

Oregon Natural Desert Association

# Strategic Plan

2021-2024

## VISION

Eight million acres of public lands are conserved across Oregon's high desert, providing essential habitat for fish and wildlife and wild places for all people to treasure and explore, now and always.

## MISSION

Oregon Natural Desert Association (ONDA) exists to protect, defend and restore Oregon's high desert for current and future generations.

## VALUES

- We are committed, tenacious, passionate, nimble and unwavering in pursuit of our mission.
- We are science-based and solutions-oriented, bringing innovative, strategic approaches to achieving our conservation goals.
- We are inclusive and welcoming, and seek to build a strong, diverse and interconnected conservation community throughout our staff, membership, volunteers, board of directors and partnerships.
- When working with stakeholders, agencies, partner organizations, the public and others, we respectfully consider all perspectives while pursuing our conservation goals.

## APPROACH AND LONG-TERM GOALS

We seek to conserve the high desert's biodiversity and most ecologically important landscapes and habitats while building a robust, enduring and inclusive community of passionate conservation advocates to champion high desert conservation for generations to come. Landscape conservation – broadly including legislative and administrative protections, science-based management and ecological restoration – is the most effective and efficient approach to provide for climate resiliency, ecosystem integrity, robust fish and wildlife populations, and effective conservation management of public lands and waters.

Through our multi-faceted conservation and stewardship programs we pursue a portfolio of strategies and actions to achieve conservation goals, including:

- Advocating for conservation management of public lands, waters, fish and wildlife
- Promoting and supporting conservation legislation, policies, programs and activities
- Leveraging the power, expertise, and resources of partners and partnerships
- Welcoming, engaging, inspiring and mobilizing individuals from all communities to participate in high desert conservation
- Identifying, developing and leading ecological restoration projects
- Challenging policies or management activities that harm Oregon's high desert
- Litigating to enforce conservation law and regulations.



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## GOAL 1: PROTECT AND DEFEND THE LARGEST, MOST ECOLOGICALLY IMPORTANT LANDSCAPES IN OREGON'S HIGH DESERT

### Strategy 1A: Advocate for permanent protection of focal landscapes and habitats

We seek to permanently protect the high desert's most ecologically important and biologically diverse landscapes and habitats through legislative or administrative action. Of the eight million acres identified in our long-term vision, we will focus in 2021-2024 on those places where the political, social, and economic conditions offer the best opportunities for success, including the Owyhee Canyonlands, the John Day River Basin, the Greater Hart-Sheldon Region, and approximately 1,000 miles of rivers and streams proposed for Wild and Scenic River designation.

### Strategy 1B: Advocate for improved conservation management of public lands, waters, fish, wildlife and ecosystems

Using a full suite of advocacy tools and approaches, we promote science-based management of the high desert's iconic landscapes, fragile ecosystems, and unique fish, wildlife and plant communities. We focus on improving policies, regulations and management to provide for habitat and ecosystem integrity, landscape connectivity and climate resiliency, while addressing invasive species, wildfire, and the threats posed by development and extractive industries.

### Strategy 1C: Enforce bedrock conservation laws and ensure effective policy implementation

We use a combination of approaches, including legal action, legislative engagement and administrative advocacy, to apply and ensure effective implementation of the important conservation laws governing the management of public lands and waters, species, resources and habitats, and the principles of transparent, inclusive, science-based decision-making.

# 2021-2024 OUTCOME GOALS

## GOAL 2: RESTORE THE MOST ECOLOGICALLY IMPORTANT HABITATS IN OREGON'S HIGH DESERT

### Strategy 2A: Restore key habitats in the high desert through implementation of science-based restoration projects

We seek to improve habitat quality and resiliency, ecosystem integrity, and biological diversity in the high desert's most ecologically important areas through the development and implementation of targeted riparian and upland restoration projects. Our strategic framework, science-based restoration techniques, and partnerships with state, federal, tribal and private landowners ensure that projects provide long-term benefits to desert ecosystems.

### Strategy 2B: Promote restoration-focused management of sensitive species and habitats

Given the magnitude of the threats and the scale of the need, our restoration advocacy focuses on achieving long-term ecological integrity through sustained, climate-adapted, science-based management of high desert lands and waters. When coupled with our site-specific restoration projects and our landscape-scale protections, this approach seeks to provide long-term ecosystem recovery and resilience throughout the high desert.

## GOAL 3: DEVELOP A ROBUST, INCLUSIVE, AND EFFECTIVE CONSERVATION COMMUNITY FOR OREGON'S HIGH DESERT

### Strategy 3A: Connect people to high desert landscapes, issues, and conservation needs

Through media, events, stewardship trips, communications, and other engagement activities we connect people to the diverse ecosystems and landscapes of the high desert. We seek to foster a sense of wonder and curiosity, build knowledge and understanding, promote responsibility, and inspire a love of place that fuels long-term commitment to active participation in high desert conservation.

### Strategy 3B: Develop a welcoming, diverse, and inclusive community of conservation advocates

We invite everyone to join us in building an inclusive, strong, resilient, inspiring, and welcoming community of advocates. We are committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion and will build a culture that welcomes anyone and everyone interested in conserving Oregon's high desert.

### Strategy 3C: Mobilize advocates to support conservation outcomes

We seek to leverage the strength and political power of our growing conservation community to achieve our conservation goals for Oregon's high desert. By deploying a portfolio of new and time-tested organizing and mobilizing approaches we will optimize the effectiveness of our advocacy to promote conservation outcomes.



Cover photo: Jim Davis  
Interior photo: Tyson Fisher