



Dispute Resolution Center

2023

**ANNUAL
REPORT**

SIX RIVERS
DISPUTE RESOLUTION CENTER

www.6rivers.org
[@Gorge_Mediation](https://twitter.com/Gorge_Mediation)

SIX RIVERS' MISSION

To empower and train people and organizations to resolve conflict through mediation, facilitation, restorative justice and other collaborative means of communication.

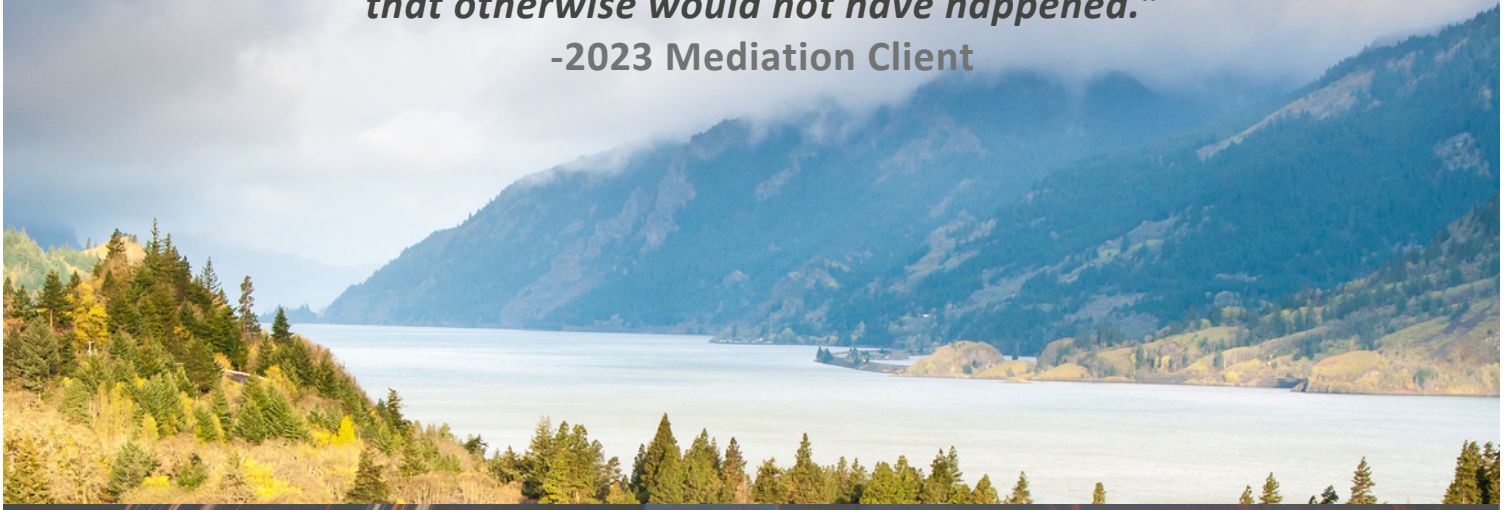
In 2023, we continued providing services to community members in our service area: Hood River, Wasco, Sherman, Gilliam and Wheeler counties in Oregon, and Klickitat and Skamania counties in Washington.

We supported conflict resolution with parenting plans, divorces, organizational and business disputes, neighborhood conflicts, landlord/tenant and housing disputes, conflicts within the agricultural sector and restorative circle processes for acts of harm. We also provided our community with training in mediation and conflict resolution.

- **94%** of clients felt respected by Six Rivers staff and mediators.
- **97%** of clients felt that they were able to talk about the issues that were important to them in mediation.
- **96%** felt that the mediation process was fair.
- Of cases that went to mediation, **70%** resulted in an agreement.


“Mediation was a valuable experience of bringing two parties together to have a discussion that has been avoided for a very long time. It created the safety to begin making agreements that otherwise would not have happened.”

-2023 Mediation Client



2023 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Provided conflict resolution for **321 closed cases**, including providing people with info and referral to other services, conciliations, conflict coaching, mediations, restorative circles, and group facilitations.
- Helped nearly **700** people directly.
- Hosted **101** mediation or restorative circle sessions.
- Trained **21** local community members in our 40-hour Basic Mediation Training, in both Spring and Fall.
- Offered **15** mediator continuing education sessions and **6** specialized trainings.
- Provided free housing mediation programs in both Oregon and Washington.



“I am really grateful to Six Rivers for offering this training. I feel that I have gained a valuable life skill and a new awareness in navigating conflict. Thank you so very much for all of the work you put into making this available for our community.”

-2023 Training Client

2023 ACCOMPLISHMENTS, CONT.

- Designed a brand-new **restorative justice program** in collaboration with local system partners and training and technical advisor New York University Center on Violence and Recovery. Conducted an extensive community readiness assessment ahead of the program’s pilot year in 2024.
- Expanded **Oregon’s USDA Certified Agricultural Mediation Program**, training mediators in specialized skills to navigate the complex regulations that farmers and ranchers have to, in complying with USDA agency programs.

2023 CASE STUDIES *

Restorative Circle Case Study

A local homeowner contacted Six Rivers for help addressing some harms which occurred to his home during a temporary absence from the residence. Six Rivers connected the homeowner and the responsible parties. A careful process was undertaken in which these parties participated in a circle and engaged in respectful conversations. Instead of blame, there was **clarification, collaboration and mutual resolution.**

Housing Mediation Case Study

A landlord asked Six Rivers what to do about overdue rent. She was upset because the tenant seemed to be buying things before paying the rent. After contact with Six Rivers, the tenant disclosed that she was falling behind on rent payments due to health and employment challenges. She acknowledged trying to avoid the landlord because of her shame. **The landlord and the tenant participated in good faith and worked together to find resources, get the rent caught up, and ensured that the housing was safe and secure and budgeted for realistically.** All the parties expressed gratitude for the support that helped the creation of resolutions with respect and compassion.

2023 CASE STUDIES*, CONT.

Parenting Plan Case Study

Two divorced parents reached out to Six Rivers for support having a difficult conversation regarding **decisions about their children's schooling and healthcare**. Communication had broken down for some time, and both were doubtful that mediation would be successful, but were willing to give it a try. At their mediation session, the parents were able to share their concerns with one another, and came to some initial agreements regarding next steps for their children. **Both shared relief** that the session had gone well and resulted in some shared agreements.

Agricultural Mediation Case Study

In 2023, Six Rivers was contacted by several pairs of agricultural producers who needed support negotiating the dissolution of their business partnerships. Through mediation, **these producers were able to come to agreements** regarding division of assets, USDA program processes, communications with customers, and next steps for future chapters.

*Details in these case studies have been modified to respect and preserve confidentiality.