

Ramblings

DESERT RAMBLINGS

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE OREGON NATURAL DESERT ASSOCIATION

SPRING 2005 EDITION VOLUME 17, NO. 1

FROM THE
OUTBACK

2005 OPPORTUNITIES AND
2004 INVENTORY RESULTS

Badlands: A work in progress

by Bill Marlett

Over the past few months, ONDA mounted a grassroots campaign to convince the Deschutes County Commission to endorse wilderness designation for the Badlands.

While Congress makes the ultimate decision on any wilderness designation, members of Oregon's congressional delegation were keenly interested in gauging local support, and therefore the county's position was important to our campaign.

When ONDA approached County Commissioners last November, we presented a petition signed by a number of the adjacent landowners to the Badlands supporting its designation. Wanting to hear "from the other side," the Commission scheduled a public hearing in January.

With help from The Wilderness Society, Campaign for America's Wilderness and the Oregon Chapter of the Sierra Club, we mounted an outreach campaign encouraging people to participate in the public hearing and to contact the commissioners directly through our web site. The response was impressive.

The Commissioners' hearing room was packed with more than 500 people, with 400 of those people sporting our colorful "Support Bad-



Volunteer Alder Fuller enjoying the views near Beaty Butte.

PHOTO: LIZ BRAUN

Wilderness Research and Rescue Project

by Chris Egerton

Sunrises and sunsets splashed by pinks, purples, and oranges; fault-block mountains stretching across the landscape as far as the eye can see; rolling hills like waves in a sea of sagebrush; massive playas tricking the mind into believing there is water just ahead; sage grouse flushing from some of the last high quality sagebrush habitat found in the U.S.; bighorn sheep teetering along a cliff's edge; pronghorn whipping into a playful frenzy as they race each other - and sometimes your vehicle - across the desert landscape; fence lizards doing push-ups on a nearby rock as you eat lunch; etchings in rock faces that speak of another time and culture - these are just a few of the spectacular scenes that volunteers witnessed during ONDA's 2004 Wilderness Research & Rescue Project.

This past summer, ONDA led a group of volunteers into Oregon's high desert where we inventoried unprotected public lands in and around the Lakeview BLM District for wilderness values. The inventory was highlighted by

see **BADLANDS** page 8

see **INVENTORY** page 7

IN THIS ISSUE

Environmental film festival fills the Tower Theatre and raises money to support ONDA's work. Page 5.

Check out the exciting ONDA volunteer opportunities for this spring through fall. Pages 3 and 7.



By Craig Miller, President



Although the environment is suffering assaults from many directions, including weakening of environmental regulations, ever increasing consumptive excesses, and societal apathy, ONDA continues to find creative ways to protect our natural treasures.

Despite a temporary setback in our attempt to push wilderness legislation forward for the Badlands near Bend, the proposed Spring Basin Wilderness along the John Day River is still on track and will likely be introduced in Congress this year. Several litigation issues are coming to a head, and Oregon's first ever buyout of a grazing permit is on its way. ONDA has never been in a stronger position to push forward on many fronts, with three energetic new staff members forming an efficient and formidable team (more details on page 14).

The board is delighted to add our newest member, Jana Rygas (see page 14 for her bio). Look for ONDA to be in the news in the coming days.



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Desert Ramblings

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ONDA exists
to protect, defend, and restore forever
the health of Oregon's native deserts.

“All the blood and sweat is worth it. To look out over a newly unfenced hillside, where all the desert’s wild ones can run, crawl and fly unimpeded, was profoundly satisfying.”

— CAROL JONES, VOLUNTEER

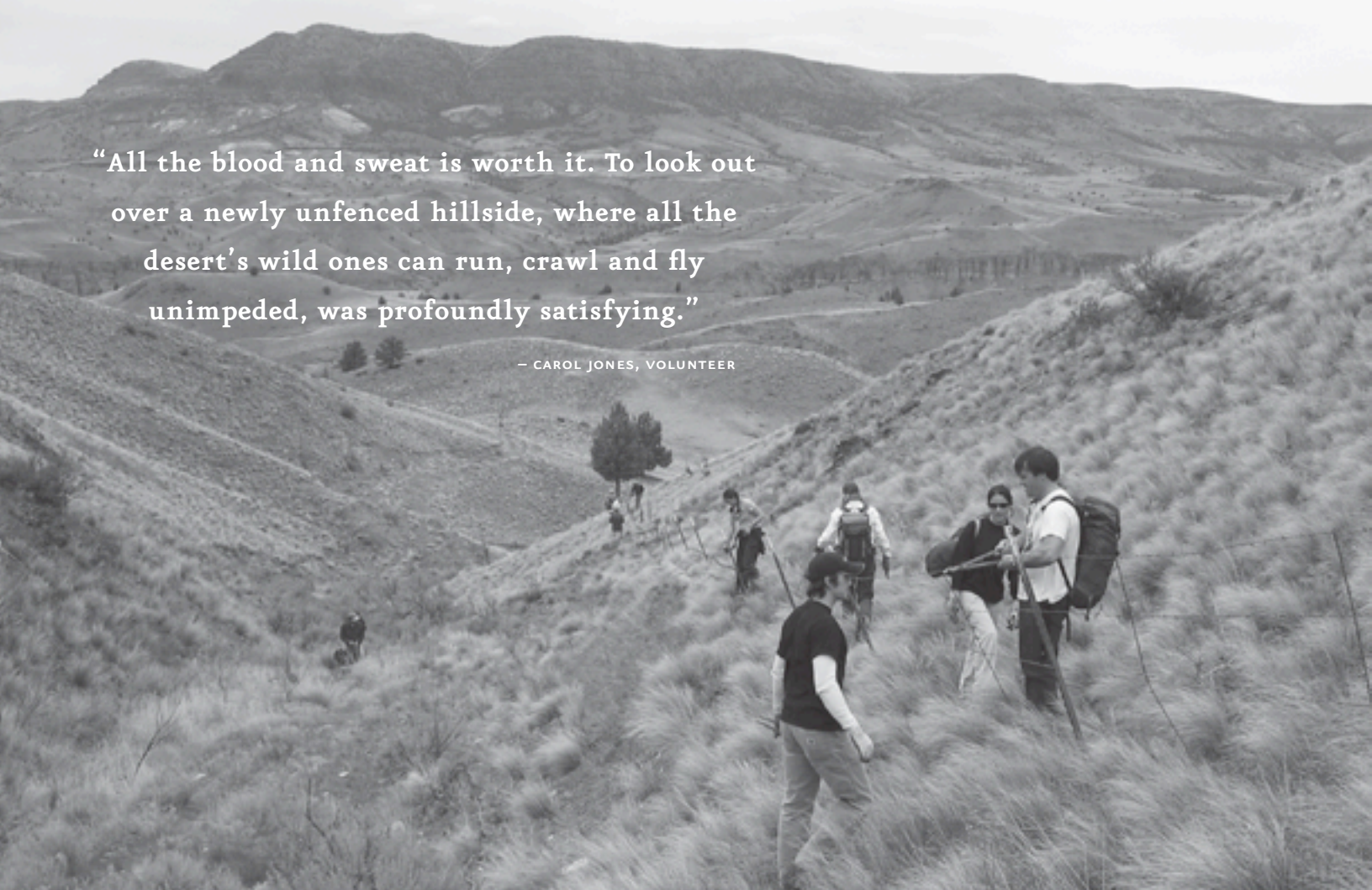


PHOTO: JOHN STERLING

Volunteers removed roughly four miles of obsolete barbed wire fence from the Pine Creek Conservation Area.

3rd Annual Barbed Wire Round-Up and Much More!

We are back at it! Last year volunteers helped to remove over 20 miles of obsolete barbed wire fence within the Steens Mountain Wilderness. This year we have 11 different work parties planned, seven of which are in the Steens. We will also be working at Hart Mountain, Pine Creek Conservation Area and the Badlands Wilderness Study Area. These trips offer a great way to experience these wild and remote areas and give something back to native wildlife.

The trips will involve hiking, removing barbed wire fence, trail maintenance, riparian restoration and some fence building. We will be camping in established campsites for most multi-day trips. ONDA provides tools and training.

For a complete list of our trips and details, see the web site at www.onda.org or call ONDA at 541.330.2638. These trips are free, but space is limited. Sign up now and join the fun!

2005 schedule

- May 15-18
Hart Mountain Fence Pull with Oregon Field Guide
- June 4-5
Pine Creek Ranch Invasive Weed/Riparian Restoration Project
- July 1-4
Steens Mountain Wilderness Fence Pull (Ankle Creek)
- July 6-7
Steens Mountain Wilderness Drainage Construction (Nye Creek)
- July 25-27
Steens Mountain Wilderness ‘Cow Free’ Fence Repair
- July 30-Aug 1
Steens Mountain Wilderness ‘Cow Free’ Fence Repair
- August 5-7
Steens Mountain Wilderness Fence Pull (Cold Springs)
- August 10-12
Steens Mountain Wilderness Fence Pull (Cold Springs)
- August 19-21
Steens Mountain Wilderness Fence Pull (Cold Springs)
- October 15
Badlands Wilderness Study Area Work Party



ONDA FILE PHOTO

Volunteers from the 2004 Steens Mountain Wilderness barbed wire roundup.



ONDA FILE PHOTO

Bend's Tower Theatre sells out for the ONDA benefit.

ONDA Makes The Big Screen

Patagonia and ONDA joined forces to bring the Wild and Scenic Environmental Film Festival to Bend's Tower Theatre on April 8.

Now in its fourth year, the Wild and Scenic Environmental Film Festival has attracted attention as a world class forum for environmental film. Due to its success, the festival is now on tour, bringing great environmental films to communities like Bend.

This one night ONDA benefit was a smashing success, selling out at 481 tickets! The festival featured six of the world's best environmental and adventure films, including "Monumental", the recently released documentary about conservation legend David Brower, and "Return to Balance", featuring the legendary Yosemite climber Ron Kauk and amazing footage of his climbing exploits in Yosemite Valley. We were honored to have Ron Kauk there in person to introduce his film and to mingle with the crowd.

Calling All Photographers

We are now taking submissions for the 2006 'Desert Wildlands' calendar.

We will publish our second full-sized wall calendar, featuring the most wild and ecologically significant areas in Oregon's high desert. The calendar serves to educate people about the magnificent areas that ONDA and our supporters work to protect and to inspire people to join our efforts.

Submission deadline is June 3rd.

Priority areas:

1. Badlands WSA
2. Spring Basin WSA
3. South Fork Crooked River WSA

The 2005
Oregon Wild Desert
Calendar.



Also there in person was Deschutes County Commissioner Tom DeWolf. Commissioner DeWolf was the one commissioner of three to support wilderness designation of the Badlands. To thank him for his position, he was given special mention during the film festival and was presented a framed photograph of the Badlands by professional photographer Greg Burke.

A big thanks to Patagonia and its Bend dealers: Foot Zone, Pine Mountain Sports, Pandora's Backpack and Mountain Supply for helping to promote the festival, sell tickets and generously donate door prizes!

We are looking forward to making this an annual event, expanding the festival into two nights and bringing it to Portland and Eugene as well. See you there!

4. Owyhee Canyonlands (anything in or along)
5. Sutton Mountain / Pat's Cabin / Painted Hills / Sand Mountain
6. Sagebrush Sea photos: Diablo Mountain, Hart Mountain
7. John Day River (anything along the river)

Submission details:

Please submit no more than 20 of your very best transparencies in 35mm, 2.25, 6x7 or 4x5. For digital image submissions, minimum 37 mb or 9x12 inches at 300dpi on CD, include printed proof sheet(s) with 2"x3" thumbnail images for digital submissions. Please send large-scale landscape images (which may include people as small elements) for the large (9x12) full page sheets, and smaller scale (details of flowers, wildlife, etc.) for the inset images on the calendar grid. All images produced full page will be horizontal, with verticals and horizontals being used for the small grid images. Please submit accordingly. Be sure that a description of each photograph is provided, either on the photograph itself, or on a separate sheet with corresponding numbers. Please include a SASE with your submission to ensure proper protection and return of your images.

Mail directly to:

ONDA
c/o Bruce Jackson
16 NW Kansas
Bend, OR 97701

For the entire list of desired image areas, please visit our website onda.org. For questions call (541)388.3864



ONDA's annual meeting volunteers are ready for a day of work.

ONDA FILE PHOTO

ONDA's 15th Annual Meeting

A big thank you to the 43 volunteers who joined us for our 15th Annual Meeting held at the Hancock Field Station just outside of Clarno, Oregon. ONDA members and friends worked tirelessly for a day and a half, removing almost four miles of obsolete barbed wire fence on the Pine Creek Conservation Area, making the area safer for wildlife migration. Our hard work was rewarded with a delicious salmon bake put on by the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs, a stunning slide show by professional landscape photographer Bruce Jackson, and a morning bird tour where the early risers were lucky enough to see a pair of kestrels mating.

Thank you for celebrating another year with ONDA! We couldn't do it without you.

Mark Berry
Emily Prud'homme
John Katzenstein
Debbie Kennedy
Dave Worthington
Tim Withee
John Sterling
Heather Sterling
Fred Sawyer
Erik Sawyer
Tom Sedgwick
Molly Connors
Alan Hickenbottom

Ian Golden
Abney Wallace
Brian Finn
Tom Segal
Jim Moos
Walter Koop
Barbara Koop
Erik Westerholm
Lacy Turner
Latham Flanagan
Mary Jane Flanagan
Thurlow McCloud
Heather McCloud

Alex Berlin
Daniel Jones
Bruce Jackson
Linda Delgado
George Schink
Mike Burri
Matt Holmes
Paul Ferro
Erin McCracken
Bob Lockaby
Terri Lockaby
Susan Lockaby

Oregon Wolf Plan Adopted But Still Vulnerable

After several years of public meetings and eleven months of hard work by a fourteen-member Wolf Advisory Committee, the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) Commission adopted the Oregon Wolf Conservation and Management Plan. While Oregon's proactive step toward allowing wolves to safely enter Oregon is a major achievement, the plan still faces some obstacles.

Three key parts of the plan are being prepared for state legislature and still need legislative approval. This legislation will:

1. Create a new classification that would call the gray wolf a "special status mammal" and forbid open season hunts.
2. Change the damage statute to allow for lethal control if wolf/live-stock conflicts occur (if the wolf is de-listed to threatened).
3. Set up a proactive compensation fund, which financially reimburses livestock producers for wolf-killed animals.

Additionally, several bills are circulating in state legislature that would weaken wolf protection. Two House Bills aim to amend the state wolf plan, one by expanding the circumstances under which a wolf could be killed, and another by requiring breeding pairs of wolves in each of Oregon's congressional districts. Two identical bills circulating in both the house and senate would list the wolf as exotic and transfer management authority from the state to county or municipal animal control.

No hearings have been scheduled for any of these bills.

For more information visit our website, www.onda.org.



ACTION ALERT



Male Sage Grouse.

PHOTO: FRANK CLELAND



Former U.S. Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt unveils proposed Sage Grouse NCA.

Public Comment Open On Sage Grouse Plan

The Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission propose to adopt an Oregon Sage Grouse Conservation Plan and associated administrative rules. Public testimony will be accepted until August 1, with rule adoption on August 8.

"The primary goal of the plan is to maintain and restore habitats necessary for self-sustaining populations of sage grouse, especially the conservation of remaining habitat. The plan emphasizes cooperative management through efforts associated with joint planning to maintain the status quo. Implementation of conservation actions will require two processes that will be guided by the implementation groups; one for public and one for private lands. Specific actions on private land will be implemented through the Natural Resources Conservation Service and Soil and Water Conservation District offices on a voluntary basis. The public lands process will include extensive public involvement via the National Environmental Policy Act process and through integration with other federal land management agencies."

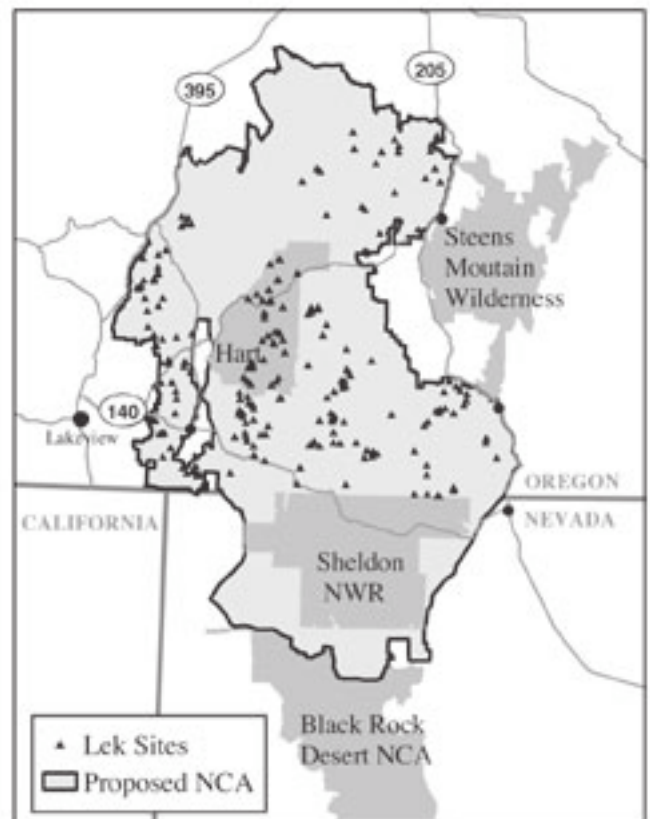
Sage grouse habitat restoration and conservation efforts are crucial to protecting all sagebrush-dependent species. (Download Dr. David Dobbin's report on the decline in shrubsteppe species from the ONDA website.) While the population in Oregon is stable for now, sage grouse populations are declining across the west, therefore the strictest level of conservation needs to take place in order to protect the habitat of these sensitive birds. To read the plan visit:

<http://www.dfw.state.or.us/wildlife/pdf/sage-grouse.pdf>

Fax in testimony: 503.947.6042

Mail testimony to: ODFW, Cherry Ave NE, Salem OR 97303

Tell the commission to support the creation of the first ever National Sage Grouse Conservation Area as the centerpiece of Oregon's conservation strategy (see map). The proposed Sage Grouse NCA encompasses the best sage grouse habitat left in the western United States.



Proposed Hart-Sheldon Sage Grouse National Conservation Area.

“The wilderness inventories have given me the opportunity to visit areas in eastern Oregon that I have always wanted to see ... I’ve seen some fascinating areas.”

— VOLUNTEER JOE HESSLER

INVENTORY from page 1

many rugged and spectacular areas such as Cogan Buttes, Coyote Hills, Hart Mountain, Fish Creek Rim, Poker Jim Ridge, Black Hills, Benjamin Lakes, and Diablo Mountain, which volunteers excitedly explored. “The wilderness inventories have given me the opportunity to visit areas in eastern Oregon that I have always wanted to see...I’ve seen some fascinating areas,” reflected volunteer, Joe Hessler after a trip to Hart Mountain.

When the year finally came to a close, 60 hardy volunteers logged nearly 2000 photos and GPS points, drove hundreds of miles of bumpy ways, and documented countless wilderness characteristics as they inventoried over 2.6 million acres of public land. Of the 2.6 million acres, 1.7 million acres were recommended to the BLM to be protected as Wilderness Study Areas (see map). This is quite an accomplishment and I congratulate all of those that donated their time. We couldn’t have done it without you! To view the complete report, visit: www.onda.org.

Opportunities for 2005!

ONDA’s Wilderness Research & Rescue Project is now in its fourth year of service to Oregon’s wild desert places. Since we began this project, nearly 6 million acres of unprotected public lands have been inventoried and nearly 3.5 million acres have been recommended to be protected as Wilderness Study Areas.

This coming summer you are invited to join us as we continue our work to conserve Oregon’s wild desert places. We will be inventoring areas around Harney Lake, Wagon Tire Mountain, Stinkingwater Mountains, and Silvies River. Inventory work will include hiking, driving, taking photographs, mapping, and writing. ONDA’s staff will provide the training and tools (cameras, GPS units, field guides, and maps); you just need to show up. Trips dates are as follows:

May 19 - 24: Harney Lake

June 8 - 12: Wagon Tire Mountain / Silvies River

July 28 - August 3: Stinkingwater Mountains

Sept 18 - 23: Clean sweep

If you have questions or would like to register, contact Chris Egertson: cegertson@onda.org or call 541.330.2638.

Pueblo Mountain inventory volunteers:

Lizzie Grossman, Liz Braun, Hank Holmes,
Julie Weikel, Judd Beck.



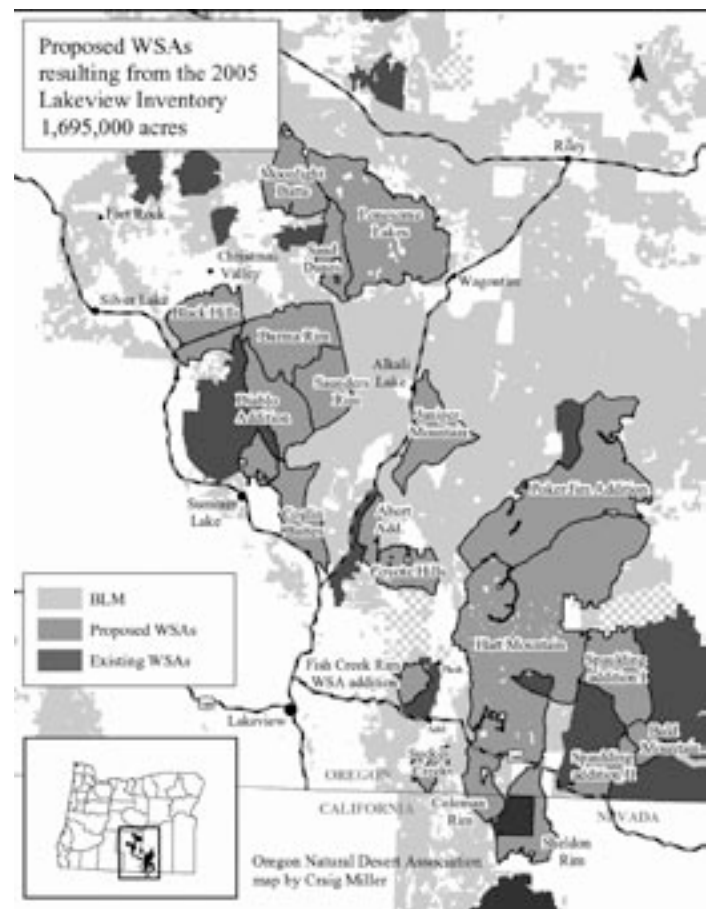
Lost Forest inventory volunteers:

Joe Hessler, Bob Speik, Judd Beck, Tom Stassen, Pamela Carpenter, Art McEldowney, Zach Ehlert.



PHOTO: PAMELA CARPENTER

Kyle Egertson marking a ‘way’ during the Lakeview inventory.





Spring in the Badlands.

Badlands: A Work in Progress



PHOTOS: BARNEY LERTON

January 31, 2005: Deschutes County Commissioners public hearing on the Badlands Wilderness proposal. Over 500 people attended with roughly 400 wearing “Support Badlands Wilderness” stickers.

BADLANDS *from page 1*

lands Wilderness” stickers. Of the 40 people who testified, 32 spoke in support of Badlands Wilderness. The commissioners held the public comment period open for roughly one month after the hearing, which gave us another opportunity to rally public comment in support of the Badlands.

We ran radio and television ads that encouraged Badlands Wilderness supporters to comment and, as added insurance, commissioned our third poll of Deschutes County voters on the question of the Badlands Wilderness. The poll showed 69% of voters support Wilderness while only 19% oppose, with nearly every demographic in Deschutes County in support of Badlands Wilderness (including occasional ATV users according to our polling).

After the public comment period closed, the county announced that nearly 1,600 comments were received, with 75% in support of Badlands Wilderness. No other issue in the County in recent history has generated that level of response.

In the spirit of compromise, ONDA dropped 5,000 acres from the proposed Wilderness area (from 36,000 to 31,000 acres) days before the commission vote in order to allow continued motorized use on 10 miles of existing ATV trail. With this gesture, the revised Badlands Wilderness area would not close one inch of ATV trail that BLM wasn’t already going to close in its new management plan. The off-road vehicle folks rejected the offer.

In the end, the three-member commission took a position of “no position,” neither support or oppose. With one commissioner opposed to the idea of wilderness and the swing commissioner offering a compromise that we could not support (allowing a two-track route to remain open through the Badlands), the remaining “pro-Badlands Wilderness” commissioner had no choice but to offer up a neutral position to keep the vote from going south.

In the current political climate, a neutral position vote will not motivate Rep. Walden to introduce a bill in Congress. On a separate level, this raises troubling questions about protocol: should a county commission be the gatekeeper on future wilderness bills in Congress? We hope not.

And let’s hope our delegation does not use an ambivalent county commission as an excuse to do nothing. Rep Walden, and Senators Smith and Wyden have the support they need if they want to move forward.

But if that’s not the case, we must either turn the swing vote on the commission, or hope to gain a pro-wilderness seat on the commission in the next election.

It is difficult to express our disappointment. But ONDA’s work on Badlands is far from over, and in spite of this temporary setback, we will persevere and ONDA will continue to make progress. For example, BLM’s new land management plan for Central Oregon now excludes motor vehicles from all of the Badlands.

ONDA also pushed to allow for the retirement of grazing permits in the new plan. Putting that new policy to



PHOTO: GREG BURKE

work, ONDA recently secured funding to purchase several permits in the Badlands, and one-half of the proposed wilderness will now be cow-free.

ONDA will also be providing new opportunities for people to help restore wilderness values in the Badlands by removing obsolete barbed-wire fencing and obliterating the now-closed ORV routes that cut through the area.

The Story Behind Route 8

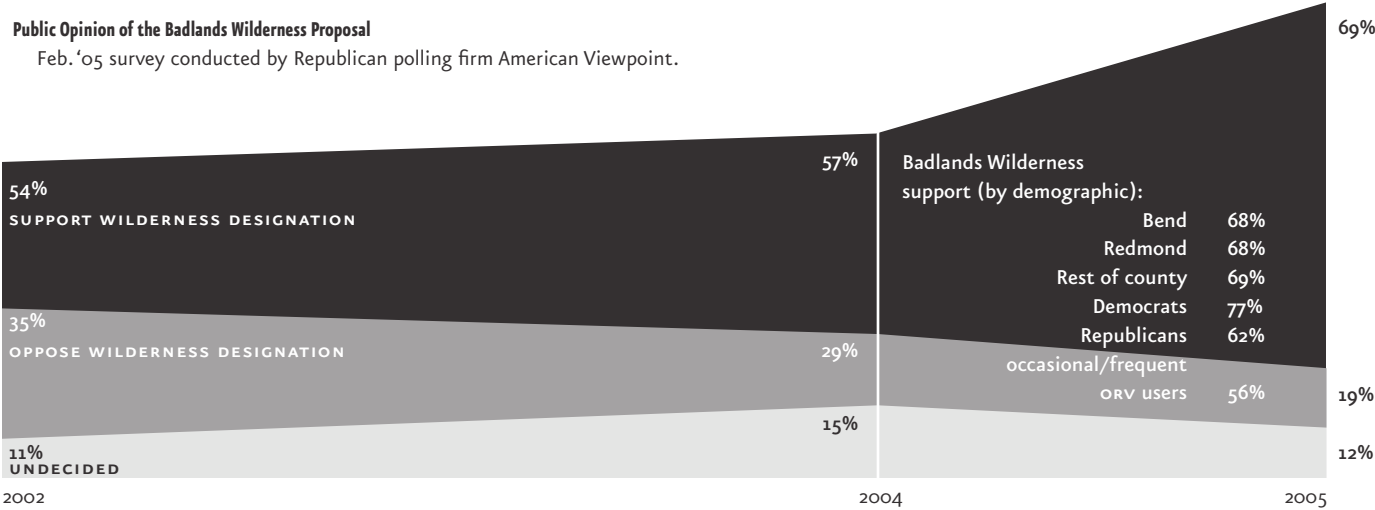
Mike Daly was the swing vote on the Deschutes County Commission, and his support of wilderness came with a hitch: only if a jeep trail known as Route 8, that runs through the heart of the Badlands, was reopened to motor vehicles.

While the Commissioner Daly’s desire to resolve the competing needs between motorized and non-motorized users in the Badlands is well-intentioned, ONDA opposed re-opening Route 8 to motor vehicles for good reason:

see **BADLANDS** page 10

Public Opinion of the Badlands Wilderness Proposal

Feb. ‘05 survey conducted by Republican polling firm American Viewpoint.



Badlands Business Supporters

Abracadabra Printing & Design
Alder Creek Kayak & Canoe Co.
Art Impressions
Astro Lounge, The
Bag Ladies of Union Street
Be-Bop Biscotti
Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream
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Big O' Bagels
Bikrams Yoga
Biscuits of Bend
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Clarno Cattle Company
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Debbie Vaughan Counselor/Hypnotherapist
Debra Burke Nutrition Counseling
Dennis McKenna, CPA
Deschutes Gallery
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Donna Hoitsma, LMT
D-Star Design
D-Star Laboratories
Ecological Services Inc
Environmental Building Supply
Family Health Care Center Unlimited
Fields Farms
Finder's Keepers
Flights of Fancy Farm
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June Hog Art Company
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Leapin' Lizards Toy Company
Light of Venus
Living Earth GIS
Longboard Louie's
Lubbesmeyer Fiber Studio
Mark Monroe Enterprises
Marz Planetary Bistro
McLaughlin Upholstery
Mels Antique Furniture Restoration
Metolius Mountain Products Inc
Mid-Oregon Electrical Services



ONDA FILE PHOTO

Horseback riders exploring the Badlands.

BADLANDS from page 9

• First, the BLM closed Route 8 after a multi-year planning process, looking at all the issues and competing uses on all public lands in Central Oregon. BLM's decision to close the Badlands, including Route 8, to motorized vehicles was balanced by keeping other public lands and routes open to trucks and ATVs. Their decision was based on the "big picture," weighing the needs of motorized and non-motorized users alike. Reopening Route 8 would undermine a careful and deliberate public planning effort by asking Congress to undo BLM's decision.

• Second, Reopening route 8 to off-road vehicle use through the middle of the Badlands Wilderness would open up a management can of worms for the BLM. Many of the past illicit activities in the Badlands, including cutting of ancient junipers and dumping of trash, have occurred near Route 8. Moreover, route 8 leads directly to Little Dry Canyon, where vandals recently defaced ancient pictographs (that were later painstakingly restored by the Central Oregon Archaeological Society). BLM is already limited in their ability to manage our public lands, and the Commissioners should not further strain BLM's ability to conserve our public lands.

• Last, but not least, making the Badlands Oregon's first "drive-through" wilderness is simply a bad idea. Roads and highways commonly divide wilderness areas or form wilderness boundaries. The McKenzie Highway west of Sisters is a good example, with the Three Sisters Wilderness to the south of the highway and Mt Washington Wilderness to the north. More recently, the Steens Mountain Wilderness includes wilderness on both sides of the Steens Mountain Road. But those are very different situations than exist in the Badlands, a much smaller area that should not be chopped in two by reopening Route 8.

In an 2003 editorial regarding the possible closing of the Badlands to motorized use, the Bend Bulletin noted that, "the loss is not the end of ATV riding as we know it. There are hundreds of miles of other trails in Central Oregon open to riding." To be precise, there are 200,000 acres designated for ATV use in the adjacent Millican Valley. But we are running out of places we can designate wilderness in Central Oregon's high desert.

The Bulletin concluded that, "Preserving one part of the high desert is a worthwhile investment." We agree, but can't preserve the Badlands by staking a road through its heart.

Looking Ahead

On a brighter note, ONDA's Spring Basin Wilderness proposal is ready to go, and Rep. Greg Walden has agreed to introduce a bill. As a key Republican member of the House Resources Committee, we are confident that Rep. Walden is capable of moving Spring Basin legislation quickly once introduced, and we will continue to work with Walden's staff and adjacent landowners to ensure the bill becomes law.

There are many challenges to protecting Wilderness in the current political climate. For some politicians, wilderness has become a partisan issue. That's too bad, and shortsighted.

Oregonians east of the Cascades want Wilderness, not just those living in Portland and Eugene. We know love of wild space is important to rural communities and folks living in the fast-growing urban areas of Bend and Medford.

To that end, ONDA will continue to build grassroots support in Eastern Oregon to conserve our wilderness heritage for future generations.

“I hope we can all join in support of this small gesture of stewardship for this planet we share with the prairie falcon and pronghorn and a thousand other creatures. The smallness of this act to secure a healthy planet and healthy people should be engaged without opposition or hatefulness.”

— DON HARKER

A Big Embrace For a Small Place

By Tracy Bowerman

On January 31, the Deschutes County Commissioners held a public hearing on the Badlands wilderness proposal. Several hundred people attended the meeting. Opponents of wilderness were predominantly off-highway vehicle (OHV) users who recreate in the area in increasing numbers. Others used the rhetoric that wilderness designation “shuts out” handicapped and seniors. But the majority of people – young and old alike – donned orange “Support Badlands Wilderness” stickers.



ONDA FILE PHOTO

Pygmy Owl, a Badlands species.

During public comment received by the Commissioners regarding the Badlands wilderness proposal, 1,032 people wrote or called in support of wilderness. 225 voiced opposition. The numbers seemed clear enough by themselves, but the truly powerful testimony was the passion with which wilderness supporters spoke.

Grandparents, parents, children, business owners, hikers, runners, disabled people, horseback riders, birders, hunters, ORV and motorcycle riders, scientists, land developers, and many more spoke of their love of the Badlands. Most of these people were personally familiar with the Badlands and had a selfless desire to protect it.

Neil Wesner shared the sentiments of many people. “My wife and I have been hiking and trail running with our dogs in this area for years. We strongly advocate for wilderness status, a level of protection rare on this side of the mountains but deserving. There are vast areas of desert available for all manner of activity and recreation. There are designated off-highway vehicle areas. But how many places are there where there is no target shooting, no ATV’s, just the sound of one foot in front of the other, the sensory experience of your surroundings, quiet, peace, serenity, the uninterrupted natural order of things. That’s what wilderness is all about and it’s a testament to our humanity, vision and sensitivity that we create such places.”

The benefit of a wilderness area in the desert just outside of Bend was something more than a thousand people felt strongly enough about to contact the commissioners. As Cornelius Peeples of Bend wrote, “huge areas that were wild desert are being eaten up by our expanding urban growth boundary. The beauty and importance of the wild areas close to Bend cannot be overstated. Simply put, we could quickly become the ugly urban strip-mall that is seen in so many cities across the US. This is why it is so critical to preserve a piece of wild land close to the city that can truly be called wilderness.”

In the two months it took the County Commissioners to reach their conclusion, the Central Oregon community rallied behind the vision of a Badlands Wilderness. Supporters wrote letters to the local newspapers, contacted the commissioners, and many local businesses staked up yard signs. In the end, the vote was divided between the three commissioners, and they opted to take no action. Only Tom DeWolf recognized the tremendous public support for wilderness designation and voted in favor. Although it is disappointing to realize that our county government does not listen to its constituents, the county will not determine the Badland’s fate. Wilderness designation lies not in the hands of our County Commissioners, but in the hands of congress. The strength and conviction with which people spoke about protecting the Badlands will continue to fuel this fight.

Bend resident Don Harker put the discussion into perspective. “I hope we can all join in support of this small gesture of stewardship for this planet we share with the prairie falcon and pronghorn and a thousand other creatures. The smallness of this act to secure a healthy planet and healthy people should be engaged without opposition or hatefulness. It should be engaged as a joyous moment of redemption for us all. If we cannot find our way to save this small place, it is unlikely we have the heart left to save ourselves. Let us each take up the defense of this sacred place for our own sake and the sake of future generations.”

Badlands Business Supporters

Midtown Ballroom/Domino Room
Mockingbird Gallery
Mondry Painting
Mother’s Juice Café
Mountain Laurel Physicians
Movie Tyme Video
Nancy P’s Baking Company
Nashelle Designs
Natural Resources Consulting Inc.
Nature’s General Store
Neo Software Inc
Newport Avenue Market
Nomad’s Piercing Studio
Northwest Adventure
Northwest Financial Concepts
Oasis Day Spa
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Ouzel Outfitters
Pandora’s Backpack
Parrilla Grill
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Pine Mountain Sports
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Ryan’s Deli & Catering
Sage Coach
Sage Creek Gardens
Sage Custom Framing
Shevlin Commons LLC
Silver Moon Brewing Company
Sky & Earth Designz
Soba Noodles
Source, The
Steve’s Consignment
Strictly Organic Coffee
Sun Country Tours
Sunnyside Sports
Taco Stand
The Grove Restaurant and Lounge
Think Safety First Company
Thomas Osborne Design
Tiger Lily
Topolino
Trivia Antiques
Village Baker, The
Voila Fashions
Wanderlust Tours
Weddings with Heart
Westside Ride
Westside Video
Wild Birds Unlimited
Wilderness Weddings
Wildflowers
Winter Farms
YES Electric
Yoga and the Healing Arts

*Before the Deschutes County
Board of Commissioners,
January 31, 2005*

My name is Alice Elshoff. My husband and I moved to Bend in 1961. I took my first hike in the Badlands sometime in the late 70's.

When the BLM did their initial inventory in 1980, I helped them locate a small section of the ancient dry riverbed that had been overlooked. It contained some beautifully river-smoothed and sculptured rock, caves and petroglyphs, evidence of early Paiute habitation.

I've led family hikes into the Badlands and taken many 4th graders there on school field trips. I can't tell you how much fun it is to watch children flat on the ground, hand lenses to their eyes, examining the desert mosses. As a little water is applied to these brown, dried up mosses, they immediately spring to life, turn green before their eyes and begin photosynthesizing. The kids think it's a miracle. And of course it is - life is a miracle.

I've photographed flowers in the spring, tracked a bobcat through the snow, and participated in an Oregon Field Guide TV program on the Badlands.

Unfortunately, I have also removed large piles of garbage and witnessed evidence of someone illegally sifting for Native American artifacts in one of the caves.

That's why this quite surprising little area needs protection. Its accessibility, which makes it so nice for most Bend residents, also makes it easy for others to abuse it, driving out there with a pick-up load of trash and then leaving with stolen ancient junipers for firewood or stolen artifacts.

I say surprising area, because not many people understand how unusual the geologic formations in the Badlands really are. The Badlands formations only form under a very specific set of circumstances.

For so many reasons, I am asking you to recognize the tremendous local support for wilderness designation. I must admit that I am very puzzled by the opposition from the ORV users. We have not protested their 643 miles of trails designated



Sunset from the Badlands.

PHOTO: BRUCE JACKSON

specifically to their use immediately adjoining the Badlands. Why do they begrudge us these ten miles to walk and ride our horses?

But more than that, Wilderness is not so much about us as it is about the future. A Native American Chief has said, "Many of us have come and gone, some of us are here now, but most of us are yet to be born." When Bend reaches 100,000 as predicted in yesterday's paper, those people will look back and praise you for your foresight in protecting this lovely little piece of the natural world we call the Badlands.

*Alice Elshoff
Steens Mountain Road
Frenchglen, Oregon*

"I can't tell you how much fun it is to watch children flat on the ground, hand lenses to their eyes, examining the desert mosses. As a little water is applied to these brown, dried up mosses, they immediately spring to life, turn green before their eyes and begin photosynthesizing. The kids think it's a miracle. And of course it is – life is a miracle."

By Mac Lacy

Battle Over BLM Wilderness Inventory Duty Continues

Under the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA), the BLM has a duty to conduct a continuing inventory of the public lands and their resources. FLPMA directs the BLM to consider its inventory information during the agency's resource management planning (RMP) process. National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires the BLM to consider the environmental consequences of its proposed actions on the wilderness resource.

Since July 2003, ONDA has been in litigation with the BLM over its adoption of the Southeast Oregon RMP ("SEORMP"). ONDA's major claims involve the scope of the BLM's wilderness inventory duty. On March 29, 2005, a federal magistrate judge issued a recommendation that ONDA's claims be dismissed and that judgment be granted for the BLM. As permitted under the local court rules, ONDA on April 15, 2005 filed an Objection to the magistrate's "Findings and Recommendation," which means a different federal judge will review ONDA's Objection and will make the final decision in this case.

In the meantime, ONDA has asked the BLM to consider the impacts of its proposals on wilderness values for a number of site-specific agency proposals. These projects range from proposals to build fences, pipelines and other "range improvements" in the Beaty Butte and Juniper Mountain areas on the Lakeview District, to more extensive such projects covering hundreds of thousands of acres of public land in the Louse Canyon and Trout Creek Mountains "Geographic Management Areas" on the Vale District, to a project involving "hazardous fuels reductions" in extremely remote areas in southeast Oregon, and to a project involving broad-scale vegetative and habitat manipulation and treatment on more than a hundred thousand acres of public land on Steens Mountain.

In particular, ONDA is concerned about the potential impacts these projects may have on wilderness study areas (WSAs) that have not been recommended by the BLM for designation as wilderness, as well as non-WSA roadless areas that may possess significant wilderness characteristics. This latter group comprises the areas ONDA and countless citizen volunteers have spent thousands of hours inventorying. Yet in all of these projects, as in the SEORMP litigation, the BLM either remains silent on the issue or takes the position that it has no duty to inventory for or consider wilderness values.

The BLM argues that once it completed its initial wilderness inventory and review under FLPMA § 603, it had no further obligation to inventory for wilderness values, or authority to establish WSAs, on the public lands. (Section § 603 required the BLM to conduct an initial inventory of public lands eligible for protection under the Wilderness Act, within fifteen years of FLPMA's enactment in 1976. In Oregon, the BLM issued a "Wilderness Study Report" with wilderness recommendations to Congress in 1991.) But FLPMA is very clear that the BLM is under a continuing duty to manage the public lands for multiple use and to prevent unnecessary or undue degrada-

tion to the public lands and their resources. Congress further directed that the "inventory shall be kept current so as to reflect changes in condition and to identify new and emerging resource and other values."

The Vale District BLM has particularly equivocated on the issue. In 2001, ONDA wrote to the Jordan Resource Area Field Manager, asking why the BLM would not conduct any wilderness inventory as part of the SEORMP planning process and requesting that the BLM, if it would not do so as part of the SEORMP, undertake a wilderness resource inventory as part of the Louse Canyon GMA process. The BLM responded that "[a] re-inventory of wilderness values is well beyond the scope of the GMA assessment and evaluation process." If a wilderness inventory is "well beyond the scope of" the GMA process, then the only remaining broad-scale land use planning process remaining under which the BLM might fulfill its wilderness inventory duties, is the RMP process. Nevertheless, the BLM argued that it need not "reopen[] the wilderness issue in the SEORMP" because "the legal standards haven't changed; and there is no new, compelling information, which suggests our original inventory, interpretations or recommendations are inappropriate." The BLM argues that it has "no reasonable foundation to re-inventory or re-address the issue of Wilderness in the SEORMP."

However, ONDA's wilderness inventory reports demonstrate in great detail how wrong the BLM is in its assertions. ONDA conducted its inventories in accordance with the BLM's own "Wilderness Inventory and Study Procedures" handbook. The ONDA reports include maps, annotated road and photo logs with GPS locations cued to the maps, and narratives analyzing each inventory unit under the BLM's definition of wilderness characteristics and documenting how that information is new and/or differs from the information in prior inventories conducted by the BLM regarding wilderness values for the area.

Because the BLM failed to undertake or perform these duties during any of its RMP processes in eastern Oregon, it must now insure that it fulfills these obligations during subsequent site-specific projects where wilderness resources may be impacted. ONDA argues that both NEPA and FLPMA impose on the agency affirmative duties to carefully present, incorporate and consider this new information. It is ONDA's position that FLPMA's language imposing a duty to collect inventory information "on a continuing basis" means the BLM must consider potential impacts on wilderness at all levels of land use planning. At a minimum, however, the BLM must either consider this public resource at the broad-scale RMP level or during each and every site-specific project.

ONDA Files FOIA Lawsuit

In February 2005, ONDA filed suit against National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Fisheries over Department of Commerce FOIA regulations that have resulted in significant delays in processing ONDA requests for information under the Freedom of Information Act. One such request for ESA consultation-related documents on the effects of grazing on steelhead took NOAA Fisheries over 10 months to complete, even though the statute requires a response within 20 working days. One regulation at issue allows NOAA Fisheries to refer records to other agencies that have a "primary interest" in the records, thus causing significant delays in FOIA processing. When the agency does finally respond to ONDA's request, another regulation allows the agency to only provide responsive documents up to the time of the original request, even if close to a year has gone by since the request was filed. This is particularly harmful to ONDA's interests because the grazing decisions ONDA is tracking occur on an annual basis: by the time ONDA receives the requested information, it is nearly obsolete. These regulations directly conflict with FOIA itself and controlling Supreme Court precedent.



WELCOME



Kelly O'Brien

Welcome Kelly, ONDA's Development Director

Excited to join ONDA in Bend, Kelly O'Brien joined ONDA in February as the Development Director.

Kelly grew up exploring the mountains and rivers in northwestern Montana, where she discovered her passion for resource conservation. She spent many summers working on the Flathead River near Glacier Park and went on to get an undergraduate degree in Business Administration.

Kelly recently graduated from Lewis & Clark School of Law, where she earned her J.D. with a certificate in Environmental Law. During law school Kelly worked as a legal intern for ONDA where she developed her dedication to protecting Oregon's native deserts. Kelly was also an active volunteer for various environmental non-profit organizations including: the Northwest Environmental Defense Center, where she worked as a land and wildlife project coordinator for eastside issues, focusing on grazing, timber sales, and endangered species act issues; and the Pacific Environmental Advocacy Center where she worked on lawsuit involving a post-fire salvage logging project in Eastern Oregon. Kelly also spent a summer working for the Water Resources Department of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation defending the tribes water and fisheries rights.

Kelly enjoys riding her bike, skiing, backpacking, running, surfing, fishing, and walking her dog. She is delighted about her move to Central Oregon where she can spend more time exploring Oregon's deserts and rivers.



Tracy Bowerman

Welcome Tracy, ONDA's Wild Salmon Coordinator

Tracy Bowerman joined ONDA in January, 2005 as the Wild Salmon Coordinator. She will be working to protect salmon and steelhead habitat along the John Day River by encouraging the removal of cattle grazing in the riparian area.

Tracy was born in Bend and grew up exploring the forests and desert areas of Central Oregon. She graduated from the University of Montana with a Bachelor's degree in Biology and a minor in Wilderness Studies. While in college, she took a year's worth of field courses, exploring wilderness areas around the Western U.S. and Canada.

In the following years, Tracy explored her various loves of wilderness, biology, outdoor education, and whitewater kayaking. These interests took her around the world, from teaching outdoor education in the Northern Rockies and for Prescott College in Arizona, to biology field work in Peru and Hawaii, to guiding whitewater kayaking trips in Mexico and New Zealand. She returned to Bend in 2004, with the desire to help protect Oregon's natural areas.



Erin Barnholdt

Welcome Erin, ONDA's New Outreach Coordinator

Erin Barnholdt joined ONDA in January of 2005 as the Outreach Coordinator. She is working to engage ONDA's members and the public in restoration and protection of Oregon's High Desert through the coordination of various work parties in eastern Oregon's Wilderness and Wilderness Study Areas, through Desert Ramblings (ONDA's newsletter) and through SageNet (ONDA's email action alert).

Erin graduated from St. Olaf College with a double major in Environmental Studies and Art and has since done a variety of conservation field work, from building trails with the National Park Service and chasing wildland fires to working with the Nature Conservancy and Metro Regional Government on riparian restoration projects. She was most recently working for Trout Unlimited on roadless area protection and wilderness proposals in the Pacific Northwest. Always hungry for more time in the field, Erin is thrilled to be leading ONDA's work parties and to be living in Bend with the mountains just outside her back door.

Welcome Jana Rygas, New Board Member

Jana Rygas, a veterinarian from Eugene, joined the board in January. She brings with her many talents including campaign organizing, strategic planning and a great sense of humor. Last, but not least, Jana loves the desert. We look forward to working with her.

She brings with her many talents including campaign organizing, strategic planning and a great sense of humor. Last, but not least, Jana loves the desert. We look forward to working with her.

Welcome aboard Jana!



MARKETPLACE



Clothing

ONDA T-shirts. White, sage and neutral.
with logo. Specific size (M, L, XL).

short sleeve \$12

long sleeve \$15

Item Description	Size	Quantity	Price	Total
Add 10% shipping				
Total				

Yes! I Support the Oregon Natural Desert Association

Contribution:

☐ \$250

☐ \$100

☐ \$60

☐ \$35

☐ \$ _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

My gift is:

☐ Special contribution

☐ New membership

☐ Membership renewal

Monthly Giving Option

Automatic bank deductions are an easy and helpful way to give. Deductions from your account may be stopped at any time by simply contacting ONDA.

Please enclose a voided check, deposit slip, or credit card number. Monthly deduction amount: _____

Business Membership

For only \$100 in annual dues your business can help ONDA to protect special places in Oregon's high deserts. With your membership, we will list your business' name on our website, along with a link to your business, an annual listing in our newsletter, special invitations to ONDA-sponsored events and all of the other many benefits of ONDA membership. Join as an ONDA business member today.

☐ \$100 (Business member).

Charge my credit card

☐ VISA

☐ MasterCard

Card number: _____ Expires: _____

Add my name to the SageNet (ONDA's Action Alert listserve)

Email address _____

Mail this form with check (or voided check, deposit slip, or credit card number for automatic withdrawals) to:
ONDA, 16 NW Kansas, Bend, OR 97701

Do You Have Earth Share Of Oregon At Your Workplace?

Oregonians care. They care about deserts, forests, and fish, about clean water and air, about taking care of their communities. Every year, more and more working people in Oregon have chosen to show their commitment by donating to Earth Share of Oregon's sixty-six local and national member groups through the fall giving campaign. Earth Share's campaign enables ONDA to reach out to many new audiences and potential supporters across the state. If you'd like your workplace to be a part of this growing trend, we invite you to learn more.

Earth Share works with employers to set up a payroll deduction program through which employees can donate either to Earth Share of Oregon (ESOR) as whole or to designate their gift for one or more ESOR members. It's simple, convenient, and makes a big difference. In campaigns in over seventy-five businesses and public agencies, ESOR annually generates well over \$600,000 to support environmental organizations that work to protect human health, preserve wildlife habitat, and reduce the causes and effects of global warming.

ESOR campaigns have many benefits both for the employer and the employee. Companies can demonstrate their commitment to the community by offering a broader set of charitable choices. Employees have the benefit of supporting work they care about with the convenience of payroll deduction. To find out more about adding ESOR to your company's giving campaign contact Ron Shoals at ESOR: (503) 223-9015 or rrs@earthshare-oregon.org; or visit www.earthshare-oregon.org. It's a great way to leverage your own commitment to the earth!



a member of Earth Share



Oregon Natural Desert Association
16 NW Kansas Street
Bend, Oregon 97701

Leave a Legacy! Remember ONDA in Your Will

Leaving a gift to ONDA in your will, or a charitable bequest is a meaningful way to pass on your compassion for Oregon's high desert. Additionally, such gifts are not subject to federal or estate taxes and there is no limit on the size of your deduction.

A charitable bequest specifies a sum of money or percentage of the estate, or a particular asset, to be given to a charitable organization, such as ONDA in your will. Gifts can be made outright at the time of your death or after you make provisions for your spouse or other loved ones.

There are several different types of charitable bequests, which we would be happy to discuss with you. For more information about bequests to ONDA, write, call or e-mail Kelly O'Brien: 541.330.2638 or kobrien@onda.org.

Wheels for Wilderness

Get rid of your old "wheels" and help ONDA's efforts to secure more wilderness in Oregon's high deserts!

Please consider donating your vehicle(s) to ONDA to be assessed at market value. The car will be sold at auction, and ONDA will receive the proceeds from the sale. You, in turn, will receive a beneficial tax deduction. The better the condition of the car means a higher donation to support ONDA's efforts.

If you have any questions about the "Wheels for Wilderness" program or would like to donate your vehicle, please contact Kelly O'Brien at 541.330.2638 or kobrien@onda.org.

Nonprofit org

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