



Neighbor News

Your Connection to Land Trust Preserves



Willow Springs Preserve Restoration Update

The second phase of the Willow Springs Preserve stream restoration has wrapped up! Crews were on site this summer building the natural structures that are being used in the restoration. **Here is what they accomplished:**

- **Constructed 156 log-based structures in Whychus Creek.** These were built using 550 whole trees collected during local fuels-reduction projects. Compared to the first phase of restoration, these larger, greener trees will help create stronger structures to withstand higher water flows.
- **Built structures to shift water flow.** Some structures were built near the bank and extend into the flow of water. These will help shift the flow of the creek in certain directions.
- **Built structures to slow water flow.** Some structures were built in the middle of the creek and look like log jams or piles of branches. They will help slow flows, collect sediment, and promote complexity and the side-to-side movement that the creek would naturally have over time.
- **Placed whole trees in the stream.** Crews placed whole trees intermixed and upstream of structures to help slow flows, collect sediment, promote complexity and side-to-side movement, and create larger debris jams.
- **Built one beaver dam-like structure.** These help imitate beaver dams, creating pools, slowing flows, and helping connect the creek to the surrounding meadow.

What's next? We watch and wait and let Whychus Creek do the work! The goal of this kind of low-tech restoration is to let the creek and its natural processes lead. Over time, with the addition of high flows, the log structures throughout the restoration will jumpstart these processes which will change the creek. Eventually the creek will transform from a human-manipulated single channel into a more natural braided series of channels that spread out across the valley floor. Crews will return in several years to complete phase three and fine-tune and build more structures as the creek changes over time.

Huge thanks to our restoration partners at the Upper Deschutes Watershed Council and Anabran Solutions for persevering on construction during a very hot and smoky July! **Stay up-to-date on Preserve news:** deschuteslandtrust.org/neighbor-news



Join us for Walks + Hikes!

Join the Land Trust on a guided tour of Willow Springs Preserve or another of our Sisters-area Preserves. Each year volunteers lead free outings at Land Trust Preserves. From fall colors to geology, you are guaranteed to learn a little more about your backyard!

Learn more:
deschuteslandtrust.org/hikes

Rimrock Ranch Forest Restoration

The Land Trust finished another forest restoration project at Rimrock Ranch in July. Our goal in restoring the forests of Rimrock Ranch is to mimic historic forest conditions and improve habitat for native plants and animals, while also reducing wildfire danger at the property and for our neighbors.

Like many parts of Central Oregon, juniper trees at Rimrock Ranch were growing in much denser stands than they did historically. Juniper thinning helps increase the amount of light and available water for other trees, grasses, shrubs, and wildflowers. This year at Rimrock Ranch, we thinned juniper on 203 acres, significantly reducing juniper density.

In areas dominated by ponderosa pine, we removed most junipers to give the pines more light and water. We kept old-growth juniper trees on ridge tops and rocky outcrops, mimicking historic wildfire patterns. We also left small stands of juniper throughout the thinned area to provide cover for wildlife like elk and mule deer. All of the thinning was completed by hand crews, ensuring that soils and plants in the thinned areas were protected and overall disturbance was limited.

Cut trees were piled and have been drying out all summer long. We plan to burn those piles when weather conditions are favorable and permit us to do so safely. We work with the Oregon Department of Forestry on all burn plans to acquire the required burn permits and determine a safe burn window.

Watch our website for more details: deschuteslandtrust.org/neighbor-news



OPEN HOUSE

Join us at our Open House!

Learn more about all our projects at our fall Open House! Celebrate an outstanding year of conservation, community, and caring for the land. Connect with Land Trust staff and other community members, and enjoy snacks and drinks.

October 8, 2024, 5-7pm

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of
Central Oregon, Bend

RSVP: deschuteslandtrust.org/events



RIMROCK RANCH FOREST RESTORATION, BEFORE



RIMROCK RANCH FOREST RESTORATION, AFTER

CONSERVATION. COMMUNITY. CARING FOR THE LAND.

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