Working cooperatively with landowners to conserve land for wildlife, scenic views, and local communities.
FROM THE DIRECTOR

Where did the year go? Where in fact, did the last 19 years go? As I look back and reflect on our recently completed fiscal year, it was a busy one for the Land Trust: new trails and bridges, conservation and restoration projects, and even floods and fires.

The Land Trust has long believed the key to conserving the best of Central Oregon is to find ways to share our lands with the public. It’s this sharing that connects people to place and helps develop a conservation ethic. Our Walk + Hike program and the efforts of our volunteers, including Volunteers of the Year Eva Eagle and Ginny Elliot, contribute to a growing voice for conservation and thoughtful land stewardship in Central Oregon.

Additionally, where appropriate, we’re developing new access to our Preserves, so families, residents, and visitors can explore and experience our lands on their own. This year we created new interpretive facilities at several Preserves, a new footbridge at the Metolius Preserve, and new trails at Whychus Canyon Preserve. Our hope is they inspire new ways to explore our Preserves and personally connect with the land.

Meanwhile, Mother Nature spoke for herself as Central Oregon’s fire season literally erupted this June with the Two Bulls Fire in a tinder-dry Skyline Forest. While it was sad to watch the fire burn across 6,200 acres of the forest, our commitment to eventually acquire and permanently protect the forest remains strong.

Over on Whychus Creek, Mother Nature reminded us of the wisdom of protecting and restoring the floodplain at Camp Polk Meadow Preserve. A series of high water events this spring repeatedly inundated the meadow. This time, instead of erosion and flooding, Whychus Creek spread across its floodplain, slowing waters and recharging the meadow. Camp Polk Meadow, with its rapidly growing creekside willows and new side channels, is once again becoming a stronghold for resident redband trout and, soon, salmon and steelhead.

Finally, by the time you read this letter, you’ll know the Land Trust has decided to build on the vision of a conserved Whychus Creek that started long ago at Camp Polk Meadow. This fall we launched a three-year, $15 million dollar comprehensive campaign to complete our conservation strategy for Whychus Creek. The first phase of the Campaign for Whychus Creek is now complete with the acquisition of two more miles of Whychus Creek which doubles the size of our Whychus Canyon Preserve.

Now it is your turn. Together with your continued annual support and investment in the Campaign for Whychus Creek, we can continue to make Central Oregon a great place to visit and live. Thank you!

Brad Chalfant
Executive Director

LAND TRUST CONSERVED LANDS

Since 1995, the Deschutes Land Trust has conserved 8,200 acres of Central Oregon for fish, wildlife, and local communities. The map below shows many of our protected lands and highlights some of the work we’ve completed in the last year.
The fire burned across a wide swath of the southeast corner of Skyline Forest—more than 6,000 acres. Much of the forest burned intensely leaving little or no living vegetation. Favorite Land Trust hiking spots like Bull and Snag Springs burned hot and relatively few of the trees survived. Parts of the historic Columbia Southern Canal also burned as did many favorite mountain biking trails.

Among the areas spared by the fire were the historic Pine Tree Mill and the ponderosa pine and basalt outcrops local mountain bikers have dubbed Easter Island. It was also encouraging to see, mere weeks after the fire raged through Bull and Snag Springs, new green grasses, aspen and snowbrush sprouting. Anxious to recover some of their loss, the forest’s owner Cascade Timberlands, has already begun salvage logging and has advised that replanting will begin in the fall.

At times like this, it’s helpful to remember that when we look at a forest we see a snapshot in time, while in reality, forests are constantly changing, shifting, and evolving. Skyline Forest, like all managed commercial forests, reflects the management objectives of the landowner. We’re often asked how Skyline Forest will respond to the Two Bulls Fire. While only time will tell, it will be fascinating to watch as climate change and a host of site specific factors influence which species predominate, which areas return to forests, and which areas become meadows or even grasslands. We can get some idea of how Skyline may recover by looking at other recent fires. The Delicious Burn in 1990 occurred on the dry northeast corner of the property, and after nearly 25 years has largely transitioned to grasslands; whereas the Bridge Creek Fire in 1979 saw rapid recovery and expansion of ponderosa pine.

The other obvious question of course, is how will the Two Bulls Fire affect the Land Trust’s goal of protecting Skyline Forest? The Land Trust is actively working with a diverse group of potential partners including The Conservation Fund, Oregon State University and the Oregon Department of Forestry to develop a proposal that can permanently conserve this incredibly important forest. The Two Bulls fire underscored the risks associated with residential development in the forest. Skyline Forest remains critically important for wildlife habitat, scenic views, and the future of recreation in Central Oregon. For those reasons and more, the Deschutes Land Trust will continue working to permanently protect Skyline Forest.

Patrick Hughes was passionate about the outdoors. Although his time in Central Oregon was cut tragically short, he developed a deep appreciation for the forests, canyons, and jagged volcanic peaks of his chosen home. Some of his happiest hours were spent exploring the trails and rafting the clear rivers of this region.

Suzie and Peggy wanted to honor Patrick by supporting the things he loved, so they chose to establish a memorial fund at the Land Trust. Then, they rallied friends and family members to contribute to Patrick’s fund. They mailed letters on Patrick’s birthday and special occasions, directing gifts and support to the Land Trust. Because of their dedication, and because Patrick was so well loved and respected by his community, thousands and thousands of dollars in support began to arrive.

Suzie and Peggy also made a call for volunteers for the Dirty Half Marathon, the Land Trust’s biggest annual fundraiser. Friends and family members responded. More than twenty people showed up to volunteer or run, all wearing custom “Pat’s Posse” t-shirts.

Because the Hughes family focused their support, they were able to make a deep and lasting impact in Patrick’s honor. To date, the Patrick Hughes memorial fund has raised more than $23,600 for the Land Trust.

The Land Trust used these funds, pooled with other support and resources, to build a new bridge at the Metolius Preserve. The bridge crosses the middle fork of Lake Creek and was built with wind-fallen larch from the Preserve. Best of all, it’s located near several beautiful old-growth ponderosa pine and opens new routes to explore and hike, two of Patrick’s favorite pastimes.

The Land Trust is inspired by the Hughes family’s commitment to creating a positive impact in Patrick’s memory. We are grateful for their generous support and honored to be a part of Pat’s lasting legacy. Through land conservation and restoration, the Land Trust will continue to work towards protecting the places Pat loved.

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For nearly 20 years the Deschutes Land Trust has relied on volunteers to help conserve land in Central Oregon. Those volunteers evaluate conservation projects, monitor and help care for our lands, help with fundraising, lead hikes and more. Their work helps maximize the Land Trust’s ability to do great conservation. In short, we’d be lost without them!

Our 2014 Volunteers of the Year are great examples of volunteers who dedicate themselves to our mission and truly make a difference. Eva Eagle has been a Land Trust member since 2003 and a volunteer since 2005. A number cruncher in her professional life, Eva stepped up years ago to take the reins of the Land Trust’s bird survey program. For nearly 10 years (half the Land Trust’s life!), Eva has collected and analyzed the sightings submitted by volunteer birders from several Land Trust properties including Camp Polk Meadow and Indian Ford Meadow Preserves.

While Eva has donated many hours for other Land Trust efforts, the bulk of her hours have been dedicated to the bird survey program—155 hours since 2005! The survey data has been critical in monitoring wildlife at the Preserves, as well as tracking the effects of large restoration projects like the Wychus Creek Restoration at Camp Polk Meadow Preserve.

“We sincerely value Eva’s long-term dedication to the bird survey program. She has helped guide its development over the years and is always sharing intriguing and useful information with us about the bird communities at our Preserves,” said Amanda Egertson, the Land Trust’s stewardship director. Thanks, Eva, for your expertise and commitment!

Although our other 2014 Volunteer of the Year is newer to the Land Trust, her contributions have also made a huge difference. Ginny Elliot has been a Land Trust volunteer and member since 2012. A former educator and self-proclaimed invasive weed devotee, Ginny immediately jumped into the Land Trust’s hike program and volunteered for the Weed Warriors.

To ground herself in the ecology of her new place, Ginny enrolled in Oregon State University’s Master Naturalist program. At the same time, she volunteered to be the shepherd for numerous Land Trust hikes. Then, she joined the Land Trust’s Weed Warriors, heading out to our protected lands rain or shine to pull invasive weeds. To top it off, she joined work parties and helped with other Land Trust events.

“We’re thrilled to have such a jill-of-all-trades volunteer for the Land Trust! Ginny’s dedication to the Land Trust has been top notch. We especially appreciate her weed-pulling zeal and the natural history she contributes to her hikes,” said Sarah Mowry the Land Trust’s outreach manager. Thanks, Ginny, for all your time and energy! —

Huge thanks to the 165 individuals and groups who donated more than 4,404 hours to the Land Trust last year!

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

The Land Trust welcomed two new members to our Board of Directors this year. Mike Cutting is a co-founder and retired president of Northwest Atlantic Partners, a national real estate brokerage and consulting firm based in Washington. Mike is a fifth generation Oregonian who grew up on a farm in the Willamette valley. He brings extensive experience in the real estate industry and a passion for Oregon to the Land Trust Board of Directors.

We also bid adieu to Board member Rod Bonacker. Rod officially joined the Board in 2005, though he has been a key part of the Land Trust since its founding in 1995. Rod served as a Board member for eight years, including two years as President of the Board during our acquisition of Wychus Canyon Preserve. His quiet mastery of complex natural resource issues combined with his innate leadership skills and boundless passion for the land made him an invaluable resource for staff and Board. Rod, thank you for all you’ve done, created, and inspired! —

Volunteers of the Year

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Finding Whychus Creek

A man recently stopped a Land Trust staff member on the street for directions. “Where exactly is Whychus Creek?” he asked.

He learned that Whychus Creek flows from glaciers in the Three Sisters through the town of Sisters and past Whychus Canyon Preserve to meet up with the Deschutes River. He learned that Whychus Creek used to be called Squaw Creek.

“Oh,” he responded, pondering this information. “I thought it was a whole new creek.”

Whychus Creek has been here for millennia, making its way from iconic Cascade peaks through pine forests, slowing to meander through green meadows, and carving through rimrock canyons. It’s the same creek upon which Native American tribes relied for sustenance.

But, in many ways, Whychus Creek is a new creek. After nearly 100 years when it ran dry during the summer season, Whychus Creek now has water year-round. From a newly restored, meandering channel at Camp Polk Meadow Preserve, to new, scenic trails at Whychus Canyon Preserve, many people are discovering Whychus Creek for the first time. Chinook salmon and steelhead are returning to its waters—a first in fifty years. It’s not the creek it was a decade ago.

Central Oregonians are beginning to recognize Whychus Creek as their own. It flows through the heart of Sisters, is as close to Bend as the Badlands, and can be accessed from Redmond in less than half an hour. It is a centerpiece for our community. It’s a place to come together to protect the best of Central Oregon for generations to come.

For nearly twenty years, the Land Trust has been working to conserve Whychus Creek. To date, the Land Trust has protected 2,200 acres of land along the creek and more than eight miles of the creek itself. These conserved lands have created an opportunity to restore Whychus Creek and revitalize its meadows and canyons. Our protected lands have bolstered water quality and created lush havens for plants and animals in an arid terrain.

The Land Trust has built several miles of trails and a program of free, guided hikes. The trails at Whychus Canyon Preserve provide the only public access to the Creek between Sisters and Alder Springs and create opportunities for recreation and connection to place. This has helped build awareness of the value of Whychus Creek—a magnificent creek important for the wildlife, scenic views, and the people of our region.

Like the man asking for directions, more and more people are finding Whychus Creek. If you’re stopped and asked about the Creek, will you tell its story? Will you speak for Whychus Creek?

Whychus 101

Flowing from the Cascade mountains, through pine forests, and into desert canyons... Whychus Creek IS Central Oregon.

- Whychus Creek is 41 miles long from its headwaters in the Three Sisters Wilderness to its confluence with the Deschutes River.
- Of those 41 miles, 15.4 are protected as a Wild and Scenic River upstream of Sisters. Downstream of Sisters, the Deschutes Land Trust has protected nearly 8 miles, and 7.8 miles are protected as federal land.
- The Creek is host to wildlife species both in and out of its waters. Chinook salmon and steelhead are finally returning home. Mule deer, elk and cougar call its canyons and meadows home. Songbirds and tiny hummingbirds live in its creekside willows.
Thank you all for the splendid work you do.

The volunteer program is great and helps expand the Land Trust’s visibility within the region.

You can’t find a better organization to give your money to. Your dollars stay local and make a difference.

The Land Trust’s unrestricted revenue continues to grow: 25% since 2010.

Where did our support come from this year? What did your support pay for this year?

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<th>Source of Support</th>
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Note: The Land Trust divides indirect costs (salaries, rent, insurance, utilities, etc.) across all program areas based on the full-time equivalency of staff. The Land Trust’s fiscal year runs from July 1 through June 30. Audited statements are available upon request. A copy of the Deschutes Land Trust’s Form 990 can be found at www.deschuteslandtrust.org.

Over 60,000 volunteer hours were completed by dedicated volunteers since 2001.

Land Trust hikes continue to engage the community:

4,921 people have joined us on hikes since 2001.

To the individuals, businesses, and foundations whose contributions make it possible for the Deschutes Land Trust to conserve and protect land in Central Oregon for today and tomorrow...

Five Rivers Society


Five Rivers Society Business


Members

Members continued... 

Members continued...
thank you

In Honor of

Bob & Gayle Baker
Marin and Gretchen Winch

Peter & Valerie Bryant
Jeff Neuman

Kathie & Michael Nieson
Gordon & Carol Steude

Doug & Marian Carter
Stanton & Martha Carter

Kelyn & Scott Collins
Judith & Bruce Kelly

Mark, Sherry, Elizabeth & Audrey Crounse
Larry Weinberg

In Memory of

Mary Beckwith Smith
Catherine Dolen

Craig & Kathi Eisenhour
Arnold & Norma Farni

R.D. & Karen Shayde
Susan & Bruce Shaul

Gilbert Stansender
Martin & Carolyn Winch

Bob Bridgeford
Sandie Flarken

Mary Hirch

Kellie Crane
Lisa & Gay Bogaw

Vern Dobson

Dick Sandvik

Liddy Hillbruner

Glen & Kate Rinicke

Patrick Hughes
David Bowsorth

Mary & Connie Camamos
Cherin Humankind Matching Gift Program
Kathryn Gabby

Peggy Fride

June Hughes

Sue Hughes

Carl Hoag

Barbara & John Lind

Wendell & Geraldine Schwartz

Robert Schweizer

Jodie Wyland

Mr. & Mrs. Stewart Wyland

Dr. William A. Johnson

Kathy Johnson

Ryan Koize

Karen & William Azbel

Elizabeth A. Laginess

Mike Limke

Mary E. Leaverton

Anonymous

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Mary E. Leaverton

Anonymous

Remembering Bob Baker
The Land Trust and the greater Sisters community lost a dear friend in January with the passing of Bob Baker, owner with his wife Gayle of Rimrock Ranch.

When he bought Rimrock Ranch in 1988, Bob looked at the 40-acre lot subdivision platted on the center of the ranch and committed himself to keeping the property in one piece. As Bob and Gayle worked with the Land Trust to develop a conservation easement, they always put permanent protection of their property first, sacrificing for the greater good of Whychus Creek.

Bob had an unceasing thirst for knowledge and was fascinated with the prospect of restoring lost salmon and steelhead runs. His appreciation for Rimrock Ranch knew no bounds. We are deeply saddened by his loss, but comforted by the fact that the first adult steelhead to return to Whychus Creek in almost 50 years returned to Rimrock Ranch, and Bob was there watching for it.

Bob Main
Mr. & Mrs. Jeremy Aird
Karen Groend
Microsoft Matching Gifts Program
Susan & Donor Nelson
Jenifer Schutz
Kathy & Max White

Jim Mann
Banhia Morkill

Jack Rice
Laurie Rice

Murray Robin
Jacque Prestidge

Jean Scarzello
Chris Scarpello
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