

Water for Citizens of Weed, California (WCWC)

872 Stringtown, Avenue

Weed, CA 96094



March 19, 2021

Guest Opinion: A Victory for the Citizens of Weed!

Water for Citizens of Weed CA (WCWC) was formed five years ago to fight for our town's water, after Roseburg Forest Products (RFP) claimed they owned the rights to the 2.0 cubic feet per second (cfs) of Beaughan Springs water that the Weed community had relied on for over 100 years. We said we would not quit until the City's water rights were restored. With the March 11 approval of the sales agreement between the City of Weed and Crystal Geyser Roxane (CG-Roxane), that goal will finally be accomplished!

This is not a perfect ending. Some people (including WCWC members) still question why we have to pay anything at all for the water we have long believed was already ours. But RFP set in motion costly legal actions that were bleeding the City's coffers and the City Council was forced to cut its losses. Once the \$1.2 million sale is final, the City of Weed will indisputably own the rights to the Beaughan Springs water in perpetuity.

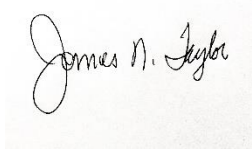
This victory for the Weed community would not have happened if the citizens of this community had not stood up and fought for what was right—protecting water as a public resource for domestic and municipal use. We especially want to recognize two former mayors of Weed for inspiring and motivating us-- Jim Gubetta and the late Dave Pearce. Without their insights, historical memories and belief in the justness of our struggle we never would have come to this point.

Our group was only the “tip of the iceberg” of the many people--friends, neighbors, community groups—who supported our cause. Many people outside of our community--journalists, photographers, lawyers, documentary film makers, and civil rights defenders also helped publicize and support our struggle and we are very thankful to them. Their interest and commitment to supporting WCWC's efforts are a testament to the global importance of preserving water as a public trust and fighting against corporate water privatization for profit.

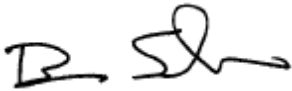
We would like to thank all the members of the Weed City Council and City staff who faced many difficult decisions, challenges and stress over the last five years as they tried to do what would be best for our community.

RFP's move to profit off of Weed's water was motivated by CG-Roxane as it was looking to expand its water bottling operation in Weed (an October, 2016 New York Times article recounted that the CG-Roxane's founder had demanded the city give up its water so his company could have more). As a result, CG Roxane became a secondary focus in the campaign to save Weed's water. Last year CG Roxane was forced to withdraw a proposal for a problematic waste water leach field after WCWC-led community opposition and petitions to State agencies. Soon afterwards, the company began negotiating with the City on this water deal and initiated other moves to improve its relationship with our community. Continuing to be seen as complicit in--and a beneficiary of--Roseburg's unethical water grab appears to have become untenable for CG Roxane, especially given the likely eventual success of the City's eminent domain lawsuit against RFP.

We acknowledge CG-Roxane for "coming to the table," and negotiating with the City and RFP to reach this agreement. It seems only fitting that CG-Roxane and RFP should help to solve the problem they created in the first place.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James N. Taylor". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'J'.

Jim Taylor, WCWC President

A handwritten signature in black ink that appears to read "Bruce Shoemaker". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'B'.

Bruce Shoemaker, WCWC media liaison