

# OREGON WILD

Winter/Spring 2018 Volume 45, Number 1



A DECADE OF LIVING  
DANGEROUSLY



Working to protect and restore Oregon's wildlands, wildlife, and waters as an enduring legacy for future generations.

Main Office

5825 N Greeley Avenue Portland, OR 97217  
 Phone: 503.283.6343  
[www.oregonwild.org](http://www.oregonwild.org)

The e-mail address for each Oregon Wild staff member: [initials@oregonwild.org](mailto:initials@oregonwild.org) (for example: [ef@oregonwild.org](mailto:ef@oregonwild.org))

Outreach & Marketing Coord.	Marielle Cowdin x 213
Membership Manager	Jamie Dawson x 205
Office & Event Manager	Gaby Diaz x 200
Public Lands Fellow	Alex Harris x 203
Development Director	Jonathan Jelen x 224
Wildlife Coordinator	Danielle Moser x 226
Finance Director	Tony Mounts x 219
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Communications Manager	Arran Robertson x 223
Executive Director	Sean Stevens x 211

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 [www.facebook.com/OregonWild](http://www.facebook.com/OregonWild)

 [@oregonwild](https://twitter.com/oregonwild)  [@oregonwild](https://www.instagram.com/oregonwild)

Western Field Office

P.O. Box 11648 Eugene, OR 97440  
 Phone 541.344.0675 Fax: 541.343.0996

Forest & Watershed Organizer	Jason Gonzales
Conservation & Restoration Coord.	Doug Heiken
Western Oregon Field Coord.	Chandra LeGue

Northeastern Field Office

P.O. Box 48, Enterprise, OR 97828  
 Phone: 541.886.0212

NE Oregon Field Coordinator	Rob Klavins
-----------------------------	-------------

Central Oregon Field Office

2445 NE Division St, Bend, OR 97701  
 Phone: 541.382.2616 Fax: 541.385.3370

Ochoco Campaign Coordinator	Sarah Cuddy
Wilderness Program Manager	Erik Fernandez



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COVER PHOTO: © DONALD A. HIGGS Wolves once roamed freely across the Oregon landscape. Will we be able to let them thrive again?





## From the Director's Desk

# Humility

Sean Stevens, Executive Director

water that makes Oregon beer world-class.

All of these arguments are 100% true. Our wildlands are good for our economy and quality of life. Forests contribute untold millions in ecosystem services in the form of clean air and clean water. These quantifiable economic gifts are incredibly meaningful to our state. And sometimes these practical arguments for wildlands and wildlife protection are the exact things that a politician needs to hear in order to make the right vote.

But surely these utilitarian arguments are not what motivate us (the Oregon Wild staff, board, and you – dear reader) to fight for the preservation of the wild. We feel it deep in our bones; a connection to the places that have given us something we could not find anywhere else. Adventure. Solitude. Awe.

Perhaps a trip into the wild repaired something broken inside of us that nothing else could heal. Maybe we remember a loved one when we smell the pine trees on a certain trail.

Our belief that investing in nature gives us far more in return feeds these personal motivations and allows them to grow.

None of these arguments are better or worse than the others. Added together, they are both the reason that we have been able to protect two million acres of Wilderness in Oregon and the fuel that pushes us toward protecting ever more.

Still, something is missing if we can only see our work for the wild as a pursuit with our own interests at the center. The magic ingredient for all conservation advocacy is humility. We cannot do right by our planet without recognizing our place on it – one

part of a complex whole.

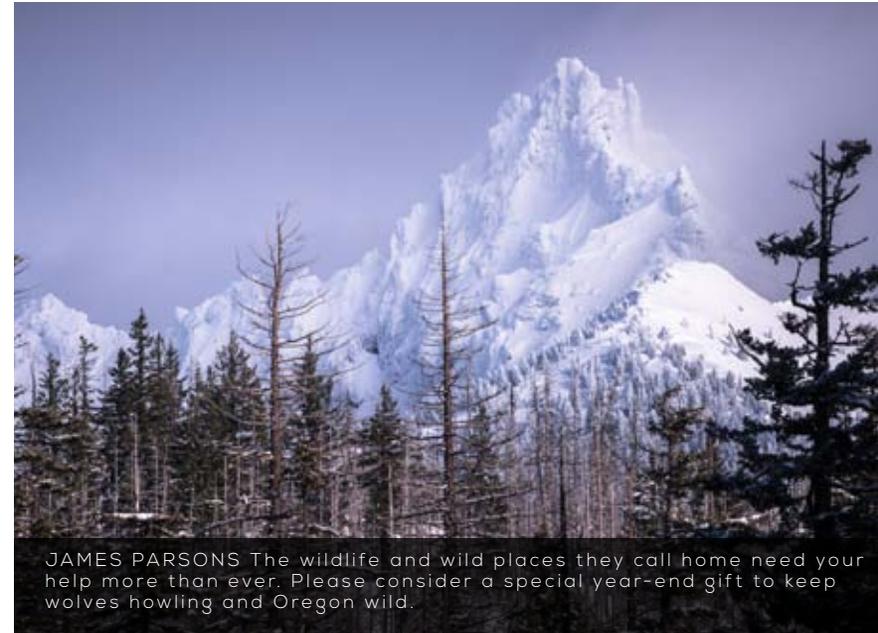
And so it is with the subject of our feature article this issue – Oregon's wolves. It has been 10 years since a lone wolf swam the Snake River and put down roots in Oregon, reclaiming for this keystone species a land it had been driven from. Our

relationship with wolves serves as a bellwether for our ability to share the landscape and not always put our own needs above all else.

As you might imagine, at Oregon Wild we spend a lot of time making the case for protecting our forests, mountains, rivers, and wildlife.

We talk about unsustainable logging and the dire impacts our clearcutting ways have for carbon emissions and climate change. We'll tell anyone who listens how important protected landscapes like Wilderness and National Recreation Areas are for our booming outdoor recreation economy.

It's no secret that northeast Oregon has seen boosted tourism as wildlife lovers journey to catch a glimpse of recovering wolves. And our Oregon Brewshed® Alliance partners will be quick to tell you how important healthy, forested watersheds are for the clean



JAMES PARSONS The wildlife and wild places they call home need your help more than ever. Please consider a special year-end gift to keep wolves howling and Oregon wild.

# A decade of living dangerously

Rob Klavins, Northeast Oregon Field Coordinator



1947

Last Oregon wolf bounty is claimed

1995

Wolves reintroduced to Yellowstone N.P.

In early June 2017, four friends and two dogs were walking down a logging road that once served as a regular travel route for the Imnaha Pack. As we entered an old clearcut, one of the dogs inspected a deck of abandoned logs for the squirrel that dove in for cover. We walked on.

A single low, short bark came from behind us. My friend whistled. A moment later, we heard another bark just up the hill. My friend called to his dog.

“Uhhh, Wally...,” my wife Emily said as she gestured and paused rather dramatically, “...the dogs are right here.”

Another bark came from yet another direction...wolves!

Unseen mere yards away, we were surrounded by the Harl Butte Pack. We heard a fourth bark. Then quiet. We put our dogs on leash and walked away.

As we left, we stopped by one of our nearby trail cameras set out to monitor wolf and human activity in the area. The footage

confirmed our suspicions – not long before, OR-50 and three other members of the Harl Butte Pack had headed our way.

Each time I’ve encountered wolves, it has evoked strong emotions. I’ve felt gratitude and awe. Never once have I felt fear.

Even here in my “backyard,” where wolves have regained a foothold on the Oregon landscape, such encounters remain notable and rare. Turn the clock back 10 years and it would have been impossible.

## Prologue

Fear of predators is likely engrained in our DNA. Throughout most of human history, that fear made it more likely you’d pass along your genes. No wonder wolves feature prominently as symbols of evil in the predominant cultures brought by later American settlers. Even conservation icon, Teddy Roosevelt, called them “beasts of waste and desolation.”

So when the early white settlers of Oregon could agree on little

else, they found common cause around eliminating wolves and other native hunters. The minutes of the 1843 meetings that began the process of statehood declare: “It is admitted by all, that bears, wolves, panthers, etc., are destructive to the useful animals owned by the settlers of this colony.”

By the mid-20th century the deed was done. As a practical matter, wolves had been exterminated from the Oregon landscape.

Thankfully, the 1960s and ‘70s brought an environmental awakening. Congress passed the Wilderness Act, the Clean Water Act, and other landmark legislation. In 1973, a Republican president signed the Endangered Species Act (ESA) – a law codifying America’s commitment to keep our nation’s plants and wildlife from disappearing.

President Nixon said at the time, “Nothing is more priceless and

more worthy of preservation than the rich array of animal life with which our country has been blessed.”

With protections in place, wolves began to make their way back into the West from populations in Canada. In the mid-1990s, wolf reintroduction into Yellowstone and Idaho augmented recovery. To this day, every wolf genetically tested in Oregon traces its roots to a few dozen wolves released in central Idaho.

Soon after, a wolf known as B-45 swam the Snake River, shook herself dry, and became the first known living wolf in Oregon in over half a century. Her visit was short. Panic befell the livestock industry who



OREGON WILD A member of the Chesnimnus Pack wanders past a trail cam.

ODFW The last decade has been full of trials for Oregon’s wolves like this one from the Walla Walla Pack. The next ten years will certainly have their challenges.

1999

B-45 swims across the Snake River into Oregon

2006



B-300 "Sophie" is trapped and collared in Idaho

pressured wildlife agencies to dart her, put her in a crate, and helicopter her back to Idaho. There she lived a good long life before being killed by a poacher in 2006.

bald eagle as one of America's greatest conservation success stories.

Yet, for a vocal minority, wolves still evoke fear. They make convenient scapegoats for rural politicians and those who see environmental protections as impediments to easy profits. As such, wolves became the center of an effective campaign of misinformation and fear – and a potent political symbol for those who fear the wild and the big bad federal government.

Subsequent Oregon wolves were hit by cars and shot by poachers. Then, on a January day 10 years ago, a lone, white wolf dubbed B-300 by Idaho officials was spotted in the eastern Oregon snow.

### Book One: growing pains

Wolves present challenges to some, but science is increasingly demonstrating that they play an irreplaceable role on the landscape. Wolves also bring benefits from quantifiable economics to less measureable – but no less real – intrinsic values.

Even so, old prejudices die hard.

For most of us in the 21st century, wolves are a symbol of freedom, wildness, and the American West. Their extermination was a tragedy and their recovery stands alongside the establishment of public lands and recovery of the

Prior to wolves returning, Oregon created a plan that represented a social and political compromise. Though rife with ambiguity, and not well-grounded in science, the plan offered a new starting point, and most parties stood by their agreements.

But the livestock industry and their political allies reneged. Year after year, they bring legislation to undermine hard fought compromises. Thanks to efforts from groups like Oregon Wild and our members, most have been soundly defeated.

In 2010, the Oregon

Department of Fish & Wildlife (ODFW) responded to industry pressure and weakened the plan themselves. Then in 2011, Congress stripped eastern Oregon wolves of federal protections with a rider to a budget bill.

Literally hours later, ODFW issued kill orders for members of the Imnaha Pack, and the agency began caving to pressure to kill wolves every time a cow went missing. Finally in 2012, with less than 30 known adult wolves in the state, Oregon Wild and our partners went to court and challenged the state's killing program.

Our legal challenge resulted in a settlement that clarified, but didn't fundamentally change, the plan. For the first time, however, all stakeholders supported it.

With enforceable requirements to meaningfully prevent conflict, Oregon was the only state in the nation

with wolves that didn't kill them from 2012 to 2015. In stark contrast to our neighbors, the wolf population grew, and by nearly every meaningful measure

## OREGON'S POACHING EPIDEMIC

Danielle Moser, Wildlife Program Coordinator

Oregon has a wolf poaching problem. Since mid-October 2017, two wolves have been illegally killed in the Klamath area (where wolves are federally protected by the Endangered Species Act), one wolf was illegally killed in Wallowa County, and another was shot in Union County by a hunter who claimed 'self-defense' – though his story doesn't appear to match the evidence that was collected by the Oregon State Police (OSP).

Oregonians can plainly see this growing poaching problem, but getting Governor Brown, OSP, and ODFW to take it seriously is another matter. Oregon Wild and our conservation partners continue to call on the Governor to reopen the investigation in Union County, and to direct her agency to take

meaningful steps to address the issue. Her silence has been deafening.

Scientists warned this could happen. Removing protections for wolves tells the public that the state has devalued the species, thus giving poachers a permission slip. Governor Brown needs to clarify that poaching will not be tolerated in Oregon.

### TAKE ACTION!

Call Governor Brown at (503) 378-4582 and ask her to take wolf poaching seriously. We need the state to prioritize conflict prevention over killing, and include strong, enforceable provisions for conservation.

2009

B-300 "Sophie" establishes Oregon's first wolf pack since eradication

– including already low livestock losses – conflict decreased.

**Book Two: turn for the worst**

Wolves hit an important milestone in 2015. When ODFW documented seven breeding pairs for three consecutive years, the state could consider delisting.

Ignoring the objections of independent scientists and an overwhelming public majority, ODFW prematurely stripped wolves of state ESA protections. At the time, the population stood at 81 known animals. The decision was absurd on its merits. It also violated the law.

Oregon Wild and our conservation partners again took the agency to court. In response,



JONATHAN JELEN Wolf track from a Wolf Rendezvous

the livestock industry and their political allies passed a bill (HB 4040) intended to insulate the decision from legal review. It was a mess. Legislators lied and admitted it passed under false pretense. Worse yet, some Democrats ensured the bill would pass in exchange for Republicans agreeing to simply come to the floor and vote on the final, unrelated bills of the session.

Those who believe in fundamental checks and balances of democracy held out hope Governor Brown would veto the bill. Unfortunately, her own staff had been working on the bill and made promises on her behalf.

Upon signing HB 4040, Brown issued an equivocating statement that optimists interpreted as a promise to get her agency back on track.

**Book Three: the new normal?**  
With the settlement provisions

2011



having expired, wolves losing protections, and a compensation program that pays livestock companies for missing animals, there are no incentives for livestock operators who dislike wolves to take meaningful measures to prevent conflict.

Predictably, livestock losses and wolf killing increased – though wolves were the quickest to feel the brunt of the state's new approach. As the Governor's signature dried on HB 4040, a helicopter took flight and killed what remained of B-300's Imnaha Pack.

Poaching has also increased (see sidebar page 5). Earlier this year, the federal "animal control" agency, Wildlife Services, "accidentally" killed a wolf with a baited cyanide bomb. Last summer, ODFW issued multiple



MICHELLE, Age 6, Eugene

kill orders allowing some of the state's most vocal wolf opponents and their friends to go wolf hunting. The last kill order enabled as many as 18 people to hunt wolves (including pups) using illegally obtained telemetry equipment - equipment provided by taxpayers for use as non-lethal conflict prevention tools. All this occurred as whistleblowers helped us uncover ongoing abuse of the state's flawed compensation program.

Meanwhile, ODFW is considering revisions to the Wolf Plan that will ensure trophy hunting, more dead cows, more dead wolves, and more conflict. Scientists have objected to the proposal. Oregon Wild has objected and provided alternatives. Thousands of you have written, called, and testified in support of stronger protections.

Through it all, Governor Brown has stunned us all with her silence.

OR-7 begins his epic "Journey," Oregon Wild holds naming and art contest for kids

**Book Four: where we stand**

A few months after the memorable walk with wolves, I hiked the same road with an Oregonian reporter. After a summer of killing, at least four members of the Harl Butte Pack were dead, and more kill orders were on the way.

We continued past the clearcut to a meadow the livestock industry wants to keep secret. It's a beautiful place in June. On this public land, thousand-year-old aspen send up hopeful new shoots. Lush grass gives way to a trickling creek. Elk calve nearby, and there is a plant so rare it has only recently been described by science – a surprisingly showy paintbrush.

The meadow looked very different in October.

The rare plant was nowhere to be found. It was hard to take three steps without landing in a cow patty. Our trail cameras showed that since June, 225 deer and elk passed this spot. So have over 6,000 unattended cows and calves. The meadow became little more

2015



Wolves delisted from the state Endangered Species Act (ESA)



2018

What will a revised Wolf Plan mean for Oregon's wolves?

than a feedlot.

We stood at a broken fence intended to keep cows out of a sensitive area. While the fences protecting nearby private lands are well-maintained, this one suffered from years of systematic neglect and destruction. The land beyond should have been full of tall willow, green sedges, and aspen. Instead it was as denuded as the adjacent overgrazed landscape.

ATV and truck tracks crisscrossed the small stream. Our cameras showed some of the tire marks were made by ODFW wolf hunters. At taxpayer expense, public employees drove their vehicles over sensitive areas trying to kill a rare, native animal to protect the invasive and

destructive livestock that caused all this degradation.

"It's absurd," I told the reporter. Thankfully, he turned off his camera before my hiking partner and I begin using some of the less-precise words in our vocabulary.

We were relieved to learn later that the last kill order was unsuccessful. After being hunted for months, the only collared wolf in the pack left the area. The remaining wolves grew savvy. But the damage was done.

ODFW currently spends 4% of its budget on non-game conservation. Unless the agency has a change of heart, and unless Governor Brown shows some leadership, we'll be right in the same place next year.

More dead cows. More dead wolves. And more unnecessary conflict.

### Epilogue

The story of wolves returning to Oregon has been maddening at times, but it is worth remembering

that just a decade ago there were no wolves to fight for. At last count, our state is home to 112 known wolves and eight breeding pairs, mostly confined to the northeastern-most corner.

We may be a long way from "Once upon a time," but we're not much closer to "happily ever after..." than the last time we featured wolves on these pages.

We hear sunlight is the best disinfectant, so we're continuing to work with investigative reporters, attorneys, activists, and whistleblowers to shine a spotlight on the truth.

This does not need to become the new normal.

Not long ago, Governor Brown

## Members keep Oregon's wolves howling

Jonathan Jelen, Development Director

ALAN HIRSCHMUGL Zumwalt Prairie

The first 10 years of gray wolf recovery in Oregon have had a fair share of twists and turns. But through the ups and downs, Oregon Wild's supporters never hesitated to stand up and speak out for this native keystone species.

When ODFW prematurely removed wolves from the state's endangered species list, Oregon Wild members were there in force. Each time anti-wolf forces introduced a bill in Salem aimed at making it easier to kill wolves, Oregon Wild members were there.

And when anti-wolf rhetoric crosses the line into poaching, Oregon Wild and its members demanded accountability.

Individuals like you - *who care about native wildlife* - make our work possible. And there's a lot more work to be done.

**Please consider a special, tax-deductible gift to help us continue to stand up for wolves and all the wilds of Oregon today.**

was prepared to sell off the Elliott State Forest to the highest bidder. But when the conservation community came together and thousands of citizens spoke up, she changed course.

Wildlife belong to all Oregonians, not just those of us lucky enough to live near big, wild places. Most

of us oppose trophy hunting for wolves. We support wolf recovery and wildlife conservation. We don't want to see dead cows or dead wolves.

With your voice and your support, we'll keep fighting for Oregon's wildlife. And we'll keep thinking bigger. ☺



ODFW A pup of OR-7 in the celebrated Rogue Pack, one of the first west of the Cascades in decades.

# Equity in the wilderness

Marielle Cowdin, Outreach Coordinator



NICK BROWN

The first time I decided to trek solo into the wilderness, my then-partner flat out told me no. You can't do it, he said, it's too dangerous for a woman. Standing nearby, our friend half-jokingly offered me his handgun.

I grew up in the mountains, I said. I know what I'm doing, I'll be fine.

I left feeling rattled.

After driving eight hours across the state, I found a site and set up camp. For the next eight hours I didn't leave my tent. Every snap and crackle beyond the nylon walls kept my body still and my breathing shallow. I hoped it was only wildlife. The night passed, and I survived.

Each time after became easier. I ventured further into remote wildlands and remained there longer. Each time, the beautiful

isolation and open air healed personal traumas bit-by-bit and empowered me to go again.

Still, a faint and persistent voice remains. It whispers to never let down my guard, to bristle when an unknown human appears. It's the same voice that speaks when I walk alone in a city at night; it says in a public space, your body might not be your own. I can only imagine the din of this voice for a person of color or an LGBT individual in public space of any kind.

Nature is the great equalizer. We're all owned by it, fragile and susceptible to its great force. But our broader culture paints a picture of the great outdoors being more equal for some than others. Those flannel-clad, deeply bearded, could maybe wield an axe folks – media, advertising, even conservation non-profit staff rosters all imply the wild is their domain.

In our forest work, Oregon Wild often speaks of monocultures. The dense Doug fir plantations of post-industrial clearcutting are

unnatural, inhospitable, and fire-prone. If we in the environmental community cannot see this reflected in ourselves, then our movement is setup to fail.

To achieve the great, seemingly insurmountable environmental tasks ahead of us, we cannot ignore a changing world and we cannot rinse and repeat our practiced strategies. We must take a step back to see the forest for the trees – to see the individuals, groups, and communities ready or already working towards our common goals. Groups including Vive NW, Outdoor Afro, Latino Outdoors, SheJumps, and Unlikely Hikers are just a few which inspire me daily.

As a historically and predominantly white movement,

we must take pause and listen to others, make space for and support their efforts, so all may stand and shine in the larger work of outdoor conservation and education. Because it's not simply about outdoor access and National Park fees, it's about changing the cultural concepts of who plays in and works for the wild.

Nature is for all. Now is the time we adapt ourselves and our work to better reflect our natural world. Now is the time we look both to and beyond our own self-interest to create the most equitable, inclusive, and diverse environment possible. Now is the time to evolve; the cultural climate is changing.☺

**Check out Oregon Wild's vision statement for Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion at [oregonwild.org](https://oregonwild.org).**



MARIELLE COWDIN

# Winter walkabouts & events

Join Oregon Wild for another great season of hikes and events celebrating our state's most pristine and iconic wild places during one of the most magical seasons of the year. Sign up at [www.oregonwild.org](http://www.oregonwild.org).

(Most hikes available for RSVP after January 1, 2018)



PROTECTED WILDERNESS



PROPOSED NATIONAL REC AREA AND/OR WILDERNESS



DRINKING WATERSHED



TERENCE LEEZY

## WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 10 (BEND)

Oregon Wild Wednesday: Snowshoeing 101  
Find out how and where to go on your next snowy adventure!



## SATURDAY, JANUARY 20 (EUG)

Rosary Lakes Snowshoe Hike *Strenuous*  
Experience the beautiful forest along the Pacific Crest Trail covered in snow as you trek to Rosary Lakes.



## SATURDAY, JANUARY 27 (PDX)

Tamanawas Falls Snowshoe Hike  
*Easy-Moderate*  
Enjoy the scenery along the beautiful Cold Springs Creek to catch a view of one of the most beautiful winter waterfalls in Oregon!

## MONDAY, JANUARY 29 (BEND)

Edison Butte Snowshoe Trek *Moderate*  
Join Oregon Wild for a snowshoe trek through the snow-covered lava fields and old-growth ponderosa pine trees near the Edison Butte Sno-Park on the Deschutes National Forest.



## FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 2 (BEND)

Walton Lake Snowshoe Hike *Easy-Moderate*  
Join Sarah Cuddy for a day of snowshoeing in the beautiful Ochoco Mountains. An easy-moderate snowshoe through some exceptionally orange Ponderosa pines under a snowy backdrop.

## SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 4 (EUG)

Odell Overlook Snowshoe Hike *Moderate*  
Explore the forested hills near the Gold Lake Sno-Park and take in spectacular views of Odell Lake on this fun snowshoe hike.



## SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 10 (EUG)

Coast Range Forests Hike - The Good, Bad, and the Ugly *Easy*  
Visit old-growth forests, regenerated forests, and young plantations to see the different impacts these forests have on water and salmon habitat!



## TBD (PDX)

Twin Lakes Snowshoe *Moderate*  
Enjoy the views and beat the crowds on this leisurely snowshoe hike, perfect for beginners and experts alike.

# Thank you for heeding the call

Gaby Diaz, Office & Event Manager



KELLI PENNINGTON

This year's *Call of the Wild* was a record-breaking celebration of our wildlands, wildlife, and waters. Old friends and new gathered around the "campfire" at Leftbank Annex in a powerful display of support for our work across the state. Backed by local businesses, partners, and YOU we raised **over \$50,000** to continue our work to keep Oregon wild!

From where I stood on the balcony, it was awesome to see over 500 flannel-clad guests mingle and connect, try their hand at the Fire Ring toss game, or bid on an auction item. Between the chorus of cheers and the sweet sounds of our musical guest Sasser and Miller, each dollar raised was one for protecting our remaining old-growth forests, fragile gray wolf population, and Wild & Scenic Rivers.

Our success is due in part to a generous community of folks who either provided funding or donated goods, services, and time to make this our biggest event of the year. Many thanks to our business sponsors at **Mountain Rose Herbs, Trailhead Credit Union, KEEN, Elemental Energy, and Widmer Brothers Brewing!**

We're also grateful to our Oregon Brewshed® Alliance partners who stocked us with tasty libations for the evening, as well as our friends at Simpatica, Grilled Cheese Grill, Flying Fish Co, Dick's Kitchen, and Dessert Delights for providing delicious camp-inspired bites. Thanks to Something Borrowed, Thicket, and Portland Nursery for transforming the space with their beautiful handcrafted

## 2017 OUTDOOR PHOTO CONTEST WINNERS



Clockwise from top left: JOE KELLER, Trillium Lake (Wildlands Winner); CALEB JACOBSON, Oneonta Falls (Waters Winner); DREW WATSON, Red Fox Hunting (Wildlife Winner).

décor. A big shout out to Usnaps for the photo booth, XRAY.fm for the on air promotion, and Pro Photo Supply for our photo contest winner prints. Last but not least, a special thank you to our board members and the record-breaking amount of Tent

Sponsors!

From the Wild & Scenic Rogue River, to the old-growth Ponderosa pine in the Ochocos and all the wildlife that inhabit these places, thank you for heeding the call of the wild! ☺

# Your tax dollars at work (for the Logging Industry)

Arran Robertson, Communications Manager

Screen capture from the Communities for Healthy Forests lobbying video.



**BUT WHAT HAPPENS  
AFTER THE FIRE IS OUT?**

The day before Congressman Greg Walden announced his “Columbia Gorge Clearcut Act” (see page 12), an obscure organization called “Communities for Healthy Forests” released a video advocating for aggressive, post-fire logging. The film’s dire narration attacks laws like the Clean Water Act and Endangered Species Act, then calls for immediately clearcutting fragile, post-fire landscapes. It ends with a call to action: **“Contact your elected Federal, State and local officials. Tell them these federal lands are too valuable to simply walk**

**away.”**

Following its release, the executive director of Communities for Healthy Forests personally distributed the video to congressional staff.

The video and its producers use logging industry talking points to argue for free access to log vulnerable forests, regardless of the environmental consequences. But the logging industry didn’t pay to produce this video.

You did.

Funding was provided by “Secure Rural Schools” (SRS) grants, a federal program established by Senator Ron Wyden over a decade ago to help rural counties transition away from relying on logging revenues to pay for essential services – like education and law enforcement. Instead, as *Oregonian* reporter Rob Davis exposed, some politicians have used it as a taxpayer supported slush fund to advance the logging industry’s agenda.

Douglas County is the nation’s largest recipient of SRS money, and for a number of years, its commissioners used SRS funds to pay for overt political activity as well as personal lobbying junkets to Washington D.C., killing bears and porcupines, and replacing ATVs for Wildlife Services. Former Douglas County Commissioner Doug Robertson, who helped create and fund Communities for Healthy Forests using federal SRS funds, now serves as their paid lobbyist.

This year, while the commission used tax dollars to do the logging industry’s bidding, Douglas County’s entire library system closed for lack of funds.

These politicians and Communities for Healthy Forests ran afoul of SRS grant intent, and they also may be violating national elections laws. A prominent campaign finance rule referred to as the Byrd Amendment prohibits federal grant money from being used to influence the executive branch or Congress. But that’s exactly what happened when this video was produced, instructed viewers to contact lawmakers, and was emailed to Congressional staff.

The good news is that Rep. Earl

Blumenauer has called for a full investigation into this growing scandal. In a letter to the Forest Service and Department of Agriculture, Blumenauer demanded the agencies be better stewards of federal funds.

Unfortunately, Blumenauer is currently the only member of the Oregon Congressional delegation calling for accountability.

Oregon Wild will continue to examine these issues, and call upon our elected representatives to ensure that the support provided by SRS funds is used properly for law enforcement, education, and fire safety, rather than providing a subsidy to the political activities of the logging industry at taxpayer expense. ☺



# Shout fire in a crowded Congress

Steve Pedery, Conservation Director



ERIC DEBORD In addition to increased clearcut logging on public lands, HR 2936 would suspend many of America's bedrock environmental laws and limit the voice of the public in management decisions. Call your Senators today!

Humans are programmed – back in the deep, reptilian part of our brains – to be afraid of fire. Most times, this instinctual reaction to fire is helpful. When it comes to understanding the role of fire in the health of a Pacific Northwest forest, it isn't. If you saw, read, or listened to news coverage of the forest fires in Oregon this summer, you experienced prime examples. Breathless hyperbole and rhetoric right out of a Hollywood disaster film painted a dire picture of charred wastelands burnt beyond recognition.

Missing was perspective on the actual intensity of the burn, or context for the role fire plays in maintaining and renewing forests.

The Eagle Creek Fire in the Columbia Gorge, for example, appears to have burned in a typical mosaic pattern – exactly the kind of fire that our forests and wildlife need. The Forest Service concluded that 55% of the Eagle Creek Fire burned at low or very low severity; the remaining 30% was moderate and just 15% burned at high severity. There are certainly

places where the aftermath looks ugly to the human eye, but overall the fire may have revitalized the Gorge rather than harmed it.

In southwest Oregon, the Chetco Bar fire affected over 190,000 acres and was portrayed as an “inferno.” Now the Forest Service estimates only 14,000 acres burned at high severity, with more than 100,000 acres burning low or very low. Good news for our forests.

Unfortunately, corporate logging lobbyists and their friends in Congress are trying to

exploit the 2017 fires to push through anti-conservation legislation using misleading rhetoric on logging as both “restoration” and fire prevention. One such bill, HR 2936 (the “logging without laws” bill - see sidebar), is a veritable laundry list of bad ideas. It passed the House on November 1 with Oregon Representatives Kurt Schrader (D) and Greg Walden (R) voting for it. Walden also introduced his own bill, HR 3715, which would open the Columbia Gorge and other National Scenic Areas around the country to logging after fires, storms, and other natural events.

The sad irony is that logging often makes fires worse. By targeting the largest, most fire-resilient trees and diverting money towards logging remote backcountry rather than thinning near homes and communities, logging corporations put communities at greater fire risk. Senators Ron Wyden and Jeff Merkley will play a key role in the coming debate over forests and fire in

the U.S. Senate. They need to hear from conservation advocates that facts and science, not fear and misinformation, should guide the management of our forests.☺

## HR 2936: "LOGGING WITHOUT LAWS" WOULD:

- Dramatically increase clearcutting on Oregon public lands
- Shrink the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument
- Gut America's bedrock environmental laws

**Sen. Ron Wyden:**  
503-326-7525

**Sen. Jeff Merkley:**  
503-326-3386

# Coordination – snake oil or severe threat?

Sarah Cuddy, Ochoco Campaign Coordinator



CHRIS SCRANTON Local advocates are ready to fight back against the anti-public lands agenda.

In November, with the help of Bundy family lawyer Karen Budd Falen, the Crook County Court voted unanimously to pass a natural resources plan and to “invoke coordination” at the behest of the local militia group. The move makes the county, home to much of the Ochoco National Forest, the newest addition to the growing list of rural counties vying for outsized influence in federal land management.

So, what the heck is coordination? One way to answer the question is to start with what

coordination is not. Coordination is not control. Coordination does not require the Forest Service to implement county natural resources plans. Coordination is not a solution – it’s more like getting sold a bill of goods.

The Crook County plan, as with many others across the rural west, dictates an increase in logging, mining, grazing, and motorized recreation while neglecting wildlife or recreation. The plan appeals to many who sympathize with the ideals behind the 2016 Malheur National Wildlife Refuge occupation. County

governments adopt local plans, thereby forcing the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management into managing America’s public lands according to local “custom and culture.”

Well, Congress and the Supreme Court state otherwise. Crook County cannot dictate how much timber is logged, or how many cattle can graze, or even how to “coordinate” with them, because the agencies manage these lands on behalf of all U.S. citizens, not just those that live nearby. After all, they belong to all of us.

While the development and adaptation of the Natural Resource Plan has been divisive and controversial in Crook County, it has also stirred up new a level of activism and advocacy. A new Citizens in Support of Public Lands group was formed in September. They tirelessly attacked the flawed plan, gathered hundreds of petition signatures, and delivered persuasive and powerful public testimony.

The good news? Well, there is now a sophisticated and dedicated group of local advocates ready to fight this increasingly common threat; the anti-public lands agenda. These local control schemes are one part of an organized attack on our public lands. Pro-industry legislators want to create acrimony and hostility towards public land managing agencies, thus creating fertile ground for

fringe ideas like selling off our public lands for personal gain.

These threats inspired many to stand up and say no; Crook County public land advocates are ready to fight back. This inspiring new community of activists have banded together to fight to protect the treasure that are the Ochoco Mountains and in support of all public lands across the west. ☺



DARLENE ASHLEY Walton Lake - a gathering place for recreation in the Ochoco National Forest.

# Everything and the forest sink

Doug Heiken, Conservation & Restoration Coordinator



ERIC DEBORD Old-growth forests in western Oregon are among the greatest living storehouses of carbon on earth.

We need to rethink our relationship with the planet – use less and conserve more. Humanity faces its greatest challenge. Our collective understanding of climate change affirms everything conservationists have said for decades.

Climate change is caused by human activities that interfere with the Earth's carbon cycle, transferring too much greenhouse gas (GHG) from natural storage

to the atmosphere where much of it stays for thousands of years. A large portion of earth's carbon is normally stored in geologic structures and the living systems that envelope our planet.

Closer to home, Oregon's forests can play a big role. We'd make a grave mistake to log like we have been, rather than redouble our conservation efforts.

Thankfully, most of our public forests are growing faster than

they are being logged. This continuous forest growth amazingly absorbs all of the logging emissions on all forest ownerships, plus about half of the GHG emissions from all other sources. We have the spotted owl and the Northwest Forest Plan to thank for this recent and dramatic reduction of logging on public lands. Oregon's forests had been egregious net emitters of GHG.

Though Oregon's forests increase their carbon stores each year, we could do far better. We still allow far too much logging, preventing our forests from fully mitigating past emissions and reaching their carbon storage potential.

Over the last century, liquidation of old-growth forests in western Oregon transferred 100 times more carbon to the atmosphere compared to the global average GHG emissions from land use. Today, forest related emissions, mostly from logging on private timber lands, roughly doubles

GHG emissions for the state as a whole. Next time you see all those clearcuts on Google Earth, realize that they emit a sizable fraction of all the GHG from cars, trucks, power plants, and factory smoke stacks in the state.

Forest fires also emit GHG, so you might be tempted to think that a bad fire year like 2017 would be bad for the climate. Not really. Fires are a natural part of earth's carbon cycle. In Oregon, emissions from fire are miniscule compared to emissions from logging. Carbon capture from annual forest growth also more than makes up for fire emissions. In this perspective, logging is clearly the culprit.

Unfortunately, the timber industry is logging more frequently, sometimes allowing forests to grow only 35 years between clearcut harvests. These forests have less time to grow and accumulate carbon, and more carbon stays in the atmosphere. On public lands, the Bureau of Land Management has already decided to ditch the Northwest

Forest Plan and adopt a new plan covering 2.5 million acres in western Oregon. Clearcutting and logging of mature forests is increasing, and protection for old-growth reserves and streamside forests is decreasing. The U.S. Forest Service is also shifting emphasis toward more clearcutting and logging of mature forests, and has plans to amend/weaken the Northwest Forest Plan.

Proposals in Salem and Washington D.C. add to our concerns. The Oregon Legislature is considering climate legislation for which a system of carbon offsets could pay the timber industry for practices that help store carbon, while ignoring the vast GHG emissions from logging. This recipe for "leakage" means extra carbon stored in one forest might be negated by more logging in another forest. Additionally, our U.S. Congress is considering a devastating array of public lands logging legislation, decreasing public involvement and protection of endangered species. ©

# Volunteer of the Year - Lisa Billings

Danielle Moser, Wildlife Program Coordinator



LISA BILLINGS

## *How did you first learn about Oregon Wild?*

I found Oregon Wild because I was searching for an opportunity to donate and possibly volunteer with an organization that sought to protect and support my favorite place in Oregon - Mount Hood. When I became more familiar with all that Oregon Wild does, I found myself interested

in doing as much as I could to further the breadth of causes that need advocacy around the state.

## *How did you begin your career as an activist? Why wolves?*

I was as ignorant as could be on the topic of Oregon's wolves until I was introduced by Danielle at my first Wild Ones. What can I say...I was instantly

hooked, and as I recently said to a group of friends, it's my new obsession!

## *What caused you to dig in and engage at a deeper level?*

There are so many issues facing Americans today that cause us all extreme concern about the future. I strongly believe that if we each dig in deeper to one or two issues that resonate the most, we can collectively make a difference. For me, Oregon Wild has provided me an outlet to channel this energy.

## *You attended your first Wolf Rendezvous this year. Can you speak to that experience and how that shaped your activism?*

It was an incredible experience: equal parts inspiring, educational, and dispiriting. I'd previously visited Wallowa County for recreation and thought of it as a beautiful and wild place. While I still think of it that way, I now know the deeper issues that face wildlife and the humans who live there, and I have a deep respect for those who work to find balance.©

# Oregon Wild migrations



GREG GIESY



In October, Oregon Wild bid a sad farewell to Crater Lake Wilderness Coordinator, **Tara Brown**. For two years, Tara worked to galvanize support for protecting the wildlands surrounding Oregon's only national park while also diving into a campaign to protect more State Scenic Waterways. We're happy to know that she will be continuing her efforts to protect our state as the new Oregon Policy Associate with our partners at the Wild Salmon Center. We'll miss Tara around the office but we look forward to working with her in a new role!

Though she was already part of the Oregon Wild team as a volunteer, we were thrilled to see **Naila Bhatni** join the board of directors in September. Naila grew up in Oman, where her winter weekends were spent outdoors, on the beaches, mountains, and wadis that make up that country. Naila left work as a forensic scientist to focus on researching global wildlife trade and environmental crime laws. She moved to Eugene in 2016 and immediately discovered the immense natural beauty in the state. We are so lucky to have her on board during these critical times. ©





**OREGON  
WILD**

5825 N. Greeley Ave.  
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# KEEPING OREGON WATERSHEDS WILD



Since launching the Oregon Brewshed® Alliance with seven charter partners in 2015, the coalition has grown to **nearly 50 businesses** in the craft brewing industry across the state, and has raised well **over \$40,000** to support the conservation efforts of Oregon Wild. We cannot thank all of our Alliance partners enough for making this initiative a reality.

Celebrate clean water, pristine forests, and craft beer at our **2018 Brewshed® Brewfests in Eugene, Portland, and Bend**. Find out more at [oregonbrewshedalliance.org](http://oregonbrewshedalliance.org).

**give**  
GUIDE

Know some outdoor enthusiasts who aren't yet Oregon Wild members? Let them know they can join through the **Willamette Week's Give!Guide**.

It's a great way to help us keep Oregon wild while getting great incentives from local Oregon businesses.

Donate through the Give!Guide, visit [giveguide.org](http://giveguide.org) today.