

BEHIND THE SCENES: PEOPLE PROTECTING THE LAND

JAY MATHER

When Land Trust Board member Kim McCarrel was a child she lived in a rural area outside of Salt Lake City. There, she could walk her dog through the hills for hours and never see another person. “I loved that place, and it never occurred to me that it could ever change. Then, when I was in college, the area was subdivided.

The sagebrush, scrub oak, and cottonwood trees I cherished were replaced by houses, roads, and sidewalks. I felt devastated at the loss, and it convinced me that development is not always the highest and best use for a piece of land,” Kim recalls.

Kim and her husband Steve are from Utah and Idaho respectively, but moved to Oregon in the early 1970s. They lived and worked in Portland and in the mid-80’s bought a vacation home at Black Butte Ranch to escape the rain. The McCarrels joined the Land Trust in 2000, and increased their involvement during the Metolius Preserve campaign. They’ve been steady contributors ever since.

“Here in Central Oregon we’re surrounded by public land. But many areas that most people think are entirely public holdings—including some of our important rivers and creeks—are actually a checkerboard of public and private land. Those private lands have an uncertain future. By conserving these lands, the Land Trust is able to protect wildlife habitat and restore the health of these waterways so salmon and steelhead will once again spawn in Central Oregon,” says Kim.

One of the places Kim enjoys riding is Skyline Forest from nearby Tumalo Reservoir. When she learned the forest was privately owned and at risk for development, she realized one of her favorite riding areas could someday disappear. Kim got even more involved with the Land Trust’s efforts to conserve Skyline Forest which eventually led to her Board service. “I think the preservation of Skyline Forest will be as important a legacy to Central Oregon as Drake Park is to Bend and Forest Park is to Portland,” she states.

“Now that we’re retired, we have more time to be involved in other ways, including going on the Land Trust’s hikes, volunteering in the field, and serving on the Board. We want to preserve some of the Central Oregon that we know and love for the benefit of future generations (of people and wildlife). I simply want to help protect pieces of land for people to explore like I did when I was growing up. It’s really a simple vision, but one with profound implications for us all.” —



KIM MCCARREL



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THE FIVE RIVERS SOCIETY

The Five Rivers Society is made up of visionary individuals dedicated to investing in the organization conserving and protecting land in Central Oregon: the Deschutes Land Trust. Society members’ gifts of \$1,000 or more protect land for wildlife and local communities and make a powerful statement about the importance of land conservation in our community.

*If you’d like to join this select leadership circle, please contact **Brad Chalfant, Executive Director** at (541) 330-0017 or bsc@deschuteslandtrust.org.*