



Nature Unites Us

2024 OREGON IMPACT REPORT

From the Director



Derek Johnson
Oregon State Director

At The Nature Conservancy, we believe a world where both people and nature thrive is possible. Although that world can feel hard to reach at times, we know that we can find a way there, together. We know this because, alongside our partners and supporters, we've spent the past 70 years beating the odds.

As part of the global science community, TNC recognizes 2030 as a milestone year to make a positive impact against the climate and biodiversity crises. Of course, our work won't stop in 2030, but the actions we take now are critical toward ensuring a livable climate, healthy communities and flourishing nature. We have years, not decades, to solve the crises of climate change and biodiversity loss. We can get there, so long as we work together.

To meet these challenges, we are working in new ways, collaborating across TNC to achieve impacts at scales that reach beyond boundaries and borders in large landscapes

like the Emerald Edge, Sagebrush Sea and our Western Dry Forests. And we're evolving not just what we achieve but also how we achieve it. We recognize that for people and nature to thrive together, we must intentionally incorporate the needs and rights of people and communities in every aspect of our organization. This includes working in right relations with Indigenous partners whose stewardship and generational knowledge are essential to durable conservation outcomes. We also work in partnership with and in support of rural and frontline communities who depend on healthy lands and waters for their livelihoods and lifeways.

This work is not possible without the support of our members, partners, donors, volunteers and trustees. I'm proud to share the following stories of the work we're achieving together, as we conclude this strategic plan and look toward the future. The challenges before us are immense, and yet the opportunities to help create that better world are abundant. Let's be courageous, and find a way, together.



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Nature Unites Us

WORKING TOGETHER TO SCALE UP OUR IMPACT FOR DRY FORESTS AND PRESCRIBED FIRE



“What I’ve learned about fire—it brings everything together. Not only does fire bring the people and the organizations together, fire brings the trees and the land together. What I’m hopeful for when it comes to doing this type of cultural burning on our landscape is that we can have partnerships, because that’s what it’s going to take.”

—ANNA MERRITT, member of The Klamath Tribes and prescribed fire practitioner. Last year, Anna joined other Tribal members and TNC staff for a prescribed fire training and collaborative burn at Sycan Marsh.



This summer, TNC’s Global Board of Directors visited Sycan Marsh Preserve to learn firsthand about our work there in collaboration with The Klamath Tribes and local, state and federal partners to increase forest restoration and beneficial fire. Senator Bill Frist chairs the Global Board, and in his Forbes column, shared his experience at Sycan and the importance of prescribed burns to combat the wildfire crisis in the western United States.



This year, TNC teamed up with Bend-based environmental advocate Pattie Gonia for a video about the role of prescribed fire in keeping forests healthy. Pattie, a critically acclaimed drag queen and advocate for inclusivity and diversity in the outdoors, joined Fire Program Director Katie Sauerbrey in the forest to talk about the benefits of prescribed fire. To date, the video has been seen on social media by over 1.2 million people.

Sagebrush Sea

WORKING ACROSS SIX STATES TO PRESERVE AN ICONIC WESTERN LANDSCAPE



The vast, open spaces of the high desert stretch across more than a dozen states, creating a “sagebrush sea” from the Dakotas to California, a landscape that defines the American West. Healthy sagebrush habitat is a complex network of vegetation—a rich, diverse mix that also includes bunchgrasses and wildflowers. Together these native plants sustain hundreds of animal species from burrowing owls and pygmy rabbits to mule deer, pronghorn and mountain lions. Many, like the greater sage-grouse, can survive nowhere else.

Despite the rugged reputation of the range, it is imperiled. Every year we lose on average another one million acres to invasive species, catastrophic wildfire, development, improper grazing and climate change.

To address these challenges, TNC staff from Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Utah and Wyoming have come together to create the Sagebrush Sea program. By connecting partners, leveraging our on-the-ground projects and sharing solutions across borders, we can achieve shared goals for this critical landscape.

This year, our shared approach helped to secure a \$9.9 million grant to restore streams and springs in six critical locations across the West. This award also helped to hire six new project managers, who work together to share learnings and best practices from their efforts to use low-technology interventions that mimic the actions of beaver and other natural processes. (For more on this work, see page 17.)

The Sagebrush Sea program is also working at ranches managed by TNC and our partners to showcase how technology and innovative thinking can transform the way livestock graze on public lands. Pairing high-tech virtual fencing and low-tech range-riding cowboys, TNC and partners are striving for solutions that protect important habitat while keeping working lands working.

In addition, TNC is forging a new upland restoration strategy to break the cycle of invasive annual grasses and uncharacteristically severe wildfire by leveraging the work of TNC colleagues and partners across the West in a multifaceted approach. Our efforts include building evidence for the most effective tools, enhancing planning to prevent and reduce the spread of invasive annuals, ensuring the availability of appropriate seeds for post-wildfire reseeding, and utilizing seed technologies to give native plants an advantage over invasives.

In Oregon, this work touches down at Trout Creek Ranch, which TNC supported Oregon Desert Land Trust in acquiring and where we now work together to steward this amazing place and pilot new approaches. With over 75 miles of streams and springs, the water resources here sustain ranching operations as well as plants and animals unique to the region, several of which are threatened or endangered species.

At Trout Creek, our efforts come together to show how improved grazing management, native seed planting and stream restoration create a healthy and thriving range. Protecting these resources will help this landscape adapt to climate change and help us leverage similar projects in the future.



Welcome Julio Olivarez!

Julio Olivarez joined the chapter this year as our new Juniper Hills Preserve Steward. A stunning example of Sagebrush Sea habitat in Central Oregon, Juniper Hills is a vital migratory corridor for elk, antelope and other wildlife. Julio brings a depth of conservation experience to his new role helping to care for the preserve, including participating in prescribed burns, managing invasive species, leading volunteer projects and restoring bird nesting habitat.

THIS PAGE Flower at Trout Creek Ranch © Jason Greene; Julio Olivarez © Julio Olivarez; OPPOSITE PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT Restoration project in southeastern Oregon © Jason Greene; Juniper Hills Preserve © Brady Holden; TNC staff planting at Juniper Hills © Brady Holden; Restoration planting at Trout Creek Ranch © Jason Greene





We are working toward a future where all Oregonians benefit equally from clean air and water, our state leads the way on climate solutions, and our most critical lands and waters are connected, protected and managed to sustain nature and people in the face of climate change. Across the West, we are teaming up with colleagues to achieve impact at scale and reach our 2030 goals.

ESSENTIAL PILLARS

**Indigenous
Right Relations**

**Equity in Science &
Conservation**

**Policy &
Advocacy**

**Leveraging
Our Lands**

OREGON STRATEGIES

DIVISIONAL PRIORITIES

Climate Mitigation & Adaptation



Natural Climate Solutions

Climate Policy

Offshore Energy Siting

Sustainable Water

Urban Tree Canopy

Healthy Oceans, Waters & Lands



Resilient Rangelands

Dry Forests & Fire

Healthy Estuaries

Western Dry Forests & Fire

Sagebrush Sea

Emerald Edge

Renewable Energy & Climate Change

Columbia Basin Salmon

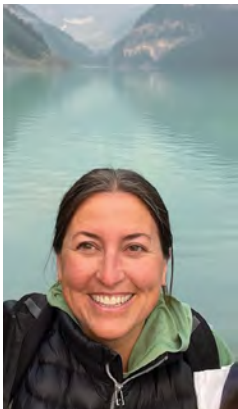
Natural Climate Solutions

CHAMPIONING IMPROVED MANAGEMENT OF NATURAL AND WORKING LANDS TO STORE MORE CARBON AND REDUCE GREENHOUSE GASES

Accelerating Carbon Storage Through Indigenous and Community Leadership

The Emerald Edge—stretching from Southeast Alaska through British Columbia to Washington state and Oregon—is a globally important carbon sink, pulling carbon out of the atmosphere at a rate equal to the greenhouse gas emissions from the energy usage of 58 million homes each year. Indigenous Peoples have stewarded these forests for millennia, and they have maintained living cultures and livelihoods connected to these lands for generations past, present and into the future. TNC staff across the Pacific Northwest are joining together to support the leadership and authority of Indigenous First Nations, Alaska Natives and coastal Tribes to help safeguard the region’s climate mitigation capacity, its rich biodiversity and the social and economic well-being of local communities.

The Emerald Edge Network hosts biannual gatherings to bring together Indigenous Peoples and local communities for focused work sessions, and this spring the Network hosted a Project Accelerator in Portland State University’s Nimiiputimt Gathering Area. Nearly 50 participants joined together to dig into projects in natural climate solutions, Indigenous-led stewardship and cultural healing efforts, benefiting from each other’s insights and expertise as well as guidance from trained facilitators. Through this and many similar gatherings, the Emerald Edge Network seeks to realize Indigenous-led and ally-supported land and water stewardship by accelerating precedent-setting initiatives and building capacity, support and belonging between community leaders across colonial borders.



Welcome Kami Ellingson!

This year, Kami Ellingson joined the chapter as our new Natural Climate Solutions Project Manager. Kami is a hydrologist with over 20 years of field experience, steeped in nature-based restoration and forest management. In her previous work, she led the Climate Vulnerability Assessment for the Oregon Coast Range and the restoration of the Salmon River Estuary in Lincoln City, Oregon for the U.S. Forest Service. In her new role, Kami is working to build relationships and help launch on-the-ground natural climate solutions projects led by TNC and our partners. She is also teaming up with colleagues from across the Emerald Edge program to collaborate with Indigenous Partners on carbon storage and forest management projects.

Case Study: Measuring Carbon at the Willamette Confluence

We’re putting different carbon calculators to the test at Willamette Confluence Preserve. Formerly a gravel mine, the Confluence was restored by TNC over the course of a decade. The restoration effort included planting 100,000 trees and 200,000 shrubs along the river, which is a powerful tool for storing carbon. Last year, the preserve was transferred to McKenzie River Trust (MRT) to leverage local stewardship and increase community engagement in the long-term management of the area. The site remains an important demonstration of a natural climate solution project, and this spring, TNC staff and MRT volunteers collected carbon data from one of the plantings. The data will be compared with different carbon calculators to determine which one is most accurate. Recommending reliable tools and gathering solid data will be critical to scaling up natural climate solutions projects across the state.





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local watershed councils, Tribal partners, land trusts and soil and water conservation districts

have facilitated access to restoration sites for carbon data gathering. The partnerships developed here will be critical for future work and our ability to support community-led projects.

Climate Policy

ADVOCATING FOR EFFECTIVE POLICY AND IMPLEMENTATION TO ENSURE THAT OREGON IS A LEADER IN CLIMATE MITIGATION

Smart Renewable Energy Siting to Accelerate a Clean and Green Energy Future

TNC supports the rapid deployment of clean energy in Oregon to provide a healthy, prosperous future for our state. Now that Oregon has set 100% clean electricity targets, it's time to make sure we protect our ecosystems and communities by siting new energy sources with care.

In 2023, we advocated for the passage of a bill by the Oregon Legislature that directs the Department of Land Conservation and Development to launch a rulemaking process for siting solar energy development that takes advantage of opportunities while minimizing conflicts with farming and communities, natural areas and cultural resources. TNC staff are active in the process as rulemaking and technical advisory committee members. Our priority is to help advocate for an effective path for counties to make siting easier in areas of lower conflict while maintaining necessary environmental protections.

Lack of a regional market and limited energy transmission have been cited as two of the most pressing challenges to achieving state clean energy mandates. A resilient regional power grid will be critical to meet increasing electricity demand and the energy coming from increased solar and wind developments. We recently joined a legislative

workgroup focused on energy transmission, led by Representative Mark Gamba, a prominent advocate for renewable energy development. TNC is currently the only conservation organization in the workgroup. With our climate partners, we are working to bring a balanced perspective and guide potential legislation to ensure we get as much capacity as possible from existing transmission lines and corridors while looking for least conflict options for new lines. We have also joined clean energy, environmental justice and labor advocates to form the Oregon Clean Grid Collaborative, working together to bring a strong voice to regional energy and transmission planning decision making.

Learning from Indigenous Perspectives on Climate

This spring, we joined TNC colleagues from the Pacific Northwest to sponsor and attend the National Tribal Leaders Climate Summit, hosted by the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians. The summit is designed to engage Tribal leaders, citizens, staff, youth, and collaborators in conversation about navigating the cultural, economic, and social challenges of climate change. It was a powerful opportunity to listen and learn from Tribal leaders about the obstacles and opportunities facing their communities, and about how TNC could better show up in support of shared goals and Tribal sovereignty.

We believe that lasting conservation must center the people linked to the natural systems we seek to protect and are grateful for this learning experience.

TNC Members Support the Climate Protection Program

This year, Oregonians had the opportunity to voice our support for climate action. Launched in 2022, the Climate Protection Program was created to limit greenhouse gas emissions from oil and natural gas over time, targeting a 90% reduction by 2050. It was one of the strongest climate programs in the country and positioned Oregon to fund unprecedented levels of community-driven climate projects, such as helping community members upgrade to energy-efficient appliances and funding clean energy projects in environmental justice communities. Unfortunately, the program was overturned by courts on a technicality in 2023.

This summer, the Department of Environmental Quality restarted the rulemaking process to reinstate the program, which included a public comment period. Over 400 TNC members spoke out in favor of reducing emissions and a strong Climate Protection Program for the future. Thank you for your support! This program is the fastest path for Oregon to get back on track to meet its emissions reduction goals while investing in communities across the state, and a decision is expected this fall.



Urban Tree Canopy

MOBILIZING EQUITABLE AND COORDINATED INVESTMENTS IN TREES ACROSS THE PORTLAND METRO AREA FOR IMPROVED HUMAN HEALTH

Connecting Canopies Wins Community Trees Award

A collaboration between The Blueprint Foundation, Intertwine Alliance and The Nature Conservancy, Connecting Canopies is a partnership to improve the equitable distribution of trees throughout the Portland metro region. Together, we are promoting a new model for urban forestry that centers Black, Indigenous and other communities of color to lead to environmental justice through more equitably distributed green spaces and a more diverse green movement and workforce. In 2023, our partnership was recognized with the Bill Naito Community Trees Award by the City of Portland. Named in honor of the late community leader and Chair of Portland's Urban Forestry Commission for over two decades, this award recognizes those whose work, like Bill's, has enhanced Portland's urban forest and inspired others to recognize the beauty and benefits of trees. We're grateful for this support of our shared effort to realize the benefits of urban trees across the region.

THIS PAGE Connecting Canopies cohort members
© Connecting Canopies; OPPOSITE PAGE, CLOCKWISE
FROM TOP LEFT Connecting Canopies cohort members
© Margaret Jacobson; © Akilah Shamsud-Din;
© Ayanna Nance

Tree Canopy Investments Targeted Where They Are Needed Most

TNC's Senior Conservation Analyst Shonene Scott completed a baseline assessment to map the distribution in canopy cover and changes from 2014 to 2020. Her results show a significant disparity in canopy cover across communities varying by race and ethnicity, as well as income. Looking ahead, this data will provide the foundation for interactive, web-based digital maps and decision tools to address inequities in tree cover and support community-driven stewardship of green spaces in priority areas. This effort works in tandem with The Intertwine Alliance's focus on tree policy and outreach to different jurisdictions to build regulations that support a healthy, equitable canopy.



Third Workforce Development Cohort on a Path Toward Green Jobs

To support the planting and maintenance of more urban trees, The Blueprint Foundation is leading a pre-apprentice program that provides career training and opportunities for young and mid-career members of Black, Indigenous, and other communities of color. The third cohort launched this summer, with 10 participants and two mentors returning from previous sessions. Each training is led by a different community partner nonprofit organization, including Friends of Trees, Portland Fruit Tree Project, Portland Parks & Recreation, Ash Creek Forestry, Meadowsweet Landscape Design, Hoyt Arboretum, Verde and Sauvie Island Center.



Sustainable Water

PROPELLING COLLABORATIONS AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW TOOLS AND POLICIES TO SECURE OREGON'S SUSTAINABLE WATER FUTURE

New Groundwater Rules Passed!

This summer, Oregonians had the opportunity to weigh in on new rules proposed by the Oregon Water Resources Department for groundwater rights applications. The new rules will help protect rivers from unsustainable groundwater use—benefiting both fish and farmers who rely on that water to thrive— and could also prevent 35,000 domestic wells from going dry across Oregon. Our staff, trustees and partners came together to voice our support, and nearly 600 TNC members answered the call and sent comments in favor of these new rules, which were passed this fall! Thank you for making this possible. By working together, we are helping to protect critical drinking water as well as water resources for communities and biodiversity.



Oregon Research Launches Global Groundwater Study

As climate change and human water use rapidly deplete water resources around the world, a first-of-its-kind global map shows that more than half of the world's groundwater-dependent ecosystems are at risk due to groundwater declines. Recently published in the journal *Nature*, this study has roots in Oregon. Research by TNC scientists mapped habitats that rely on groundwater throughout the state and found that groundwater supports nearly half our wetlands and over 37,000 miles of rivers. The data gathered in Oregon was used to train a machine-learning model to map groundwater-dependent ecosystems around the world. This effort provides the opportunity to scale up the lessons we learned in Oregon to identify—and ultimately conserve—these important climate-resilient habitats in other states and countries.



Water Security for Frontline Communities

In this year's legislative session, we successfully advocated for a \$1 million investment in water security for frontline communities through the state's Well Abandonment, Repair and Placement Fund. This relatively new program helps low-income communities who lose access to drinking water by paying for 75% of the costs of drilling a new well or deepening an existing well. The program was created in 2021—with TNC input and advocacy—and it was so immediately popular that it ran out of funds in 2023. More than 500 households are experiencing water insecurity in Oregon each year. Our advocacy for this funding reflects TNC's efforts to forge a more climate-adaptive future for Oregonians, including the communities most vulnerable to water scarcity.

THIS PAGE Sustainable Water Strategy Lead Zach Freed gathers water samples in the field. © Claire Ruffing/TNC; OPPOSITE PAGE Water Scientist Dr. Claire Ruffing takes a water sample. © Zach Freed/TNC





Resilient Rangelands

ADVANCING THE WIDESPREAD ADOPTION OF IMPROVED HABITAT MANAGEMENT AND SUSTAINABLE GRAZING PRACTICES

In the face of annual grass invasion, more frequent drought and increasingly severe wildfire, TNC staff are working to catalyze shifts to livestock grazing and rangeland management that promote ecological and community resilience to climate change. Working in collaboration with TNC's multi-state Sagebrush Sea program, this strategy leverages our existing relationships, expertise, preserves and co-managed lands—including Zumwalt Prairie and Trout Creek Ranch—to address the knowledge gaps, social barriers, and regulatory forces that reinforce unsustainable grazing and habitat management.

In rangeland habitats across Eastern Oregon, our staff are working with partners and communities to meet the challenge of invasive grasses, restore critical water resources and forge collaborative grazing agreements that benefit both wildlife and local economies. Here are several of the valued members of our team and the work they are helping to advance.

Resilient Rangelands strategy lead Anya Tyson is serving as facilitator for the Tri-corner Community Collaborative, a new entity focused on the working landscape within and



between the Hart Mountain and Sheldon National Wildlife Refuges. The collaborative seeks to uplift existing stewardship efforts and pursue emerging opportunities to help sustain the ecological, economic and cultural values of this landscape into the future. Recently, the group came together to apply for federal funding for a shared undertaking to proactively tackle invasive annual grasses and juniper encroachment. This progress shows the power of the Collaborative and finding common ground among ranchers, hunters, local government and conservation.

This past year, Anna Hosford joined our team as our new Riparian Restoration Project Manager. She is excited to include traditional ecological knowledge in the conservation efforts taking place close to her home in rural Eastern Oregon. Her position was added as part of grant secured in collaboration with the Sagebrush Sea program for stream restoration across the West. (For more on this work, see page 4.) Anna is leading efforts to restore streams and springs at Trout Creek Ranch, where we work in collaboration with Oregon Desert Land Trust. This fall, we are installing several restoration structures that mimic the beneficial influence of beaver activity in an important stretch

of Cottonwood Creek, which provides critical water resources to sage grouse, migratory birds and more.

Another critical addition to our team this year was J. Johansen, who joined as our new Zumwalt Prairie Preserve Steward. J. brings more than a decade of experience working productively with private rangeland managers as a soil conservationist with the Natural Resources Conservation Service. He is passionate about the evolution of grazing culture, the inclusion of Tribal voices in land management, and the health of grassland ecosystems. His attention to detail and relentless pursuit of beauty as a former goldsmith, custom homebuilder and western boot maker inform his work of sharing the sensible and evidence-based grazing systems we've honed on the Zumwalt Prairie to benefit new contexts, communities and landscapes.



THIS PAGE LEFT Anya Tyson © Bella Rosado/TNC; TOP Anna Hosford © BLM/Deanna Spragg; OPPOSITE PAGE J. Johansen © Mike Beachy/TNC



Dry Forests and Fire

CATALYZING A SHIFT IN A RESTORATION AND FIRE MANAGEMENT TO RESTORE ECOSYSTEM BALANCE AND PROTECT COMMUNITIES

Launching the Oregon Fire Partnership

Last year, The Nature Conservancy was awarded \$40 million by the U.S. Forest Service to increase our work in prescribed fire. Now, a portion of this funding—along with support from TNC donors—is touching down in Oregon communities to support planning, implementation and monitoring of prescribed burning in our dry forests while helping to train the next generation of leaders in prescribed fire.

Largely from the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022, this unprecedented federal investment is helping to support the USFS Wildfire Crisis Strategy over the next seven years, including work in nationally identified priority landscapes across the West in Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah and Washington. Nearly \$8.5 million of this funding has helped us launch the Oregon Fire Partnership, a five-year catalyst project that is creating prescribed fire crews in three dry forest landscapes: Southern Oregon, the east slope of the Cascades and the Northern Blue Mountains.

These new crews, under the leadership of TNC prescribed fire experts, are providing the opportunity for locally based partners—including area Tribes and Indigenous people, federal, state, local agency and nonprofit organizations—to gain prescribed fire experience and credentials. Their work together to apply prescribed fire where it is most needed will

reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire. It will also help to build the knowledge and skills of the local workforce, so that communities have the capacity to protect their health, safety and forests into the future.

To meet the scale of prescribed fire needed, partnership and community support are crucial. The Oregon Fire Partnership and our Dry Forests and Fire Strategy are growing collaborations with the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, The Klamath Tribes and other Tribes and Bands in the region, who bring vital Indigenous knowledge, insights in cultural burning and a deep commitment to land stewardship. Local land trusts, Oregon Department of Forestry and Northwest Youth Corps have also joined this effort; we are grateful for their abilities to engage their communities and emerging professionals who are so needed to achieve success. Local philanthropic leaders are providing support to leverage federal funding and expand this effort across ownership boundaries for an all-lands approach to forest resilience.

THIS PAGE Prescribed fire © Mitch Maxson/TNC; OPPOSITE PAGE, TOP ROW Jeremiah Alford © Jeremiah Alford/TNC; Gabriel Clift © Gabriel Clift/TNC; Clare Durant Bailor © Clare Durant Bailor/TNC; MIDDLE ROW Lacey England © Lacey England/TNC; Nathaniel Henry © Nathaniel Henry/TNC; Derek Howell © Derek Howell/TNC; BOTTOM ROW Day MacKendrick © Day MacKendrick/TNC; Amber McVicar © Amber McVicar/TNC; Grayson Smith © Grayson Smith/TNC

Meet the New TNC Staff of the Oregon Fire Partnership



JEREMIAH ALFORD

GABRIEL CLIFT

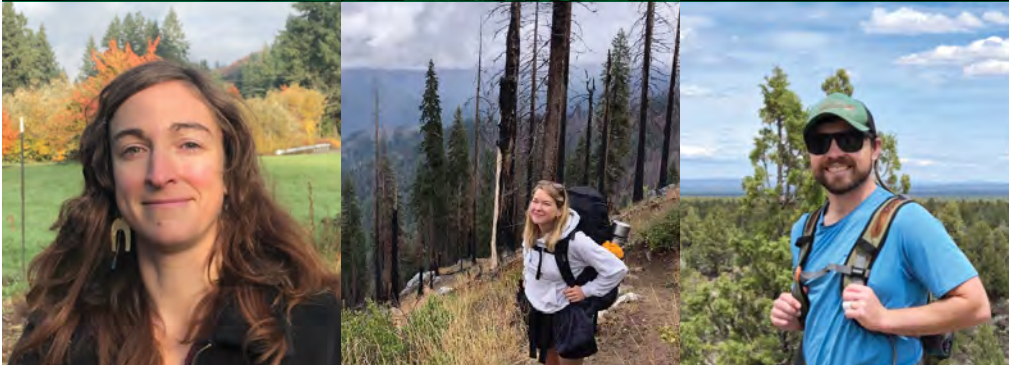
CLARE DURANT BAILOR



LACEY ENGLAND

NATHANIEL HENRY

DEREK HOWELL



DAY MACKENDRICK

AMBER MCVICAR

GRAYSON SMITH

New Recommendations to Update the NW Forest Plan

This summer, the Northwest Forest Plan Federal Advisory Committee reached unanimous agreement on a sweeping set of recommendations for a climate-smart amendment to the Northwest Forest Plan. Members of the committee were appointed by US Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack and include TNC Oregon's Director of Conservation and Science Ryan Haugo. If successful, their work together will be the first significant update to the Northwest Forest Plan in over 30 years and will influence the management of 24.5 million acres of federal forests in Washington, Oregon and California.

Created in 1994, the Northwest Forest Plan is a 100-year management plan to protect threatened and endangered species, while also contributing to the region's social and economic sustainability. The plan is being updated to address current management challenges such as climate change and wildfire.

Although additional work by the US Forest Service is needed to engage in meaningful consultation with Northwest Tribes, the new recommendations are also a small but important step in rectifying the exclusion of Tribes and Indigenous voices in creating the original plan.

Over the course of ten months, the committee members—representing state and local government, Tribes, conservation, science, industry and communities—worked together to draft nearly 50 pages of detailed recommendations addressing Tribal inclusion, forest stewardship, fire resilience, carbon storage, climate adaptation, sustainable communities and more. The recommendations are the result of intense negotiation and compromise on all sides. The amendment is expected to be completed early next year; if enacted, it will drive a profound change and improvement in the management of national forests across the Northwest and help TNC reach our conservation goals for more resilient forests in the face of a changing climate.

Healthy Estuaries

PROTECTING CRITICAL HABITAT, SPECIES AND CONNECTIVITY THROUGH ESTUARY RESTORATION

New Siuslaw Estuary Acquisition

Earlier this year, The Nature Conservancy closed on the acquisition of a 245-acre property on the Siuslaw River, joining the 20-year effort of many partners to restore the estuary and help salmon populations recover. This acquisition brings more than 75% of the estuary into conservation status.

Located east of Florence, Oregon, the Siuslaw estuary supports a diversity of wildlife, including resident and migratory birds, over 50 species of finfish, shellfish, beaver, bears and four species of bats. Cannery records and models indicate that the Siuslaw watershed was second only to the Columbia River in numbers of coho, yet only a small fraction of the population persists today. Once restored, this property will provide critical rearing and resting habitat for multiple species of salmonids.

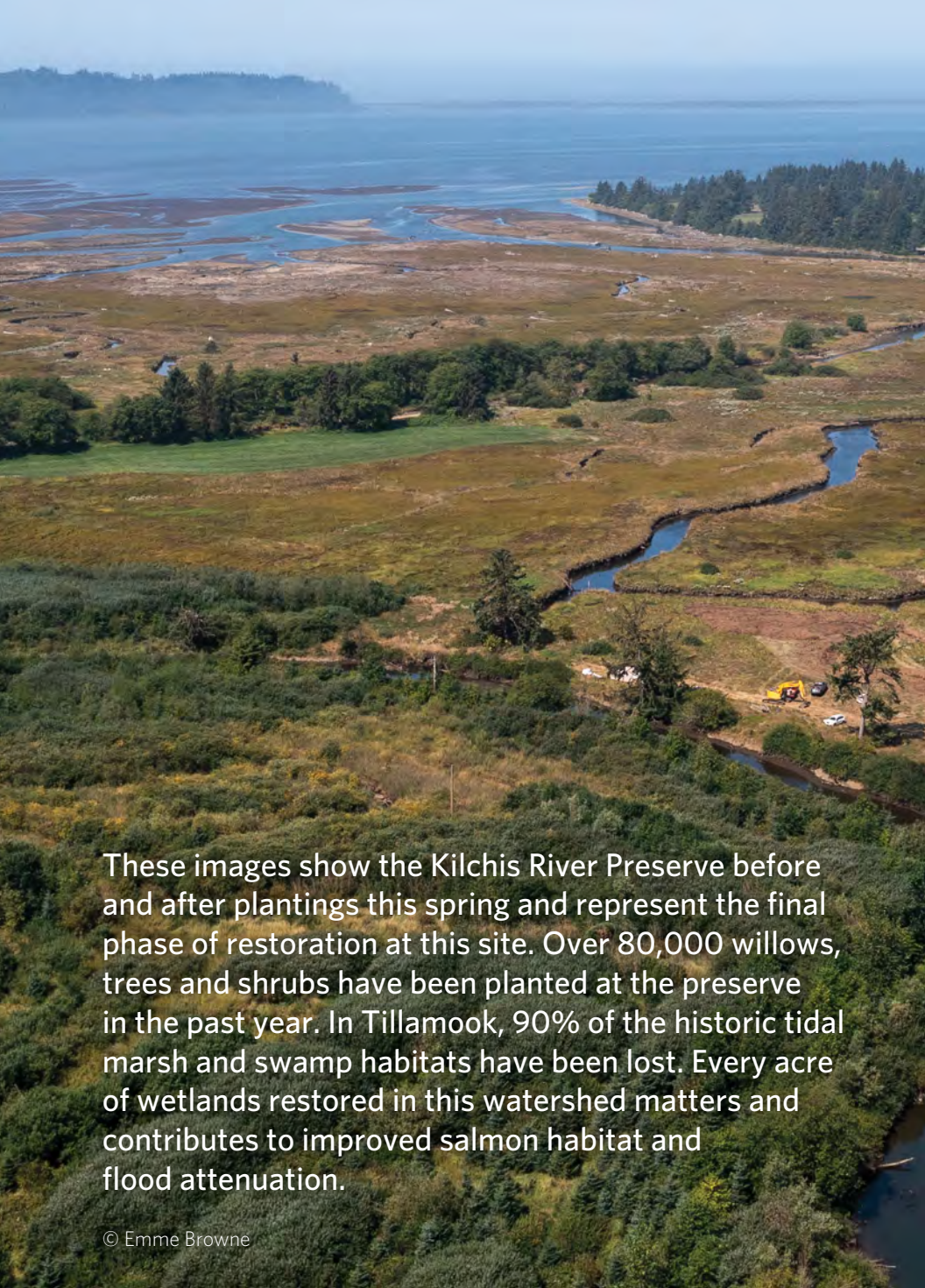
This acquisition is adjacent to an additional 1,140 conservation acres in a community committed to boosting watershed recovery. Actions such as removing fish passage barriers, installing in-stream structures to capture gravels and nutrients and reconnecting tidal wetlands have benefited many species and set species like Chinook and resident cutthroat trout on the path to recovery. Support from the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and TNC donors helped to make the acquisition possible, and the property is now held by McKenzie River Trust. Looking ahead, we will be partnering with the Trust, Confederated Tribes of the Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians and the Siuslaw Watershed Council on the property's restoration and long-term stewardship.



Welcome Brenda Padgham!

This summer, Brenda Padgham joined the chapter as our new Director of Real Estate. Experienced in leading strategic and collaborative land acquisition and stewardship activities, Brenda is focused on growing inclusive collaborations built on trust and developing strong relationships with landowners, Tribes, partners and policy makers. On the Oregon coast and across the state, Brenda will be digging into the many facets of protecting special places and leading projects that support TNC's conservation strategies and values.

BEFORE **AFTER**



These images show the Kilchis River Preserve before and after plantings this spring and represent the final phase of restoration at this site. Over 80,000 willows, trees and shrubs have been planted at the preserve in the past year. In Tillamook, 90% of the historic tidal marsh and swamp habitats have been lost. Every acre of wetlands restored in this watershed matters and contributes to improved salmon habitat and flood attenuation.



Volunteer Programs and Community Engagement

CONNECTING PEOPLE AND NATURE TO HAVE MORE IMPACT TOGETHER

City Nature Challenge: Biodiversity in Our Communities

City Nature Challenge is a global event where communities come together to document and celebrate local biodiversity. Every April, participants use the iNaturalist app to record observations of plants, animals, fungi and more in their neighborhoods. This year in Oregon, over 800 people logged observations of more than 1,600 species!

TNC joined the fun by hosting events and working with partners around the state. In Eugene, staff and volunteers led a bird walk at Willow Creek Preserve. In Bend, staff, trustees and volunteers hosted an afternoon “BioBlitz” of species identification. TNC staff also presented to Salem-area participants as part of the Marion Soil and Water Conservation District’s programming.

In the Portland area, we teamed up with Portland Community College to host a BioBlitz at Camassia Natural Area, followed by a unique collaboration with a PCC microbiology class to identify different species of algae in the classroom. TNC staff also led a hike and BioBlitz for a local Girl Scout Troop at Camassia Natural Area, and another tour at the Sandy River Gorge.



THIS PAGE FROM TOP City Nature Challenge participants at the Sandy River Gorge © Sandra Farrell; A bird walk at Willow Creek Preserve ©TNC; OPPOSITE PAGE FROM TOP LEFT Maidenhair fern © Sandra Farrell; Dale and Lois Derouin © Molly Dougherty/TNC; Susan Brown © Molly Dougherty/TNC; Hannah Hoyos © Molly Dougherty/TNC; Woody Mosby © Phoebe Wagner/TNC

Celebrating Our Volunteers of the Year!

This year, we hosted our first in-person recognition event in several years to celebrate the many achievements of TNC volunteers. In resuming this event, we had the opportunity to honor a number of volunteers for their past and emerging efforts.



Dale and Lois Derouin
VOLUNTEERS OF THE YEAR

For over 20 years, they've been the backbone of our conservation efforts, from tending to trails and facilities to leading guided hikes and representing TNC as volunteer naturalists. Dale and Lois's wisdom, humor, and unwavering commitment inspire us all.



Susan Brown
VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

For over 25 years, Susan has tended tirelessly to Cogswell Foster Preserve. From monitoring wildlife to organizing volunteer events, her stewardship ethic and love for the preserve and its inhabitants shines through in every task she undertakes.



Hannah Hoyos
ROOKIE OF THE YEAR

As a crew leader, Hannah brings a wealth of ecological knowledge and a commitment to inclusivity. She goes above and beyond to provide volunteers with deeper insights into the habitats we work in and fosters a culture of care at every event she orchestrates.






Woody Mosby
ROOKIE OF THE YEAR

At our Portland office, Woody is a welcoming presence and an energetic force, caring for plants indoors and out, our fleet vehicles and many tasks in between. His dedication and positive attitude have made him an indispensable part of our community.



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