

Oregon Wild

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The fight for
Oregon's wildlife



OREGON WILD

Working to protect and restore Oregon's wildlands, wildlife, and waters as an enduring legacy.

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COVER PHOTO: JOSH MORE, CREATIVECOMMONS.ORG After being hunted to extinction in Oregon in 1935, three wolverine have recently been confirmed in their historic, native habitat. Without significant reform of Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife however, Oregonians won't see a recovery plan for the return of this keystone species.





From the Director's Desk The wolverine way

Sean Stevens, Executive Director

The photo isn't exactly a perfect encapsulation of wild nature. Green, glowing eyes frozen in the flash of a mounted trail camera. A small body clinging to a tree trunk, caught mid-bite while feasting on the leg of a road-killed deer strapped to a branch by researchers.

Still, the fact that the creature caught on camera back in April 2011 was one of the most tenacious, wide-ranging, and elusive animals in America made it pretty special. In fact, it happened to be the first confirmed animal of its kind documented in Oregon since 1986 – a wolverine!

Wolverines are feisty. They live in harsh, snowy conditions. They fight wolves off of fresh kills. They aren't afraid to go toe-to-toe with animals five times their size.

Their tenacity reminds me of Oregon Wild.

We don't back down from a fight to protect Oregon's environment. If the timber industry vastly outspends us, we'll outsmart them. If mining interests are dead-set on digging up our rivers, we'll dig in for the long haul, drawing attention to exploitative extraction practices.

Quite frankly, you need tenacity and dogged determination in the face of the recent national election results. Congress – already dysfunctional – is about to get downright depressing for those that care about protecting our public lands. Thankfully, the Senate filibuster and President Obama's veto pen still stand in the way of egregious policies that would undermine environmental protections.

While the situation in Washington D.C. is bad (see page 14 for Rep. Blumenauer's take on what's next), here at home things are different. When Oregon Wild crafted our current strategic plan, we saw the writing on the wall. Progress at the

federal level was bound to be slow. We needed to build our Wilderness campaigns for the long term but also start to look for opportunities in Salem.

With pro-environment candidates sweeping to victory in the Oregon Legislature, our shift of focus to state issues is looking rather prescient.

As you'll read about on the following pages, we're primed to take advantage of a friendlier legislature to fundamentally reform how our state's wildlife agency does business.

It's an exciting opportunity, but it will be challenging.

There are only 250 wolverines in the lower 48, and only three known to exist in Oregon.



DAVID COBB If Oregon's wolverine population is to spread beyond the Eagle Cap Wilderness it will take a concerted effort from wildlife advocates like you.

As tenacious as wolverines are, decades of trapping and habitat fragmentation have drastically reduced their numbers. Climate change is the latest threat to this snow-dependent species.

The response from wildlife agencies? Deny wolverines endangered species protection and allow trapping in their home range.

Unlike the Marvel comic fantasy, the wolverine – despite being feisty and tenacious – won't endure without the

support and long-term planning of a human community willing to fight for the preservation of wild nature. Instead of fictional action heroes we'll need people just like you.

Let us know!

If you'd like to receive a physical copy of our annual report (and special fold out map), request one at info@oregonwild.org

Fighting for Oregon's wildlife & ODFW reform

Quinn Read, Wildlife Coordinator



© 2013 'MIKE' MICHAEL L. BAIRD From sea otters to condors, wolves to wolverine, Oregon's native apex predators keep their habitats – and our landscape – in ecological balance. Their survival and the health of our environment should be a priority for the agencies tasked with their management.

High in the Willowa Mountains, in the far northeastern corner of Oregon, up to three wolverine are making a tentative return to their historic alpine habitat. These notoriously elusive animals were hunted to extinction in Oregon as early as 1935. So, when the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife – the agency charged with protecting

and conserving our state's native wildlife and their habitats for the benefit of *all* Oregonians – confirmed the first wolverine tracks in 2011, it seemed like a fitting occasion to roll out the red (er, green?) carpet and welcome the big lugs home.

Unfortunately for the wolverine, they couldn't have picked a worse time to

make their reappearance. Today, the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) is faced with a historic budget shortfall, born from its decades-long dependence on declining hunting and fishing license sales. The sad consequence is an agency without the will or the resources to take the necessary conservation measures to protect our

most vulnerable non-game wildlife. Sorry, wolverine, no recovery plan for you, try again some other time.

We're not talking about a one-time budget shortfall here. If ODFW continues on its current trajectory, wedded to an unsustainable funding model at the expense of its broader public mission, it risks institutional

failure. And that has implications not just for the wolverine, but for all of the fish and wildlife that call Oregon home.

Why should Oregonians care?

State wildlife agency reform may not be the kind of hot-button issue that inspires kids to grow out their hair and throw on their mass-produced Che Guevara t-shirts. Nevertheless, if you care about wildlife, it's an important one. And if you're reading this, there's a good chance you do care about wildlife. It turns out, lots of Oregonians do – for lots of different reasons.

Maybe you've witnessed thousands of snow geese take flight over the Klamath Basin through a pair of binoculars, or a lone chickadee at a bird feeder through your kitchen window. Maybe you've hunted Roosevelt elk in the forests of Oregon's Cascades or fished for Chinook salmon on the Columbia River. Maybe you've laughed with your kids while watching sea otters at play during a visit to the aquarium. Or maybe you've heard the lonely howl of a gray wolf while backpacking in the Willows.



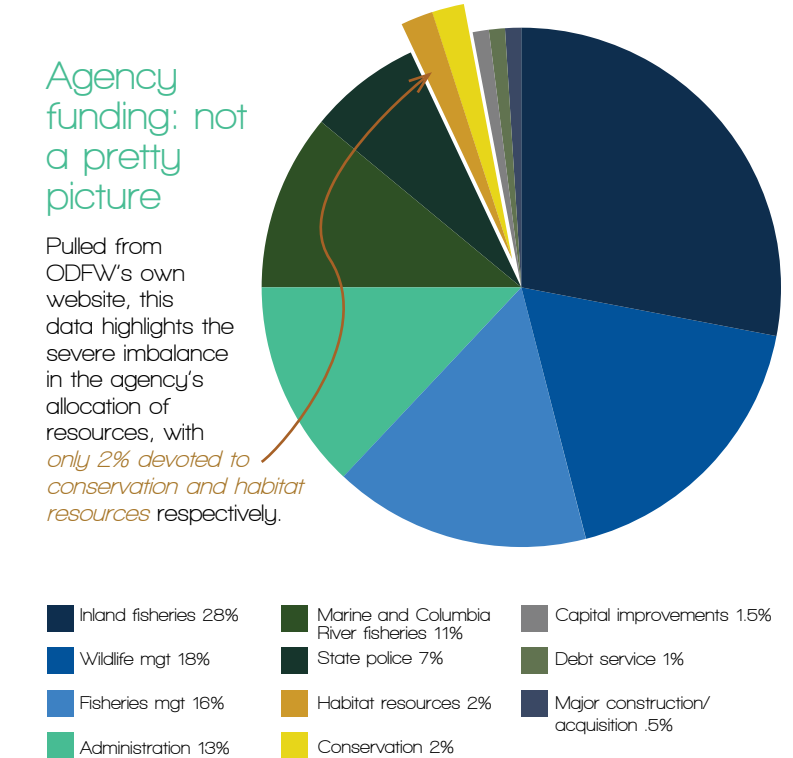
RHETT WILKINS Wildlife viewing comprises the vast majority of wildlife-related recreation in Oregon – clearly Oregonians value wildlife for wildlife’s sake. So why hasn’t ODFW heeded this public demand that aligns with their mission to protect and conserve both game and non-game species?

Whatever your reason, it’s a good one. And you’re in good company. A 2011 survey by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service found that 1.8 million people participated in some sort of wildlife-related recreation in Oregon – hunting, fishing, or wildlife watching. Of those 1.8 million people, 11% hunted, 36% fished, and a whopping 81% watched wildlife in 2011.

All of that activity in 2011 generated \$2.7 billion in related expenditures within the state of Oregon. Fishing expenditures totaled \$641 million and hunting expenditures totaled \$239 million. Wildlife-watching expenditures alone accounted for \$1.7 billion. That’s a lot of money injected into the economy to support our interest in wildlife-related recreation.

These numbers speak to a need for a state wildlife agency that fulfills its mandate to conserve both game and non-game species. Oregon faces numerous challenges related to threatened and endangered species, habitat loss, and climate change. Yet, ODFW is either unable or unwilling to rise to these challenges.

The agency’s refusal to prepare a recovery plan or institute any measures to address the return of the wolverine is just one glaring example. The same goes for sea otters. Once thought extinct on the Oregon coast, growing evidence suggests the critters are making comeback. But so



far, the sea otter barely merits a mention on ODFW’s website.

Likewise, endangered California condors once soared over Oregon. They could again, but their recovery is hampered by the proliferation of lead ammunition. Condors ingest toxic fragments while scavenging on animals killed by lead bullets. However, ODFW will not seriously explore a ban on lead ammunition

due to fears it will negatively impact revenues from hunting.

And then, of course, there are Oregon’s endangered gray wolves – once trapped, hunted and poisoned to near extinction. Under significant pressure, ODFW developed a comprehensive wolf plan. It’s not perfect, but thanks in part to state protections, wolves have begun to make a comeback, with 64 known adult wolves in the state. It’s a good

Native wildlife on the verge: the agencies vs. Oregon Wild

GRAY WOLVES

ODFW & USFWS

With intense pressure from anti-wildlife and livestock interests, state and federal managers are considering stripping protections for gray wolves.



OREGON WILD

Our wolf population is up and livestock depredations are down thanks to Oregon Wild efforts to craft the most progressive wolf management plan in the country in 2013. We'll fight any attempt to undo this progress, including ODFW plans to prematurely remove endangered species protections for Oregon's wolves.

SEA OTTERS

ODFW

Despite reports of sea otter sightings off the coast growing every year, ODFW has failed to work proactively to craft a recovery plan for this keystone species.



OREGON WILD

We're raising awareness and working with coastal communities to call on the state to draft a plan to recover sea otters to their native habitat.

USFWS

Despite a population of just three in Oregon, the government withdrew wolverine from Endangered Species Act consideration last spring.

WOLVERINE

OREGON WILD

We've initiated a legal challenge and are calling on the federal government to stop playing politics with wildlife conservation and give wolverine the protections they so desperately need.



CONDORS

ODFW

While California's wildlife managers are phasing out lead ammunition that poisons condors, ODFW is digging in and preemptively opposing lead ammunition reform.

OREGON WILD

Working with other conservation partners to return the largest bird in North America to its native habitat here in Oregon.



start, and ODFW should be commended for its efforts. Unfortunately, the agency is at risk of going backwards on protection for this iconic species with next year's status review and its 5-year wolf plan review. The agency is already considering a reckless proposal to provide specific location data to ranchers.

On the other hand, the agency finds plenty of funding to keep fish hatcheries fully stocked, and to artificially boost deer and elk populations with winter feeding programs. There is money to haze cormorants and sea lions – ostensibly to protect fish. They also direct resources to Wildlife Services, a federal agency infamous for killing native predators like cougars and coyotes.

A mission adrift

ODFW's woes stem from the 1990s when the legislature slashed general fund support, leaving the agency reliant on revenues from hunting and fishing license and equipment sales. ODFW has a clear mandate to protect and conserve both game and non-game fish and wildlife in the public interest. However, the agency's reliance on revenues from hunting and fishing license sales created a culture focused almost exclusively on those user groups, at the expense of the broader public interest. Over the last twenty years, as participation in

hunting and fishing declined across the state, resources for the agency diminished. ODFW responded by increasing fees and cutting conservation programs at the core of its mission. But increased fees led to even fewer people taking up hunting and fishing. It's a vicious cycle that has left hunters, anglers, and conservationists alike feeling alienated.

ODFW's mission is *"to protect and enhance Oregon's fish and wildlife and their habitats for use and enjoyment by present and future generations."* While hunting and fishing are a vital and appropriate part of ODFW's work, it is not the primary mission. To justify ODFW's funding model and the deviation from its core conservation mission, the number of people paying to hunt and fish must grow over time. Over the last twenty years however, the number of Oregonians who hunt

or fish has steadily declined, while the number of people who engage in wildlife watching has steadily increased – a trend echoed across the nation.

According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, between 2001 and 2011, total expenditures by anglers in Oregon declined by 43%. It's a similar story for hunters, for whom expenditures shrunk by 59%. Over the same time period, expenditures by Oregonians for the primary purpose of watching wildlife grew 129%.

Instead of adapting and diversifying its funding model in response to these trends, the agency doubled down on its focus on a small and shrinking user group. Add a shaky economy to this downward spiral and it's easy to see why ODFW is now faced with an unprecedented \$32 million budget shortfall.

ODFW's solution? Deep spending cuts to conservation programs, increased hunting and fishing license fees, and \$17 million in general fund dollars, which are derived from taxes paid by all Oregonians. That's a pretty big request for public dollars from an agency that almost entirely fails to meet the needs of the growing majority of wildlife enthusiasts in Oregon who do not hunt or fish.

What can we do about it?

Lest this all sound too grim, it's worth remembering that ODFW has a statutory obligation to prioritize the conservation and protection of native species. ODFW is (apologies, cliché alert) at a crossroads. The current budget crisis proves the agency cannot afford to continue its current trajectory. But ODFW's request for general fund dollars also provides a rare opportunity for the public to

weigh in. Oregon Wild is taking that opportunity and running. With your support, we can help the agency refocus its programs, funding model and culture to meet the needs of Oregon and the values of the public it serves.

ODFW has lost the trust of thousands of Oregonians who see little evidence that the agency represents their values, or has an interest in non-game species conservation. To repair that breach of trust, we believe ODFW must adopt a broad-based and diverse funding model that capitalizes on the growing number of wildlife watchers in the state. The agency must refocus on its broad conservation mission and work to proactively protect and recover fish and wildlife and their habitats. It must assist landowners in protecting habitat and preventing conflict with wildlife. Finally, it must recommit to

conservation science and research that educates the public, counters misinformation, and provides high-quality data to inform decision making by local and state agencies and elected officials.

It may sound daunting, but it's necessary. ODFW has the potential to be a strong partner in the conservation of the fish and wildlife that make Oregon such a special place to live. But they need input, feedback, and activism from people like you to realize that potential. Oregon Wild is taking on the challenge, and we hope you'll join us. ☺

Take Action!

Visit www.oregonwild.org/wildlife to help us fight for native Oregon wildlife and habitat.



COURTESY OF ODFW



COURTESY OF primatewrangler (FLICKR CC)



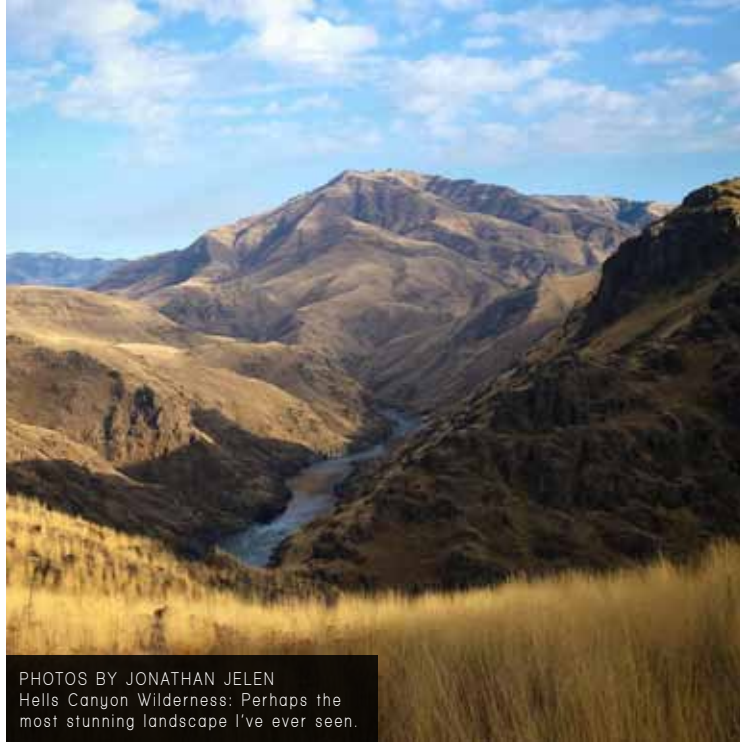
RHETT WILKINS



GARY G. MILLER

The personal 50 Hikes Challenge – #iamwilderness

Jonathan Jelen, Development Coordinator



PHOTOS BY JONATHAN JELEN
Hells Canyon Wilderness: Perhaps the most stunning landscape I've ever seen.

291 miles.
43,000 feet of elevation gain.
50 Wilderness hikes.
One deeply personal journey.

With this year marking the 50th anniversary of the Wilderness Act, Oregon Wild launched the inaugural

50 Hikes Challenge, inviting supporters to hike in each and every Wilderness – existing and proposed – in the state. We created the Challenge as a fun, interactive way to raise the profile of Wilderness in Oregon while building momentum for our campaigns to permanently

protect Crater Lake, the Rogue River, and Devil's Staircase.

I decided to personally tackle the *50 Hikes Challenge*, figuring that it'd be a great way to see many of the special places in Oregon that I hadn't yet crossed off my list. I was craving a new personal challenge and, frankly, the checklist mentality seemed to fit my Type A/OCD tendencies. So, in early May, it began with one of my close-in, staple hikes in the old-growth forest along the Salmon River in the Salmon-Huckleberry Wilderness. At that time, I couldn't have predicted the impact this journey would have on me.

If you follow Oregon Wild, you already know why Wilderness is important. Wilderness provides us with clean water. It preserves unspoiled wildlife habitat. It offers world-class recreation opportunities. But perhaps the most significant reason to protect Wilderness – and I'd wager the reason that most of us do this work – is much more personal.

For me, Wilderness is where life's peak moments happen. It's where I go to find answers to my life's most basic and personal questions. It's

where I go to find solitude and to stem loneliness. It's silent in all the right ways.

Wilderness is my church and hiking is my meditation. It's where I go to escape and make sense of an increasingly insane and sometimes disheartening world. It's where everything makes perfect sense and where life's problems seem more manageable.

Some areas I hiked with a friend. Many, I did just with myself and my thoughts. Some Wilderness areas required more of me – more blood, sweat, and tears (a lot of blood if I timed my hike with peak mosquito season!). But each one made an impression on me and gave me a story for the road.

There was the spotted owl that graciously posed for our Oregon Wild group in the Table Rock Wilderness. There was the jolly suction dredge miner named Albert who affably gave me a heads-up about bears in the area as I set up camp

just outside the Kalmiopsis Wilderness – and in the next breath, matter-of-factly warned me about the recent Sasquatch activity in the area. There was the blustery false summit on South Sister which nearly blew a friend and me off our feet atop the Three Sisters Wilderness. And there were the distant midnight wolf howls that provided the soundtrack to a moonlit night in the Wenaha-Tucannon Wilderness.

According to the uncharacteristically poetic legislative text from 1964, Wilderness is a place “where man himself is a visitor.” But honestly,



A spotted owl in the Table Rock Wilderness



The 50th and final hike!

mean that this area is timeless and can be enjoyed by Oregonians for generations to come.

The Wilderness signs were also a stark reminder of the endless energy, hard work, and dedication that went into achieving the protection this place now enjoyed. I made it a habit of touching the sign on my way out of every Wilderness area as a small, personal tribute to the people that gave so much to protect it.

In truth, 2014 has been a difficult year for me. This year brought with it some significant personal challenges that have deeply tested my character and have changed me in pretty life-altering ways. The *50 Hikes Challenge* helped me to cope. On some hikes, it provided me with a chance to more clearly think through the obstacles I was facing. And on many others, it granted my mind some much-needed quiet and calm.

This whole experience has taught me a lot. It's given me first-hand knowledge about what each of these Wilderness

with each passing Wilderness that was checked off my list, Wilderness felt less like a place where I was a guest and more and more like a place I belonged. Like home. There were times where I hiked every day for a week. And there were times when going a mere three or four days in the city would get me feeling seriously antsy.

Normally when hiking, I prefer to see as little evidence of human impact as possible. But as I started check more and more hikes off my list, I began to look forward to seeing the Wilderness signs at each boundary. Those signs are a definitive assurance that the area I was about to step foot in would be forever protected, that a hiker in 10, 20, or 100 years would be able to clear their head and recreate in this specific spot. Those signs

areas look and feel like. I've learned about their ecology and the wildlife that depend on them. I've learned about the tireless work that went into designating them as Wilderness. But mostly, I learned a lot about myself, what's most important to me, what I need in my life, and how to best bond with those I care about.

It also taught me that how good the beer around the campfire tastes is directly proportional to the difficulty of the hike.

With so many challenges and transitions, this year could be defined by many things for me. But I choose to think of 2014 as the *Year of Wilderness*. Because after all, once you've completed the Oregon Wild *50 Hikes Challenge*, isn't everything else just a walk in the woods (park)? ☺



Owyhee Canyonlands Proposed Wilderness



Challenge completed - adventure is out there!

Marielle Cowdin, Outreach & Membership Coordinator

Oregon Wild launched the *50 Hikes Challenge* to celebrate a year of Oregon Wilderness. In 1964, the Wilderness Act established the "gold standard" for permanent protection of our



NICHOLAS O'NEILL
'This was a wonderful and transformative experience!'

public lands, giving the Eagle Cap Wilderness, Three Sisters Wilderness, the Kalmiopsis Wilderness, and 44 other Oregon areas an enduring home on the American

landscape. With only 4% of Oregon protected as Wilderness however, we can and should do better. Exploring both protected and yet unprotected places (like Crater Lake National Park and its backcountry), instills an understanding in each Oregonian for why these places are so incredibly significant to our lives, our wellbeing, our state, our environment, and our world.

175 people registered for this year's *50 Hikes Challenge* and 585 photos have been posted via #iamwilderness on Instagram. Thank you to all who showed your love of Wilderness (and adventure) in the *50 Hikes Challenge*! Remember to send your log sheets and photos to 50hikes@oregonwild.org.

Bear with me, things got wild

Marielle Cowdin, Outreach & Membership Coordinator



EMMA BROWNE

“You’re all here,” Executive Director Sean Stevens said to the gathered crowd at Leftbank Annex, “because you share the belief that Oregon Wild does – the belief that we must protect Oregon’s wildlands, wildlife, and waters to assure that these wild systems will thrive for generations of humans and wildlife to come.”

The attentive *Call of the Wild* audience comprised of at least 350 supporters, activists, photographers, alumni, sponsors, and friends of Oregon Wild, listened inspired, having just watched a beautiful film by Trip Jennings and Balance Media commemorating two of the year’s big milestones: the 40th anniversary of Oregon

Wild and the 50th anniversary of the Wilderness Act.

“I’m asking you to help Oregon Wild tonight by answering the call of the wild, and the call to support the organization that has been dedicated to protecting and growing the wild for 40 years,” Stevens added.

The call was made and boy, that call was answered. With help from our generous *Call of the Wild* sponsors and attendees, this year’s camp-inspired benefit **raised over \$40,000** – a prodigious beginning for the next 40 years of keeping Oregon wild.

This success is due in no small part to the sponsors, donors, and volunteers that helped Oregon Wild pull out all the stops for this special anniversary party. Trailhead Credit Union hosted the well-visited trail mix bar. Delicious bites from Simpatica Dining Hall, Pacific Pie Co., Tastebud, and Thrive Pacific Northwest kept folks satisfied as they sipped on Migration Brewing’s special beer (*The Wilderness*), Northwest wines from Duck Pond Cellars, Cornerstone, and Territorial, and cocktails featuring Big Bottom Whiskey and Crater Lake Vodka.

Guests perused the diverse silent auction packages from OARS, Momentum, Ascending the Giants, and others, while local guitarist Joe McMurrian provided the

down-home soundtrack. Thanks to Pro Photo Supply and Art Heads Custom Framing, gorgeous prints of 10th annual Outdoor Photo Contest finalists illuminated one wall of the auction – the intense gaze of an owl, the welcoming moss of a tree, and elegant landscapes welcomed wandering visitors. Attendees might have also seen a friendly, but very hungry bear throughout the evening. As you might expect from a party bear, most sightings occurred at the photobooth, conveniently located near the trail mix bar.

We certainly couldn’t have hosted such a party without the volunteers who kept things rolling smoothly – whether out in the rain, at the entrance, the welcome desk, the coat check, the auction tables, and the bar. And of course, *Call of the Wild* was truly made possible by the folks that came out that rainy night to celebrate with us. Big thanks to all the Tent Sponsors, including new Oregon Wild board members Kate Blazar and Nathan Kennedy, who hosted tents for friends, family, and colleagues.

To all our sponsors, donors, friends, guests, and volunteers: thank you for answering the call of the wild! We hope to see you again next year.

Photos from the event can be found at [facebook.com/OregonWild](https://www.facebook.com/OregonWild) and on our Flickr page at Oregon Wild Photos.

OUTDOOR PHOTO CONTEST WINNERS

ENDANGERED PLACES: *Appreciation (Crater Lake)* by TJ Thorne – WILDLIFE: *Bushbills in the Snow* by David Leonard
WATERS: *The Crystal Bathroom (Abiquia Falls)* by Tula Top – WILDLANDS: *Sandy Glacier Cave* by Eric Guth



Oregon's forgotten forests

Steve Pedery, Conservation Director



FRANCIS EATHERINGTON Old growth in the Elliott State Forest – part of the Flying Fish Timber Sale.

If you watch television or listen to Oregon Public Broadcasting radio, you've likely heard ads from the Oregon Forest Resources Institute touting the Oregon Forest Practices Act (OFPA). If you have ever driven through the Oregon Coast Range on the way to the beach, you've probably noticed clearcut after clearcut, often on extremely steep slopes, and wondered how the jarring reality matches up to the rosy language of those ads.

Paid for by the logging industry, the ads in truth have nothing to do with reality. Logging rules on state and private lands in Oregon are among the worst in the country – clearcutting is to Oregon what mountaintop removal coal mining is to West Virginia. The good news is that a growing coalition of rural

landowners, public health advocates, and conservation groups are gaining ground in a fight to do something about it.

In October, the *Oregonian* newspaper launched a multi-part series exposing how the logging industry exploits weak rules on aerial spraying of toxic pesticides and herbicides, putting human and environmental health at risk. The story sparked widespread public outrage and led State Senator Michael Dembrow, Representative Ann Lininger, and others to attend town hall meetings organized by rural residents to hear their concerns. In 2015, Oregon Wild hopes to work with these and other legislators on a plan to reform aerial spraying of these toxic chemicals, and to ensure that Oregonians have full

access to information regarding their use.

Further south in the Elliott State Forest, the logging industry has sought to exploit a conflict over education spending and revenues from clearcutting to advocate for the privatization of public lands. The Elliott is the only state-owned forest in Oregon that still contains significant old-growth – half of the 90,000 acre forest is over a century old. At issue is the fact that past clearcutting has harmed endangered species, which has led to long-overdue reductions in logging levels.

Here also, a growing coalition of rural residents, hunters and anglers, and conservation groups has rallied to oppose privatization, urging the Oregon State Land Board (which oversees the Elliott) to decouple clearcutting revenues from education spending. A solution to the Elliott conflict that protects the surviving old-growth, and focuses any future logging on thinning in previously degraded stands, could offer protection for endangered species, provide a model for reforming the Oregon Forest Practices Act, and help our state shed the image of “the West Virginia of the Northwest.” ©



FRANCIS EATHERINGTON A helicopter sprays herbicides over a massive Seneca Jones clearcut.



ODFW The Elliott State Forest is critical for the survival of endangered species like Coho salmon, providing some of the finest remaining habitat in the Oregon Coast Range.

Conservation round-up

Steve Pedery, Conservation Director



FRANCIS EATHERINGTON Over 1,000,000 acres of our public lands would be subjected this type of 'ecoforestry' and other forms of clearcutting under Senator Wyden's O&C bill.

(which have previously been passed in the Senate independent of any logging legislation). It also creates a complicated network of weaker designations for some important areas. However, these conservation measures should be viewed in light of the reality that the bill subjects more than 1,000,000 acres of public lands to some form of clearcutting, and diverts most of

the revenue to county politicians.

Going to court for Klamath wildlife

Tule Lake and Lower Klamath National Wildlife Refuges have long been known as the most important freshwater wetlands west of the Mississippi. However, during the summer months they seem more like a refuge for commercial agribusiness than for wildlife. Oregon Wild has joined with several organizations to

file a legal challenge over the failure of the US Fish and Wildlife Service to develop a legally-required plan to ensure commercial agriculture does not harm wildlife on the refuges. A win would be a giant step forward in ensuring geese, eagles, and fish take priority over agribusiness on these important wetlands.

The new war on America's public lands

Most Americans view our nation's national parks, monuments, forests, and other public lands as treasures.

Unfortunately, a growing number of anti-environmental politicians funded by the coal, oil, and logging industries, are advocating for state governments to seize and sell off America's federal public lands. Here in Oregon, politicians in Klamath and Clackamas Counties have openly advocated for seizing public lands. Oregon Wild has joined a multi-state coalition working to block these attacks on our public lands. You can find out more about these attacks, and how you can help stop them, online at westernpriorities.org.

Wyden Pushes O&C Logging Legislation

On November 13th, US Senator Ron Wyden passed his controversial plan to more than double logging levels on publicly-owned "O&C" lands in Western Oregon out of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee. His bill aims to produce 400 million board feet per year—a staggering 80,000 log truck loads—through a controversial clearcutting practice euphemistically called

"ecoforestry," where 70% of the trees in a stand are slicked off. In addition, Senator Wyden is proposing 50,000 acres of old-school industrial clearcuts, a level of abuse not seen on federal public land in Oregon since the 1980s.

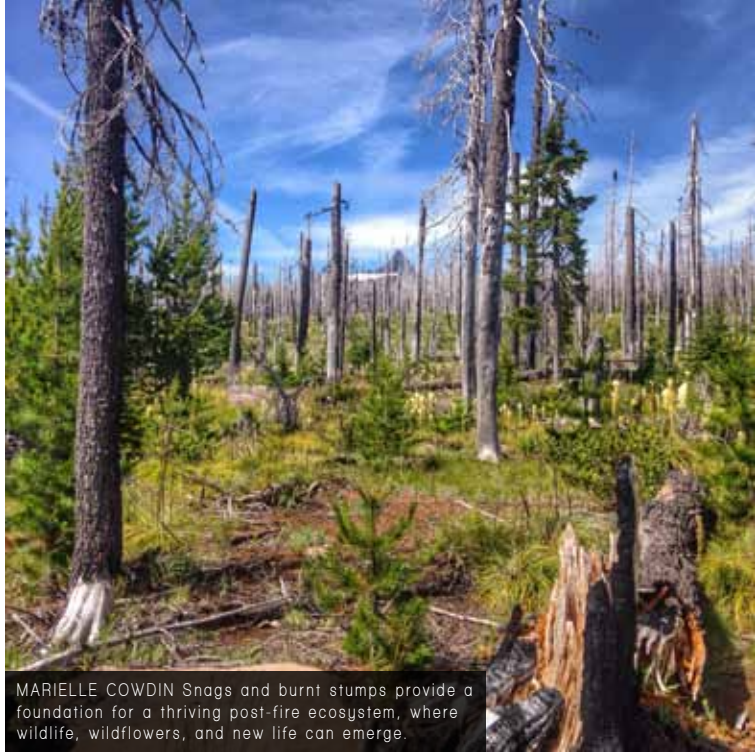
Wyden's bill is not all bad. It would safeguard most old-growth forest (trees over 120 years old) on O&C lands, and it designates 85,000 acres of new Wilderness for the Wild Rogue and Devil's Staircase areas



BRETT COLE Klamath wildlife ought not to be sacrificed at the hands of unsustainable commercial agribusiness and the wildlife agency that continues to ignore its responsibilities.'

Seeing the forest through the fire: the case against “salvage” logging

Chandra LeGue, Western Oregon Field Coordinator



MARIELLE COWDIN Snags and burnt stumps provide a foundation for a thriving post-fire ecosystem, where wildlife, wildflowers, and new life can emerge.

“Salvage” isn’t inherently a bad word, but when applied to forests burned by fire, it’s worse than most four letter words. “Salvage logging” removes trees killed by fire for the sole purpose of getting timber and economic value from those trees. Often likened to “mugging the burn

victim,” it comes at the expense of natural processes, some of the rarest wildlife habitat, and soil and water quality.

Fire is a natural part of forest ecosystems, often leaving patches of forest untouched or only lightly burned, while burning hot and killing

trees in other areas. The mosaic left behind means more diversity of forest structure and wildlife habitat. The dead, standing trees (snags) left in burned patches might offend some human eyes, but beyond the blackened trunks, these trees form the basis for a thriving post-fire ecosystem. Insects move into the decaying trees, providing a food source for numerous woodpecker species. As snags decay, they become cavities for birds to nest and roost in. When they fall, dead trees return nutrients to the soil providing complex habitat for wildlife. Shrubs, grasses, and wildflowers often rapidly recolonize burned areas, and some types of trees even require fire to release their seeds and reproduce.

Salvage logging sets back this natural recovery process with a vengeance, not only by removing dead trees but also by building roads and churning up fragile soils with logging equipment.

Oregon Wild has fought ill-conceived, post-fire logging proposals for decades. The Biscuit Fire salvage, one of the most famous in the early 2000s, logged thousands of acres in inventoried roadless areas and important habitat for threatened

species. More damage would have been done, but both public outcry and litigation efforts put a stop to large portions of the Biscuit Fire logging project. Sadly, laws and policies on federal lands favor salvage logging over protection of recovering forests. In many cases, salvage proposals can use special “emergency” authorities to do an abbreviated environmental analysis, and limitations are placed on public involvement.

The 2013 and 2014 fire seasons resulted in several salvage logging proposals in Oregon – with more on the horizon once the smoke clears. Currently, Oregon Wild staff and partner organizations are working to stop or scale back post-fire logging proposals affecting 6,000 acres of sensitive forests – from the Deschutes and Ochoco National Forests burned in the Two Bulls and Bailey Butte Fires, to prime spotted



KIM MEYER

owl habitat in the Roseburg and Medford BLM Districts in the Douglas Complex Fire last year, to the Oregon Gulch Fire on BLM lands near the California border.

Science tells us the best thing to do after a forest fire is to let nature take its course. If we let nature manage the recovery, we’ll have more diverse and resilient forests, thriving wildlife, and recovery of sensitive soils. If we “mug the burn victim,” we’ll damage ecosystems already struggling to recover after decades of logging and other abuse. ☺

From the desk of Rep. Earl Blumenauer

US Representative Earl Blumenauer, 3rd District of Oregon



At first, the 2014 midterm election looked bleak for the environmental community. We lost some environmental champions and “gained” new members who are antagonistic to the environment and wilderness.

But, there are positive developments. Initiatives for land preservation and conservation at the state and local levels continue to be popular among the voters. In Oregon, we reelected environmental champions and gained a legislature that will be easier to work with. I was pleased with the tremendous turnout and the strong program for our forum honoring the 50th Anniversary of the Wilderness Act and look forward to the next century. We’ve identified opportunities that have broad appeal throughout the state – protecting special places that belong to every Oregonian.

During the next two years, with no worries about reelection, the Obama Administration should take bolder, decisive action on monument status and

the management of federal agencies. Remember, it was President Clinton’s proposal to designate Steens Mountain in southeast Oregon as a National Monument that led Republicans to Congress to make concessions and pass a law protecting the area.

Democrats need to give people a reason to vote and show voters what environmental champions really stand for. Now is the time to make our plans for the next generation of wilderness protection, help the Administration establish its environmental legacy, establish a vision for the next generation of protecting Oregon’s special places, and build public support for the wilderness. Between now and the 2016 election we have an opportunity to build momentum, sharpen our focus, and energize our friends.

I look forward to working with Oregon Wild as we make these important steps.



Earl Blumenauer and Hillary Barbour hike the Mount Hood proposed Wilderness

Oregon Wild goes to Washington

Bridget Callahan, Wilderness Campaign Organizer

I recently had the honor of traveling to our nation’s capital to advocate on behalf of Oregon’s wildlands, wildlife and waters. Washington, D.C. can be a daunting destination when it comes to protecting our remaining wild landscapes, and I was unsure how warm my reception would be.



It was a relief to be welcomed and to engage in meaningful conversations with federal agency staff and Oregon’s elected officials. I discussed the values of protecting wildlands and the benefits they provide our state, from clean drinking water and wildlife habitat, to recreation opportunities and tourism. Topics varied each meeting, but one question was repeatedly asked: Who is fighting for this place?

Demonstrating support in D.C. is interpreted in measurable actions. Petitions, business endorsements, and letters to the editor all let officials know what is important to us. Witnessing democracy in action I realized that when we act, we can make Washington listen. So speak up! Visit your representative’s office. Write to your local paper. Because behind every great Wilderness is a group of people who worked to protect it.



RANDALL R. BEIDERWELL Oregon’s only national park and its backcountry deserve permanent protection. With your action, you can make a difference to protect the state you love.

More than five years have passed since the last Wilderness protections were secured for Mount Hood. Since that time we've seen a number of logging projects on the Mount Hood National Forest. Some are restoration thinning projects that we can support – others, not so much.

The north side of Mount Hood, also known as the quiet and better looking side, is where one logging project called "Lava" proposes to log over the Vista Ridge trailhead. In mid-August there may be no better trail on Mount Hood than Vista Ridge, with epic wildflower displays and amazing glacier views.

Everything above tree line is protected as Wilderness and logging isn't allowed, but unfortunately the trailhead and lower slopes don't have the same safeguards. Oregon Wild members weighed in with comments in opposition to the Lava Timber Sale earlier this year. Combined with support from other organizations and help from State Representative Ann Lininger, the Forest Service has agreed to drop the most controversial logging unit at the trailhead. While the project is still not perfect we are excited and relieved to know that the Vista Ridge trailhead will be spared.

Today's logging proposals are a reminder that unless an area is permanently protected as Wilderness our natural treasures aren't guaranteed to remain intact. While we may have worked to keep the chainsaws and bulldozers away from the Vista Ridge trail today, what will next year's (or next decade's) bad idea bring?



Today's timber sale is tomorrow's Wilderness

Erik Fernandez, Wilderness Coordinator

While fending off misguided logging proposals from the Forest Service, we've also built new bridges (figurative ones!) and forged an historic agreement on increased protections.

Historically, mountain bike clubs have not supported Wilderness proposals in Oregon or around the nation. The Wilderness Act doesn't allow mechanized transport, including cars, off-highway vehicles, snowmobiles, and bikes.

At a time when most issues are polarizing people we were able to sit down with mountain bike users and set aside our differences. We found that we had more areas of agreement than anticipated. This historic accord means that Oregon Wild and mountain bike groups both support increased Wilderness protections for several areas around Mount Hood.

The proposal includes the old-growth forests and rivers in places like Boulder Lake, Salmon River, Tamanawas Falls, and McCall

Point while maintaining access to important mountain biking trails. Simply put, this is a great success story in the making.

Timberline, Mount Hood Meadows, the Mazamas, Mosier City Council, and others have also endorsed this proposal. The next step is to encourage Oregon's congressional delegation to build on this rare agreement to better ensure that Mount Hood is protected for future generations to enjoy as we do today. ☺



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Winter Walkabouts


Saturday, January 10

 Tumalo Roadless Area Snowshoe

(Bend) Easy

Wilderness Coordinator Erik Fernandez leads a snowshoe trek into the Swampy Lakes area with epic views of Broken Top and the Sisters.


Saturday, January 10

 Twin Lakes Snowshoe

(Portland) Moderate

This segment of the Pacific Crest Trail has it all: old-growth forests, lakes, and spectacular straight-line views of the summit of Mount Hood. Enjoy the scenery on this snowshoe hike led by Jonathan Jelen.


Saturday, January 17

 Todd Lake Ski Trip

(Bend) Intermediate

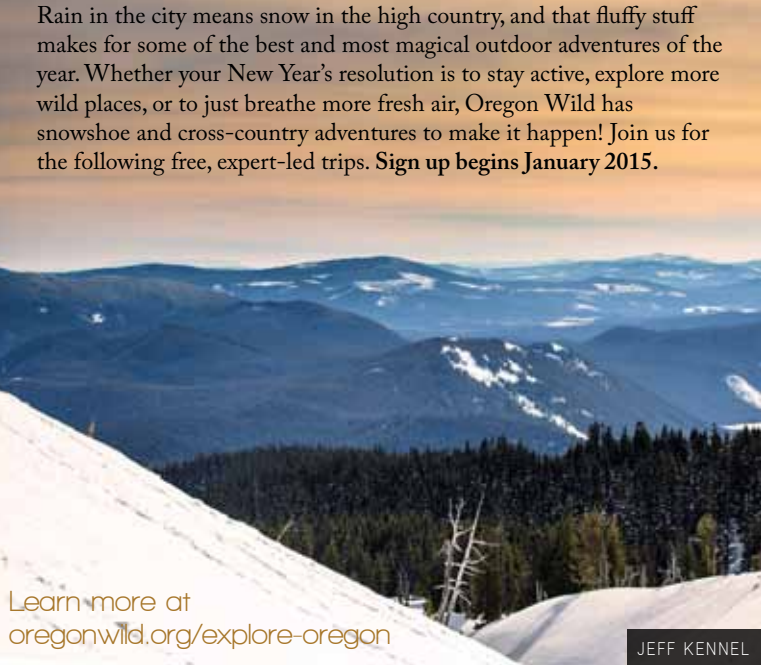
Join Central Oregon Field Coordinator Pam Hardy and the Central Oregon Nordic Club for a cross-country ski trip around Todd Lake adjacent to Three Sisters Wilderness.

Saturday, January 24

 White River Snowshoe

(Portland) Easy to Moderate

Wilderness Organizer Bridget Callahan leads an excursion through the stunning White River Canyon on Mount Hood's eastside.



Rain in the city means snow in the high country, and that fluffy stuff makes for some of the best and most magical outdoor adventures of the year. Whether your New Year's resolution is to stay active, explore more wild places, or to just breathe more fresh air, Oregon Wild has snowshoe and cross-country adventures to make it happen! Join us for the following free, expert-led trips. **Sign up begins January 2015.**

Learn more at oregonwild.org/explore-oregon

JEFF KENNEL

Saturday, January 24

 Diamond Creek Falls

(Eugene) Easy

Shed the winter blahs as Western Oregon Field Coordinator Chandra LeGue leads a short trip to two frozen waterfalls near Willamette Pass.

Saturday, January 24

 Ochoco Divide Ski Trip

(Bend) Easy to Intermediate

A cross-country ski adventure with Oregon Wild and the Central Oregon Nordic Club to an area many Bend residents have never explored!

Sunday, January 25

  Salmon River Meadows

(Portland) Easy to Moderate

Search for signs of abundant wildlife amidst the last remaining low-elevation meadow habitat in the Mount Hood area.

Sunday, February 8

 Marilyn Lakes Snowshoe

(Eugene) Intermediate

Slide past frozen lakes and through snowy forests in the Maiden Peak Roadless Area for a view of Diamond Peak.



WILDLIFE



PROTECTED WILDERNESS



DRINKING WATERSHED



Oregon Wild is honored once again to participate in Willamette Week's Give!Guide, helping to create a community of giving to support dozens of Oregon non-profits. Give to Oregon Wild through Give!Guide now through December 31st and you'll receive great incentives from local Portland businesses like Stumptown Coffee Roasters, ¿Por Qué No?, Salt & Straw, and more. Give and keep Oregon wild at giveguide.org

GIVE WILD.



SCOTT CARPENTER