

DESERT RAMBLINGS

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE OREGON NATURAL DESERT ASSOCIATION

SUMMER 2007 EDITION VOLUME 20, NO. 2



OREGON NATURAL DESERT ASSOCIATION

Passion, perseverance and volunteer efforts
underpin ONDA's successes. **PAGE 3**

How ONDA has used litigation to secure wilderness and
restore desert ecosystems. **PAGE 4**

ONDA milestones. **PAGES 3-7**

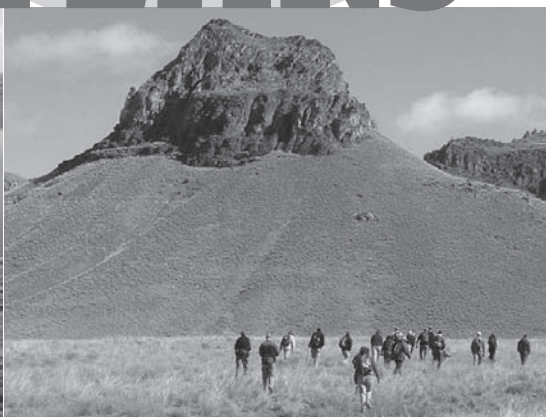
The "Ballad of ONDA," by Alice Elshoff. **PAGE 6**

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ONDA's lifetime members. **PAGE 11**

ONDA YEARS

Photos, clockwise from top left: Steens Mountain sunrise by Bruce Jackson; Steens Mountain fence-pull volunteers by Tara Gunter; Badlands WSA by Greg Burke; hiking in Spring Basin WSA by Erin Barnholdt; Abert Rim by Jim Davis; Alice Elshoff hiking by Alan D. St John.



ONDA Turning 20 – a Lot to Celebrate!

Durlin E Hickok, President



ONDA's incredible history of accomplishments is well-outlined throughout this newsletter. As you read in Bill Marlett's article, he will be resigning at the end of this year as ONDA's founding executive

director. As part of the transition to a new executive director, we are excited to inform you of our successful search for Bill's replacement. After a month-long process, having received applications from across the country and interviewing numerous candidates, the ONDA Board of Directors unanimously chose to extend the position to Brent Fenty, who has formally accepted and will begin work with ONDA on November 1st.

Brent is no stranger to the Oregon High Desert, nor to many of you. Although raised in Central Oregon, Brent's activities have taken him across the country and even to Africa for a commitment with

the Peace Corps. Most recently, Brent has spent the last two years in Alaska coordinating numerous environmental activities. Brent's educational background is in environmental science, having attained both bachelor and master degrees. His knowledge of Oregon's high desert ecosystems is impressive and includes three years of prior work with ONDA as a Wildlands Coordinator and other conservation experience in volunteer, staff and director roles.

Although it is difficult to imagine ONDA without Bill Marlett at the helm, we are confident that Brent will be able to fill the role with the same vision, determination and passion that Bill has provided during his highly accomplished tenure. We have the good fortune that Bill has agreed to stay on at ONDA as a consultant. In addition to providing expertise in conservation-related matters, Bill will ensure a smooth transition for the new executive director.

It's been a great first 20 years for ONDA. With your continued support, the next 20 years will be even more successful.



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DESERT RAMBLINGS

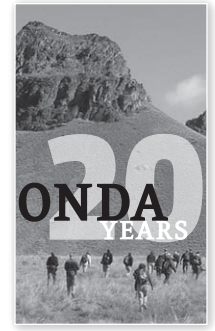
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From the Outback ... Here's to 20 More Years



By Bill Marlett, ONDA Executive Director

Hard to believe ONDA will be 20 years old this fall.

Reflecting back, ONDA has grown from a tenacious nest of desert rats into a formidable organization, both abhorred and admired in various quarters. Valuable attributes in a group dedicated to fostering ecological change in entrenched minds.

Our recipe for success over the years is due to a unique blend of passion and perseverance. We have been fortunate to have both. Coupled with active members and volunteers, stalwart financial supporters and broad leadership from board and staff, we have been the quintessential grassroots conservation group.

To all the dedicated members and supporters of ONDA, thank you for your past support. You have given ONDA a voice for the wilderness and Oregon's high desert heritage.

To cap off the past 20 years, and to mark the beginning of the next 20 years, I will be stepping down as executive director at the end of this year. Looking forward, the ONDA board has hired former ONDA staffer Brent Fenty as ONDA's new executive director.

Brent was ONDA's wildlands coordinator for three years (following designation of the Steens Mountain Wilderness). Not only do we have a great rapport, I have total confidence that, with Brent's familiarity with ONDA's culture, vision and mission and his first-hand experience and passion for Oregon's High Desert, we will maintain our string of successes well into the future.

To help ONDA launch the next 20 years, I am asking you to remain steadfast with ONDA. The ONDA board and staff are capable and committed, and we have much more to accomplish over the next 20 years. A bold vision requires patience, and our job has only begun.

My transition should come as no surprise. As executive director for the last 14 years (I was the first paid staff at ONDA), and six years prior as board member, I'm statistically past due. Too, I need more time on the land. As Aldo Leopold said, "There are some who can live without wild things, and some who cannot." I cannot.

Though you will find more of me in the wild places we all cherish,

I will remain under contract in 2008, focused on strategic conservation efforts and helping with the transition.

I am personally committed to ONDA's mission, but timing is everything. ONDA is financially healthy and is at a critical point to expand its capacity to further our mission.

We have made great strides in creating a lasting legacy of wilderness for future generations. The Owyhee Wild and Scenic River and Hart Mountain Antelope Refuge are now cow-free, and we created the nation's first cow-free wilderness on Steens Mountain. Looking ahead, we're poised to secure both the Spring Basin and Badlands Wilderness.

Our vision remains solid: 8 million acres of Wilderness in Oregon's High Desert, sage grouse flourishing across the landscape, steelhead teeming in the John Day River and a profound respect for the land.

A little history on ONDA

In October of 1987, a handful of desert activists gathered in the tiny Bend office of the Measure 7 campaign headquarters (a.k.a. the Oregon Rivers Initiative) to address the growing need for a citizen watchdog group focused on protecting 13 million acres of Oregon's High Desert under BLM management.

Up to that point, no group focused solely on this vast expanse of Oregon's High Desert (save for the Oregon Cattlemen's Association). The visible conservation presence in the High Desert was ONRC's (now Oregon Wild) field representative, Don Tryon, based in Bend. The need for increased oversight of the BLM and the land under its care was undeniable.

Similar to other grassroots groups in the West, the genesis of ONDA was further stimulated by BLM's mandate from Congress in 1976 to inventory public lands for wilderness potential. BLM's public process was in full swing in the 1980s and gave rise to citizens mobilizing under the common banner of Wilderness.

Today, ONDA enjoys many loyal fans. That ONDA today is shunned in some quarters simply reflects we have stepped on the toes of people

see **OUTBACK** page 10

TIMELINE: OREGON NATURAL DESERT ASSOCIATION

1987

- ONDA founded.

1988

- Inauguration of the Sage Proposal, conservationists' first citizen-based, desert wilderness proposal, predecessor to ONDA's current wilderness vision: the proposed Oregon High Desert Protection Act.

1989

- ONDA incorporates as a tax-exempt nonprofit organization.

1990

- ONDA and other interested environmental and conservation groups begin meeting to forge desert wilderness legislation.
- ONDA receives first grant supporting "Adopt-a-Wilderness" program.

1991

- ONDA moves into new office at Central Oregon Environmental Center.
- ONDA, others secure grazing suspension on Hart Mountain National Antelope Refuge.

1992

- ONDA and partners introduce proposed Oregon High Desert Protection Act at annual Desert Conference.
- ONDA wins appeal, blocking BLM's plan to pave Steens Mt. Loop Road.

1987-2007



continued on page 4

Litigation Retrospective

If I have seen further it is by standing on ye shoulders of Giants.

– Sir Isaac Newton, Feb. 15, 1676

By Mac Lacy, Senior Staff Attorney

Since its earliest years, ONDA has used litigation as a key means of achieving its goals of designating desert wilderness and restoring native desert ecosystems and clean water. Early on, we were able to pursue litigation when public interest-minded private attorneys were kind enough to represent us pro bono in a case here or there. In 2001, ONDA hired its first full-time staff attorney, and in 2005 we added a second. Today, ONDA continues to use strategic litigation in complex environmental and natural resource cases to help accomplish its mission. The pursuit of desert wilderness is ever-evolving, ever-progressing – and we are acutely aware that the victories we achieve today and in the future are soundly founded upon ONDA's history of successful, cutting-edge legal actions. What follows is a retrospective of some of our most important victories over the years.

Hart Mountain: 15 Years Cow-Free and Going Strong

Hart Mountain is located in the northwest corner of the Great Basin, in the midst of a vast sea of sage-steppe habitat. It is home to pronghorn, California bighorn sheep, mule deer, and sage grouse. President Franklin Roosevelt established the Hart Mountain National Antelope Refuge in 1936 as a range and breeding ground for pronghorn and other wildlife.

In 1991, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (FWS) adopted a management plan for the Refuge that failed to disclose and examine the effects of grazing. ONDA filed suit against FWS, claiming the agency had violated NEPA as well as the National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act, the Migratory Bird Conservation Act, the Wilderness Act, and FWS guidelines by failing to prepare compatibility determinations for grazing on the Refuge and by allowing grazing that was incompatible with the Refuge's purposes.

ONDA then entered into a settlement agreement with FWS under which the agency agreed to prepare the environmental review. In 1994, ONDA's efforts paid off when the Service decided to eliminate

grazing from the Refuge. Ever since that time, ONDA has organized volunteers each year to remove miles and miles of now obsolete barbed-wire fencing from the Refuge. The land quickly responded with quaking aspen, tall grasses and increasing pronghorn populations. When the Refuge's management plan comes up for its 15-year review in 2009, we are confident that this cattle-free paradise will remain so following the dramatic recovery of the Refuge's wildlife populations and habitat.

Donner und Blitzen River: Laying the Groundwork for Nation's First Cow-Free Wilderness on Steens Mountain

In German, this important redband trout stream flowing off Steens Mountain and winding its way north to the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge is the "thunder and lightning" river. Army troops gave it this name when they encountered a mighty lightning storm while crossing the river in 1864.

In 1995, ONDA sued the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) over the agency's comprehensive management plan for the River. ONDA argued the plan violated the requirement in the 1968 National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act that BLM "protect and enhance" the river's designated "outstandingly remarkable values" (ORV), because BLM failed to consider excluding cattle from the river corridor.

The Court rejected BLM's contention that the plan struck an "appropriate balance" between continued grazing and protecting and enhancing ORV. In particular, the Court cited BLM's decision to ignore a scientific report by The Nature Conservancy concluding that grazing was having broad scale negative effects upon riparian and upland vegetation throughout the river corridor. Importantly, the Court concluded that despite the fact that grazing had been permitted on the river before it was designated as a wild river system, BLM nevertheless has authority under the WSRA to exclude cattle from the river area if necessary to protect and enhance the river's values. Based on its finding that BLM violated the WSRA's protect and enhance duty, the Court enjoined further grazing authorizations within the corridor until BLM complied with its legal obligations under the WSRA and NEPA.

TIMELINE: OREGON NATURAL DESERT ASSOCIATION

1993

- ONDA hires Bill Marlett as first executive director and first paid staff.
- ONDA stages first Hart Mountain Barbed Wire Round-up outing.

1994

- ONDA files Clean Water Act lawsuit against Forest Service to reduce livestock pollution into the John Day River.

1996

- Clean Stream Initiative (Measure 38) campaign launched.
- ONDA wins Clean Water Act suit against USFS to protect John Day River from grazing pollution.

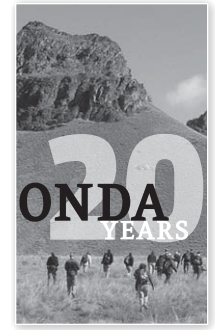
1997

- ONDA wins Donner und Blitzen Wild & Scenic River Act lawsuit; cows removed from the river corridor.

1998

- In response to ONDA petition, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service finds that listing Great Basin redband trout under the Endangered Species Act "may be warranted."
- ONDA wins suit to prevent coyote hunting on Hart Mountain National Antelope Refuge.
- ONDA wins Owyhee Wild & Scenic River Act lawsuit; cows removed from the river corridor.

1987–2007



The Blitzen's 72 wild and scenic miles remain cow-free to this day. This proved to be the first in a series of successful **WSRA** cases for **ONDA**. Moreover, the Blitzen victory laid the political groundwork for **ONDA**'s most notable accomplishment to date, the Steens Mountain Protection Act. In passing the Act, Congress created the first cow-free Wilderness in the U.S.

Owyhee River Canyonlands: Continuing Protection of Wild and Scenic Rivers

ONDA next turned its attention to the Wild Owyhee Rivers in the magnificent Owyhee Canyonlands. Often considered the most remote area in the entire Lower 48, the Owyhees are a stunning labyrinth of narrow canyons, hidden hot springs, and places where it's not hard to imagine that you're the first human to ever visit them.

In 1998, **ONDA** sued **BLM**, charging that the rivers' management plan failed to "protect and enhance" the river's designated values. The rivers had been overgrazed for decades, particularly in the fragile ribbon of riparian habitat that lined the 120 miles of designated river corridors. Agreeing with **ONDA** that **BLM** improperly failed to consider removing grazing from the river, the Court stated:

Regardless of whether cattle grazing was a permitted use when the rivers were first designated, if grazing proves to be detrimental to soil, vegetation, wildlife, or other values, or is inconsistent with the "wild" designation, then clearly the **BLM** has the right – indeed, the duty – not only to restrict it, but to eliminate it entirely.

The Court also interpreted the **WSRA** to mean that **ORV** are to be protected and enhanced, and that only uses which are consistent with such protection and enhancement and do not substantially interfere with public use and enjoyment of the river **ORV**, should not be limited. Combining this with **BLM**'s failure to prepare an **EIS** and its failure to consider eliminating grazing, the Court permanently enjoined grazing along the Owyhee Rivers. The injunction remains in effect today.

Protecting Desert Wilderness on Beatys Butte

In 2001, the Clinton Administration issued a Wilderness Inven-

tory and Study Procedures handbook outlining the procedures and criteria that **BLM** and citizens should use to inventory for wilderness values on public lands. The following year, **ONDA** launched its Wilderness Research & Rescue program, dedicated to systematically inventorying and documenting wilderness characteristics on the **BLM**-managed public lands in eastern Oregon. Our aim was to document where **BLM**'s now decades-old information is no longer accurate and to convince the agency to take a new look at areas outside of existing Wilderness Study Areas that possess outstanding wilderness characteristics worthy of consideration and potential conservation.

Beginning with our **SEORMP** lawsuit, filed in 2003, we have been pressing the issue in court. The basic argument is that **BLM** violates **NEPA** and **FLPMA** each time it adopts a land use plan or other project without considering impacts to wilderness values outside of existing Wilderness Study Areas. In 2006, **ONDA** finally achieved a stunning court victory in our challenge of the East-West Gulch Projects on Beatys Butte. **BLM** proposed to build more than 20 miles of pipelines and new barbed-wire fences, a multitude of new water developments, and 2 miles of new road – all within an area near the summit of Beatys Butte that **ONDA** had inventoried and documented to possess outstanding wilderness values. The agency refused to consider our report during the **NEPA** process, instead relying on its 25-year old data to claim "no wilderness values exist" there.

In a precedent-setting ruling, the court held that **BLM** violated its obligation to take a "hard look" at impacts to wilderness like any other resource on the public lands. It also enjoined the agency from further implementing the project, as well as from using any of the already-built projects. (**ONDA** had stopped the remainder from moving forward by filing a preliminary injunction motion early in the litigation.) In 2007, we achieved a second injunction prohibiting **BLM** from building the latest incarnation of these projects. (See Legal Docket, Page 13).

There remains a long battle ahead in convincing **BLM** to recognize (and manage for) outstanding wilderness values on vast millions of acres in eastern Oregon. This case, though, sets us off in the right direction.

1999

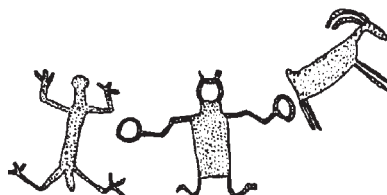
- **ONDA** along with 30 conservation groups petition President Clinton to expand the Hart Mountain National Antelope Refuge,
- **ONDA** wins suit against **BLM** regarding the Millican Valley Off-Road Vehicles Recreation Area which impacts adjacent wildlands.
- The first Gray Wolf in 36 years enters Oregon.

2000

- Congress passes Steens Mountain Cooperative Management & Protection Act, creating the nation's first cow-free wilderness area, a redband trout preserve, 29 miles of Wild and Scenic Rivers, and 1.2 million-acre mineral withdrawal.
- **ONDA** and colleagues launch the National Public Lands Grazing Campaign, publishes "Welfare Ranching" to help educate public.

2002

- **ONDA** launches "Wilderness Research and Rescue" inventory program to find and document unprotected desert land possessing wilderness character in Oregon.
- **ONDA**'s administrative petition to Oregon Dep't of Fish & Wildlife forces **ODFW** to undertake planning process and adopt a management plan for endangered wolves.
- **ONDA** settles lawsuit with **BLM** blocking much of a 35,000-acre non-native seeding project in public lands burned by wildfire near Jackies Butte.



continued on page 6

ONDA Rode in on a Cold Dark Night

By Craig Miller

When several desert enthusiasts met for the first time in 1987 to organize a local group in Bend, we had big ideas. So what if we were up against some political obstacles, including our President (Reagan), our Congressman (Denny Smith), and the Oregon Cattlemen's Association? Who cared if we didn't have money or experience? What was it to us that most people didn't even know Oregon had a desert, and those who did considered it a wasteland?

We were a hodgepodge collection of folks, including students, teachers, housewives, doctors, naturalists, and retirees, but we had a common vision – protecting the desert. One or two had experience with forming a nonprofit organization. Others knew something about budgets, communication, or leadership. What we lacked in resources, we made up for in knowledge, passion, and sheer chutzpah.

What brought us together was a common love of the wild desert. What drove us to action was the conviction that BLM had short-changed wilderness land determinations. We introduced the "Sage Proposal" recommending 5 million acres for Wilderness designation in Oregon, more than double what BLM admitted had wilderness character, and four times as much as BLM recommended.

It took a while for ONDA to make much of an impression in Oregon. It soon became apparent that we couldn't get far without paid staff. The board took the plunge and hired Bill Marlett as executive director, and since then we never looked back. Our membership has grown to more than 1000 strong, our staff increased to nine, including two full-time attorneys. ONDA is now known and respected (in some cases feared and hated) throughout the state of Oregon.

In the early years, when we had more bark than bite, the Ballad of ONDA was born. When I first heard the ballad, I was amused. It gave me a quixotic sense of riding out to fight the windmills. Its message, humorous and serious at the same time, settled into my subconscious. Now, years later, when victories such as Steens Wilderness designation, or a successful Wild and Scenic Rivers lawsuit is announced, the chorus races through my mind:

*Now ONDA rode in on a cold dark night
They were few but they knew that right makes might
There was work ahead, but the stakes were high
And the world was gonna hear their battle cry. ONDA!*

the

By Alice Elshoff

It was back in the winter of 88
When the BLM boys began to celebrate
They'd finished their study
They'd seen the wild land
All they could see from a government van
And they'd never heard of ONDA

They said, "Throw the nature lovers a bone"
Give 'em a million acres they can call their own
They can hug those bunnies and climb those rocks
And prim-i-tive-ly rec-re-ate with burrs in their socks
And they hadn't figured on ONDA

CHORUS:

*Now ONDA rode in on a cold dark night
They were few but they knew that right makes might
There was work ahead, but the stakes were high
And the world was gonna hear their battle cry. ONDA!*

So they read all the volumes, studied all the maps
Decided they weren't buying into that game of craps
Said there's land out there that's wild and alive
"A million acres won't do it, we're goin' for five"
And the world's gonna hear from ONDA

And they hiked and mapped all over those lands
From the Owyhee canyons to the shifting sands
They did their homework and they spread the word
Til on everyone's lips was the whispered word, ONDA
Oh, they traveled the land through the sun or the mud
They wrote their letters and they signed in blood
There was thankless work and more to come
And they sat in meetings til their buns went numb
But their hearts belonged to ONDA

TIMELINE: OREGON NATURAL DESERT ASSOCIATION

2003

- ONDA files lawsuits to protect steelhead and bull trout habitat in John Day River basin and along Malheur and North Fork Malheur wild and scenic rivers.
- National Public Lands Grazing Campaign works to introduce legislation, the Voluntary Grazing Permit Buyout Act (HR 3324), to enact a voluntary federal grazing permit buyout program to compensate public lands ranchers on 257 million acres of federal public lands in the West.

2004

- ONDA lawsuit challenging Vale BLM's slow processing of rangeland health assessments kicks starts agency progress.

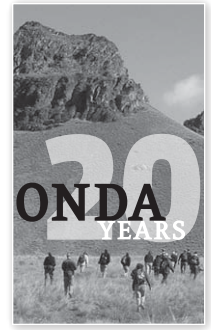
2005

- ONDA assists in creation of Upper Deschutes Resource Management Plan, which allows retirement of grazing permits and closes all roads in the Badlands WSA; rancher holding two-thirds of Badlands grazing permits retires permit under new UDRMP.
- Instream rights protected for Home and Threemile Creeks in Steens Mountain Wilderness.

1987–2007

Beatys

of ONDA



Then they looked at their work and they called it good
Could the deserts be saved, you bet they could
For they made a plan and they called it SAGE
And the wild desert concept was coming of age
And everyone knew it was ONDA

As they hiked and mapped, they looked around real good
Didn't take long 'til they understood
There were problems out there, the fish all in trouble
The whole High Desert reduced to a stubble

Not a wolffy grass in sight, the streams all dead
Wasn't nothing growin' in the watershed
Cows in the basins, cows in the streams
There were cows in the uplands, even shittin' in the Steens
Looked like a job for ONDA

Newmont Mining came along, looking problematical
Wanted to take the gold and leave us with the chemicals
"Get it straight" said ONDA, "like when you quit"
If you take away the gold you gotta take away the pit

There were ORV-ers everywhere you turned
Didn't intend to leave the soil unchurned
"It's our historic right," they said through their sneers
"Cause we've been doing it for 13 years."
Oh, the desert cried out for ONDA

When the fish needed streams on which they could depend
We set out to help our desert finny friends
Launched the Clean Streams Initiative, Measure 38
The biggest damn news in the whole damn state
And everyone knew about ONDA

Next the crazed Republicans, like a plague they came
Saving wildlife and deserts wasn't their game
They just took over, their eyes all aburn
And the Wild Desert Act had to wait its turn

But ONDA won't be stopped, we're in it to the end
We've got a great campaign to save our desert friends
And we're working all together with other desert rats
And you will definitely be seeing a Big Protection Act
Oh they haven't heard the last from ONDA

2006

- ONDA wins groundbreaking suit halting range project on Beatys Butte because of BLM's failure to consider impacts on wilderness-quality lands inventoried by ONDA.
- ONDA wins suit against Forest Service before Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, restoring the public's ability to challenge the annual decisions by which the Forest Service authorizes grazing practices.
- ONDA wins Freedom of Information Act suit against National Marine Fisheries Service; decision preserves right to obtain information from agencies.

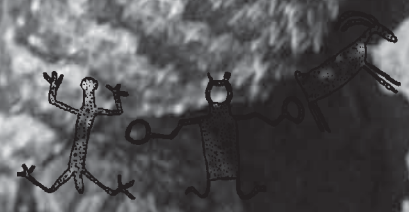
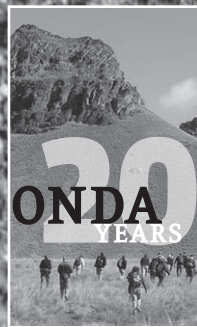
2007

- ONDA injunction motions halt BLM's construction of broad-scale range projects in areas with wilderness values in West Little Owyhee River's Louse Canyon area.
- ONDA wins suit against National Marine Fisheries Service and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service; court rules agencies' approval of grazing practices in steelhead and bull trout habitat in the John Day River basin violates Endangered Species Act.
- Court rules in ONDA's favor that BLM violated Steens Act requirement to prepare a comprehensive transportation plan, considering non-motorized as well as motorized travel, for Steens Mountain's Cooperative Management and Protection Area.

- ONDA wins a second injunction barring East-West Gulch Projects in areas with ONDA-inventoried wilderness values on Beatys Butte; also wins a separate injunction barring a similar project on Juniper Mountain.







...from the Photo Album

From the Outback, Continued

from page 3

ple who profit from the status quo. Change is difficult for anyone, and is naturally resisted where there are economic consequences. But change we must, or suffer the consequences: lost wildness, polluted streams, no wolves.

Many a rancher benefits from the privilege of grazing their livestock on public lands, and ONDA has tried its best to watchdog sweetheart deals, sealed with a wink and nod, between ranchers and the BLM. We might have expected this behavior 100 years ago, but no more. ONDA has confronted head-on the antiquated relationship between livestock ranchers and our public lands, and promoted instead a legacy of wilderness and wildlife.

To underscore how slowly change comes, one need only listen to the rant from the Oregon Cattlemen's Association today on whether we should allow wolves back in Oregon. In 1944, Aldo Leopold noted: *"The University of New Mexico has done well to preserve this saga of how the state was made safe for cows. How the state is to be made safe from cows is a saga yet to be written."*

Sixty plus years later, the saga continues, and ONDA has been part of a growing chorus confronting the cowboy myth through education and political action.

Collectively, the ranching community and BLM are better off because of ONDA's watchdog role, and we have tried to be there to work with the BLM given the opportunity. I am proud of the many professional relationships, if not friendships, we have with BLM employees.

In fact, many progressive BLM staff and ranchers share ONDA's passion for Wilderness. We have signed cooperative management agreements with the BLM to help pay for monitoring in Bully Creek watershed near Vale, manage juniper in the Steens Mountain Wilderness and perform restoration work in the proposed Badlands Wilderness east of Bend. That said, we don't exist to do BLM's job, but to hold our government stewards accountable.

Over the last 20 years, our greatest accomplishment has been to foster public awareness of the ecological importance of Oregon's High Desert. Both the threats it faces from livestock grazing (there

are other threats, but nothing comes close to the futility of growing cows in a desert), and the opportunities to permanently protect it by way of Wilderness. As Aldo Leopold also observed, *"Recreational development is a job not of building roads into the lovely country, but of building receptivity into the still unlovely human mind."*

Without awareness of place, and a sense of duty to pass on legacy landscapes, our mission to protect and restore forever Oregon's High Desert is impossible. People give ONDA a voice; we can only hope others have a desire, if not need, to listen.

Where will we be at the end of the next 20 years?

Predictions are easy, but the landscape is morphing before our eyes. Global climate change coupled with the ecological aftermath of 140 years (in Eastern Oregon) of livestock grazing is a recipe for the "perfect desert storm." We are on a precipice of fundamental change to the vegetation across the landscape, where invasive species loom larger on the horizon every day. There are no techno fixes, no easy solutions, no recipes for success.

The politics of Eastern Oregon are likewise changing, as Bend becomes the political center of Oregon's 2nd Congressional District. That Oregon's expansive High Desert doesn't have a strong conservation leader in Congress is a reflection of its past, not its future.

People lead, politicians follow, and the demographic trends of Eastern Oregon suggest conservation of our High Desert landscape will become more important to people migrating to Eastern Oregon for quality of life factors that include natural amenities like Wilderness and cool, clear streams.

At the same time, the vast majority of people who currently reside in Bend have only been here for 5 years or less. This underscores the difficulty of reaching, much less informing a public with shallow roots in the community.

Both in ecology and politics, one thing is guaranteed: change is inevitable. We can adapt and anticipate the future of Oregon's High Desert in 20 years, but we can't alter the outcome. We can, however, instill in future generations a passion for the land, and an unwavering desire to protect it, forever.

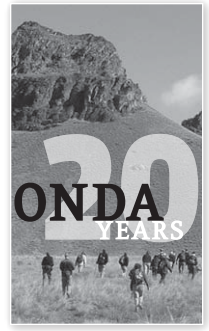
20 Years of Foundation Support for ONDA

ONDA recognizes that foundations have many worthy causes to support, for which we are sincerely thankful for the many foundations listed below that have generously supported our mission over the last 20 years.

American Wilderness Coalition; The Brainerd Foundation; Bullitt Foundation; The Burning Foundation; Carizma Foundation; Center for Respect of Life and Environment; Charlotte Martin Foundation; The Conservation Alliance; Environmental Support Center; The Flow Fund; Foundation for Deep Ecology; Fund for Wild Nature; Further Foundation; Gund Foundation; Harder Foundation; Hugh & Jane Ferguson Foundation; The Jubitz Family Foundation; Kirby Foundation; Kongsgaard-Goldman Foundation; Laird Norton Foundation; Lazar Foundation; Max and Anna Levinson Foundation; Mazamas Conservation Committee; McKenzie River Gathering Foundation;

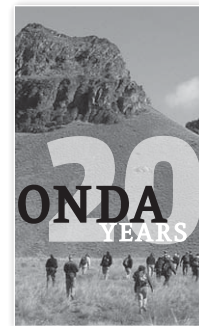
Meyer Memorial Trust; Mountaineers Foundation; Musicians United to Sustain the Environment; National Rivers Coalition; Norcross Wildlife Foundation; Northwest Fund for the Environment; Oregon Community Foundation; Oregon Jewish Community Foundation; Patagonia, Inc.; Peradam Foundation; Phielo Foundation; Pronghorn Community Foundation; Ralph L. Smith Foundation; Recreational Equipment, Inc.; The Rockwood Fund; Rouge Wave Foundation; Sperling Foundation; The Strong Foundation; Temper of the Times Foundation; True North Foundation; Turner Foundation; Wilburforce Foundation; Wyss Foundation

Lifetime Members



To thank our most generous supporters, we have created a new ONDA Lifetime Membership to recognize the people who have made ONDA the amazing organization it is today. Lifetime Members have shown their commitment to the protection of Oregon's High Desert by each giving a total of over \$1,000. Their generosity has provided a lifetime of support and deserves a lifetime of recognition! Thank you to all of our Lifetime Members:

Al Urquhart	Douglas Frank	John Cunningham	Patrick Conner
Alan Locklear	Drs. Warren L. and Marka Bruhl	John J. Kaib, MD	Paul and Marcia Suter
and Marie Valleroy	Durlin Hickok and Carol Wallace	and Sharold Barr Kaib	Peter Geiser
Alice and Cal Elshoff	Edgar and Dee Anne Shanks	John Kingery	and Maureen Sweeney
Allen and Twylah Johnson	Edward Schmidt	John M Sherman	Phil and Melinda Conti
Andrea Vargo and Ed Mcnamara	Elaine Rees	John Marks	Richard and Elizabeth Marantz
Andrew B. Crosby	Elizabeth Brown	John McKay and Barbara Tyler	Richard L. Hay
Andy Kerr and Nancy Peterson	Ellen Mendoza	John Vitas and Pat Towle	Rick and Mary Donahoe
Anne and John Richen	Erik Fisher	Jon Cain	Robert and Sandra Buscher
Arthur Ticknor	Frances Stevenson	Joseph Hessler	Robert Artman
Barbara Bowerman	Frank and Joanne Cleland	and Ruthann Maguire	Robert Benedict and Laura Niles
Barbara Mendius	Frank Szczygiel	Josephine and Peter Von Hippel	Robert Dark
Betty Soreng	Fred Sawyer	Justin Liversidge	Robert Gorham
Bill and Patty Lou Wessinger	Gary and Sharon Kish	and Martha Church	Robert Jensen
Bill and Sara Tattam	George and Nadine Reynolds	K.A. and Bette Rose Hayes	Robert Sims
Bob Amundson	Glenn Van Cise and	Karen Theodore	Roger and Ann Worthington
Bob Phillips	Christine Mckenzie Van Cise	Karl and Grace Smith	Ronald Schaaaf
Carol Dodson Jacquet	Gordon and Kay Baker	Ken and Barbara Cerotsky	Sandra Deveny
Carolyn Eckel	Hank and Deborah Noble	Ken Serkownek	Scott Becker
Charlaine and Robert Beschta	Hank Holmes, MD	Kenneth and Ruth Love	Scott Bolton and Trudi Traister
Charles and Reida Kimmel	Harry F. Brevoort	Kevin Lair	Scott Murray
Christel Nordhausen	Harry H. and Eleanor Wagner	Kirk and	Sid and Louise Henderson
Conan O'Harrow	Helen Harbin	Charlotte L. Richardson	Stan and Sue Shepardson
Craig and Carol Lacy	Jack and Lynda Wheeler	Larry Erickson	Stanton Cook
Craig and Marilyn Miller	Jack and Susan Crosby	Lauren and Ron Beyerinck	Stephen Pruch
Craig Bradle	James Scott	Lee Belknap	The Sterling Family
and M.E. Deckelmann	James Shake	Lee Christie and Tom Keffer	Stu and Hilary Garrett
Dan Van Vactor	Jay and Teresa Bowerman	Lee Hickok and Sharon Loomis	Sue and Norman Noble
Daniele McKay and John Nangle	Jean Parker	Leslie Johnson	Susan and Richard Koe
Dave and Duane Funk	Jerome and Mary Fulton	Lynn and Lawrence Krupa	Susan Ash
Dave and Kendra Summers	Jim and Dory Delp	Marcia Sigler	Susanna and Donald Defazio
Dave Olson	Jim and Nadine Harrang	Mark Monroe	Teague Hatfield
Dave Werntz	Jim Davis	Mary Garrard	Tim Withee
David Johns	Jim Dixon	Mary Lou Soscia	Timothy Bartels
David Zimmerman	John and Betsy Messer	Meg Campbell	Ursula and Charles Le Guin
Del and Lu-nita Hawkins	John and Carrie Howell	Mike and Deb Daunhauer	Wayne and Cathy Salvo
Diane and Rick Rupp	John and Cyndee McDaniel	Molly Connors	William Percy
Don Johnston	John and Joan Casey	Mr. & Mrs. Jack and Lois Barry	and Amy Schoener
Don Mansfield	John and Phyllis Reynolds	Nancy Pobanz and David Wade	Win Francis
and Rochelle Johnson	John Casey	Norbert and Christine Leupold	



Thank You ONDA Board Members for 20 Years of Service

The board is the heart and soul of any nonprofit organization, and ONDA is no exception. The following 44 people have generously given on average 5 years of service to ONDA over the past twenty years. If it weren't for our all volunteer board of directors, ONDA would not exist today. Their responsibility has been twofold: to ensure that ONDA remains focused on its mission, while ensuring the financial and emotional health of the organization.

BOARD MEMBER	FROM	UNTIL	YRS	BOARD MEMBER	FROM	UNTIL	YRS
Lauren (Perkins) Beyerinck	Oct. 87	Nov. 92	5	Ron Cronin	Nov. 91	Dec. 92	1
Lynn (Huntington) Premseelaar	Oct. 87	Jan. 96	9	Barbara Butler	Nov. 91	Mar. 93	2
Alice Elshoff	Oct. 87	current	20	Elaine Rees	Nov. 92	Oct. 97	5
Matt Holmes	Oct. 87	Dec. 88	1	Stu Sugarman	Jan. 94	Dec. 05	11
Craig Miller	May 88	current	19	Kathleen Myron	Jan. 94	Sept. 98	4
Greg Johannsen	May 88	Nov. 92	4	Dave Funk	Jan. 94	current	13
Beardsly Graham	May 88	Dec. 88	1	Craig Lacy	Mar. 94	May 03	9
Bob Buscher	May 88	Nov. 91	3	Michele Penner	Jan. 94	Nov. 95	1
Al St. John	May 88	Dec. 88	1	Rudy Clemens	Dec. 94	Oct. 00	6
John Barss	May 88	Nov. 89	1	Denzel Ferguson	Oct. 96	Nov. 96	0
Bill Renwick	Jan. 89	Jul. 89	1	Lee Christie	Sept. 98	current	9
Mike Sequeira	May 89	Nov. 92	3	Phil Conti	Sept. 98	current	8
John Schubert	May 89	Dec. 90	1	Ed Backus	July 00	Oct 03	3
Ellen Bishop	Jan. 90	Dec. 91	1	Greg Holmes	July 00	Nov. 06	6
Bill Marlett	Jan. 90	Sep. 94	4	Bob Spertus	July 00	May. 03	3
Connie Lonsdale	Jan. 91	Jul. 01	10	Terry Gloeckler	Oct. 01	Oct. 03	2
Karen Theodore	Jan. 91	Nov. 91	1	Durlin Hickok	Feb. 04	current	3
Mary Garrard	Nov. 91	Jan. 94	3	John Sterling	Feb. 04	current	3
Tom Pringle	Nov. 91	Mar. 93	2	Kirk Richardson	July 04	current	3
Gary Brown	Nov. 91	Sept. 94	3	Helen Harbin	Oct. 04	current	3
Dick VanderSchaaf	Nov. 91	July 04	13	Jana Rygas	Jan. 05	current	2
Harold Winegar	Nov. 91	Dec. 92	1	Lisa Brown	Feb. 06	current	1

OREGON NATURAL DESERT ASSOCIATION

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Volunteers Sought for Fall Trips

What began as a lofty idea between friends in the 1980's has grown to be a strong and functioning organization with over 200 dedicated volunteers each year. A huge thank you goes out to everyone who has contributed their time and talents to ONDA. We wouldn't be here without you.

Join ONDA on an end of the season work party. To register, visit www.onda.org and click on Volunteer.

Sept. 10-14 Steens Mountain Wilderness fence pull: Hike 4-6 miles in to a primitive camp in the Mud and Ankle creek area of the Steens, remove obsolete barbed wire fence, and explore an area most people never see.

Sept. 22 Sutton Mtn. WSA fence pull: Not far from Bend is a little known WSA. Explore the area and remove barbed wire fence. There is an option to camp the night before and/or after on the mountain.

Nov. 17 Pine Creek Conservation Area tree planting: PCCA was given 500 trees to plant along Pine Creek, a tributary of the John Day River. We will camp or stay at a local bed and breakfast.



Tom Sedgwick on a wilderness inventory trip.

In Memory of Tom Sedgwick

Our sincerest thank you to the many people who choose to honor Tom Sedgwick's life by giving a gift in his memory to ONDA. A dedicated and valued long-time ONDA volunteer, Tom will be sorely missed. His memory will live on in the places he helped to protect and the hearts of the countless people he touched and inspired.

Court Injunctions Bar Range Projects in Areas with Wilderness Values

This summer, ONDA received two orders blocking proposed rangeland projects on lands in BLM's Lakeview District containing wilderness values. One halted BLM's latest East-West Gulch Projects on Beatys Butte, which authorized building more than 13 miles of barbed-wire fence, 3.7 miles of above-ground pipelines, two miles of road, 6 water troughs, 3 steel storage tanks, and 3 cattle guards. The other halted the Horseshoe Pasture Division Fence project, which authorized a new 5-mile fence along the ridge of Juniper Mountain (roughly 50 miles northeast of Lakeview). The injunctions, issued by Administrative Law Judge James H. Heffernan in response to appeals filed by BLM in the Department of the Interior's Office of Hearings and Appeals, will preserve the status quo until the judge hears the full cases this winter.

ONDA's appeals focused on BLM's faulty analyses of wilderness characteristics. Instead of analyzing the project areas' wilderness characteristics as a whole, BLM claimed the areas were subdivided by many roads to justify considering each subunit separately. BLM therefore concluded there were no wilderness-worthy lands present in the project areas. However, BLM provided no analysis or data of its own to overcome the scores of photos and other data in ONDA's Lakeview wilderness inventory report. Much of ONDA's report is dedicated to showing that those routes do not meet BLM's definition of "roads" – they are largely two-track, rocky, overgrown "ways" through sagebrush – and that the areas are therefore roadless. ONDA's inventories are based on BLM's definition of the term "road," as originally defined by Congress when it adopted the 1976 Federal Land Policy and Management Act. The judge agreed that "BLM has presented objective proof establishing a sufficient likelihood of error in BLM's conclusion that the area affected ... lacks wilderness character and therefore that BLM should have considered the impacts to wilderness values."

Both projects were previously halted by ONDA for BLM's failure to consider the impacts on wilderness values. The initial incarnation of the Gulches project was overturned by ONDA's successful lawsuit, *ONDA v. Rasmussen*, and the Horseshoe project had been withdrawn as a result of an ONDA lawsuit and subsequent settlement agreement.

Steens and Lakeview RMP Challenges Will Follow SEORMP to Ninth Circuit

On June 8, 2007, Judge Aiken issued a mixed ruling on ONDA's challenge of the Andrews-Steens Resource Management Plan (RMP). The court ruled in favor of ONDA on our claim that BLM failed to comply with the Steens Act's comprehensive transportation plan requirement. In response, BLM quickly rescinded its recently-issued "Travel Management Plan," which contained many of the same flaws identified by the court. However, the court upheld the RMP in all other respects. Unfortunately, the court gave BLM a great deal of deference on the issue of wilderness, concluding that BLM's internal office review of our inventory report was sufficient because "BLM has wide discretion in conducting its wilderness analysis and need

not agree with ONDA's assessment."

On June 28, 2007, Judge Hogan issued an opinion on our companion challenge of the Lakeview RMP. Again, the court widely deferred to BLM and ruled for the agency on all claims. Concerning wilderness, the court held that BLM had discretion as to how to meet its wilderness inventory duties. The court dismissed several other claims on jurisdictional grounds. ONDA will appeal these two decisions as it has done with very similar claims in its Southeast Oregon RMP (SEORMP) case. That case is fully briefed and we will hold argument in the Ninth Circuit this fall.

Grazing Resumes in Bully Creek Pasture; ONDA and WWP Increase Monitoring

As reported in the last Desert Ramblings, ONDA and Western Watersheds Project filed suit earlier this year to defend a BLM decision to rest the badly overgrazed Bully Creek Pasture from grazing in 2007. We asked the court to overturn a preliminary "stay" decision by an Administrative Law Judge, who had concluded that BLM's closure decision was based on faulty monitoring. Unfortunately, after a lengthy hearing on May 11, 2007, Judge Mosman declined to issue the injunction. The court was reluctant to overturn an ALJ's decision and felt that the rancher had provided the ALJ at least "good-faith" questions concerning BLM's monitoring data.

After this setback, and to ensure lack of monitoring is not at issue again, we redoubled our efforts to augment BLM's monitoring during the 2007 grazing season, initially on April 29 by donating and delivering to the critical pasture a dozen utilization cages. Led by the efforts of stalwart volunteer Gene Bray, WWP staffers and scientists made multiple trips to the pasture this summer to document grazing impacts. In cooperation with Stuart Murray of High Desert Ecology, we are compiling the results into a report to be submitted to BLM. We look forward to working with BLM to improve management of the pasture in 2008.

BLM to Reconsider Impacts to Wilderness Values in Owyhee Canyonlands

In response to litigation filed by ONDA, BLM has announced its intention to conduct additional analysis concerning impacts to wilderness values in the Louse Canyon Geographic Management Area. ONDA challenged this vast-scale project last year because of the tremendous impacts it would have on designated WSAs as well as other public lands with ONDA-inventoried wilderness values in and around the West Little Owyhee River. BLM's proposal calls for 58 miles of barbed-wire fences and more than 13 miles of water pipelines; installation of 10 livestock watering troughs; 17 spring "renovation" projects; and upland vegetation "treatment" involving clearing sagebrush of more than 3,500 acres. In response to BLM's decision to augment its analysis, the court issued a "stay" on the lawsuit. During the stay, no new projects will be constructed and most newly-built major projects will not be used. ONDA will meet with BLM this summer to discuss BLM's findings concerning ONDA's inventory report and recommendations.

ANNOUNCEMENTS



Gena Goodman-Campbell

Welcome Gena Goodman-Campbell, Wilderness Coordinator

Gena joined ONDA as the Wilderness Coordinator in spring 2007. She is focusing her time with ONDA primarily on the Badlands Wilderness Campaign, coordinating with local businesses, shareholders and community members who are invested in protecting this unique area.

Growing up in Portland, Oregon, Gena enjoyed exploring the wetlands and rivers around her home. She graduated with a B.A. in Political Science from Colorado College where she furthered her passion for all mountain-related activities, and could not resist the opportunity to return to Oregon upon graduation to work with the Oregon Student Public Interest Research Group (OSPIRG) at Central Oregon Community College. After organizing voter mobilization campaigns, petition drives and wilderness hikes with the wonderful COCC students, Gena made the move onto ONDA's staff to focus her energy on protecting the wild deserts she has grown to love.

When she's not playing outside, Gena enjoys working on a variety of unfinished art projects, watching and playing soccer and cooking.



Jane Steadman

Welcome Jane Steadman, Legal Intern

Jane Steadman joins ONDA this summer as a legal intern in the Portland Office. Jane's love for nature, education in biology and environmental studies, and experience working as a grassroots organizer for Save Our Wild Salmon prompted her to pursue a career in environmental law. Her affection for the High Desert blossomed during an impromptu road trip a couple of years back, and has deepened with each subsequent trip. This summer she was lucky enough to go on a fence pull with ONDA and to take "Legal Ecology," a field class held at the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge, the Malheur National Forest, the Steens, and Hart Mountain. She feels fortunate to be able to help and learn from ONDA's superb legal team this summer. She will be a second year law student at Lewis & Clark Law School this fall, and hopes to continue to work with ONDA throughout school and long after.



Caroline Pihl

Welcome Caroline Pihl, Conservation Intern

Caroline Pihl is spending her summer as ONDA's conservation intern, working with Gena on the Badlands Wilderness Campaign. Having grown up in Paradise Valley, Montana, Caroline has always had a passion for protecting the environment. Recently returned from a semester studying conservation in the Amazon, she has thoroughly enjoyed learning about grass-roots campaigning and politics in Bend's drier climate. After one last stint on the east coast to finish her senior year at Harvard University studying History and Literature, Caroline plans to head back to the mountainous west to enjoy life kayaking and adventuring. Caroline would like to thank all of the staff at ONDA for such a wonderful and fulfilling summer!



Pete Hickok

Gone Surfing: Pete Hickok

ONDA's energetic membership coordinator Pete Hickok will be leaving ONDA to take off on a long-term surfing expedition to Baja, Mexico, followed by a renewed commitment to his art work.

We are grateful for the contributions Pete made to advance ONDA's mission. His energy was contagious, as was his enthusiasm for protecting Oregon's High Desert. Pete organized ONDA's annual meetings and, along the way, revamped ONDA's web site and orchestrated a major upgrade of ONDA's data base. Pete was the courteous voice dealing with ONDA members on the phone and made many friends along the way.

We wish Pete many a "hang-ten" in Baja, we're all envious and hope he returns inspired.

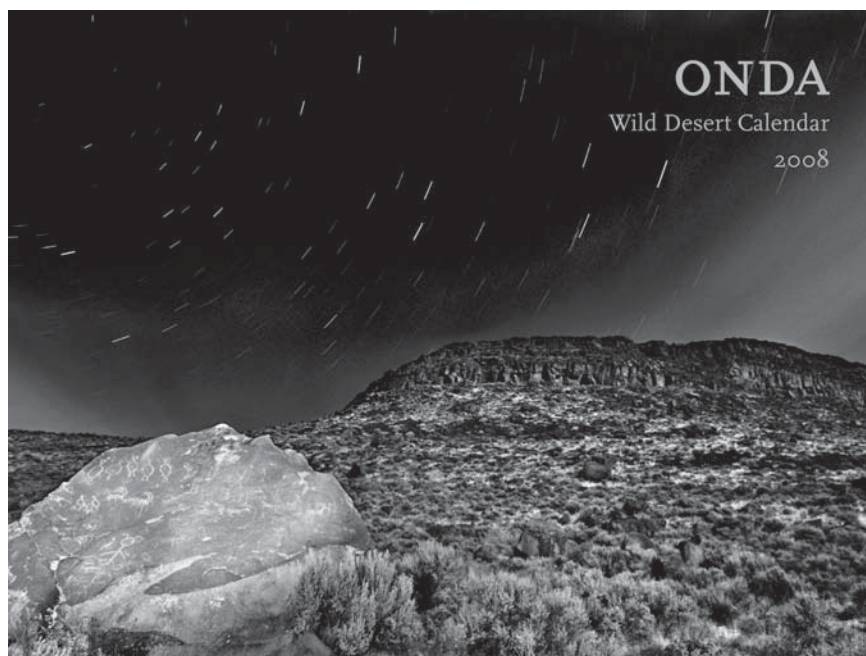
Thank You

ONDA would like to thank John Hartog for his generous donation in memory of Quietude.

ONDA would like to thank Brian and Judith O'Keefe for their generous donation in memory of Edna LaFranchi.

ONDA would like to thank Tom Ragland for his generous donation in memory of Hayduke.

MARKET PLACE



ONDA Wild Desert Calendar

The ONDA Market Place is pleased to offer the 2008 edition of the Oregon Wild Desert Calendar – 12 inches x 9 inches in size and featuring two outstanding desert photos for each month of the year.

Photographers who contributed work to this calendar are: Greg Burke, Jim Davis, Scott Erickson, Mike Henetz, Bruce Jackson, John Lasseter, Dan Linne, Craig Miller, Kevin Nibur, Al St. John and David Sherrill.

Price is \$15, plus \$2 for shipping.

Clothing

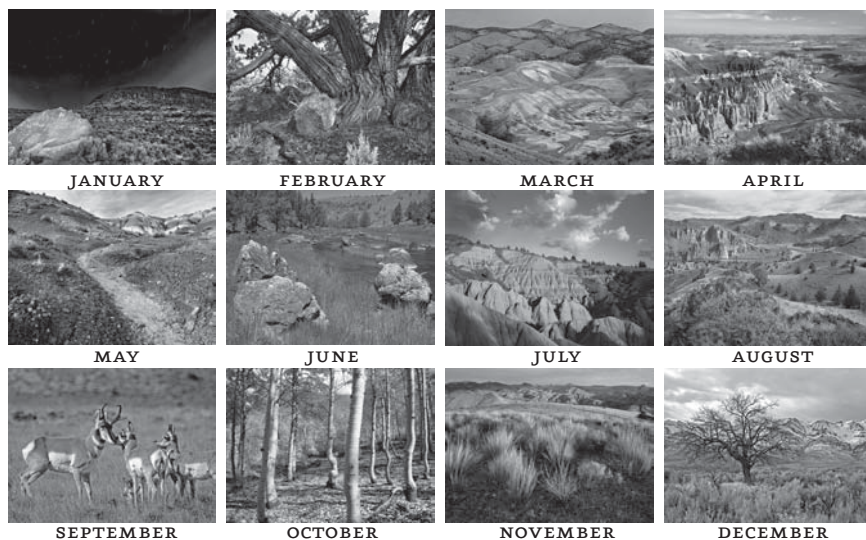
ONDA T-shirts. White, sage and neutral. with logo. When ordering, specify size.

Women's short sleeve (S, M, L) \$15

Men's short sleeve (M, L, XL) \$15

Long sleeve (M, L, XL) \$18

Long-sleeve shirts are not available in sage.



Item Description (for apparel, please specify men's or women's)	Size	Quantity	Price	Total
Add 10% shipping (\$2 for calendars)				
Total				



Wildfire: A Century of Failed Forest Policy

ONDA is pleased to offer *Wildfire: A Century of Failed Forest Policy*, edited by ONDA advisory board member George Wuerthner. This book is free to ONDA members (including shipping).

For your copy please contact hbbrown@onda.org or call (541) 330-2638

JOIN ONDA

Help defend Oregon's wild places by becoming a member of ONDA.

To join, use the membership envelope inside this newsletter, contact our office at 541.330.2638, or visit www.onda.org



GO FOR A JOY RIDE.

DONATE YOUR OLD CAR TO A GOOD CAUSE: THE ENVIRONMENT

When you donate your old car to the Oregon Natural Desert Association's cars for conservation program, you receive a tax deduction and experience the joy of knowing that you've helped ONDA's effort to restore, defend and protect Oregon's native deserts. Like to know more? Contact Barksdale Brown at hbbrown@onda.org or 541.330.2638



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

RIMROCK SOCIETY

By joining ONDA's Rimrock Society, Legacy Group, you are helping ensure ONDA's long-term sustainability and the future of desert wildlands in Oregon.

- ☐ Yes, I want to learn more about how I can leave an enduring legacy to ONDA.
- ☐ I have already established a planned gift for ONDA. Please enroll me in the Rimrock Society, Legacy Group.

NAME

ADDRESS

PHONE/EMAIL

Clip and mail to: Kelly O'Brien, Oregon Natural Desert Association, 16 NW Kansas Ave., Bend, OR 97701



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