

2025

CELEBRATING

30
YEARS

NEWSLETTER

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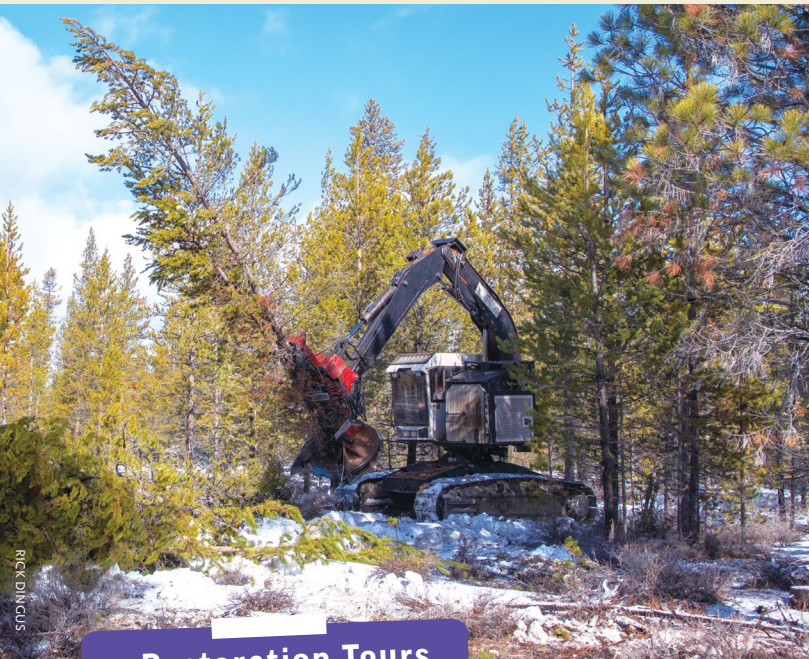


DESCHUTES
LAND
TRUST

Paulina Creek Preserve Takes Shape

The Land Trust's newest Preserve has become a hive of activity in 2025! Over the winter we completed our first phase of forest restoration. Crews were on site thinning the dense forest near the southern border of the Preserve. Our goal was to thin lodgepole pine to favor ponderosa pine which also creates a fuel break for neighboring homes. We completed this work on frozen ground to ensure that overall disturbance on the land is limited. The thinned trees will be used in the restoration of Paulina Creek to provide habitat for fish and wildlife.

Speaking of the stream restoration, planning is currently underway to design stream restoration and community access at the Preserve. Our goal for the stream restoration component is to create a robust restoration design that helps the creek reestablish natural processes and improves habitat for fish and wildlife. Our goal for community access includes accessible trails that provide educational opportunities and connect to future regional trail systems. We look forward to sharing more details on these plans as they progress. Watch our website for more information!



Restoration Tours

Join us for a guided walk or hike to learn more about current and future restoration efforts at Paulina Creek Preserve!



Community Science for the Birds

The call of a bird and the call to make a difference in your community might not seem related at first, but for the Land Trust's volunteer bird surveyors, they are intertwined.

Community scientists play an integral role in how the Land Trust cares for the lands and waters that we protect. Our bird surveyor program has been collecting and sharing data with the Land Trust since 2002. Local volunteers have spent 8,800 hours(!) patiently listening for bird calls, watching for slight movements in bushes, and looking overhead to identify the different bird species at Land Trust lands. Bird surveyors have been active at 11 Land Trust protected areas, with more than half of those places providing habitat for 100+ different kinds of birds. Camp Polk Meadow Preserve takes the crown as our birding hotspot though—186 species of birds have been spotted there!

Land Trust bird surveyor Susan Zimmerman shared, "I'm a bird surveyor because it's important to have year-round information on bird presence (or absence). Surveying birds also provides information about breeding birds, seasonal use, and overall populations levels. I jumped right into tracking birds at Paulina Creek Preserve knowing that this could provide information to help the Land Trust compare bird numbers before and after restoration. Aside from this community science aspect, bird surveying at the Preserve gives one a magical intimacy with a relatively small patch of land. It's awe-inspiring to see all the birds come back to their little niche habitats in spring, and great fun to count them all when they do."

Are you interested in becoming a volunteer bird surveyor for the Land Trust? It's easy to get started! After watching a short video on your own, join our staff for a bird survey orientation at a Land Trust Preserve, then you're ready to begin birding on our behalf! Heed the call (pun intended) and become a bird surveyor today!

Learn more: deschuteslandtrust.org/bird-surveys

Celebrating 30 Years!

This year the Land Trust celebrates 30 years of conservation, community, and caring for the land! That's quite a milestone that is reflected in the 18,700+ acres we've protected, the 12,500+ people we've connected to the land, and the 125,800+ hours that have been donated to caring for the land! It is also reflected in the smaller things, like these fun facts about the Land Trust:



In 1995, the Land Trust had: 6 board members, 10 volunteers, 493 hours volunteered, 10 donors.



We've given away 168,400 milkweed seeds to help monarch butterflies since 2019.

We protect one of the oldest structures in Deschutes County, the Hindman barn.



The first young steelhead were returned to Whychus Creek at Camp Polk Meadow Preserve in 2007.



We protect a fen! Fens are biological hot spots and can remain in the same location for thousands of years.



In 2024, the Land Trust had: 14 board members, 16 staff, 5,652 hours volunteered, 1,712 donors.

Read more fun facts from the past 30 years and watch a video to celebrate our anniversary: deschuteslandtrust.org/30th-anniversary



1995: Founders of the Deschutes Land Trust attend a conference in Portland. Photo: Land Trust.



2002: Norma Funai leads one of the first public tours of Camp Polk Meadow Preserve. Photo: Land Trust.



2012: The Land Trust completes the first large-scale stream restoration project, the Whychus Creek restoration at Camp Polk Meadow Preserve. Photo: Jay Mather.



2024: The Land Trust expands community engagement efforts, attending events like Latino Fest in Madras. Photo: Land Trust.



03/28/2024 WHYCHUS CANYON PRESERVE



06/14/2024 CAMP POLK MEADOW PRESERVE



10/03/2024 ASPEN HOLLOW PRESERVE



10/25/2024 RIMROCK RANCH

Keeping Up With the Cougars

Every parent will tell you that raising a child is hard work. But what if you're a mountain lion? That's where Deschutes Land Trust can lend a hand! A core part of our mission is conserving and caring for natural areas that wildlife need to thrive. Our protected lands provide the connected space and habitat for a wide variety of wildlife, including mountain lions, songbirds, fish, and elk.

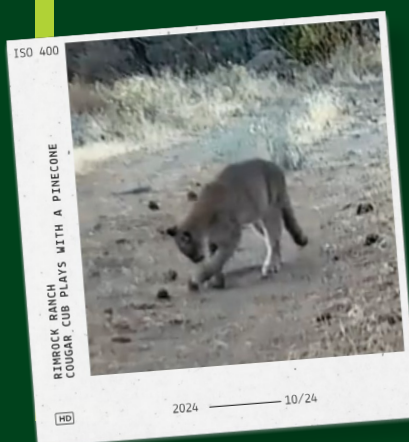
This past year, we watched a mountain lion mama make a home for herself and her two cubs on Land Trust protected lands along Whychus Creek. Our wildlife cameras captured scenes from the family of three throughout the year, letting us watch these cubs go from tiny, spotted fur babies to awkward teenagers with too-big paws who liked roughhousing.

These elusive creatures were never spotted by humans (as far as we know). We can help keep ourselves—and wildlife—safe by following a few simple guidelines when recreating outside: explore in pairs or groups, make noise as you explore, and keep dogs on-leash. If you do see a mountain lion, make yourself big, loud, and do not run! Talk loudly while backing away slowly.

Even if we didn't see this cougar family in real life, we're glad to be able to share a year of raising cougar cubs with you through our wildlife cameras. We hope you enjoy it! (And be sure to scan our code below to watch a video of their activity!)

Check it out!

Cougar Cub Cuteness!



Watch these fuzzy babies grow up as they wander our protected lands along Whychus Creek:



CONSERVATION. COMMUNITY. CARING FOR THE LAND.

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Explore Our Lands

Join the Land Trust April-November for free, guided walks or hikes to explore the nature of Central Oregon!

deschuteslandtrust.org/hikes