

Deschutes Land Trust

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DESCHUTESLANDTRUST.ORG

CONSERVATION. COMMUNITY. CARING FOR THE LAND.

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:****Deschutes Land Trust Names 2026 Cohort of Emerging Conservation Leaders**

Bend, OR—January 14, 2026—The Deschutes Land Trust is pleased to announce its 2026 cohort of Emerging Conservationists of Central Oregon (ECCO). The second annual ECCO cohort includes 25 individuals from throughout Central Oregon who bring a wide variety of skills, expertise, and passion for conservation to the Land Trust.

"The Land Trust recognizes the growing need for more leaders in our conservation community. We are so excited and proud to be working with this group of bright and talented emerging conservationists. We can't wait to see what new ideas, perspectives, and energy they bring to the Land Trust," said Rika Ayotte, the Land Trust's Executive Director.

Emerging Conservationists of Central Oregon, or ECCO, is a Land Trust program that works to engage millennials and connect early- and mid-career professionals with opportunities for community leadership growth. ECCO members donate 10-15 hours of their time a year and serve for one year with an option to extend their service for an additional two years.

[Learn more.](#)

2026 Emerging Conservationists of Central Oregon Cohort:

Liz Crandall	Veronica Malby	Ben Rubin
Jeannie D'Agostino	Madison Montgomery	Naomi Serio
Laura Fitzgerald	Justin Nelson	Alison Shane
Adam Foster	Grace Ogawa	Fenix Van Tassel
Dante Francomano	Mary Pantenburg	Alice Weston
Kimi Guerra	Amy Paul	Kelly Whitehair
Michelle Guitard	Kaylin Preston	Jen Winkler
Alex Hardison	Parker Randels	Jess Wulzen
Nick Maithonis		

About Deschutes Land Trust:

The Deschutes Land Trust envisions a future of strong and healthy natural and human communities—where we work together to conserve and care for the lands that make Central Oregon an incredible place to live, work, and grow. As Central Oregon's locally-based, nationally-accredited land trust, the Deschutes Land Trust has conserved and continues to care for more than 18,742 acres since 1995. For more information on the Deschutes Land Trust, contact us at (541) 330-0017 or visit deschuteslandtrust.org.

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Media resources: [ECCO photo](#).

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