



Cape Meares Community Launches Conservation Project to Protect its Forest, Waterways and Lifeways

- **Cape Meares Watershed Conservancy Project created to preserve the Cape Meares Forest and Coleman Creek Watershed through community forest land acquisition**
- **\$1.8M funds to be raised in securing forest land**
- **A major milestone in preserving and safeguarding habitat for now and future generations**

For the local communities that live around Cape Meares, their connection to the forest is deep, and touches many aspects of their lives. A potential logging effort on a 120+ acres of privately held forest threatens the biodiversity and stability of Cape Meares Forest, and will have a huge impact on the life of the community.

The Cape Meares Water Conservancy Project was established as an urgent call to acquire and preserve the privately held forest land. The effort would expand the existing contiguous Cape Meares Community Forest, protecting the hydrologic function of the watershed, the water source for the Cape Meares Community, and maintaining recreational access for the community. The effort would strengthen the connections between waters, landscapes, and lifeways that also include Cape Meares Lake and Bayocean Spit.

Cape Meares is an Oregon coastal forest and beach community, located where the Pacific Ocean meets the Tillamook Bay, on the historic lands of the indigenous Tillamook people. Embedded in a rich historical context, Cape Meares features outstanding recreation and wildlife habitat values, with physical connections to the Cape Meares National Wildlife Refuge and Lighthouse, the Cape Meares Community Forest, the Oregon Coast Trail, Lake Meares, and its own distinctive ecosystem, hikes and wildlife. It's a treasure unto itself, a hidden gem on the Pacific Coast.

With much effort between the private owner and Cape Meares Community Association (CMCA), the development and logging of the forest land was halted. Parties voluntarily entered into a mutually beneficial agreement for an equitable transfer, sale and partial donation of the land to CMCA if CMCA can raise the required \$1.8M to purchase the "Subject Property" by Fall of 2023.

If successful, the conserved forest land would surround and forever protect almost the entire southern and eastern boundaries of the Cape Meares community. This is the largest remaining parcel contiguous with the community forest, encompassing Coleman Creek. Its acquisition would be a rare and momentous step to preserve and safeguard its nature and habitat both now and for future generations. The success of this project could also set an example for other communities around the country in their conservation initiatives.

Background:

The Cape Meares Watershed Conservancy Project was initiated in October 2021 when the community was alerted to a logging operation underway on private forest land in the Cape Meares-Coleman Creek Watershed. Coleman Creek is the sole source of water for the people of Cape Meares and the spring-fed fish-bearing creeks flow through the forest to the wetlands and sustain the largest freshwater lake in Tillamook County.

Community volunteers maintain a network of trails throughout both forest parcels connecting and intersecting with flowing creeks, verdant hillsides, and scenic vistas. As in many places on the Oregon coast, this area is landslide prone, with documented historic deep-seated landslides and surface land instability.

The forested hillsides wrap around the southern and eastern edges of the Cape Meares neighborhood. The trees in the area were last harvested in the early 1970s. Today, the recovered natural landscape features old growth forest characteristics with mature stands of alder, hemlock, and spruce trees and northwest native understory. The harvest of this mature forest acreage would create gaps in tree canopy and the network of root structures, increase erosion, and further de-stabilize the ground, potentially leading to large-scale flooding and landslides that could adversely impact the hydrologic function of the Watershed.

Long-Term Benefits / Strategic Partnerships:

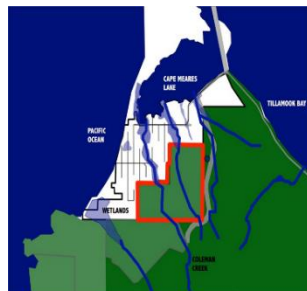
In addition to the short-term outcome of the land purchase and protection, this project also provides longterm public, County and community infrastructure benefits, including building on work already completed to protect community water sources, build community resilience, and provide long term stability and safety for the community.

Oceanside Water District and the Cape Meares community have made strategic investments in watershed protection. In September of 2014 a new 200,000-gallon water tank was installed for Cape Meares residents. The purchase of the Subject Property supports those investments. The map highlights the location of Oceanside Water District – Cape Meares Water Tank and infrastructure that could be adversely impacted by the harvest of the timber on the slope immediately below the tank.

Near-term project outcomes to preserve the entire Cape Meares Community Forest (CMCA Forest joined with the Subject Property ~ 226 acres) would further support long-term investments in the new Three Capes Scenic Loop Road, secure public access to the trails system, enhanced fish and wildlife protections, and will benefit our forest neighbors: Tillamook County Parks, Oregon State Parks, and Cape Meares National Wildlife Refuge.

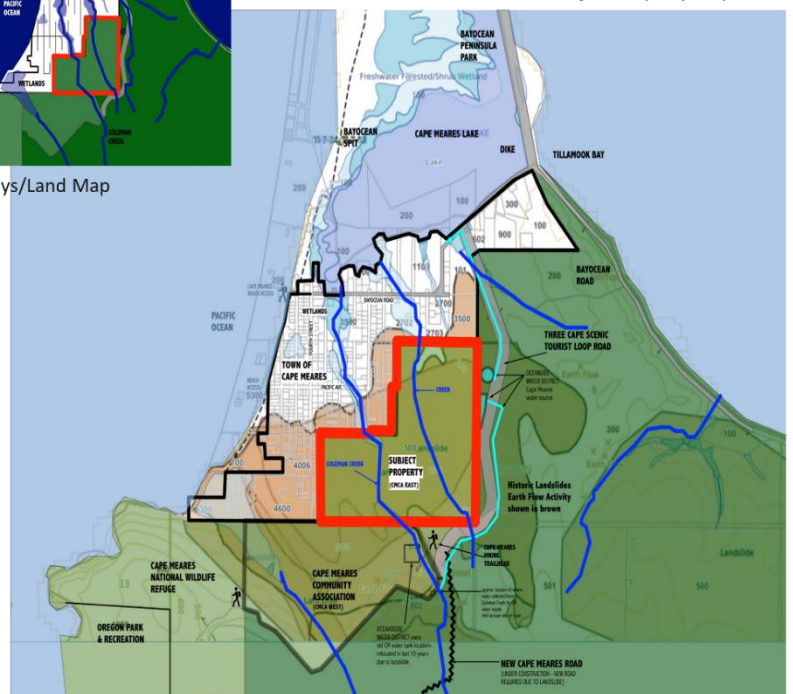
Who we are:

The Cape Meares community is a diverse group of stakeholders tied together by this unique place and distinctive location, and rich in a living history. The Cape Meares Community Association (CMCA) is a charitable organization that serves as a catalyst to promote social interaction and exchange of ideas around common educational interests, environmental stewardship, historical preservation, and community well-being.



Waterways/Land Map

Town of Cape Meares and Subject Property Map



The CMCA owns and manages 106 acres of the Cape Meares Community Forest, a small beachfront wetland parcel, and the Barbara Bennett Community Center in the historic Bayocean Schoolhouse. With Federal Emergency Preparedness grant funds, the Cape Meares Community Association developed an Emergency Management Plan and has been implementing that plan with grant funding, charitable donations, and countless hours of volunteer labor. These community assets are supported, and values extended, through the purchase of the 120+ acres of forest land that borders the neighborhood and the CMCA Forest property.



Through community engagement, volunteer support, and charitable contributions the CMCA is well positioned to take the lead on watershed conservancy, already succeeding in the first step of reaching an agreement to purchase for conservation the 119 acres of private timberland and 15 undeveloped residential lots adjacent to the Cape Meares Community Forest.

The Cape Meares Community Association is pleased to announce our partnership with the North Coast Land Conservancy and the Oregon Community Foundation to work cooperatively on the mission of protection for the Waters, Landscapes and Lifeways of Cape Meares.

CALL TO ACTION

OUR NEED IS URGENT as we expect to close on the purchase of the 120+ acres for the Cape Meares Community Forest expansion by the end of 2023.

DONATE to our mission to Conserve and Protect the Waters, Landscapes and Lifeways of Cape Meares.

SUPPORT Cape Meares Watershed Conservancy as a Volunteer to assist with project development, fundraising, and on-site forest management projects.

ENGAGE in Cape Meares Community Forest tours and outreach activities to stay in touch with the progress of our watershed conservation.

A scenic view of a rocky beach with driftwood in the foreground. The ocean is visible on the left, and mountains are in the background under a clear blue sky.

Cape Meares Community Association is a 501(c)(3) Charitable Organization
DONATIONS TO THE CMCA FOR THE CAPE MEARES WATERSHED CONSERVANCY PROJECT ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE.

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