



DESCHUTES
LAND
TRUST

2024 ANNUAL REPORT

The Deschutes Land Trust conserves and cares for the lands and waters that sustain Central Oregon, so local communities and the natural world can flourish together for generations to come.



From Our Executive Director

I can confidently say that 2024 was an eventful year—full of so many successes and celebrations! Together we moved mountains’ worth of materials to restore miles of stream at Ochoco Preserve. Together we created plans for restored forests and streams at Paulina Creek Preserve. Together we chased new projects, large and small, and started them on their path to fruition. Together we connected rural communities, families, and young professionals to conservation in their backyards. Together we strengthened our commitment to increasing land ownership, access, and stewardship for the Tribes of Central Oregon.

Throughout it all, the constant was the commitment and support from our staff, Board, donors, volunteers, and community. As we look to the future, we know you’ll continue to be by our side as we craft our next strategic plan, roll out the final phase of restoration and community access at Ochoco Preserve, and share the next important piece of land that we are working to conserve.

Thank you for taking the time to read this annual report and learn about our organizational health. I hope that you will be inspired by all that we accomplished together in 2024 and will continue to support our mission and vision into 2025 and beyond!



With gratitude,

Rika Ayotte

Rika Ayotte
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

24

Conservation Success Stories From 2024



1 Launched ECCO for millennials to connect with local conservation.



4 Changed the face of Ochoco Preserve.



1 Supported local firefighting efforts near Paulina Creek Preserve.



2 Planted more than 75,000 new native plants at Land Trust Preserves.



5 Helped reintroduce native fish in our region.



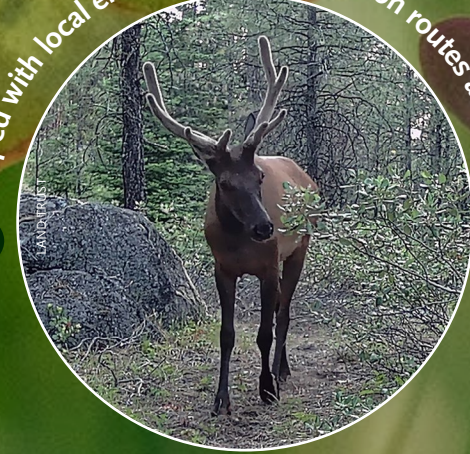
8 Celebrated outstanding volunteers: 5,651 hours and 368 people!



3 Launched Nature Kids, a new program of guided nature walks for families and kids!



6 Shared our protected lands. Nearly 700 folks joined us on a walk or hike!



9 Helped with local elk research on migration routes and habitats.

Read more 2024 conservation success stories [here!](#)

#LoveTheLand!

Equity Report

In 2024 the Deschutes Land Trust continued our efforts to strengthen diversity, equity, and inclusion across our organization. We built on our previous progress, implementing the goals on the next page.

\$17K

contributed by Deschutes Land Trust since 2022 to support Indigenous-led community projects.

8

new interpretive brochures and signs made available in Spanish.



Partnerships to Increase Access

The Land Trust hosted an event in July 2024 at Priday Ranch in conjunction with our local partners from Oregon Humanities, Vámonos Outside, and Latino Community Association. The group came together to collaborate on a program called *Interpretando Nuestro Territorio/ Interpreting Our Land*. Attendees gathered at Priday Ranch (pictured above) to enjoy a guided hike led by Land Trust staff member Gabriel Juarez, and then a facilitated conversation in Spanish about connection to the land.

We also partnered with Trout Unlimited and Madras Elementary School to provide a tour at Priday Ranch for a group of 4th graders (pictured at right). They toured the ranch, learning about Trout Creek and why creeks are so important in our high desert. Huge thanks to all our partners for the time and energy they put into making these events possible!

Madras Elementary School students visit Priday Ranch.



- 1

Goal: Use an equity lens to root equity into all policies and systems. This includes our bylaws, strategic plan, conservation strategy, community engagement plan, and stewardship work. **Progress in 2024:**

 - Updated our conservation strategy to better define community values and how we integrate them.
 - Updated and expanded employee healthcare benefits to better address the needs of all staff and their families.
 - Began to update our Preserve signage to help increase inclusivity and accessibility for all types of users at Land Trust Preserves.
- 2

Goal: Expand cultural community partnerships. While the Land Trust works with dozens of community partners each year, we will endeavor to work with and lift up new partners whose perspectives and engagement will make our work better and more impactful. **Progress in 2024:**

 - Strengthened partnerships with Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs and Klamath Tribes to guide stewardship and conservation decisions on their ceded lands.
 - Increased our annual contribution to the Indigenous Land Relationship Fund, a grant program for Indigenous organizations to strengthen connections to their ancestral lands.
 - Partnered with Oregon Humanities, Vámonos Outside, and Latino Community Association to lead a Spanish-speaking tour at Priday Ranch.
 - Offered interpretive materials in Spanish via our website.
 - Continued to distribute milkweed and pollinator plants to local rural and underserved communities.
- 3

Goal: Refine our employment process to improve staff diversity, retention, capacity, and professional development. We want to better reflect the communities we serve. **Progress in 2024:**

 - Revised our employee handbook, safety manual, and compensation policy with an emphasis on equity, inclusion, and transparency.
 - Recruited and retained staff and Board from diverse backgrounds.
- 4

Goal: Embed equity training for staff, Board members, and volunteers. We want our team to reflect our values in their work and interactions with our communities. We seek to reduce bias and increase awareness across our organization. **Progress in 2024:**

 - Supported staff participation in regional, local, and national trainings and conducted peer-to-peer staff training.
 - Improved our onboarding process to provide diversity, equity, and inclusion training materials to all new staff and Board members.
 - Continued staff and Board participation in the Oregon Land Justice Project, focused on increasing Indigenous land ownership, access, and stewardship.

Financial Summary

The Land Trust's fiscal year runs from January 1 through December 31. This financial summary comes from the Land Trust's yet-to-be audited 2024 financial statements and are subject to change. Audited statements are available upon request. A copy of the Deschutes Land Trust's Form 990 can be found at www.guidestar.org.

18,742
acres conserved



Where did our support come from this year? **TOTAL \$7,174,341**

Grants 57% \$4,073,071	Unrestricted Donations 21% \$1,544,560
Restricted Donations 18% \$1,269,132	Investments + Other 4% \$287,578

What did your support make possible this year? **TOTAL \$6,537,044**

Conservation + Stewardship 84% \$5,494,760	Education + Outreach 8% \$541,015
Organizational Sustainability 6% \$365,976	Management + Support 2% \$135,293

Number of donor households: **1,712**

Volunteer hours donated since 1995: **125,805**

Endowment for stewardship of conserved lands: **\$2,558,465**

Value of conserved lands: **\$21,889,068**



KRIS VRESTOVICH

Stay up-to-date with Land Trust news! Join our e-newsletter: deschuteslandtrust.org/enews



The Deschutes Land Trust conserves and cares for more than 18,742 acres in our region for today, tomorrow, and for generations to come.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| PRESIDENT | Breck Flanagan-Caldwell |
| Ann Richardson | Rob Garrott |
| VICE PRESIDENT | Melissa Kent |
| Stacey Forson | Daniele McKay |
| TREASURER | Gonzalo Mendez |
| Steve Brown | Amy Miller |
| SECRETARY | Tom Montag |
| Michelle McSwain | Jim Nicol |
| | Austin Smith Jr. |
| | Inge Wells |

LAND TRUST STAFF

- | | |
|---------------------------|------------------|
| EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR | Rika Ayotte |
| Kiyomi Appleton Gaines | Gabriel Juarez |
| Natasha Bellis | Katie McGee |
| Pat Cohen | Sarah Mowry |
| Peter Cooper | Mo Odell |
| Amanda Egertson | Michael Rubovits |
| Jana Hemphill | Mike Vernon |
| Sarah Holcombe | Jen Zalewski |

