental review process. Thus, people who care can actually use CEQA law itself to help protect local environments and natural resources from damaging economic and other interests. Although CEQA is a state law, there is no state agency that oversees its implementation. Rather, local governing bodies are responsible for its enactment, which means that local input and control is possible...and is in fact mandated! CEQA also defines procedures for challenging decisions and actions that citizens believe are inappropriately taken by local agencies.



Accomplishments:

With respect to the Crystal Geyser Water Company (CGWC) project, W.A.T.E.R.:

- engaged diligently in the CEQA process and rallied the community to participate;
- hired environmental and legal expertise to provide information and written reports;
- held forums to communicate with the public and community leaders;
- appealed the Siskiyou County Planning Commission's decision to approve the Final EIR, a "fatally flawed" report according to expert opinions;
- sued Siskiyou County for violation of CEQA after the appeal was denied;
- filed a legal challenge against the City of Mt. Shasta's approval of a wastewater discharge permit for CGWC since the approval relied on the faulty EIR.

With respect to other projects in our area, W.A.T.E.R.:

- submitted comments to the McCloud Community Services District concerning the Notice of Preparation for the EIR of the proposed McCloud Artesian Spring Water Bottling Facility project. The Draft EIR is scheduled to be released in 2019.

Strategy 2: Engaging the Community

In the spirit of the saying “it takes a village...” W.A.T.E.R. has an ongoing commitment to rally community input and support. We are stronger when there is a broad base of ideas and perspectives to promote a thriving and sustainable community that serves and protects all residents. And we have been doing this for 5 years now! There are extensive tasks involved in continuing to press for sustainable economies and the environment, and considerable opportunities to best utilize each person’s interests and skills.

Accomplishments:

- **Postcard Campaign:** Challenging the claims of economic prosperity resulting from a beverage bottling plant.

An economic impact report commissioned for the Crystal Geyser Water Company plant touted many benefits. Because we were concerned about the veracity of the study, W.A.T.E.R. hired a professional economist to analyze the report, and he found many flaws and unsubstantiated conclusions. Hundreds of postcards were distributed to the community members to sign and mail to the Siskiyou County Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors to call their attention to our economist’s findings.

Our economist concluded that the **"study fails to answer the question of whether there is a net benefit of the proposed bottling plant to the Siskiyou County community,"** and the **"study is not a good guide to decision-making around the proposed plant."**

Dear Supervisor:

Noah Enelow, Ph.D., a senior Economist at EcoTrust, reviewed Crystal Geyser Water Company's economic impact analysis of the proposed bottling plant near Mt. Shasta in the study titled, "Economic Impacts of Crystal Geyser on Siskiyou County, California, 2016." This study was authored by the consulting firm Allied Economics of Arizona (hereafter referred to as the AE study).

After thorough analysis, Enelow found "egregious shortcomings" and "a wide range of economic, social, and environmental costs associated with the proposed bottling plant, which the study ignores." He further states, **"the study is not a good guide to decision-making** around the proposed plant. The AE study is riddled with omissions, ambiguities, and faulty assumptions; presents its conclusions out of context; and fails to draw upon the best publicly available data in making its claims."

I ask you to review the full critique at cawater.net for a more detailed accounting of the inadequacies of Crystal Geysers economic claims, and do NOT use the AE studies in evaluating the potential benefits and costs of the CG beverage bottling project.

Sincerely,

- **Public Forums:**

- **"Making Public Hearing Comments: A Public Forum on How to Speak at a Public Hearing,"** November 14, 2017.

Fifteen community members discussed issues pertaining to the Siskiyou County Planning Commission's approval of the Crystal Geyser FEIR. We shared strategies for making public comment at the upcoming appeal hearing by the Board of Supervisors (BOS). At that BOS hearing, 17 people spoke out opposing the approval of the flawed FEIR.

- **"What is happening with the Crystal Geyser EIR?"** January 25, 2018.

After the Siskiyou County Board of Supervisors denied our appeal and approved the FEIR, we initiated a legal challenge. Knowing that part of the litigation process would involve mandatory settlement discussions, we gathered the community to learn what they felt would be appropriate mitigations for the bottling plant impacts. Approximately 40 people attended and shared their perspectives which were incorporated into our list of mitigation demands.



- **Connecting via the Internet and Social Media:** W.A.T.E.R. has an **email list** and sends **monthly e-newsletters** to update the community. We have a **Facebook page** (facebook.com/mtshastawater) with over 600 followers to connect with supporters via social media. Our **web page** provides news, documents, links to articles about W.A.T.E.R. in the media, and more: Go to cawater.net to donate, to sign up for our e-newsletter and find out more.



- **Fundraising Raffle:**

The Gateway Neighborhood Association (GNA) spearheaded a fundraising raffle, “Win-Win for W.A.T.E.R.”, to support W.A.T.E.R.'s work. It was gratifying to experience the generosity of 50 local businesses and community members who donated \$7,000 worth of fabulous prizes! Five grand prize packages and 30 individual prizes were given away. A public celebration was held and winning tickets were drawn on September 16, 2017 and the event shown “live” on Facebook.

- **Volunteers:**

“Friends of Water” is a group of local volunteers that helps with many outreach and fundraising activities.

Volunteers have been active in:

- writing "letters to the editor" to local newspapers;
- submitting written comments for the CEQA process;
- commenting at public meetings and hearings;
- having a presence at court hearings;
- participating in post card campaigns;
- helping with tabling and community events;
- helping with fundraising efforts.



Also...

- An ensemble of professional local musicians performed a spirited classical music concert and donated the profits to W.A.T.E.R.

- A pair of local artists teamed up to make beautiful "We All Live Downstream" mugs with the help of volunteers, and the profits were donated to W.A.T.E.R.

Strategy 3: Building Collaborative Efforts to Influence Environmental and Economic Policies

From our beginning, W.A.T.E.R. has collaborated closely with various groups who are interested in protecting our local environment and natural resources. Together, we are stronger and collectively we have a range of perspectives, history and information that provides a powerful force for preservation, positive growth and sustainability for our region.

Accomplishments and Alliances:

- W.A.T.E.R. is co-petitioner with the **Winnemem Wintu Tribe** in the law suits challenging the validity of the FEIR.
- W.A.T.E.R. collaborates on an ongoing basis with the **Gateway Neighborhood Association** (GNA) which represents residents who live around the CGWC plant, some of whom have experienced negative effects during previous plant operations.
- W.A.T.E.R. is participating in the **Mt. Shasta City's** process for revising the City's General Plan, providing input on issues related to environmental protections that will support the tourism economy.
- W.A.T.E.R. members attend the **NGO Groundwater Collaborative** and the **Sierra Water Working Group** meetings. These groups work with State legislatures and the Department of Water Resources in fixing loopholes in law and legislation for California groundwater.
- W.A.T.E.R. is a member of the **Upper Sacramento Regional Water Action Group**, which is a collaborative effort to manage water resources in our region. This collaborative also competes for grants from the Department of Water Resources for local water infrastructure improvements and projects designed to collect data including monitoring groundwater levels.
- A W.A.T.E.R. member has been part of **Groundwater Monitoring projects** in the area surrounding the CGWC plant and in the larger Mt. Shasta Volcanic Watershed.

2017-2018 Financial Report

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Income		
Contributions-Restricted		3,620.00
Contributions-Unrestricted		<u>63,683.96</u>
Total Income		67,303.96
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Expenses		
Business Expenses		1,453.79
Contract Services		
Legal Fees (Mooney, Burch)	32,437.30	
Environmental Expert Contract fees	<u>18,022.50</u>	
Total Contract Services		50,459.80
Operations		507.50
Insurance (liability, D&O)		2,261.66
Total Expenses		54,682.75
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Total Net Income		12,621.21

Thank You!!!

Our heartfelt thanks go to the many individuals who have supported our cause with a donation. Many thanks to the Shasta Regional Community Foundation for organizing the North State Giving Tuesday on-line fundraising event. Special thanks to Berryvale Natural Foods and Grocery for hosting a "Round Up" fundraiser for W.A.T.E.R.!

We are grateful to the following funding organizations for their support in 2017-2018:

- Lush Fresh Handmade Cosmetics
- Patagonia
- Resist
- Rose Foundation Northern California Environmental Grass Roots Fund
- Shasta Regional Community Foundation
- Story of Stuff

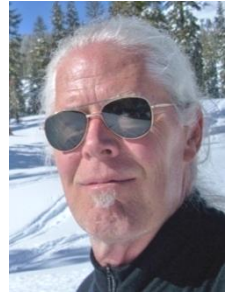
W.A.T.E.R.'s Board of Directors



Bruce Hillman, President (Printing Industry Digital Imaging and Production Specialist). “Since my college days I have been active in movements for economic, racial and environmental justice. In 2013 I heard of Crystal Geyser’s plan to open a plant with no environmental review required, and realized that this issue was where 'local meets global.' I could not ignore the effects of this plant on the water, air, plastic pollution, and global warming. We then organized the W.A.T.E.R. group to take on these issues.”

Frank Toriello, Vice President (Retired Journeyman Machinist and Woodworker).

“The genesis of my participation in W.A.T.E.R. sprang from my outrage at the 2000 election combined with my anti-war feelings that re-emerged from this country’s response to 9/11. The disingenuous actions of corporations and governments that W.A.T.E.R.’s work has revealed have been greatly motivating and, along with the solidarity and growing friendships in W.A.T.E.R., keep me committed to our endeavor.”



Roslyn McCoy, Treasurer (Retired, Army Corps of Engineers, Equal Employment Opportunity Office; currently an In-Home Healthcare Provider). “My motivation is 'Think Globally, Act Locally.' I am a member of W.A.T.E.R. because this group is a strong watchdog, making sure that we are protected from corporations that might exploit our community and environment.”

Geneva M. Omann, Ph.D. (Biochemistry), Secretary (Retired, formerly on Faculty at the University of Michigan Medical Center, Departments of Surgery and Biological Chemistry). “I believe that grass roots efforts are the only thing that will bring positive change. I am deeply inspired by the dedicated and talented people in the W.A.T.E.R. core leadership team and others who work with and support us.”



Raven Stevens, Member (Animal Communicator). “It’s an honor to be on the Board of W.A.T.E.R. and to work with the larger community. It’s important to give voice to the serious issues regarding the industrial extraction of water, potential damage to domestic wells and the planned degradation of our clean air and pure water. Together, we are stronger.”

Daniel Axelrod, Ph.D. (Physics), Member (Emeritus Professor of Physics, University of Michigan). “My political perspective is the glue that holds together and sustains all the political work in which I have been involved over many decades. This fundamental problem of private corporate power, of course, goes far beyond any local issues in the rural Mt. Shasta area. But even our small region sees the shadow of a system based on concentrated private wealth, in the form of a multinational pharmaceutical company trying to privatize water resources here without regard to environmental or community concerns.”





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