



By Corie Harlan
Owyhee Coordinator

The statewide effort to protect one of our last, best, most wild places – Oregon’s Owyhee Canyonlands – continues to make important and exciting strides forward.

In late June, U.S. Senators Wyden and Merkley introduced the Southeastern Oregon Mineral Withdrawal and Economic Preservation and Development Act (S.3048), a bill that strives to address industrial development threats – such as mining – that are clawing at the edges of the Owyhee. The primary effect of this bill would be to prevent hard-rock mining, oil and gas de-

velopment and right-of-way development on approximately 2 million acres of the Owyhee.

This bill recognizes that the Owyhee is at risk from the sort of ill-advised industrial development that could forever alter its wild rivers and impact fish, wildlife and abundant recreation opportunities.

Senators Wyden and Merkley should be thanked for their leadership in working to protect our wildest public lands and Oregon’s recreational opportunities.

This bill provides critical and long overdue movement towards safeguarding the Owyhee’s lands, wildlife and waters for future generations. Stopping development threats in the Owyhee Canyonlands is one of the core

Owyhee, continued on Page 3

*The momentum has continued to ramp up for permanently protecting the Owyhee Canyonlands, including recent legislation introduced by Oregon’s senators.
Photo: Nate Wilson*

INSIDE DESERT **Protect:** New and updated resources for the Oregon Desert Trail. Page 4.
RAMBLINGS: **Defend:** Federal court all but sidelines Steens wind energy project. Page 5.
Restore: Legacy gift expands sage-grouse habitat monitoring program. Page 6.

PERSEVERANCE, FINDING COMMON GROUND PAY OFF FOR OREGON'S DESERT

By Brent Fenty, Executive Director



Brent Fenty

Sometimes when I'm hiking in Oregon's high desert in the full heat of the summer or rowing down a river and the wind is pushing upstream, it seems like I will never reach my destination. That feeling seems all too familiar at times in ONDA's work to protect, defend and restore Oregon's high desert. Our efforts require perseverance and a commitment to keep pushing ahead even when at times it seems like we may never reach our goal.

This is what the long and hard-fought battle to stop industrial-scale wind development on Steens Mountain felt like several times over the past decade. However, thanks to the incredible effort and support from many of you, Steens Mountain as we know and love it remains intact for wildlife and future generations. It was not easy, and many were doubtful that we would prevail. Our recent victory in the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals (see page 5) rewards nearly a decade of hard-fought legal work on behalf of Steens Mountain; it also safeguards the wilderness and the Cooperative Management and Protection Area that were secured through several decades of earlier effort.

It is clear that not everyone agreed that hundreds of wind turbines on Steens Mountain were a bad idea. For a region hungry for economic development, the proposal represented the potential for more jobs. Although we may have disagreed on this project, we have found agreement on others in Oregon's high desert, such as the successful development of the Neale geothermal project in Malheur County.

This year's Desert Conference will bring people together to discuss and discover other areas of agreement. With the theme, "Public Lands, Common Ground," we intend to highlight the incredible gift of public lands we have inherited from past generations. While media coverage of the Malheur Refuge takeover in many cases featured conflict and controversy, Desert Conference will provide an opportunity to celebrate and learn from past efforts where diverse stakeholders have come together to develop thoughtful public lands management decisions. Through such efforts, Tribal leaders, ranchers, conservationists, local elected officials and others have created solutions instead of reliving decades-old disagreements. I hope you will join us in Bend for this important conversation (see page 7).

Although ONDA will continue to work hard to find common ground, it is also clear that we cannot craft such solutions without different viewpoints coming to the table. In such cases, we must push ahead regardless in order to give important and threatened areas the protection they clearly deserve. The Owyhee Canyonlands is such a place. With over 2 million acres of wilderness-quality land in Oregon and more than 500,000 acres of wilderness designated on the Idaho side in 2009, it is impossible to argue the Owyhee is not deserving of permanent protection. But that is what opponents have chosen to do. They argue that the area already has numerous layers of protection despite the fact that almost all of these "protections" fail to ensure meaningful conservation of the Owyhee for future generations. These so-called protections have repeatedly enabled oil and gas, mining and road development across the West. The Owyhee deserves better.

While ONDA has worked continuously for nearly a decade to find common ground to protect the Owyhee, we have only seen threats increase. Recent media coverage has highlighted proposals to extend an Interstate from Boise to Reno and to build a pumped-storage hydroelectric facility near Lake Owyhee State Park. These proposals add to existing threats such as mining, oil and gas leasing, off-road vehicle impacts and invasive species.

In June, Senators Ron Wyden and Jeff Merkley introduced legislation to restrict mining and oil and gas development in the Owyhee, marking important progress in conservation of the region (see page 1). The legislation recognizes that the incredible values of the Owyhee must be protected and is based on important work of the last several decades. We will work with the Senators to build on this legislation and ask you to let them know that the Owyhee deserves permanent protection.

There are places worth fighting for – Oregon's Owyhee Canyonlands is such a place. Like the river that carves that incredible desert canyon, we will win with persistence over time. I look forward to continuing to work with you to find and develop common ground when possible and to stand strongly for our wild places when necessary.

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OREGONIANS ADVOCATE FOR THE OWYHEE

OWYHEE CANYONLANDS

Continued from Page 1

pillars of the decades-long effort to provide permanent protection to these unique and fragile public lands.

Our work isn't done. Now is the time to keep urging our senators to champion a strong, comprehensive conservation approach that affords the highest degree of protection for the Owyhee. We've advocated for national conservation area, wilderness and Wild & Scenic Rivers designations (wildow- yhee.org/why-protect-it/ConservationPro- posal). Yet if Congress fails to act in the short time remaining this session, a national mon- ument could offer the Owyhee the protection it needs. As Rep. Earl Blumenauer said at a recent event, "Whether national monument or wilderness, it's past time to permanently protect this place."

Vast support continues to grow

More than 35,000 people from Oregon and beyond have now voiced their support this effort. And support for protecting the Owyhee continues to grow.

A recent statewide, bipartisan poll (olcv.org/owyhee-survey) found that a majority of Oregonians support permanently safeguarding the Owyhee Canyonlands. Seventy percent of Oregonians statewide and 66 percent in the 2nd Congressional District (Eastern Oregon) support permanent protection. This support cut across all five congressional districts, demonstrating strong statewide support.

And they are willing to speak out. Two hundred of these supporters rallied in Salem this spring to show elected officials just how much this place means to them. Over 150 local businesses have signed on to help with the effort. And new diverse voices, such as Oregonians for the Owyhee (wildforth- eowyhee.org), are adding their own calls for protection.

The Owyhee Canyonlands has now even inspired a beer, made by Portland's Base Camp Brewing Co. Sales of Owyhee Canyonlands Wild Ale will contribute to efforts to protect this amazing landscape.

We're certain the momentum for the Owyhee will continue in the coming months. We will need your help to deliver the mes- sage loud and clear that protecting this Oregon gem cannot wait!



Photo: Michael Hughes courtesy of Northwest Rafting Co.

HELP PROTECT THE OWYHEE, NOW!

It is clear that protecting this special place **now** is a good move for Oregon's economy and our cultural and ecological heritage. Here are three simple things you can do **today** to help ensure the Owyhee gets the protection it deserves:

1

Send an email to Senators Wyden and Merkley. Tell them you love the Owyhee and thank them for introducing the mineral withdrawal legislation. But let them know you still want to see the highest degree of protection for the Owyhee, now.

www.merkley.senate.gov/contact

www.wyden.senate.gov/contact

2

#WildForTheOwyhee: Post about why you love the Owyhee on Facebook, Instagram or Twitter with the **#WildForTheOwyhee** hashtag. These posts demonstrate to our leaders the widespread support for permanently protecting the Owyhee.

3

Ready for more? Email corie@wildow- yhee.org to pen a letter, attend a meeting and make more big moves on behalf of the Owyhee.



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www.flickr.com/photos/oregonnaturaldesert

WORK CONTINUES TOWARD WHYCHUS-DESCHUTES SOLUTION



*Deschutes River canyon after a spring rain.
Photo: Katya Spiecker*

By Gena Goodman-Campbell
Central Oregon Coordinator

It's no secret why ONDA is committed to achieving the highest level of protection for Whychus-Deschutes. Places like Alder Springs and Steelhead Falls have a near-mythological reputation in Central Oregon. Stories about fishing the Deschutes River are passed down through generations, and our region's geological and cultural histories are written on the canyon walls.

At the encouragement of Senator Ron Wyden, a group of stakeholders concerned about the Whychus-Deschutes came together in early 2015 to work toward a collaborative proposal for the future of the area. Our goal was to find common ground among residents at Crooked River Ranch who are concerned about wildfire and conservation advocates, including ONDA, who've long worked for wilderness designation of Whychus-Deschutes. Over the course of a year of discussions, this collaborative effort yielded recognition of shared values and the beginnings of a true win-win solution.

At the outset of the discussion, representatives from each stakeholder group, including Crooked River Ranch Fire and Rescue and the Friends and Neighbors of the Deschutes Canyon Area (FANs), had an opportunity to share their priorities for public lands in the area. Experts from the Crooked River National Grassland and the Bureau of Land Management helped the group gain an understanding of the rules and regulations guiding public lands management and fire suppression.

From this common understanding, a set of solutions emerged that would address each stakeholder's priorities in a balanced way. Removing wilderness study area status from a small section of public land bordering Crooked River Ranch would facilitate fire prevention and suppression, while wilderness protection for the spectacular canyonlands of the Middle Deschutes and Lower Whychus Creek would ensure that Whychus-Deschutes remains wild for future generations to enjoy.

Unfortunately, this collaborative solution was put in jeopardy this spring when Congressman Greg Walden introduced HR 5132, the Crooked River Ranch Fire Protection Act, a one-sided bill that ignores local input.

"Our collaborative experience shows what is possible when members of the community come together to find solutions for managing public lands," said Marilynne Keyser, president of FANs and a longtime Crooked River Ranch resident. "We are asking Congressman Walden to work with us to explore a more balanced approach that addresses the needs of all stakeholders."

Throughout Central Oregon, community members responded strongly to Rep. Walden's bill.

Nearly 300 people sent messages to their representative in Congress urging them to oppose HR 5132, and 15 conservation groups from across the West joined ONDA and FANs in calling on Rep. Walden to support local efforts to build consensus. Now, this broad-based coalition will work with community leaders and our senators to advance the win-win solution that stakeholders have worked on for over a year.

NEW AND UPDATED RESOURCES FOR THE OREGON DESERT TRAIL

By Renee Patrick
Oregon Desert Trail Coordinator

Since the start of the year, ONDA has been hard at work polishing existing Oregon Desert Trail resources and introducing new ones to help adventurers navigate the route.

New resources include a databook/water-chart that compiles data found on the maps as well as information from the guidebook. The water chart ranks water sources from reliable to questionable to unreliable, and is color-coded to match the maps. It is also a Google Sheet that can be downloaded onto a cell phone and updated electronically from the trail.

New water cache guidelines and maps help hikers place water along the dry 160 miles that stretch between Bend and Paisley.

Oregon Desert Trail resources:
ONDA.org/OregonDesertTrail

Those who have already completed the trail gave us detailed notes and maps on where they placed their water, and we are working towards more permanent water solutions in the future.

We have a new partnership with the Hiking Project. The first 270 miles of the trail are on the Hiking Project's website (with the goal of including the rest of the miles by the end of the year) and free app. You will find elevation profiles, a slimmed-down version of the guidebook, and a real-time view of where you are on the route at all times.

Updated materials include the map set

and guidebook. Maps now have declination information to aid in navigating with map and compass, updated mileages, and a few minor reroutes. The guidebook has small text changes to reflect the changes to the maps.

Coming soon is a town and resource guide that describes important services hikers will find along their journey. The guide is a work in progress, but a draft is available via email.

Finally, show your love of the Oregon Desert Trail with our new stickers, patches, and poster maps, available on our website.

Remember, all resources are free and available at ONDA.org/OregonDesertTrail. We welcome any feedback or observations from your trip to the high desert; every little bit helps us refine the route and improve the resources for future adventures (renee@onda.org).

FEDERAL COURT SIDES WITH ONDA, ALL BUT SIDELINING STEENS WIND

By Mac Lacy
Senior Attorney

In May, the U.S. Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals rejected former Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar's approval of an industrial-scale wind project that would have forever marred Steens Mountain and harmed its dwindling Greater sage-grouse population. The court agreed with ONDA that the Bureau of Land Management failed to consider the project's effects on the bird's crucial winter habitat areas.

In 2011, Salazar approved a plan to construct dozens of wind turbines and a 46-mile-long, high-capacity transmission line on Steens Mountain. But at high-elevation sites like this sage-grouse seek out wind-swept ridges where winds prevent heavy snow accumulation. Sagebrush is exposed and available for the grouse to eat and use then for shelter, critical to the bird's winter survival. The project also would have severed a corridor connecting neighboring sage-grouse populations. Steens Mountain lies near the center of one of the last remaining strongholds of contiguous sagebrush habitat – essential for the future of the sage-grouse.

According to the three-judge panel writing for the court, "the BLM had a duty to assess, in some reasonable way, the actual baseline conditions" at the project site. BLM's failure to survey for the birds at the project site and reliance on inaccurate data undermined the agency's assumption that no grouse use the area in the winter.

The court rejected Interior's pleas for special deference or that mitigation measures could, as the court put it, serve as a "panacea for inadequate data collection and analysis." And the court concluded that Interior's error impeded public participation during the environmental review process and made it impossible for BLM to "know what impacts to mitigate, or whether the mitigation proposed would be adequate to offset damage to wintering sage grouse."

Crucially, if BLM had acknowledged the area's winter habitat, the project site would have been classified as an essential "Category-1" habitat. These are areas where the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife's binding Oregon Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation Assessment and Strategy allowed no energy development.

ONDA and co-plaintiff Audubon Society of Portland have argued for years that Steens Mountain is not the right place for wind development. Protected by Congress in 2000, this landscape is a crown jewel of Oregon's



ONDA recently secured a key victory in the effort to stop industrial wind projects in Greater sage-grouse habitat on Steens Mountain. Photo: Bruce Jackson

high desert. It is home to sage-grouse and other sensitive fish and wildlife species and is treasured for its wide-open vistas and wild country. Steens Mountain is one of the largest undeveloped expanses of sagebrush habitat in the entire country.

This project was left over from a time before the BLM and the state of Oregon set guidelines to encourage developers to focus on low-conflict areas and avoid places like the Steens. The court decision sets an important legal precedent to help ensure that renewable energy projects are sited in areas where they avoid these types of impacts.

While the litigation was ongoing, ONDA and Audubon Society of Portland submitted petitions to the Department of the Interior in 2013, 2014 and 2015 asking for the withdrawal of the Steens wind approval. The petitions

highlighted that the developer had lost all of the key regulatory approvals necessary for the project to go forward and that important new science continued to illustrate the likely impacts of the project on sage-grouse habitat and population connectivity.

This will go down as one of the most important and lasting court decisions ONDA has achieved, alongside historic decisions driving national wilderness policy and securing protections in other iconic areas including Hart Mountain and the Owyhee Wild and Scenic Rivers.

ONDA and Audubon Society of Portland are represented on this case by senior attorney Mac Lacy, assisted by Portland-based public interest attorney Dave Becker and Boise-based attorney Laird Lucas.

YOUR DONATIONS AT WORK IN OREGON'S HIGH DESERT

Thanks to you ...

35,000 conservation supporters and counting from Oregon and beyond continue the drumbeat for protecting the Owyhee Canyonlands. Join them at WildOwyhee.org.

750 miles of the Oregon Desert Trail await adventure, with new and recently enhanced guide materials at ONDA.org/DesertTrail.

1 industrial energy development proposal

that would harm wildlife and forever mar Steens Mountain is all but finished thanks to a recent court decision.

ONDA.org/SteensWind.

34 trained Independent Stewards join hundreds of restoration volunteers in the effort to ensure a healthy, vital high desert. ONDA.org/VolunteerField.

... and so much more, all made possible because of you!

LEGACY GIFT EXPANDS SAGE-GROUSE HABITAT MONITORING PROGRAM

By Ben Gordon
Stewardship Director

This spring, buoyed by the generosity of an estate gift from Elliott J. Dubreuil, Jr., who loved wild places and wildlife, ONDA embarked on an ambitious monitoring effort to help ensure a strong future for the imperiled Greater sage-grouse.

Following the federal decision not to list the imperiled Greater sage-grouse as endangered in fall 2015, we launched the Sage-Grouse Habitat Monitoring Project to support the recovery of the species. Through this project, we will monitor the implementation of the Bureau of Land Management's Greater Sage-Grouse Approved Resource Management Plan Amendment and ecological trends on public land in the Prineville, Lakeview, Burns and Vale BLM districts of eastern Oregon.



Elliott J. Dubreuil, Jr.
Photo: Katrina Hays

The federal sage-grouse plan outlines standards for habitat conditions. The plan also requires management changes if habitat conditions aren't meeting those standards. And a key element of the plan is on-the-ground monitoring to determine if the standards are being met. To ensure the BLM sage-grouse plan leads to healthy habitat conditions, we are helping by proactively and systematically monitoring the condition of key areas throughout Oregon's high desert.

While we were designing our plan for the new monitoring project, we learned of a substantial gift from the estate of Elliott J. Dubreuil, Jr. Prior to his passing in late 2015, Elliott was a long-time central Oregonian who loved outdoor adventure and spent much of his free time exploring Oregon's high desert. Thanks to Elliott's thoughtful planning and generous spirit, we gained resources that allowed us to grow our critical sage-grouse habitat monitoring efforts.

We selected several sage-grouse Priority Areas for Conservation for our initial monitoring efforts. These areas encompass approximately 1 million acres of public land across the Hart-Sheldon, Owyhee Canyonlands and central Oregon regions. The lands represent some of the best remaining sage-grouse habitat in Oregon, indeed some of the best in the country.

Next, we consulted experts to develop a scientifically valid vegetation monitoring protocol (see sidebar). We then trained staff, volunteers and interns to kick off our project with an assessment of sage-grouse habitat conditions on the 500,000-acre Beatys Butte grazing allotment near Hart Mountain in southeastern Oregon.

Monitoring just this area of Oregon's high desert will take approximately 2,500 hours to complete. Given the magnitude and importance of this project, we are exceedingly grateful that Elliott's legacy gift allows us to expand our scope of work to include other critical areas of sage-grouse habitat.

In accordance with Elliott's desire to provide educational experiences for young conservationists, we hired two seasonal project staff and enhanced our internship offerings. By capturing and analyzing information about the ecological health of important sage-grouse habitat in eastern Oregon, the team will help determine if habitat objectives and standards outlined in BLM's sage grouse management plan are being met. If they are not, we will have powerful data from which to advocate for improved land management. If conditions improve, we will have a detailed understanding of how to best support future habitat sustainability.

No matter the outcome, we are confident our project will lead to meaningful, lasting benefits for sage-grouse management in Oregon and across the West. This project is a testament to ONDA's leadership and is a meaningful example of how donor contributions make a tangible difference in Oregon's high desert.

Inspired by Elliott's generosity and ONDA's leadership in sage-grouse conservation? Contribute to conservation efforts in Oregon's high desert at [ONDA.org/donate](https://onda.org/donate). And, you'll find more information on how to plan your legacy at [ONDA.org/legacy](https://onda.org/legacy).



A volunteer collects data in the Greater Hart-Sheldon Region to help assess habitat health in the area for Greater sage-grouse. Thanks to a generous donor, ONDA is gathering information in Oregon's high desert that will be valuable for the future of the bird. Photo: Jeremy Austin

HOW ONDA SAGE-GROUSE MONITORING WORKS

We consulted with numerous experts, including agency personnel, academic ecologists and field researchers, to design a monitoring protocol that will accurately measure ecological conditions in sage-grouse habitat. The resulting methodology employs a line-point intercept survey and a photo point technique to assess the degree to which habitat objectives outlined in the BLM's sage-grouse plan are being met. Field personnel establish subplots and collect baseline data on six vegetation groups: sagebrush, shrubs, perennial grasses, annual grasses, native forbs and invasive forbs. The survey data will be used to determine the percent cover and average height of each plant group in each area. We are conducting surveys in the first year of the monitoring effort with intensive work in the spring, during the peak vegetation growth period, and in the fall after grazing has been removed from the landscape.

In subsequent project years, we will photograph the surveyed subplots. Photos will be taken with a standardized reference object to provide scale. We will use these photos in conjunction with the line-point intercept data to summarize vegetation trends. Project staff will repeat the line-point intercept survey every three to five years in place of the annual photo point monitoring.

ANNOUNCEMENTS



DESERT CONFERENCE BRINGS TOGETHER DIVERSE INTERESTS

This year, Desert Conference will bring landowners, conservationists, elected officials, scientists, outdoor recreationists and engaged citizens to Bend on Oct. 14 to explore collaborative solutions for managing our public lands.

Desert Conference will kick off with a keynote from Nancy Langston, an environmental historian who has researched the Malheur basin and wrote “Where Land and Water Meet: A Western Landscape Transformed.” Then through a series of panels, more than 25 experts will discuss the most pressing management issues facing our high desert public lands.

Presenters and conference attendees alike will be encouraged to dig deep into case studies from around the region, searching for broader lessons and shared values. Discussion of the sage-grouse conservation planning processes will highlight a concerted effort to protect habitat, ensure the viability of the species and prevent a listing under the Endangered Species Act. The Sutton Mountain and Painted Hills Area Preservation and Economic Enhancement Act of 2015 will serve as a prime example of how working together on economic development and conservation priorities led to broadly supported legislation primed for congressional action. Finally, Desert Conference will home in on the value of diverse participation. As Langston so eloquently puts it: “Equitable futures for Western public land ... develop from the hard work of collaboration, like the 2013 effort that brought together the local community, Tribes, conservation groups and the state and federal governments to develop a new management plan for Malheur. These are the efforts that best respect the region’s history while pointing the way to a sustainable future.”

2016 DESERT CONFERENCE: PUBLIC LANDS, COMMON GROUND

Friday, Oct. 14, 8 a.m. – 6 p.m.

Unitarian Universalist Campus, 61980 Skyline Ranch Road, Bend

\$50; Register online: ONDA.org/DesertConference

Lunch and closing reception refreshments will be provided

STAFF CHANGES

Welcome, Lisa Foster



Lisa Foster

Lisa joined ONDA in April as our development associate. She will be organizing ONDA’s High Desert Speaker Series and Desert Naturalist Hike Series, among other tasks. She comes to us with a double major in biology and economics, having most recently spent time conducting botany and wildlife surveys for the Forest

Service. She has enjoyed skiing, backpacking, rafting, and bike touring around the U.S., Europe, Argentina, and Chile, and maintains that the Pacific Northwest is most beautiful place on Earth. Welcome, Lisa!

Welcome, Corinne Handelman

Corinne joined ONDA in April as the Portland-based



Corinne Handelman

outreach coordinator, in which she seeks to energize current members in the region and to further build support for ONDA’s work to protect, defend and restore Oregon’s high desert. She also sits on Oregon Environmental Council Emerging Leaders Board and most recently worked for the Sandy River Basin Watershed Council. On most

weekends you can find Corinne camping in Oregon’s wilderness areas, working in her garden, or kayaking local wild and scenic rivers. Welcome, Corinne!

WILD & SCENIC FILM FESTIVAL IN BEND SEPT. 9



Friday, Sept. 9, at the Tower Theatre in Bend.

Presented by E2 Solar.

Matinee: 4:30 p.m., \$14

Evening: 8 p.m., \$16

Student? Under 18? Special price: \$10 at either screening.

For tickets, visit ONDA.org/wsff



ONDA is a member of EarthShare of Oregon, which brings support to environmental endeavors in local communities, across Oregon and around the world.



Oregon Natural Desert Association
50 SW Bond Street, Suite #4
Bend, Oregon 97702

DESERT NATURALIST HIKE SERIES

Discover the stories in the sagebrush on a hike with the Oregon Natural Desert Association. Learn about stars, rock formations, animal signs, human history or preparing for a long-distance backpacking trip in our new hike series with experts in each field. Most hikes are in areas that ONDA works to protect. **All hikes are free** unless otherwise noted. Hike space is limited so pre-registration is required. Complete trip details are provided upon registration. All hikers will meet at the ONDA office and carpool to the trailhead.

STARS OVER THE DESERT

Pine Mountain Observatory with astronomer Alton Luken

A desert without light pollution is a great place to view the night sky. Take a short hike to the top of Pine Mountain to view the planets, stars and constellations. Then look through the telescopes at Pine Mountain Observatory.

- Friday, Aug. 26, 6 pm – 1 am
- Difficulty: Easy, 0.25 mile hike to the top of Pine Mountain.
- \$5 donation to Pine Mountain Observatory requested.
- *Picnic dinner provided by: Blackened Dragon*

BACKPACKING IN THE BADLANDS

Oregon Badlands Wilderness with Oregon Desert Trail Coordinator Renee Patrick

Preparing for a long-distance through-hike involves a lot of planning, especially in the desert. Take a hike from the Tumulus Trailhead to Flat Iron Rock Trailhead in the Oregon Badlands Wilderness and learn about backpacking this new route.

- Thursday, Sept. 8, 9 am – 5 pm
- Difficulty: 9 miles, moderate, all-day hike. Trail may include rocky or loose terrain, with steep sections and moderate elevation gain.
- *Picnic lunch provided by: Sol Verde*

WILDLIFE SIGNS AND TRACKS

Oregon Badlands Wilderness with Shirlee Evans & Helen Harbin

Who lives here? Follow animal tracks, discover nests and build a story of life in the Oregon Badlands Wilderness.

- Saturday, Sept. 17, 10 am – 1 pm
- Difficulty: Easy. Trail is generally flat, with some rocky terrain and slight elevation gain.
- *Picnic lunch provided by: Devore's*



Learn about Oregon's high desert with experts through ONDA's new Desert Naturalist Hike Series. Here, a hiker enjoys the Deschutes River Canyon in central Oregon. Photo: Jim Davis

GEOLOGY OF EASTERN OREGON

Scout Camp with Geology Dr. Daniele McKay with OSU-Cascades

What shaped the rock formations of Eastern Oregon? Explore the geology of the Scout Camp Trail.

- Saturday, Oct. 1, 10 am – 2 pm
- Difficulty: Strenuous. Trail is steep and rocky, with elevation gain of more than 1000 ft. May feature rock scrambles or other challenging features. Trekking poles recommended.
- *Picnic lunch provided by: Bangarang*

HUMAN HISTORY OF THE HIGH DESERT

With University of Oregon Prof. Pat O'Grady

Who lived here before us? How long ago? What tools did they use? Explore the human history of the high desert on the Whychus Crossing trail.

- Late October TBD, 10 am – 4 pm
- Difficulty: Moderate. Trail may include rocky or loose terrain, with steep sections and moderate elevation gain.
- *Picnic lunch provided by: Jackson's Corner*

Check out our website for registration and more information: **ONDA.org/hikes**