

OREGON WILD

Summer 2026 Volume 53 Issue 2



**Oregon's historic win
for wildlife**

**Trump's old-growth
clearcutting plan for our
backyard forests**



MAIN OFFICE

5825 N Greeley Ave Portland, OR 97217
Phone: 503.283.6343
www.oregonwild.org

WESTERN OREGON FIELD OFFICE

P.O. Box 11648 Eugene, OR 97440
Phone: 541.344.0675

CENTRAL OREGON FIELD OFFICE

2843 NW Lolo Dr #257, Bend, OR 97703
Phone: 541.382.2616

NORTHEASTERN OREGON FIELD OFFICE

P.O. Box 48, Enterprise, OR 97828
Phone: 541.886.0212

OREGON WILD BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Darcie Meihoff, President	Chris Enlow
Cassidy Quistorff, Vice-President	Ryan Jasperson
Seth Prickett, Treasurer	Kate Ritley
Jordan Anderson	Shasta Zielke
Lisa Billings	

The e-mail address for each Oregon Wild staff member: initials@oregonwild.org (for example: ef@oregonwild.org)

Lauren Anderson
K. Anne Conrad-Antoville
Erik Fernandez
Sami Godlove
Doug Heiken
Jonathan Jelen
Phenix Johnson
Rob Klavins
Anastasia Kuznetsova
Chandra LeGue
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Senior Staff Attorney
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Communications Director
Western Oregon Field Attorney
Grassroots Campaign Coordinator



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starts with
clean water

FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

Restoring my faith



QUINN READ
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

WITH THIS NEWSLETTER, we get to do that rarest of things in this political climate: celebrate a true, impactful, lasting conservation victory for wildlife! This legislative session, our team, led by wildlife program manager Danielle Moser, spearheaded a monumental coalition effort to pass 1.25% for Wildlife. Years in the making, this legislation will provide a sustainable and meaningful source of funding to support wildlife conservation in Oregon.

In the pages that follow, you'll read more about what this legislation means for wildlife and what it took to secure this victory.

But I want to take a moment to thank and acknowledge each of you for your support. Make no mistake, this was only possible because of a groundswell of community advocacy. Each and every way you showed up for this mattered. You attended lobby days, called and wrote to your legislators, drafted testimony, wrote letters to the editor, made connections to businesses, donated, became members, and liked and forwarded posts on social media. It all counted.

Can I confess something? I've spent much of my conservation career telling people that their voices matter. And also... the particular political sh*tstorm we're in right now, with its efforts to shut the public out of decision-making, has made it hard to say with much conviction.

So I owe 1.25% for Wildlife a debt of gratitude for restoring my faith. Your collective efforts made it

politically untenable for key politicians to deny this bill. YOU did that. You made this bill a force to be reckoned with, and you ensured it got over the finish line.

Allow me to say, once more, with feeling:
Your voice matters.

Our work isn't done. We'll be engaged with the implementation of this historic legislation in the years to come. And we're cooking up new ways to expand our proactive state policy work. In the meantime, our defensive work at both the state and federal levels will continue at full throttle. And we will need you through all of it.

For years, we were told a policy like 1.25% for Wildlife was impossible. And yet...

Let's remember that we can accomplish the seemingly impossible when we show up and work together. And let's have more victories like this to celebrate, yeah?

On behalf of all of us at Oregon Wild, we thank you. We are grateful to be part of this powerful, passionate and committed community.

For the wild,

Wildlife advocates rally
in Salem in support of
HB 4134.



Phenix Johnson

A wildlife win for the history books

DANIELLE MOSER
WILDLIFE PROGRAM MANAGER



IN THE VENN DIAGRAM of visionary, implausible, and persistent, you will find HB 4134 (1.25% for Wildlife) at the center. Through extensive coalition-building, strong grassroots engagement, rapid-response communications, and steadfast advocacy, this historic legislation to safeguard Oregon's most vulnerable wildlife defied the odds and turned the most skeptical political observers into advocates and believers.

For too long, the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) has lacked funding to do critical conservation work, especially for non-game species. Historically, a majority of the agency's funding has come from the sale of fishing and hunting licenses and permits. As a result, most of the agency's focus has been on species that are hunted and fished. Insufficient non-game funding meant there were not enough wildlife biologists and ecologists in the field to collect data about imperiled species, monitor their populations, and then implement on-the-ground solutions to support their recovery.

This is not merely an Oregon problem. States across the country have been grappling with the same issue and searching for a solution. Efforts at the federal level, in the form of the Recovering America's Wildlife Act, have thus far fallen short of the support needed to pass the US Congress. Increasingly, it's become clear that it will be up to individual states to come up with solutions.

Over the years, Oregon legislators introduced various concepts for adequately funding wildlife conservation. From a tax on birdseed to a surcharge on your personal income tax return, many ideas were considered. A 1.25% addition to our state's very low tourism tax ultimately prevailed, and for good reason. Because 65% of out-of-state visitors

Marcus Rehman



pay this tax, it was not an increase in Oregonians' cost-of-living. And Oregon's thriving tourism industry means that even a modest increase in the tax results in millions of dollars to fund this critical restoration work.

Let's face it, Oregon's natural beauty, our charismatic wildlife, and pristine waters are the main drivers of tourism. They are what motivates many people to visit, and what keeps them coming back. However, Oregon can only maintain these values if we invest in them. That's exactly what HB 4134 proposed.

Oregon legislators of both political parties agreed. With solid, bipartisan support in both the Oregon House of Representatives and the Oregon Senate, HB 4134 ultimately passed the State Legislature on March 4th, 2026. It was signed into law by Tina

A rally to support HB4134 in front of the State Capitol Building.



Kotek a few weeks later, noting that “protecting Oregon’s natural lands and wildlife is not separate from economic prosperity—it is foundational to it.”

This bill wouldn’t have gotten across the finish line without a lot of effort from many people.

With the help of an incredible coalition (co-led by Oregon Wild and Western Environmental Law Center), we harnessed the collective efforts and capacity of dozens of conservation, hunting, angling, and recreation organizations. This coalition mobilized the public across the state, resulting in thousands (and thousands) of emails, letters, opinion pieces, letters to the editor, social media posts, and calls to legislators. Over 100 businesses statewide stepped up to support the legislation. Our presence was felt in Salem through direct legislative advocacy and hosting a wildlife rally and lobby day that saw turnout unlike anything before.

We were passionate. We were relentless. We were victorious. The impact of HB 4134 will reverberate for generations to come.

SO, WHAT DOES THIS HISTORIC LAW ACTUALLY DO?

The majority of funds raised will go to the implementation of the State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP) - Oregon’s blueprint for recovering the most imperiled fish, wildlife, and habitat. The SWAP identifies 320 species of greatest conservation need and the habitats they depend on, species like the Cascade Torrent Salamander, Sierra Nevada Red Fox, Desert Horned Lizard, and American White Pelican. With these funds, ODFW can hire more wildlife experts to collect important information about at-risk species, work with partners and members of the public to address species’ needs, and implement restoration actions.

But that’s not all! Critical funding will also be directed to programs that seek to address major factors contributing to population declines in Oregon: habitat loss and fragmentation, invasive species, wildfire, and human-wildlife conflict.

Additionally, there will be sustained funding to address the pervasive poaching problem in Oregon

by having state troopers across Oregon, investing in education and outreach, and retaining a state wildlife prosecutor for the Department of Justice. This will go a long way toward the detection of poaching incidents, enforcement, and, ultimately, prosecution.

Finally, funding will also be directed toward wildlife coexistence and stewardship programs at ODFW and local wildlife rehabilitation centers across the state. By hiring more staff to educate the public about living near wildlife and non-lethal ways to reduce conflict, we can increase tolerance and live more harmoniously with our wild neighbors.

To pass such a significant bill and change the future for wildlife conservation in Oregon required an all-hands-on-deck approach. Early on, it was essential to identify legislative champions who could carry the bill and be fierce advocates with their colleagues. But it was also important to build a grassroots movement outside the Capitol to elevate the issue. Having a steady drumbeat of support from the public illustrated the importance of the legislation and ensured passage was inevitable.



Linda Steider

Advocates and legislators celebrate the passage of HB 4134.

The grassroots and grasstops (a term for ‘influentials’) movement in and outside Salem is what propelled the campaign forward. While I wish I had the column space to list everyone who helped with this campaign (and there are a lot of you), here are a few notable people worthy of highlighting:

REPRESENTATIVE KEN HELM

Representative Helm was our legislative champion from the jump. His unwavering commitment to solving this issue began long before this legislation, and it must be commended. Even with setbacks over the years, he remained dedicated to finding long-term funding for Oregon’s most vulnerable fish, wildlife, and habitat before retiring from office in 2027. Rep. Helm rounds out his tenure in the legislature by leaving a lasting legacy for Oregon’s wildlife. We couldn’t be more appreciative of his advocacy and proud to have gotten this over the finish line, together.

SRISTI KAMAL, DEPUTY DIRECTOR AT WESTERN ENVIRONMENTAL LAW CENTER

There’s a famous African proverb that goes, “If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.” That’s why I was incredibly lucky to have Sristi Kamal as co-pilot for this effort. Having her by my side meant we could go both fast and far. And that we did. Sristi and I mapped out the political strategy, coordinated coalition efforts, met with legislators, liaised with Salem lobbyists, and co-created (and checked off!) many, many to-do lists. Sristi is a force for positivity, optimism, and hard work. Those three characteristics (and a lot more), fueled the campaign.



REPRESENTATIVE SUE RIEKE SMITH

Relatively new to the Oregon legislature, Representative Rieke Smith was on the fence about HB 4134. Coming from a background in health care and education, it was understandable that she had a learning curve about the need and importance of securing dedicated funding for Oregon’s most imperiled species and habitat. That being said, Representative Rieke Smith remained open and respectful as she met with constituents, advocates, and fellow legislators. She read thoroughly, listened intently, and ultimately decided to support the bill. Not only that, but she even added her name as a cosponsor and gave a speech of support during the House of Representatives floor debate. Her shift from unsure to supportive illustrated the power of the campaign and the turning of the tide in the legislature.

KARLY CHIN, ADVOCACY PROGRAM COORDINATOR FOR BIRD ALLIANCE OF OREGON

A round of applause must be given to Karly, advocate extraordinaire. Not only did she organize the most impressive wildlife rally and lobby day at the Capitol, but she coordinated every detail behind the scenes to make it a success, communicated with participants, mobilized constituents to attend their legislator's town hall, and so much more; all while remaining surprisingly calm and upbeat (what's your secret, Karly?). Her efforts galvanized the support of hundreds of Oregonians and created a grassroots movement that helped pass the bill.



Erik Strot

THE YOUTH

Holy smokes, did young people turn out for HB 4134! Students from Cascades Academy, Cottonwood School, Catlin Gabel, and many others showed up in a big way to advocate for this historic legislation. They were enthusiastic and passionate, but also creative and unique in their storytelling. Legislators, in particular, appreciated hearing from them. We are grateful to all the students (and their teachers) for supporting and fostering their civic engagement. It was powerful. It was impactful. It made a difference.

The passage of HB 4134 means long-term, sustained funding for years to come. It means safeguarding the places and species that define our natural legacy and make Oregon a (inter)national treasure.

At a time of political turmoil and federal government actions that are hostile and destructive, state leadership is essential. With HB 4134, Oregon can serve as a national model for addressing the biodiversity crisis by investing in fish, wildlife, and habitat restoration. For those around the country looking to implement something similar, here's my advice: think big; be visionary; bring together unlikely allies; don't worry if you stumble; persistence is key.

Here at Oregon Wild, we are overcome with joy and excited to celebrate such a monumental moment. Wherever you are while you read this article, I hope you'll join us in raising a glass and toasting the passage of HB 4134 - 1.25% for Wildlife!



Cody Clark

IT'S GOOD BUSINESS TO SUPPORT WILDLIFE

The historic 1.25% for Wildlife victory was made possible thanks to a community-wide effort. This includes pro-conservation Oregon businesses that answered the call. They used their voice to speak up loudly for imperiled species, and Oregon's legislators took notice.

From realtors and Oregon Brewshed® Alliance partners to wineries, retailers, and lodges, over 100 businesses from across the state voiced their support for the 1.25% for Wildlife bill. In the critical final days of the campaign, businesses like **Living Room Realty**, **pFriem Family Brewers**, **Oregon Pack Works**, and the **Inn at Spanish Head** were calling their state senators, using their social media platforms, and submitting testimony to show their support for wildlife and conservation. It made a monumental difference.

The main opposition - the Oregon Restaurant & Lodging Association - peppered their membership with alarmist claims about how this historic bill would decimate Oregon's tourism industry. Supporters of the bill knew better. They saw 1.25% for Wildlife for what it really was - an essential investment in Oregon's tourism future that will protect habitat and help over 300 native species avoid extinction.

It's not always easy for businesses to speak out for causes they support, but it makes an enormous difference when they do. Our heartfelt thanks go out to the many businesses that spoke up and made this victory possible!

So the next time you're in the market for a new home, a weekend getaway, or a delicious Oregon beer, please consider supporting pro-conservation businesses. They not only represent the best of what Oregon has to offer - they're playing a key role in keeping Oregon wild!

Fighting for our backyard forests

CHANDRA LEGUE

SENIOR CONSERVATION ADVOCATE



Alyssa Roth-Fortune

IN FEBRUARY, the Trump administration announced that the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) would be revising management plans for the 2.5 million acres of forests they manage in western Oregon. The goal: Align BLM management with the administration's objective of maximizing resource extraction from public lands.

The announcement is unsurprising amidst an onslaught of Trump administration executive orders, rollbacks to environmental protections, reductions in public transparency, and reduced opportunities to engage in management decisions that impact public lands and forests. Even on its own, this new proposal is a genuine threat that promotes the kind of destructive, unsustainable logging that destroys wildlife habitat, damages streams, increases fire hazards, and scars the hillsides that surround rural communities.

As with the other fronts in the war on public lands, Oregon Wild isn't backing down from this wrestling match. And we've got thousands in our corner: YOU!

BLM FOREST VALUES AT STAKE

To look at the checkerboard pattern of western Oregon BLM lands, often mixed with private timber parcels or on the edge of rural communities (the product of a unique history), you might think these hard-to-access fragments of forests are without much ecological or recreational value.

Look again! These lands were deemed a vital part of the Northwest Forest Plan's (NWFP) ecosystem-based management framework. They support vital habitat for threatened species like marbled murrelets and salmon, protect headwaters of major rivers and drinking water for rural residents, and are important to the quality of

The old-growth forests of Crabtree Valley could be at risk under the BLM plan.

life for millions of people. Scattered across these BLM lands are nearly a million acres of mature and old-growth forests, outstanding recreation areas, wild rivers, and unique habitats found nowhere else.

TRAILS: Alsea Falls, Enchanted Forest, Sterling Mine Ditch, Greyback Mountain, North Bank Preserve, Rogue River, and many more

AREAS OF CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN:

Rough & Ready Creek, Marys Peak, Horse Rock Ridge, New River, Valley of the Giants, Crabtree Valley, McGowan Creek, and many more

WILD & SCENIC RIVERS: Sandy, North Fork Clackamas, Molalla, and Rogue (plus many more proposed for protection under the River Democracy Act)

CURRENT MANAGEMENT OF BLM LANDS

This isn't the first time BLM has revised its guiding plans. In 2008, the timber industry worked to gain approval for a Western Oregon Plan Revision (dubbed "WOPR"). The final plan prompted a legal challenge that environmentalists won in court. After years of additional planning, public process, and legal wrangling, the BLM finalized a new plan in 2016. This revision shrank protections for streamside forests, increased aggressive logging practices, and removed these forests from the NWFP's conservation framework.

Over the decade since the plan's implementation, the pace of logging on BLM lands has increased. In fiscal year 2025, nearly 250 million board feet of timber were logged on these lands, a 7% increase from the previous year and a significant increase from the two previous decades that saw recovery of streams and wildlife habitat under the NWFP.

Oregon Wild and other conservation groups have challenged numerous BLM logging proposals in recent

years that have targeted mature and old-growth forests and threatened species habitat. Courts have sided with conservation groups, highlighting that, even under the significantly weaker safeguards of the 2016 plan, the agency has regularly violated its own rules and bedrock environmental laws in order to facilitate commercial logging projects.

MORE LOGGING TO MEET TRUMP ADMINISTRATION DEMANDS

Administration officials have explicitly stated that their goal is to return to the logging levels of the 1970s and 80s—when the BLM and Forest Service were clearcutting roughly 3-square miles of old-growth forests per week.

To achieve aggressive new logging levels, the administration intends to override decades of court rulings protecting clean water and wildlife, and return to the very management practices that led to federal Endangered Species Act listings for coho salmon and other imperiled species in the first place.

The latest proposal would:

- Place logging above all other public lands uses, like recreation, wildlife habitat, and drinking water.



Chandra LeGue

- Open nearly 2-million acres, or 77% of Western Oregon BLM lands, to potential clearcutting, including old-growth forests and other lands previously set aside for conservation.
- Reduce protections for clean drinking water, salmon, and steelhead by shrinking logging buffers along rivers and streams to as little as 25 to 100 feet.
- Reevaluate protections currently designated Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs) and natural areas.
- Increase fire risk to communities by logging and replacing resilient older forests with more fire-prone younger stands.

In short, the proposed plan revision would double down on the most destructive aspects of public lands management across a wider landscape, prioritizing resource extraction over the long-term health of our forests and communities.

In lock-step with the Trump administration's plan, Congressman Cliff Bentz (R-OR) also introduced H.R.7603, the so-called "O&C Renewal Act." This bill ignores the myriad values public BLM lands in western Oregon represent, and seeks to elevate one value—maximum logging levels—above all others.

HOW ARE PEOPLE STEPPING UP?

With so much at stake, it's no wonder that people have responded with outrage over this latest attempt to turn BLM's forests over to timber interests.

People who know and love these forests reached out in droves to learn how they could take action—from people who live adjacent to BLM lands in the Coast Range to school kids who visited BLM lands on field trips. Through emails, presentations, and the exposure from online content creators, we reached a wider audience and

Sign marking a logging road on BLM lands.

helped generate 17,000 public comments on the BLM's plan. Thousands more were submitted by followers of other organizations.

People clearly care a LOT about these forests. But will the Trump administration listen? Maybe not, but these public lands belong to everyone, not just logging companies. Even though the administration is making it harder, we won't stop fighting for the special places in our backyards. When the next phase of this plan revision rolls out this summer, you can count on us to share the tools you need to defend BLM forests.

Take Action! Tell Oregon's Congressional delegation to oppose Trump's old-growth clearcutting plan for western Oregon forests!



LEAVE A WILD LEGACY

We have a unique opportunity right now: Two generous Oregon Wild members have offered to donate \$1,000 for every new supporter who includes Oregon Wild in their planned giving – up to \$25,000.



Including Oregon Wild in your planned giving is easy, and each person's plan can be as varied and unique as the wild places that inspire us. Legacy giving isn't just for the wealthy. Whether \$500 or \$50 million, every legacy gift makes a difference and helps ensure that Oregon Wild will be fighting for what's most important to you long after you've reached the end of the trail.

For more information and to access Oregon Wild's FreeWill page, go to: oregonwild.org/legacy-donation/

Have questions or already have Oregon Wild in your will? Please reach out to Jonathan at: jj@oregonwild.org

Upcoming Events

Wild Miles Challenge

WHEN: JUNE 1 - AUGUST 31

The days are getting longer, the trails are drying out, and summer hiking season is here! This summer, we are bringing back the Wild Miles Challenge, your chance to turn outdoor adventures into action for Oregon's public lands.

Starting June 1 and through the end of the summer, every mile that you hike, bike, paddle, or ride can help protect the wildlands, wildlife, and rivers we work so hard to protect. Sign up to pledge per mile or set a fundraising goal, then start your summer adventures knowing you are outside defending the places you love most.

HOW TO PARTICIPATE:

1. Sign up for the challenge at oregonwild.org/wildmiles. Commit to a dollar amount per mile hiked, biked, or paddled in support of Oregon Wild's work, or set a one-time donation goal.
2. Track miles and raise funds throughout the summer.
3. As you make progress in your milestones, donate on our platform. All donations are tax-deductible.
4. Share progress with friends and family to grow support for Oregon's wild places.

Sign up at oregonwild.org/wildmiles

Rabble Rouser

WHEN: AUGUST 23

WHERE: CRYSTAL BALLROOM, PDX

Mark your calendars and get ready to get in some good trouble for the wild places you love. Rabble Rouser is back on August 23 at Portland's iconic McMenamins Crystal Ballroom, and this year, we're turning up the volume.

In a moment when so much feels uncertain, we're leaning harder into radical hope, radical joy, and radical care for one another. Rabble Rouser 2026 is part activist training, part community gathering, part joyful resistance party. This event brings together organizers, artists, advocates, and everyday people who are ready to show up for each other and for the future of our communities and public lands, and you won't want to miss it!

Expect to have a lot of fun and learn through hands-on trainings, bold conversations, creative workshops, and practical tools to help you take action locally and build collective power. You'll learn how to organize in your community, push decision-makers to act, protect yourself and your neighbors, and stay grounded in joy while doing the work. And because this moment calls for creativity and a little chaos too, this year's event is inspired by the long tradition of art, music, and movements that challenge the status quo and bring people together in moments of resistance and possibility.

We'll close out the evening with a show-stopping drag performance from Pattie Gonia, celebrating the power of resistance, community, and what everyday people can do when we come together to make change.

Tickets and full details coming soon. Save the date! This event WILL sell out, so be prepared to grab your tickets early!

Call of the Wild

WHEN: OCTOBER 16

WHERE: THE REDD ON SALMON ST, PDX

Did you hear it? It started off as a murmur over the mountains, then a whisper in the woods. It kept on growing until it became the CALL OF THE WILD!

Every year, we have the time of our lives planning our annual fundraiser, and this year is no different!

This is your formal invitation to the wildest party of the summer! Meet other activists dedicated to preserving all of the creatures and features that make Oregon special, and know that your good time fuels an entire year of conservation wins. Expect fun games, prizes, delicious food, creative cocktails, and music that will make you want to howl at the moon.

We have a few surprises up our flannel this year that you won't want to miss! So bring your favorite fellow adventurers and plan to answer the call!

More details and tickets coming soon!



Phenix Johnson

Looting Oregon's treasures

CHANDRA LEGUE

SENIOR CONSERVATION ADVOCATE

THE FIRST FULL YEAR of Trump's second term was a doozy for public lands and wildlife, and the hits have kept coming this spring. These numerous attacks on what Oregon nature lovers hold dear can be confusing and overwhelming; that is an intentional strategy of this administration. Oregon Wild is working to help our supporters and general public untangle these threats to our public lands and specifically highlight what is at stake.

In January, we released our report "Trump 2.0: Looting Oregon's Treasures" to detail shifts in public policy that threaten to fundamentally change the management of some of the state's most iconic places. These include revisions to the Northwest Forest Plan and Blue Mountains Forest Plan, the rescission of the Roadless Area Conservation Rule, weakening of wildlife and habitat protections under the Endangered Species Act, reduced staffing and reorganization at federal management agencies, Executive Orders deregulating logging and energy development, and dismantling NEPA (the National Environmental Policy Act). The report also highlights legislative proposals, such as the Fix Our Forests Act and Congressional public lands sales. Together, these changes are an effort to dramatically limit the public's ability to learn about and influence decisions on public lands. Taken to their logical conclusion, they threaten to privatize landscapes we've been working to protect for future generations.

Since the report was released, additional proposals - both administrative and legislative - have been advanced to ramp up logging of western Oregon's BLM forest lands (see pages 8-9).

The threats posed by these policy changes, plan revisions, and legislation aren't just on paper. They will have real consequences for places Oregonians know and love, from the Coast Range to the Blue Mountains and everything in between. In the report, we highlight several of the treasured places that could be harmed by these threats. These include:

OREGON REDWOODS: Threatened by increased logging, management plan changes, and privatization schemes.

MOUNT HEBBO: Threatened by increased logging, loss of roadless area protections, and weakened species protections.

LOOKOUT MOUNTAIN IN THE OCHOCOS: Threatened by increased logging, management plan changes, and reduction in staff and funding for restoration.

LOST LAKE ON MOUNT HOOD: Threatened by increased logging and forest plan changes, and weakened species protections.

This all sounds pretty bleak, but Oregon Wild doesn't plan to back down in the face of these threats. The report lays out how we will continue to advance protective legislation, defend policies like the Roadless Rule, engage in forest plan revisions, use legal action to protect wildlife and their habitats, and mobilize public support. After all, these treasures belong to everyone, not just the corporate interests the Trump 2.0 administration serves.

Download the report



Sue Niezgoda

JOIN US OUTSIDE THIS SUMMER!

Whether it's a wildflower meadow, mountain viewpoint, hidden waterfall, or the biggest tree you've ever seen, I bet some of your favorite places can be found on public forest lands. We know it can feel overwhelming to have so many threats to our beloved public lands hanging over us. But we also know that getting outside to connect with and draw inspiration from the forests, streams, and wildlife habitats we love is one of the best ways to keep up our spirits.

Oregon Wild is here for you, with a season of guided hikes that will help you get out and enjoy these places, connect with other nature lovers, and give you the background and tools you'll need to take action to defend these special places.

Our hikes this year are shining a spotlight on places under attack by Trump administration proposals - from Roadless Areas to mature and old-growth forests.

Find upcoming hikes under "Discover Oregon" on our website, and search "hiking guide" to find online guides to hiking in Roadless Areas, along proposed Wild & Scenic Rivers, and more.

UPCOMING HIKES INCLUDE:

June 22: McGowan Creek Old-Growth (near Eugene)

July 8: Oak Ridge (near Hood River)

July 11: Lookout Mountain (central Oregon)

July 31: Cape Perpetua (central Coast)

August 8: Paulina Creek (central Oregon)

August 28: Marys Peak evening hike (near Corvallis)

The road(less) not taken

SAMI GODLOVE
CENTRAL OREGON FIELD COORDINATOR



Jayson Moorman

*Two roads diverged in a
yellow wood...*

MUCH LIKE THE narrator in Robert Frost's poem, the Trump administration's Forest Service had a decision to make on which path it would choose: to keep the Roadless Rule, or to eliminate it. Unlike the narrator, the agency had a clear, logical, scientifically sound, and politically popular path laid out in front of it: keep Roadless Rule protections in place.

But, alas, that road was not taken, and the one they chose is one of destruction. Not just destruction via one singular road, but one that will be followed by hundreds, thousands of others, cutting deep into the heart of our nation's wildest and most intact forests. These roads will beckon bulldozers, logging trucks, mining equipment, and other development into special places like Larch Mountain and Joseph Canyon, Tumalo Mountain and Hardesty Mountain, Rough and Ready Creek, among others.

However, Oregon Wild also had a choice, and we chose to fight back.

During the initial comment period last fall, we generated thousands of public comments from our community. In total, over 600,000 Americans submitted public comments during a shortened 21-day comment period, and over 99% of those opposed repealing the Roadless Rule.

When the Trump administration refused to hold any public meetings or town halls on the proposal,

despite over 600 being held nationwide during the creation of the Roadless Rule in 2001, we decided to organize our own. Community-led Roadless Rule town halls are happening across the country, and hundreds of Oregonians stood up for our roadless wildlands at packed events in Portland, Bend, and Eugene.

Speakers from every level of government—from Congresswoman Andrea Salinas to State Senator Anthony Broadman, Lane County Commissioner Laurie Trieger, and Bend City Councilor Steve Platt—and all walks of life—scientists, firefighters, recreationists, hunters and anglers, teachers, students, grandparents, and public lands lovers, voiced their support for Roadless Rule protections and local Roadless Areas. The mic passed back and forth as advocates shared stories about why these forests matter. Afterwards, attendees took action by filling out individual public comment postcards to be mailed to the Forest Service.

These are their public lands, our public lands; places we go for quiet recreation and backcountry experiences, watersheds that provide us with clean drinking water, and landscapes that still contain intact habitat for fish and wildlife.

The Trump administration wants to silence us and is hoping its plan to repeal the Roadless Rule will go through quietly. We won't let that happen.

All across the country, public voices are speaking up for public lands.

And that has made all the difference.

Public lands advocates speak up
for threatened roadless forests at
a town hall in Portland

Litigation round-up

JOHN PERSELL
SENIOR STAFF ATTORNEY

LEGAL VICTORIES!

Oregon Wild and our partners achieved a significant statewide win for fish this past November.

With the Nez Perce Tribe and the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR), conservation groups had challenged a sneaky attempt by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) to roll back fish passage protections at dams and other obstructions. The state court held that ODFW did not follow proper notice procedures for such a substantial change, and suggested that any deviation from default volitional passage requirements might run afoul of State law. Oregon Wild and other conservation groups were well represented by Crag Law Center in the matter.

Then, in January, Oregon's federal District Court ruled in favor of Oregon Wild and WildEarth Guardians in our challenge of CE-6, a "categorical exclusion" the Forest Service relied on to authorize tens of thousands of acres of commercial logging on the Fremont-Winema National Forest without full environmental review pursuant to the National

Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). As written, CE-6 includes no acreage limits and can be applied to anything the Forest Service deems "timber stand and/or wildlife habitat improvement activities." The Court agreed with us that the Forest Service had never demonstrated that commercial logging of unlimited acreage had no significant impacts justifying a categorical exclusion from NEPA analysis. The Court struck down CE-6, meaning it can no longer be used to authorize logging. Crag Law Center and WildEarth Guardians provided outstanding legal representation in the case.

We also received a resounding victory in our challenge to BLM's terrible Blue and Gold Project. This project, just southwest of Yoncalla, targeted a rare block of contiguous old-growth forest on a ridgeline of Yellow Butte above the Umpqua River. Home to both spotted owls and marbled murrelets, Yellow Butte has some of the last ancient, unlogged stands in the Coast Range, an island within a sea of industrial clearcuts.

On behalf of Oregon Wild and partners Cascadia Wildlands and Umpqua Watersheds, Senior Staff Attorney John Persell argued the Blue and Gold case in Portland last November, and we had been anxiously awaiting a ruling on the merits ahead of logging scheduled to begin on May 15. Just in time to stop the most egregious logging, on May 14 the Court definitively ruled that BLM failed to adhere to its own management plan that requires retention of the largest, oldest trees, and failed to satisfy its obligations under NEPA, and vacated the entire project. Crag Law Center and attorneys for Cascadia Wildlands also provided legal representation in this case.



NEW LAWSUITS!

In January, again with Cascadia Wildlands and Umpqua Watersheds, we filed suit to challenge BLM's 42 Divide Project, which straddles either side of Highway 42 near Camas Valley. Not only does the project fail to protect existing spotted owl habitat, but the BLM also failed to address severe impacts to marbled murrelets and the northwestern pond turtle. Logging within the project is expected to begin in July, so our coalition has already moved for a preliminary injunction, with a hearing scheduled at the end of June. Crag Law Center and in-house counsel for Cascadia Wildlands provide legal representation in the case.

Meanwhile, on the Umatilla National Forest, the Forest Service finalized its decision authorizing the Ellis Project southeast of Heppner. This project initially generated widespread support among conservation groups, hunting groups, ODFW, and the CTUIR because it proposed extensive road closures and decommissioning to increase elk security habitat, which is severely lacking in this portion of the forest. However, pursuant to the Trump administration's direction not to proceed with any decisions that would limit "access" for motorized vehicle enthusiasts, the Forest Service walked back the planned road closures. In its final decision for the project, it only authorized a handful of miles of "seasonal" closures that completely fail to meaningfully address the lack of elk security habitat. Oregon Wild and Greater Hells Canyon Council filed suit challenging this unlawful change. Crag Law Center represents the plaintiffs.

Conservation round-up

STEVE PEDERY

CONSERVATION DIRECTOR

EXPOSING A DATA CENTER LAND GRAB ON MOUNT HOOD

US Rep. Cliff Bentz did a very good thing last summer when he helped block an effort to sell off 3.2 million acres of America's public lands as part of President Trump's "Big Beautiful Bill."

Unfortunately, at the same time, Bentz was also trying to sneak a bill (HR 655) through Congress to transfer 150 acres of public lands in the Mount Hood National Forest to the City of The Dalles.

Despite claims that the transfer would help the city expand water storage to address climate change, the main driver appears to be the exploding water demand from Google data centers. Beyond the loss of public lands, and the terrible precedent of sacrificing such lands for data centers, the bill would divert more cold, clean water from salmon and steelhead habitat in the Hood River watershed. This stealth public lands land grab wasn't surprising given that local politicians in The Dalles have long sought to hide water use by data centers from the public.

Oregon Wild, together with our partners at WaterWatch and Bark, worked to shine a light on HR 655. Our efforts resulted in a massive blowback

against the bill. At a recent Hood River town hall, Senator Ron Wyden was peppered with requests that he oppose the bill. More pressure is needed, and Senators Wyden and Merkley should continue to hear from Oregonians who oppose efforts to dismantle America's public lands. You can reach the US Capitol Switchboard at 202-224-3121.

TRUMP'S 'WAR ON PUBLIC LANDS' TARGETS FOREST SERVICE

Oregon Wild has never been shy about calling out the US Forest Service when it does not live up to its mission, but we also firmly believe that the agency and its staff fulfill a vital purpose. In contrast, the logging industry has long viewed the agencies' conservation scientists, restoration specialists, and recreation managers not as stewards of our public lands, but as an obstacle to looting our national treasures. Under the Trump administration, they have found a friendly ear.

In April, the Trump administration announced plans to force the Forest Service to relocate its national headquarters from Washington, DC, to Utah (home of notoriously anti-public-lands US Senator Mike Lee). It also announced that it would shut down all regional offices, including the Portland office, and consolidate scientific research facilities across the country into a single location in Colorado. The goal appears to be to force out as many agency staff as possible, and to weaken its connection with the lands it is tasked with managing.

It is expected that the Trump administration will seek to vastly expand the use of more expensive private contractors and rely on logging-friendly state agencies and private contractors to make up for the massive capacity gap it is creating. The plan is already being challenged in court and comes at a time when public lands in the Western US are facing a dangerously dry summer and fire season.

Devin Tolman



MIGRATIONS



Last month, Oregon Wild bid farewell to Board member **Chris Beatty**. Chris served on the board for 4 years, bringing his background as a scientist, entrepreneur, and outdoors enthusiast to advancing Oregon Wild's mission. While we will miss

him greatly, we are thrilled that Chris is returning to his scientist roots to expand his Tall Trees Project and MARMOT LIDAR Project – work which will help support and advance the advocacy efforts of groups like Oregon Wild. These projects use LIDAR data to map tall trees and establish forest age classes, which can help us understand what's at risk and support our work to protect our oldest forests. While we are sad to lose his voice on our Board, we look forward to continuing to collaborate with Chris in this next chapter.

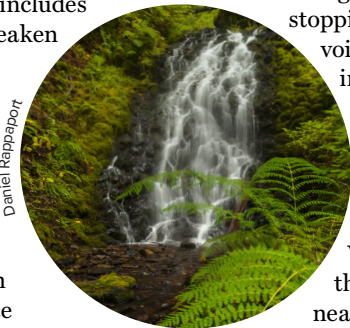
Great beer starts with clean water

JONATHAN JELEN
DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

We don't want to brag, but Oregon has some of the best drinking water on the planet! Since clean Oregon drinking water is the #1 ingredient in each and every beer brewed across our state, it's a precious resource for all of us and one that is at the heart of Oregon's world-class brewing community. It's also one we can never take for granted.

Unfortunately, this incredible resource is more threatened now than ever before. Trump's war on public lands is putting our watersheds squarely in the crosshairs. This barrage of attacks includes efforts to rescind the Roadless Rule, weaken protections for two million acres of forests in western Oregon, and erode Northwest Forest Plan safeguards for millions more acres across our national forests.

To help raise awareness about these threats and to build support for watershed conservation this past Earth Month, the Oregon Brewshed® Alliance launched its 4th Annual Wild & Scenic Earth Day Collaboration Series. Our friends at Coleman Hops, Yakima Chief Hops, and Indie Hops generously discounted several Salmon-Safe certified



Daniel Rappaport

hop varieties, while new partners Country Malt Group, Montana Craft Malt, and Admiral Maltings discounted malt for all 17 brews.

Then, some of Oregon's best breweries crafted special beers to honor their respective brewsheds and raise awareness about the need to defend and protect them.

Participating breweries included:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| BearKat Brewing | Level Beer |
| Binary Brewing | Living Haus Beer Co. |
| Deschutes Brewery | Parallel 45 Brewing |
| Foreland Brewing | Silver Falls Brewing |
| Grand Fir Brewing | Sunriver Brewing |
| Hetty Alice Beer | Terranaut Beer |
| Hopworks Brewery | Tiny Giants Brewing |
| Lazy Days Brewing | Worthy Brewing |
| Leikam Brewing | Xicha Brewing |
| Double Mountain Brewery | |

It instantly became our most delicious campaign yet!

But Oregon Brewshed® Alliance members aren't stopping there. They have been raising their voice for several top conservation priorities, including the 1.25% for Wildlife victory and defending the Roadless Rule. They're also continuing to support our ongoing work to advance the River Democracy Act, which would protect 3,200+ miles of Oregon's waterways as federally designated Wild & Scenic Rivers and better protect the drinking watersheds (er, brewsheds) for nearly one out of every four Oregonians.

For more information on the Oregon Brewshed® Alliance, go to:

brewshed.oregonwild.org



SCHILLING CIDER HELPS US 'KEEP IT WILD'

In April, Oregon Wild once again teamed up with our friends at Schilling Cider for their Keep It Wild campaign! This month-long campaign included a fun, creative social media campaign, activist engagement, and, of course, some incredibly delicious ciders!

At the end of the campaign, Schilling generously donated a whopping \$40,000 to support Oregon Wild's conservation work! This extremely generous support has a monumental impact on our conservation work and will absolutely help us keep it ("it" being Oregon) wild!



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Back for 2026! Outdoor Photo Contest

For nearly two decades, the photo contest has connected Oregonians with the state's one-of-a-kind wildlands, waterways, native wildlife, and the people who enjoy them.

As Oregon's public lands and forests are under increasing pressure, documenting these places now will help us build awareness and protect them in the future.

WILDLANDS & FORESTS - Exploring Oregon's stunning landscapes.

WATERS - Showcasing the importance and beauty of Oregon's aquatic wonders.

WILDLIFE - Featuring Oregon's incredible diversity of native wildlife and fish.

PEOPLE - Representing the diverse communities who love the outdoors.

ZOOMED IN - Capturing Oregon's hidden treasures through macro and close-up photography.

Visit photocontest.oregonwild.org to submit your photos!

Daniel Gomez / Top Spur



Wyatt Pace / Coal Creek Tributary



David Willingham / Shelvin Park



Caleb Jacobson / Mt Hood



Andrea Morris / Marquam Nature Park