

OREGON WILD

Winter Spring 2025 Volume 52, Issue 1

Defying gravity

Improbable victories
offer hope for the future





OREGON WILD

Let Nature Live. Let Nature Last.

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Photo by Drew Watson



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FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

Resilience – on our landscape, in our movement, in ourselves



JONATHAN JELEN
ACTING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

MY MORNING ALARM is synced to one of my Spotify playlists, so each day I wake up to a random song from hundreds of options. Some mornings, it's Pink Floyd; others, David Bowie. The morning after the election, though, I woke up to The Gap Band singing the funk classic, "You Dropped a Bomb on Me."

I guess the Universe has a sense of humor like that.

Oddly, it wasn't the lyrics that stuck with me, despite the all-too-on-the-nose chorus. Instead, it was the steady, powerful drumbeat that resonated. Before I knew it, I was out of bed and starting my day—still in shock, but drinking coffee; discouraged, but out for a morning walk; angry, but appreciating the fall foliage in the sunlight.

That beat kept me moving through the day. And by day's end, I'd done my small part to continue what Oregon Wild has been doing since 1974: protecting the most awe-inspiring parts of our beautiful state.

One of Oregon Wild's core values is tenacity: "We believe in giving 'em hell. We don't back down from difficult fights and seemingly insurmountable challenges. We've stuck around for 50 years by being persistent, dogged, and scrappy."

The political reality of the next four years is disheartening, but it's not debilitating. I think back to the first Trump administration—by the end of it, Oregon Wild had become a bigger, stronger, and more

effective organization than it was at the start. With a new generation of conservation activists fueling the movement, we were equipped to launch two of the biggest, boldest campaigns in our history: the River Democracy Act and the Climate Forests campaign.

In our 50 years, we've seen administrations come and go. Some brought opportunities to advance conservation; others were openly hostile to the very idea of protecting anything. But Oregon Wild has outlasted them all. Oregon Wild—and the values we share and fight for together—outlasted Trump before, and we will outlast him again.

The next four years won't be a cakewalk. We'll face a myriad of reckless, short-sighted threats to our public lands, climate, wildlife, and democracy. Our role as a watchdog will be more critical than ever.

We will dig in. We will hold the line. We will fight like hell for the wild places and wildlife that depend on us to be their voice.

And at the end of Trump's second term, I believe Oregon Wild and the conservation movement will be stronger. We'll be louder—with a new generation of activists falling in love with, and rallying to protect, Oregon's wildlands, wildlife, and waters. We'll keep that drumbeat going. Just as we've done for 50 years, we will give 'em hell.

Thank you for all you do to help keep Oregon wild.



Defying gravity

Improbable victories offer hope for the future

SEAN STEVENS

OUTGOING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



“For years, conservationists have labored to influence decisions affecting public lands... Hundreds have invested time and effort examining sites, studying maps, adjusting boundaries, deciphering the subtleties of bureaucratic prose, and pressing convictions upon elected representatives. Then came November 4, 1980. Today, conservation accomplishments, decision making processes, and indeed, the public lands are in danger of being swept away...”

THOSE WERE THE opening words of the January-February 1981 Oregon Wild newsletter. Ronald Reagan had just defeated Jimmy Carter, Republicans had taken the Senate for the first time in two decades, and the new power brokers aligned with anti-public lands extremists known as the Sagebrush Rebellion. To put it bluntly, shit did not look good.

Four and a half decades later, we can look back and see what followed—years of ups and downs punctuated by a steady series of wins for the wild that would have seemed improbable in 1981. Back then, the organization was young, just finding its footing, while the logging industry was an ever-present, dominant force.

Like a mountain goat facing a sheer cliff towering thousands of feet overhead, we didn't let the scale of the challenge or the long odds of success deter us. We picked our way up the slope—sometimes slowly and persistently, sometimes with bold leaps—and reached every summit because we never gave up.

As we enter a new era with renewed challenges, the stakes are high and the obstacles immense. Here are a few stories from times we defied the odds to secure victories for nature. Let them remind us that we'll do it again.



Marielle Cowdin

The beloved Strawberry Mountain Wilderness was protected during the otherwise hostile Reagan administration.

From ‘Rebellion’ to RARE victory

After the Reagan revolution put Interior Secretary James Watt in power, conservationists feared for the very existence of public lands. But we dug deep and went to battle for roadless areas. In a review process mandated by Congress, the early-’80s Forest Service had purposely stuck their heads in the sand - identifying only 262,000 acres out of 3 million-plus acres available as wilderness-quality. So, we sued the bastards and the threat of litigation lit a fire under Congress. In 1984 over 850,000 acres of Wilderness were protected in the Oregon Forest Wilderness Act including beloved landscapes like the North Fork John Day Wilderness and the Sky Lakes.

Riding out the rider from hell

When the northern spotted owl was listed as a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), Oregon Wild and allies seized the moment to challenge the entire timber sale program in the Pacific Northwest. A federal judge agreed and issued an injunction, halting old-growth logging projects across the region.

Never one to shy away from bending the rules to benefit big timber, Senator Mark Hatfield introduced the notorious Section 318 “Rider from Hell” in 1989, releasing 18 ancient forest logging projects from the injunction. While this move won the day for the timber industry, public and legal pressure to stop the epidemic of old-growth clearcutting continued unabated. Just four years later, the Clinton Forest Summit led to the creation of the world’s first ecosystem management plan—the Northwest Forest Plan—which marked the end of the heyday of ancient forest logging.



Brett Cole

The northern spotted owl rode out the Rider From Hell and was the catalyst behind the Northwest Forest Plan



Rallies on the state capitol steps were crucial in turning the tide for the Elliott.

From privatization to protection

In the days following Donald Trump’s election in 2016, Oregon got an early preview of public land privatization proposals when the State Land Board accepted bids to sell off the 82,000-acre Elliott State Forest to private timber interests. The deal seemed final. But then Oregon Wild and our allies raised holy hell. Bob Sallinger (see sidebar) warned in *The Oregonian* that Governor Kate Brown would be “haunted for the rest of her career” if she voted to sell the Elliott. Once seen as inevitable, the sale was halted when we raised enough of a ruckus to persuade all three Land Board members (including Republican Dennis Richardson and Treasurer Tobias Read, both of whom flipped their votes) to reverse the decision. Today, the vast majority of old growth in the Elliott is protected under a new Habitat Conservation Plan.



DEDICATION ACROSS DECADES REMEMBERING BOB SALLINGER

When historians document case studies on how one person, with enough dedication and tenacity, can make a profound difference, there will surely be a picture of Bob Sallinger. For more than three decades—whether in Portland’s urban oases, the remote refuges of southeast Oregon, the halls of Salem, or the meeting rooms of Harney County—Bob was an indefatigable advocate for wild places and creatures.

Oregon Wild remembers Bob’s life with both sadness and inspiration after his passing in late October at the age of 57.

This newsletter is filled with stories of standing up for nature despite steep challenges and long odds. Bob understood the importance of digging in and fighting for what was right, no matter how insurmountable the task seemed. He will be an irreplaceable figure in the conservation movement in Oregon but his example will forever propel us forward.



Even President Trump had to stand in awe of the giant trees at Devil’s Staircase.

A Devil of a time

Located deep in the heart of the Oregon Coast Range, Devil’s Staircase was one of the last roadless areas left unprotected by the 1984 Wilderness bill. In 2009, Oregon Wild and many allies reignited a campaign to protect the area’s towering ancient trees and mythical, stair-stepped waterfall. Despite multiple near misses, the Oregon Wildlands Act eventually passed as part of a larger legislative package and was, somewhat surprisingly, signed into law by Donald Trump in 2019. The new law also designated the Molalla River and over 250 miles of tributaries to the Rogue River as Wild & Scenic. This hard-won victory is a testament to Oregon Wild’s relentless commitment over the decades to securing a protected natural heritage.

Saving the eastside screens in court means huge Ponderosa in eastern Oregon slated for the chopping block will be spared.

Big trees trump Trump

In the final hours of the first Trump administration, a political appointee overseeing the Forest Service approved a rollback of protections for large trees across seven million acres of National Forests. This action directly attacked the Eastside Screens—a rule established alongside the Northwest Forest Plan to protect the last remaining older forests east of the Cascades. These trees, 21 inches in diameter or larger, represent only 3% of trees still standing in eastern Oregon, yet hold 42% of the forest’s carbon.

Despite efforts from the collaborative-industrial complex (including scientists funded by the Forest Service) to defend Trump’s decision, Oregon Wild and our allies immediately mounted a legal challenge. In August 2023, a magistrate judge ruled overwhelmingly in our favor, citing violations of the Endangered Species Act, National Environmental Policy Act, and other laws. In April, another judge confirmed this ruling, effectively reinstating the Eastside Screens. When Forest Service attorneys dropped their appeal in September, a four-year battle to protect ancient forests across seven million acres finally came to a close.

Tim Graudier



Protect, defend, thrive: Oregon Wild's four-year strategic vision



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HERE'S AN OLD saw that goes “failing to plan is planning to fail.” When faced with the challenges we are staring down today (climate crisis, extinction crisis, Trump crisis) you can't just wing it. Luckily, Oregon Wild has spent the last year developing a new four-year strategic plan that will have us pushing visionary proposals even while we get ready for some epic defensive maneuvers. Here are a few details from the plan:

Protecting the Wild

- Put the River Democracy Act over the top and cement Oregon's legacy as the undisputed champion of Wild & Scenic River protections in the U.S.
- Make history by working alongside Indigenous allies to map Oregon's future national monuments -- using the success of the Bears Ears National Monument in Utah as our guide.
- Lean into our Public Lands 4 All initiatives as we fight to protect our democracy, safeguard communities, and defend the ecosystems that sustain us all.

Defending Forests and Public Lands

- Defend the foundational environmental laws that enable our watchdog efforts, while collaborating with regional and national partners to seek transformative changes in public lands management
- Sustain the Climate Forests coalition and strengthen the defense of mature and old-growth forests across the country, preserving these vital forests to combat climate change.
- Advance a new vision for federal forests that prioritizes clean water, wildlife habitat, and climate resilience, creating a strong platform to counter harmful Trump policies.

Helping Wildlife Thrive

- After years of roadblocks and disinterested politicians, take wildlife policy directly to voters and build a ballot measure campaign to give real teeth (and funding) to state protections for at-risk wildlife.
- Dig in to support Indigenous and Tribal-led wildlife initiatives such as sea otter recovery, beaver restoration, fish passage, dam removal, and more.

A Half-Century of Keeping Oregon Wild

CHANDRA LEGUE

SENIOR CONSERVATION ADVOCATE



IN MAY 2024, I found myself on the front porch of Susan Applegate’s home outside Yoncalla, Oregon, alongside long-time activists eager to share their experiences and memories from the trenches of Douglas County’s environmental movement in the 1970s. The group included Susan, an Oregon Wild board member in the 2000s; Paul Nolte, a founding board member who signed Oregon Wild’s original incorporation papers; Leslee Sherman, a charter member of the Umpqua Wilderness Defenders and a board member of the Oregon Wilderness Coalition in the 1970s; and Richard Chasm, an active Umpqua Wilderness Defender who went to high school with Oregon Wild’s first Executive Director, James Monteith. Together, they have dedicated decades to advocacy for places like the Boulder Creek Wilderness (protected in the 1984 Oregon Wilderness Bill), speaking up for forest protections, and seeking common ground—even within communities dominated by the timber industry.

Their pride in their achievements, perseverance over the years, and deep connection to the place they’ve called home for decades (in some cases, generations) was inspiring—even for this 20+ year veteran of Oregon Wild.

Conversations like these were highlights of our 50th Anniversary celebration this year. Along with the gala events in May, this fall, Oregon Wild staff traveled around the state, hosting gatherings in communities where our work has made a lasting impact. From Lincoln City to La Grande, we met with supporters, raised a glass with partner organizations, and celebrated the wild places that have been saved and the hard work of our fellow

advocates for forests, waters, and wildlife. (Read on our blog at oregonwild.org/news/.)

On our tour, we traveled with a giant map showcasing many of our accomplishments over decades of advocacy. Alongside reflecting on our history and successes, we invited people to share their vision for Oregon's future on the map. Unsurprisingly, despite more than five decades of inspiring success stories, there remains much work to do! From protecting our remaining mature and old-growth forests and removing salmon-killing dams, to reforming wildlife policy, bringing sea otters back to Oregon's coastal ecosystems, helping restore beavers to the landscape, reforming public lands grazing, and recognizing Indigenous rights, our supporters had plenty of ideas and encouragement to share.

Lessons in tenacity: wisdom from the last 50 years

Contributing to this work over the long term, knowing it may never be done - whether as a staff or board member for Oregon Wild or a partner organization or as a member/supporter who takes email actions or shows up at events to learn more - can be exhausting. Earlier this year we reached out to former staff and board members and invited them to share some of their memories, inspiration, and advice on the occasion of this anniversary. Their wisdom, perseverance, and passion came through in positive messages that can help keep us all going:

"You can do it! Get organized, don't give up."

-Dave Stone, former staff member (1980s and long time public lands advocate)



"There is a long run of incredibly beautiful people who devoted some or all of their lives to protecting wild places in Oregon. What is left now is your inheritance, what you leave is your legacy."

Jeremy Hall, former staff member (1999-2005)

"Remember the importance of constant effort and patience. As Brock Evans always puts it, 'Endless Pressure Endlessly Applied.' I remember I once voiced my frustration at how much time and effort it was taking to protect our wilderness proposals.

Holway Jones gently informed me that, when he began the fight to protect what became the French Pete wilderness, the Wilderness System didn't even exist!" -Douglas Schoen, a former Board member (late 1970s) who passed away this summer

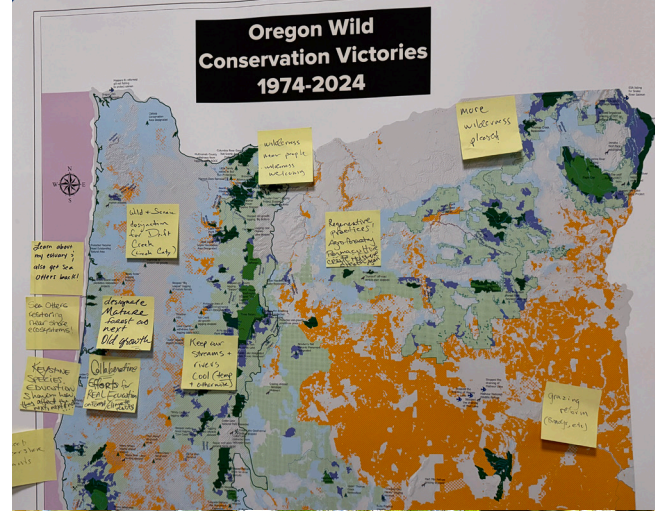
"Always be vigilant in keeping what we have already protected and keep looking for new areas to be protected from development. It's the only thing that will save us."
-Joe Walicki, Oregon Wilderness Coalition co-founder

"Remember that we do this work for all life, honoring and respecting the lands, the waters, and all living creatures. When politics and circumstances seem grim for Oregon's ongoing and increasing protection, Oregon Wild staff keeps going. And because you keep going, it inspires me to keep going."
-Leslea Logan, former Board member (2009-2014)

Chloe LaMonica



Chandra LeGue



Chandra LeGue



Our forests at risk

LAUREN ANDERSON
CLIMATE FORESTS PROGRAM MANAGER



Carolyn Ferreira



Leon Weidinger

WHEN IT COMES to forest policy, we're looking at two key timeframes: the final weeks of the Biden administration and current Congress, and the next four years. The weeks to come will be challenging and often chaotic, presenting a risk that harmful forest policy proposals may become law.

A misleading forest policy threatens public lands

Our forests face a threat from a deceptively titled piece of legislation that aims to weaken critical environmental protections. The so-called "Fix Our Forests Act" claims to address forest management and wildfire risk, but its true purpose is to silence public input, bypass science in land management, and undermine the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) across millions of acres of federal land.

This bill would hand the reins of our public lands over to the logging industry, divert resources from community protection, and undermine science-backed wildfire strategies. Once again, industry allies in Congress are using popular terms like "forest management" as a Trojan horse to dismantle environmental laws and weaken forest protections, prioritizing corporate profits over public interest.

Senator Ron Wyden summed it up well: "The bill undermines bedrock environmental laws, and would allow poorly designed, large commercial projects that threaten community drinking water, wildlife, and recreation opportunities to proceed with inadequate environmental review."

Anti-environmental riders in the Farm Bill

The U.S. Farm Bill is a massive piece of legislation that

covers food, agriculture, forest policy, conservation, nutrition, and international food aid. Reauthorized every five years, the version passed by the House earlier this year (H.R. 8467) includes multiple harmful riders, some of which threaten forests. It includes massive loopholes for logging projects to skip environmental analysis and public processes under the guise of habitat management and wildfire prevention. It also attacks the Endangered Species Act and diverts funding away from natural climate solutions and conservation efforts. It's essential that Senators Wyden and Merkley oppose these harmful provisions to ensure a clean Farm Bill is passed before the next Congress begins.

Future of the mature and old-growth forests

If the Trump administration and new Congress inherit the National Old Growth Amendment (NOGA) and Northwest Forest Plan (NWFP) amendment processes, there's a risk of irreparable harm to our forests in the Pacific Northwest. If NOGA is finalized, it could be subject to the Congressional Review Act (CRA), which gives Congress 60 legislative days to essentially veto any single regulation issued by the executive branch. The CRA also prohibits the issuing agency from enacting regulations that are "substantially the same" indefinitely. If Republicans control both houses of Congress and NOGA is nullified through the CRA, we may lose the chance to protect mature and old-growth forests under future administrations.

Similarly, if the NWFP amendment process is taken up by the Trump administration, mature and old-growth forests, and the fish and wildlife that rely on them, could face dire outcomes. Going forward, Oregon Wild will be focused on defending these vital climate forests and doing everything possible to keep these trees standing for future generations.

Bringing sea otters back

DANIELLE MOSER
WILDLIFE PROGRAM MANAGER



Marc Webber

THE EFFORT TO bring sea otters back to Oregon's coastal waters is making steady progress, but we'll need your help to get it across the finish line.

Sea otters, which were locally extinct by the early 1900s due to overhunting, have been a missing link in Oregon's nearshore environment for over a century. In their absence, sea urchins—one of their natural prey—have flourished unchecked, consuming kelp forests and causing a decline in marine habitat. Reintroducing sea otters would play a crucial role in revitalizing the ocean ecosystem, something urgently needed in the face of climate change and biodiversity loss.

Thankfully, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) agrees. In 2022, the USFWS conducted a feasibility study exploring the possibility of returning sea otters to Oregon's coast.

The study concluded that “there would be multiple substantial biological and ecological benefits to the nearshore marine ecosystem from a reintroduction of sea otters to their historical range in northern California and Oregon.” After completing the study, the USFWS held 16 public events between Oregon's north coast and the San Francisco Bay area to discuss the findings and hear perspectives from local communities on the potential reintroduction.

While these public events were well-received, additional considerations remain. Our partners at the Elakha Alliance conducted complementary research into the economic and tourism impacts of reintroducing sea otters. These studies indicate that reintroduction could bring meaningful economic and social benefits to coastal

USFWS



communities, but also underscore the importance of implementing the project thoughtfully to avoid adverse impacts.

What happens next?

At Oregon Wild, we know that rational ecological, social, and economic reasons alone are not always enough to prompt action from decision-makers. As with other successful reintroduction efforts—like those for California condors, grizzlies, and wolves—it's critical to demonstrate broad public support for species restoration. That's where you come in!

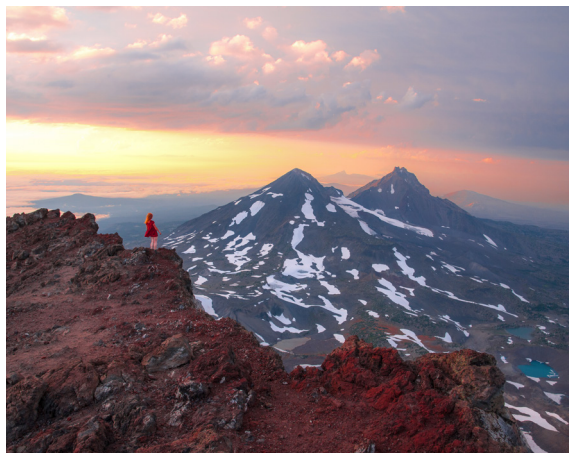
In the coming months, we'll be reaching out to our Congressional delegation and other elected officials to emphasize the importance of sea otter recovery. We'll urge them to support and fund USFWS's efforts to bring sea otters back home. Stay tuned for ways you can get involved and lend your voice to this important cause.

Showcasing the 2024 Outdoor Photo Contest winners

ANASTASIA KUZNETSOVA
BRAND AND MARKETING MANAGER

That's a wrap on the Oregon Wild Outdoor Photo Contest 2024!

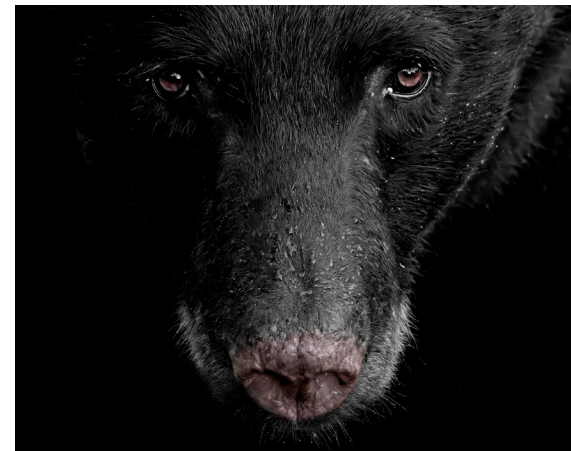
A sincere congratulations to the winners!



People | **South Sister by Kayla Sulak**
First designated in 1964, and later expanded in 1978 and 1984 thanks to Oregon Wild's advocacy, the Three Sisters Wilderness area protects 286,000 acres of stunning mountain lakes, glaciers and snow fields, lava flows, and ancient forests.



Wildlands & Forests | **Mount Hood Sunset by Daniel Rappaport**
Oregon Wild has long fought to protect Mount Hood's wildlands from reckless and destructive logging. While that threat remains, it is now compounded by the challenges of a warming climate and increasing development pressure. Oregon Wild's forest conservation efforts provide a crucial solution—but only if we act now.



Wildlife | **Black Bear by Stewart Willason**
Black bears (*Ursus americanus*) can be found across North America and their population in Oregon is estimated to be 25,000 to 30,000. While they aren't at risk of extinction, they are frequently poached. The protection of their habitats and preferred forage is key to keeping them thriving and out of conflict with humans.



Waters | **Dawn at Sparks Lake by Stu Gordon**
Sparks Lake provides easy access to stunning mountain views along the Cascade Lakes Highway west of Bend. Formed by a lava flow that blocked the upper Deschutes River 10,000 years ago, the shallow lake waters and surrounding wetlands are home to river otters, beavers, and a variety of birds.



Zoomed In | **Sphinx Moth on Milkweed by Douglas Beall**
Native pollinators like this white-lined sphinx moth (*Hyles lineata*) play a vital role in the health of native ecosystems - from forests to alpine meadows. Oregon Wild remains committed to protecting habitats for native wildlife—whether by opposing aggressive logging and pesticide use or by championing conservation efforts that benefit creatures of all sizes.

Honoring the past, protecting the future

RACHEL MIRELES
MEMBERSHIP COORDINATOR



W

E ASKED YOU to party like it was 1974—and wow, did you deliver! This year's special 50th Anniversary Call of the Wild was a huge success, raising nearly \$100,000 to support our mission to protect Oregon's wildlands and wildlife. Your incredible generosity exceeded our expectations, and we couldn't be more grateful for your support in helping us continue our vital work.

A huge shoutout to our incredible volunteers, sponsors, and local businesses who made the night truly magical. From the funky '70s décor and music to the delicious food, it was a party for the ages! You made this one of our most exciting and impactful fundraisers ever, and it's all thanks to your energy and support.

With 2025 just around the corner, we're dreaming even bigger. The threats to Oregon's natural heritage are real and increasingly urgent, but with your help, we know we can rise to the challenge.

Keep an eye out for all the exciting things we have planned! Every donation, no matter the size, helps protect Oregon's wilderness and ensures it thrives for generations to come. From all of us at Oregon Wild, thank you for making this year's Call of the Wild an unforgettable success!



Conservation and litigation update

JOHN PERSELL
STAFF ATTORNEY
STEVE PEDERY
CONSERVATION DIRECTOR



Leon Werdinger

Klamath salmon come home to Oregon

In challenging times, nature often provides Oregon Wild staff and supporters with the inspiration needed to keep up the fight. There's no better example of this than the return of Klamath River Chinook salmon to Oregon for the first time in 112 years.

On October 5th, the removal of the lower four dams on the Klamath River was completed. Just 11 days later, on October 16th, biologists from ODFW and the Klamath, Karuk, Yurok, and Hoopa Tribes identified the first fall Chinook returning to tributaries of the river in southern Oregon, above the former site of JC Boyle Dam. Despite its ancestors being cut off from these waters for over a century, and despite decades of low water flows, toxic algae blooms, and the harmful effects of destructive logging and grazing, that salmon persisted. In the weeks since, it has been joined by dozens more.

The return of Klamath River salmon to Oregon is a powerful reminder: as nature persists, so must its defenders!

Toxic department of forestry culture exposed

The Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) has long been criticized for its close ties to the logging industry, its scandal-plagued finances, and its outdated approach to forest and fire management. In early October, investigative reports by *Willamette Week* and *The Oregonian* uncovered further issues, revealing a toxic leadership culture marked by

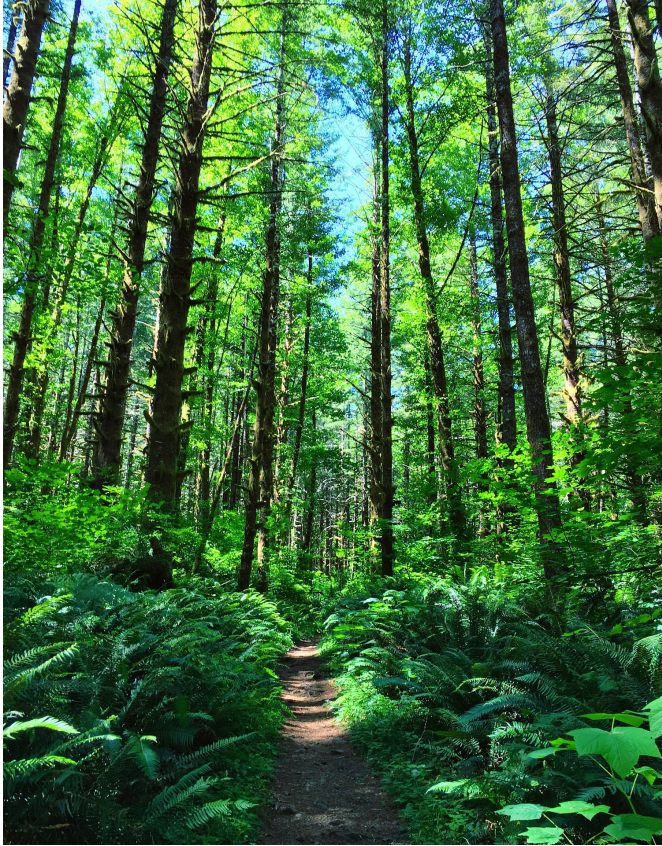
hostility toward women, a lack of diversity, and a climate of fear and retaliation against those who speak out. Senior leaders in the agency, along with some members of the Board of Forestry that oversees it, have dismissed these concerns as mere complaints from a few disgruntled staff.

Mike Shaw, the agency's second-highest-ranking official, has been central to many of these complaints. After spending a month on paid leave, Shaw was finally terminated on October 31st when media investigations, spurred by public records requests, revealed he had engaged in an inappropriate sexual relationship with a subordinate.

Shaw's conduct is not an isolated incident but a reflection of a "good ol' boys" culture within ODF that is deeply aligned with the logging lobby and influenced by many of its harmful viewpoints. In the coming months, Oregon Wild will work alongside a broad coalition of organizations to reform this broken institution and reshape it into an agency Oregonians can be proud of.

Challenging old-growth logging sales

In late September, Oregon Wild, Cascadia Wildlands, and Umpqua Watersheds filed a legal challenge against the Bureau of Land Management's Blue and Gold Project, a logging sale near Sutherlin targeting one of the last intact old-growth forests in the Coast Range. This forest, an island of healthy, functioning ecosystem, stands amid a landscape



dominated by private industrial clearcuts. Named for the nearby Blue Hole and Yellow Creeks, the Blue and Gold Project area is home to imperiled wildlife species and numerous towering, centuries-old trees that have withstood multiple wildfires.

Before approving the project, the BLM misrepresented the age of the stands slated for clearcutting and aggressive thinning, neglected



A fall-run Chinook Salmon returns to a tributary of the Klamath River for the first time since 1916. Photo by Mark Hereford, ODFW.

to conduct accurate surveys for spotted owls and marbled murrelets, and failed to account for the loss of carbon storage potential. Additionally, the BLM overlooked the heightened fire risks to nearby communities that could result from increased clearcutting.

Alongside Oregon Wild staff attorney John Persell, our coalition is represented in this lawsuit by attorneys from Cascadia Wildlands and the Crag Law Center.



MIGRATIONS

Earlier this year, the Oregon Wild team bid a fond farewell to JT Flowers. Since joining us in February 2023, JT split his time between Oakridge and Portland, working to advance several public lands priorities, including the River Democracy Act. He brought a unique passion and focus to expanding the conservation movement and deepening connections between communities of color and the environment. Through this “Public Lands 4 All” framework, JT forged partnerships with numerous organizations, led trips with youth groups, and co-hosted “The Reconnect,” a gathering for environmental professionals of color.

Though JT has moved on from Oregon Wild, we’ll continue cheering him on in his roles as a leader at the Albina Vision Trust and as a newly appointed TriMet board member.



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WILD**

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Photo by GT Larson



TOP FIVE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF 2024

All made possible by the generous support of Oregon Wild members like you!

1.

By leading a national Climate Forests Campaign and partnering with activists like Pattie Gonja, **we helped generate over one million public comments** urging the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management to protect mature and old-growth forests for their immense climate benefits.

2.

Successfully challenged the Trump administration's rollbacks of the Eastside Screens in court, **winning back protections for the largest and oldest trees across 7+ million acres in six national forests in eastern Oregon and Washington.**

3.

Filed litigation with partners like the Nez Perce Tribe and the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation to **better protect salmon and hold ODFW accountable to the law.**

4.

Secured the reintroduction in the U.S. Senate of the largest expansion of river protections in Oregon history. The River Democracy Act aims to protect 3,200+ miles of our waterways, which would better safeguard drinking water for 1.3 million Oregonians statewide.

5.

Monitored 100+ timber sales and projects impacting mature and old-growth forests across Oregon. Drawing on our 50 years of experience as a watchdog for public lands and wildlife, we initiated and advanced litigation challenging 12 timber sales in federal court - including on the Mount Hood, Willamette, and Fremont-Winema National Forests, as well as Western Oregon BLM lands.

As we head into 2025, Oregon Wild will draw on five decades of experience as a steadfast advocate for old-growth forests, rushing rivers, and native species that make Oregon such a spectacular place.

We've held the line against seemingly insurmountable challenges time and again, and we're ready for the fight ahead. But we can't do it without you.

Please stand with us and consider a year-end donation to help us defend Oregon's wildlands, wildlife, and waters in 2025 and beyond!