

Water for Citizens of Weed, California:
Community Update and Call to Action
July 2019

Demand Transparency and the Opportunity for Public Input!

For more than three years Water for Citizens of Weed, California (WCWC) has been fighting against the unethical attempted grab of our community's main source of drinking water, Beaghan Springs, by Roseburg Forest Products. We would like to provide an update to our community on the current status of this struggle.

Despite all of our efforts and the fact that we have uncovered strong historical evidence of the City's legal and ethical right to this water, and even in the face of strong community opposition and extensive publicity, Roseburg is continuing to use legal bullying to force the City to either give up our water completely or otherwise pay Roseburg an exorbitant sum for water that is already ours!

Current Situation: In May, 2017 Roseburg Forest Products sued the City of Weed over the rights to Beaghan Springs water. The City counter-sued. Over two years later the case is still in the court system. Roseburg's case against the City is slowly depleting City coffers, and it is likely that if/when Roseburg were to lose, they would just appeal and keep dragging this expensive legal process out for years to come, thus using the threat of their seemingly unlimited legal resources to intimidate the City into submission. This has reached the point where we have heard that some on the City Council believe the City can no longer afford to pursue this case in court. This would mean that, despite all the evidence we have gathered arguing for our community's historical right to this water, that the case may never have its day in court. (For a summary of these issues see: <https://waterforweedca.org/brief-summary>).

The security of our City's water supply and our future access to Beaghan Springs water remains a matter of critical importance and of great ongoing concern to many people in our community, yet the City of Weed and our council members have not discussed this publicly and we have been unable to get any updates on the City's lawsuit against Roseburg for many months. This implies that some sort of negotiations may be underway. However, the public has not been informed of any details regarding such negotiations or other strategies and remedies the City may be considering in order to secure water for the City.

Weed citizens are worried that huge decisions may be made in secret without any transparency or public input into the process, costly decisions that could result in the City caving in to Roseburg and thus requiring large increases in water fees or taxes for the Citizen.

WCWC calls on our City Council to create a Public Forum so:

- the public can learn about the status of the legal case and any alternative strategies under consideration for securing our community's water.
- the community can provide informed input to our Council members.

What you can do: Contact your Council members, ask them for an update on the situation and request that they refrain from making any irrevocable decisions concerning our water without providing a public justification and opportunity for hearing from the citizens of our community!!! This needs to be done as soon as possible!!!

OTHER UPDATES:

Crystal Geyser Roxane’s Dirty Tactics Revealed:

Crystal Geyser Roxane, the same company operating in Weed, is trying to open up a new water bottling operation in Randle, Washington, near Mount Rainier. Earlier this month the company’s chief operating officer accidentally sent an email intended for the company president to the local newspaper. The email revealed the dirty tactics CGR is willing to sink to in its efforts to take over that community’s water. These included hiring a public relations firm to form a fake “grassroots” organization to try to counter opposition to its efforts, making intentionally distorted threats to scare the community and even suing the local community to get its way. Sound familiar? This revelation raises up some serious questions about the corporate responsibility, ethics and tactics of CGR right here in our own community. It all involves the same people in the same company. For the full article and copy of the email see: http://www.chronline.com/news/crystal-geyser-mistakenly-emails-chronicle-randle-bottling-project-likely-dead/article_cd562296-a434-11e9-85e8-03a953d811a6.html

Status of the “Weed 9”: When Roseburg sued the City of Weed they also sued nine community members and WCWC for speaking out on the issue. This was clearly an intimidation tactic designed to silence people opposed to Roseburg’s unethical and greedy water grab. Due to great legal representation from The First Amendment Project, the lawsuit was ruled an illegal “SLAPP” suit by the Superior Court in December, 2017. However, in early 2018 Roseburg appealed the decision to the appellate state-level court and since then has dragged the lawsuit out as long as possible. Roseburg’s appeal of the Superior court decision is just more evidence of its reliance on legal bullying in order to get its way. Despite Roseburg’s huge legal resources, our lawyers are confident we will prevail in the appellate court. However, prevailing on our SLAPP suit only releases the nine individuals and WCWC from the lawsuit. This will NOT affect the status of the City’s legal battle with Roseburg over our water.

Testimonial from the Weed 9: "Hello, I am Mike Yates, one of the Weed 9 trying to save our water. Without going into details, I can tell you that after four years of fighting for our water we are about to lose it within a few months. If you don't act right now, it will be too late. Call the City Council members, write your state Senator, the Attorney General's office, Weed City Manager, Roseburg Forest Products asking them to reconsider their position and most of all tell your friends and neighbors to act now or what the future will bring is much higher water costs for poorer quality water."
Please read this newsletter to find out more about what is happening and how YOU can ACT NOW.

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Municipal Water Issues in
Weed**

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