

CAMPAIGN FOR THE OWYHEE CANYONLANDS TURNS UP THE HEAT

By Corie Harlan
Owyhee Coordinator

This summer and fall, the statewide effort to permanently protect Oregon's Owyhee Canyonlands is hitting full throttle. We're shining a light on the need to preserve this special place for future generations through events and communications with our decision-makers, and we will be asking you more than ever before to get involved.

We've said it before, and we'll say it again: The Owyhee Canyonlands is big in every sense of the word.

Protecting more than 2 million acres in the southeastern corner of Oregon would be an unprecedented big win for conservation, for Oregon's wildlife and rivers, and for Oregonians. And a goal this large and significant requires a coordinated, statewide effort like the Owyhee Canyonlands Campaign.

We're thrilled by how the campaign has grown. Thousands of people statewide, as well as conservation and recreation groups, have been advocating this year for protection for the Owyhee. More than

Owyhee Canyonlands, continued on Page 4



Photo: Chad Case

The heat is on statewide to protect the Owyhee Canyonlands.

Learn more at **WildOwyhee.org**. Sign the petition supporting permanent protection at **WildOwyhee.org/act**.



A male Greater sage-grouse puts on an impressive display during mating season.
Photo: Barb Rumer

EFFORTS TO PROTECT SAGE-GROUSE REACH CRESCENDO

By Dan Morse
Conservation Director

By now people across the West, and perhaps the entire country, have heard a lot about the Greater sage-grouse.

The BLM's near-final plans for Oregon and other regions are now public. A decision on whether to add the grouse to the endangered species list is due this fall, and efforts to protect the bird and its habitat have reached a fevered pitch. Counties, states and even Congress are battling over how to manage the species.

At the core of all this activity is the fact that sage-grouse occupy an immense habitat area that must be protected, restored and thoughtfully managed to stabilize and increase the bird's dwindling population. How to achieve this goal is one of conservation's biggest current questions.

In order to slow and eventually reverse the decline, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has been working to develop approaches that will protect sage-grouse habitat. The BLM manages the large majority of sage-grouse habitat in southeastern Oregon, so the release of the final BLM plan in

Sage-grouse, continued on Page 3

INSIDE DESERT RAMBLINGS:

Protect: Senator Merkley introduces John Day wilderness legislation. Page 4.
Defend: ONDA continues to defend and advocate for Steens Mountain. Page 5.
Restore: Stewardship program grows but sticks to its volunteer roots. Page 6.

CELEBRATE STEENS, PROTECT OWYHEE

By Brent Fenty, Executive Director



Brent Fenty

Fifteen years ago this October, many rejoiced when President Bill Clinton signed into law a bill to protect nearly 500,000 acres of Steens Mountain as a cooperative management and protection area, including more than 170,000 acres of wilderness and the nation's first "cow-free" wilderness. The success was significant not only because it marked permanent protection of an area often referred to as the "crown jewel" of Oregon's high desert, but also because it marked the first desert wilderness area in the state of Oregon.

Many of us believed that the designation signaled a greater interest in conserving more of the lesser-known but incredibly wild deserts areas east of Oregon's Cascade Range. Since 2000, two other areas totaling more than 40,000 acres, the Oregon Badlands and Spring Basin, have also been protected as wilderness in Oregon's high desert. During that time, volunteers have also done incredible work pulling more than a hundred miles of fence off Steens Mountain. It's possible that next year Steens Mountain will join Hart Mountain as one of the largest unfenced and ungrazed landscapes in the West.

Despite those successes other spectacular high desert areas in Oregon remain unprotected. The Owyhee Canyonlands has long been recognized as one of the most incredible places not just in Oregon but across the entire lower 48. Unfortunately and unbelievably to many, it remains the subject of mining and energy development proposals in and around its edges. Anyone who has visited the area has witnessed irresponsible ATV use damaging fragile desert soils and contributing to the proliferation of cheatgrass, medusa-head and other invasive species.

In 2000 when Steens Mountain was permanently protected, the Owyhee Canyonlands was also being actively considered as a national monument by the Clinton Administration. U.S. Rep. Greg Walden even drafted legislation to protect nearly 400,000 acres of Oregon's Owyhee as wilderness. Unfortunately, the focus on Steens Mountain and other areas simply didn't leave enough time to work out protections for the Owyhee.

Since then, new science and wildlife research has only further highlighted the incredible values of this area, which is often cited as the largest unprotected area in the lower 48. This rich expanse is home to more than 500 archeological sites, the largest herd of California bighorn sheep in North America, is one of the six most critical areas for Greater sage-grouse in the West, and is one of the few areas where scientists say you can expect a clear view of the Milky Way in the decades ahead. You can find pure solitude among the craggy, red-rock spires of Leslie Gulch and the Honeycombs to the north, or among winding rivers and verdant small canyons to the south. It is perhaps the wildest and most remote place that Oregon has to offer.

It is increasingly clear to many that it is time to do right by Oregon's 8th Natural Wonder. It's now more critical than ever that Oregon's congressional delegation continue to hear from you. One simple yet powerful act is to sign the petition to protect the Owyhee at WildOwyhee.org/act. Another is to call and write to Sen. Ron Wyden's office directly (www.wyden.senate.gov/contact) to share why protecting the Owyhee is important to you, even if you've done so already. Please help with this great effort today. Together, we've logged amazing accomplishments, and we can do it again. We hope 15 years from now to be toasting to a forever wild Owyhee!

YOUR DONATIONS AT WORK IN OREGON'S HIGH DESERT

Thanks to you...

58,000 acres of desert wildlands at Sutton Mountain are even closer to protection now that your advocacy encouraged Sen. Jeff Merkley to introduce legislation in Congress. Thank Sen. Merkley at ONDA.org/protectsutton.

55 miles hiked by three women ages 65–80 through the unprotected lands between the Sheldon and Hart Mountain wildlife refuges highlights the conservation potential of this vital migratory pronghorn path. Stay tuned for the debut of our film chronicling their journey this fall.

More than 100 miles of routes on Steens Mountain that appear on agency maps but do not actually exist on the ground remain off-limits to motorized use. This legal ruling protects some of the most vulnerable places on the mountain while challenges to a BLM plan are underway.

1 ONDA Portland office expanded to include a new outreach coordinator. Matt Kertman will bring dozens of new events and opportunities to support desert conservation to the region.

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

STAFF

Jeremy Austin
Hart-Sheldon Coordinator
Barksdale Brown
General Manager
Allison Crotty
Development Director
Elisa Davis
Membership Coordinator
Brent Fenty
Executive Director
Sam Frank
Stewardship Coordinator
Gena Goodman-Campbell
Central Oregon Coordinator
Ben Gordon
John Day Coordinator
Heidi Hagemeyer
Communications Coordinator
Corie Harlan
Owyhee Coordinator
Jefferson Jacobs
Stewardship Coordinator
Lindsay Jones
Development Assistant
Matt Kertman
Outreach Coordinator
Mac Lacy
Senior Attorney
Dan Morse
Conservation Director

AT LARGE

Craig Miller
GIS Specialist
Bill Marlett
Senior Conservation Advisor

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Helen Harbin (Bend), President
John Sterling (Bend), Vice President
Jeff Frank (Santa Barbara), Treasurer
Gilly Lyons (Portland), Secretary
Kirsten Blackburn (Portland)
Ray Hartwell (Bend)
Teague Hatfield (Bend)
Alan Hickenbottom (Portland)
Allison Mace (Portland)
Ken Rait (Portland)
Chris Van Dyke (Tumalo)
Julie Weikel (Princeton)

OFFICES

50 SW Bond Street, Suite #4
Bend, OR 97702
541.330.2638
FAX: 541.389.5056
917 SW Oak Street, Suite 419 & 300
Portland, OR 97205
503.525.0193 (legal)
503.703.1006 (outreach)

Desert Ramblings is published three times annually (spring, summer and fall/winter) by the Oregon Natural Desert Association.

SAGE-GROUSE

Continued from Page 1

late May provides good insight into the future of sage-grouse management. A wide array of stakeholders worked on its development, and fortunately there are many positive aspects of the plan. Some provisions, like the establishment of strictly managed sagebrush focal areas in the Beatys and Louse portions of Lake and Malheur counties, would result in meaningful protections for sage-grouse. Similarly, restrictions on cross-country ATV use, mineral development and large-scale energy transmission would be extremely beneficial for sagebrush habitat.

Unfortunately there are also some aspects of the plan that aren't clear, don't go far enough or are simply off the mark. One very concerning part of the plan would allow for energy and power transmission development in priority sage-grouse habitat in Lake, Harney and Malheur counties. This special exception for these three counties is troubling because of the potential impacts it could lead to and because the best available science says that this is the exact wrong thing to do for sage-grouse. Other plan provisions also need improvements, including strengthening how livestock grazing would be managed in sage-grouse habitat and how new development would be limited in the most important areas for the species.

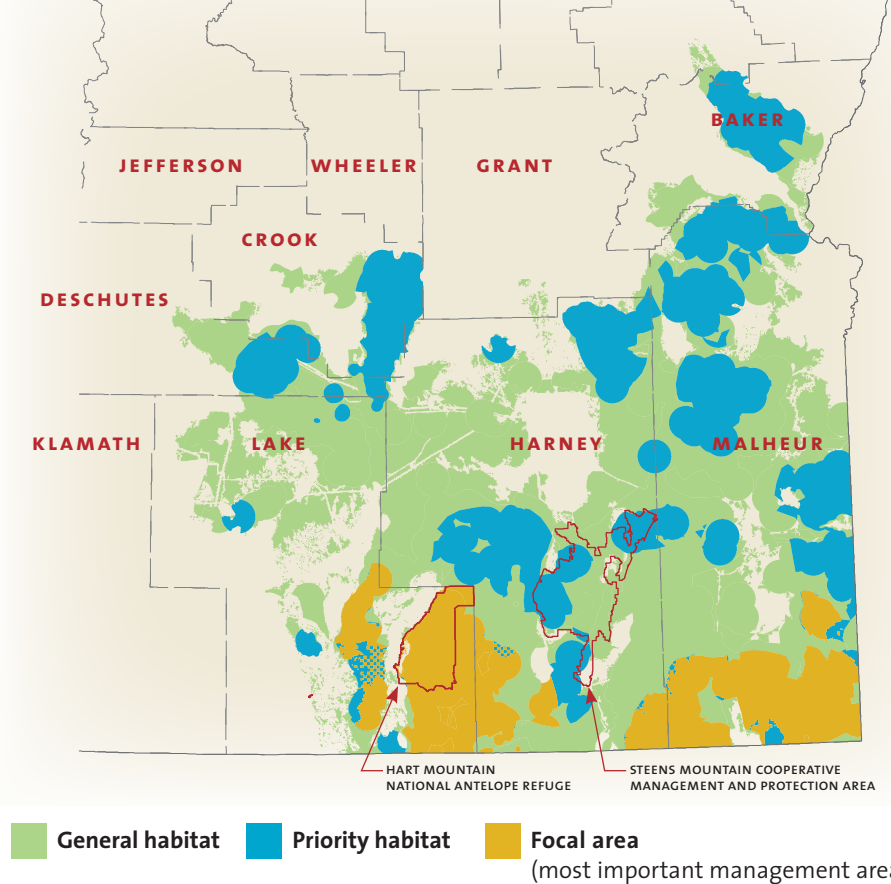
Overall, ONDA found many parts of the plan that would benefit sage-grouse but a few areas where the plan was lacking and needs changes. Given this concern, ONDA submitted a formal protest of the plan in late June seeking targeted changes. We expect an answer to our protest, and the approximately 200 other protests filed by others, sometime in August when the BLM issues its record of decision for the plan.

The state is also playing a part.

What will Oregon's sage-grouse plan do?

More than three years ago the governor convened a collaborative process involving a multitude of stakeholders. Known as SageCon, participants ranging from local governments to conservation groups to ranchers to wildlife scientists helped develop a plan to manage sage-grouse habitat on private and state-owned lands. Over the course of this effort state officials worked to identify the primary threats to sage-grouse on private lands and to develop plans to stave off these impacts. One of the plan's major provisions is a 3 percent cap on new surface disturbance resulting from development. This cap is required for all new developments in priority sage-grouse habitat no matter which state agency is handling a development proposal. The cap and other approaches to maintain and enhance sage-grouse habitat was formalized through two state rulemaking processes that wrapped up in late July.

OREGON GREATER SAGE-GROUSE HABITAT AREAS



Will the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service list the species?

It's too soon to know. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service officials will only say that their decision will be based on the science, the threats to the species and the agency's degree of certainty that conservation measures will be implemented to benefit sage-grouse. What we do know is that the determination will be made by the end of September. In the meantime, some in Congress want to forestall the listing decision or block the BLM plans. What Congress ultimately does is similarly difficult to predict, but the Fish and Wildlife Service will reach its conclusion this fall and ONDA is hopeful that the decision, the BLM plans, the state plan and other efforts will ultimately benefit the species.

Remembering what it's all about.

In the end laws, plans and good intentions only go so far for sage-grouse survival. If this work results in large, unfragmented, healthy expanses of sagebrush and native grasses supporting a functioning native ecosystem, sage-grouse populations will rally and thrive. Any other alternative isn't an option.

Large expanses of the sagebrush ecosystem can still be found in southeastern Oregon, as well as in 10 other states and two Canadian provinces. The sagebrush sea however faces serious threats from industrial development, large-scale wildfires, invasive plants, livestock grazing, recreation and other uses that disrupt the sage-grouse's life-cycle and fragment their habitat. These changes have led to a significant decrease in sage-grouse populations across their range. More than 350 other species also depend on this sagebrush-steppe ecosystem.

OWYHEE CANYONLANDS

Continued from Page 1

10,000 people have joined the Owyhee Facebook community, nearly 9,000 people have signed the petition calling for protection of the area, and Friends of the Owyhee (Facebook.com/FriendsoftheOwyhee), a new eastern Oregon-based group, has been leading hikes and holding events to increase local awareness and support for the area in Malheur County.

In addition, the Owyhee Coalition is amplifying efforts to gather petition signatures and to urge U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden to take action. The Owyhee Coalition consists of local, regional and national groups that recognize the conservation, recreation and economic values of the area. In addition to ONDA, Owyhee Coalition members include American Rivers, American Whitewater, Conservation Lands Foundation, Mazamas, The Pew Charitable Trusts, Sierra Club and The Wilderness Society – and we are fired up about seeing this place protected.

We also have some great, updated tools to help get the word out. We're now on Instagram at [Instagram.com/OwyheeCanyonlands](https://www.instagram.com/OwyheeCanyonlands). The revamped WildOwyhee.org website now offers more information about conservation in the Owyhee.

Growing awareness and appreciation for the sagebrush sea

The recent designation of the Basin and Range National Monument in Nevada, as well as the release of the Bureau of Land Management's Greater sage-grouse plans, have brought national attention to the West's desert lands and highlighted their ecological, recreational and cultural significance. Oregon's Owyhee Canyonlands has been identified as one of the most significant remaining strongholds for the Greater sage-grouse in the West by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and articles in Men's Journal, 1859 magazine and elsewhere continue to elevate the wonders of this special place.

Recently, Congressman Earl Blumenauer of Portland came out in favor of action to protect the Owyhee now. "For years, I've heard from Oregonians in my district and across the state in loud support of protecting the Owyhee, a priceless part of Oregon's natural landscape and heritage," he said in a statement.

A major partner is also working to bring awareness to this swath of the sagebrush sea. KEEN Footwear, based in Portland, launched its Live Monumental campaign in July to showcase exceptional places that deserve protection (keenfootwear.com/livemonumental). KEEN identified the Owyhee Canyonlands as one of five places in the

OWYHEE CALENDAR

We need our growing group of supporters – and **YOU** – to turn up the heat!

August 1-10:

- Join Owyhee Canyonlands Facebook community (www.facebook.com/OwyheeCanyonlands), invite friends.
- Sign the petition supporting permanent protection of the Owyhee Canyonlands at wildowyhee.org/act. Invite friends and colleagues to sign the petition.

August 10-21

- Call Senator Wyden at his Portland office: 503-326-7525. Tell him you love the Owyhee and it deserves protection, now!
- Email Senator Wyden at www.wyden.senate.gov/contact. Let him know you support permanent protection of the Owyhee Canyonlands.

Thursday, August 13:

- Attend KEEN Live Monumental Owyhee event | Bend. Check **Owyhee Canyonlands Facebook** for event details.

Thursday, September 3:

- Attend KEEN Live Monumental Owyhee event | Portland. Check **Owyhee Canyonlands Facebook** for event details.

nation to feature in this campaign, which will be touring across the country this summer. Live Monumental will deliver thousands of signatures supporting permanent protection of these places to the Obama Administration in the fall.

ONDA has been actively advocating for the protection of the Owyhee for over seven years. At the end of the day, the Owyhee Canyonlands deserve protection. There are a variety of legislative and administrative options the campaign is considering to permanently protect this place, and should a legislative approach prove unsuccessful a national monument designation would afford this area the protection it deserves. We applaud KEEN's efforts and urge you to turn out for the Live Monumental events.

SUTTON MOUNTAIN WILDERNESS PROPOSAL INTRODUCED IN CONGRESS

By Ben Gordon
John Day Coordinator

ONDA supporters have waited for more than 10 years for this news: On May 7, Oregon Senator Jeff Merkley introduced the Sutton Mountain and Painted Hills Area Preservation and Economic Enhancement Act of 2015. This monumental step creates the opportunity for Congress to designate 58,000 acres of public land as wilderness in the John Day River Basin.

Sutton Mountain and the other areas included in this wilderness bill – Pat's Cabin, Dead Dog Canyon and Sand Mountain – are spectacular. The rich geological history, remote canyons and plant communities found few other places on Earth are just a few of the many reasons why these areas deserve to be protected.

During the past year Wheeler County residents and decision

makers have advocated for the wilderness designation as a way to keep visitors who initially come to admire the Painted Hills for a longer duration. By offering visitors opportunities to explore the region in greater depth, local businesses are optimistic that more visitor dollars will be captured in the county.

After seeing Sutton Mountain firsthand and hearing strong local support for the proposal, Senator Merkley stepped up to introduce a bill to protect the area as wilderness. His strong leadership has created the opportunity currently being considered by Congress.

Please encourage Oregon's delegates – Senators Merkley and Ron Wyden and Congressman Greg Walden – to work together to move the Sutton Mountain and Painted Hills Area Preservation and Economic Enhancement Act of 2015 successfully through Congress. Do this today at ONDA.org/protectsutton to share your support for protecting this amazing piece of Oregon's high desert.

FIFTEEN YEARS LATER, WE CONTINUE TO CELEBRATE, DEFEND STEENS MOUNTAIN

By Mac Lacy
Senior Attorney

This October marks 15 years since Congress's historic decision to permanently protect Steens Mountain. Signed into law in 2000, the Steens Act established the Cooperative Management and Protection Area, 428,000 acres of public land covering most of Steens Mountain – with 175,000 acres of that as the Steens Mountain Wilderness. While the act is designed, above all, to conserve the “long-term ecological integrity” of this exceptional landscape, the path to conservation has not always been smooth.

Environment

The Steens is an extraordinary place deep in eastern Oregon's high desert. The landscape encompasses deep, glacier-carved gorges, dramatic scenery, vast wilderness, and wild rivers. The mountain's precipitous eastern escarpment towers a mile above the prehistoric lake bed of the Alvord Desert. A rich diversity of plants and animals live among the mountain's meadows, aspen groves, juniper woodlands, and expanses of sagebrush.

Protection

The act was the culmination of a joint effort between Oregon's congressional delegation, the governor, and the secretary of the interior. ONDA too played a principal role in crafting the legislation, including negotiating boundary adjustments and land exchanges crucial to consolidating a checkerboard of land ownership.

The centerpiece of the act is its creation of the Steens Mountain Wilderness, unique as the nation's first livestock-free wilderness area. The act also added 29 miles to the National Wild and Scenic River System, withdrew 1.1 million acres from mineral and geothermal leasing, and designated the nation's first Redband Trout Reserve.

Today, the Department of the Interior includes Steens Mountain in its National Conservation Lands. Established by Congress in 2009, the system protects nationally significant landscapes recognized for their outstanding cultural, ecological, and scientific values.

Importantly, the act only partially addressed questions of long-term management to restore ecological integrity on Steens Mountain. Much of the greater Steens area remains in Wilderness Study Area (WSA) status awaiting permanent protection from Congress. Still other areas have been identified through ONDA's citizen inventories for their wilderness values, but not yet accepted as such by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM).

Defense

Despite strong protections in the Steens Act – including prohibitions against off-road driving and establishing new roads – ONDA advocacy has still been necessary over the years. Strategic legal action has served as a vital check against potential habitat loss and impacts to wilderness values.

- Since 2007, ONDA has held at bay an industrial-scale energy project proposed to be built atop Steens Mountain — including the project's 46-mile transmission line that would sever one of the remaining habitat corridors in eastern Oregon that connect



Photo: Michelle Alvarado

*Known for its plummeting drops, U-shaped glacial gorges, aspen stands and abundant wildlife, **Steens Mountain became permanently protected 15 years ago in October.***

and allow for genetic exchange between neighboring populations of Greater sage-grouse.

- In 2011, ONDA's lawsuit challenging parts of a 336,000-acre juniper clearing project caused the BLM to rethink its approach to dealing with juniper encroachment in sage-grouse habitat, a result that has benefitted habitats across the West.
- In 2014, years of watchdogging paid off when the BLM rejected a proposal to build dozens of livestock watering stations and similar projects inside the Blitzen River, South Fork Donner und Blitzen, and Home Creek wilderness study areas.
- Through 2015, a series of court orders have barred motorized use and maintenance upgrades on 126 miles of BLM-proposed roads on Steens Mountain that are redundant or nonexistent and would unnecessarily break up and destroy sagebrush habitat and untrammeled roadless areas.

For the future

Over the years, ONDA has sent hundreds of volunteers on monitoring and restoration missions on Steens Mountain. With much accomplished and much still to accomplish, Steens Mountain stands as a proud example of what grassroots advocacy, resolute legal defense and volunteer stewardship can achieve to preserve one of the unparalleled treasures of Oregon's high desert.

ONDA is represented on the Steens travel management and wind energy cases by its longtime staff attorney, Mac Lacy, and Portland-based public interest attorney Dave Becker. Laird Lucas of the Boise-based Advocates for the West also serves as co-counsel in the Steens wind case.

STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM GROWS YET STICKS TO ROOTS

By Sam Frank
Stewardship Coordinator

When ONDA began there were no paid staff, no offices, no newsletters. There was simply a group of volunteers and their love of Oregon's wild desert.

"A few of us knew each other from around town and the Desert Conference," says Alice Elshoff, a driving force behind the formation of ONDA. "We thought about getting a group together, so I put an ad in the paper saying anyone interested in protecting the desert should come to this meeting. That's how it got started really." The fledgling group was responding to the BLM's 1980 state-wide survey of potential wilderness areas in Oregon as mandated by the Federal Lands Policy and Management Act of 1976. Alice and others felt there were more areas that should be included for recommendation as wilderness. So this group of volunteers did what ONDA is still doing today: getting volunteers out on the ground.

From humble beginnings, ONDA has grown over the last few decades. ONDA's Stewardship Program has blossomed as well, though the roots of the program are still firmly anchored in eastern Oregon desert soil. And new programs are in the works this year to further expand our volunteers' reach.

"From its earliest beginnings ONDA has been driven by a core of passionate volunteers," said Craig Miller, who does GIS work for ONDA and was one of the original volunteers who responded to Alice's ad. Craig, a retired emergency physician, still gets out into the field to renew his passion for eastern Oregon and to do some birding. "As ONDA has grown and flourished over the years," he said, "volunteerism has continued to be an indispensable element to its success."

In 2014, ONDA's Stewardship Program generated 4,496 volunteer hours and included more than 300 individual volunteers. Accomplishments included planting thousands of native trees and shrubs, removing miles of unnecessary barbed wire fence, restoring streams, surveying wildlife and – staying true to our roots – monitoring wild lands and waters to advocate for their protection. These feats were accomplished through ONDA's popular guided group trips. A limitation of these events, however, is that there can only be so many of them in a given year. It takes ONDA staff a great deal of time and effort to plan, host, and wrap up these trips. In addition, many trips are limited in the number of participants either because of group size reg-



Alice Elshoff works with a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service staffer during an ONDA stewardship trip at Malheur National Wildlife Refuge in 2013. Stewardship has long been at ONDA's core, and it's expanding now to offer more independent means of helping the high desert. Photo: Jefferson Jacobs

ulations in places such as wilderness or wilderness study areas (WSA), the ability of the trip leader to safely and effectively manage the group, or simply to alleviate any environmental impacts caused by a large group.

This is where the Intern Monitoring and the Independent Stewards come into the picture. The Intern Monitoring is akin to that first group of volunteers in the early '80s with a heavy dose of field monitoring. Applicants apply for one of the two or three internships available each summer. After training, they are sent into the field for four-to-five-day stints each week for two months. This requires less staff time than the group events and produces a large amount of monitoring data without concerns for managing a big group. We had a productive, successful test run of it this year and hope to do it again next year. However, the Intern Monitoring Program is limited in how much it can accomplish each year because the interns are only involved for the summer months.

The Independent Stewards are the other new offshoot in the Stewardship Program. Independent Stewards are trained so that they go into eastern Oregon on their own and report to ONDA what they see happen-

Stewardship opportunities

If you're interested in joining ONDA's Stewardship Program, call Sam Frank at 541-330-2638 or visit our website at:

ONDA.org/volunteer

ing on the ground. A volunteer can simply attend an ONDA-hosted group event prior to applying to become an Independent Steward. Once that's done, Independent Stewards undergo a one-day training on a host of topics so they know what to look for.

ONDA supporters have long asked how else they can help in the high desert. The Independent Stewards program offers volunteers that opportunity they'd long sought – to also perform critical stewardship tasks while exploring in eastern Oregon.

A pilot group of Independent Stewards will get rolling in the late summer. Nowadays, ONDA volunteers might be using tablets and smartphone apps to collect field data, but the heart of ONDA's Stewardship Program grew from that initial seed planted by a group of volunteers over 30 years ago.

MEMBERS

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



David Denis

Bend resident David Denis joined ONDA in December 2013. In just a year and a half, David has become a steady fixture at ONDA events – he's already volunteered at half a dozen. You might have met David at the refreshments table!

What inspired you to become an ONDA supporter?

When I first moved to Bend, I was looking at The Source Weekly and saw a listing for one of ONDA's open houses. I have always been a desert lover, so this beckoned to me and I knew I wanted to participate.

What's your favorite place in Oregon's high desert?

I haven't done too much exploring yet, but I've worked with Owyhee Coordinator Corie Harlan to map out an Owyhee road trip that I'll head out for this fall. It's really high on my priority list. Closer to home, I love the Badlands and even just driving through Christmas Valley. It takes a while to grasp the beauty of the desert. People often see it as an empty wasteland. But if you spend enough time there and learn to appreciate it in geological time, and realize how it has been shaped through time and erosion, then the desert becomes vibrant and beautiful.

What would you say to existing and future supporters about ONDA's community?

It's just great to be associated with people that care, who want to make a difference, people who get that we need to preserve this area. Most people don't realize how much animal migration routes are affected by human expansion into open areas and the immense impact on the animals. I like that through ONDA I meet people who understand that and we can share our thoughts about that. And that you need to take action!

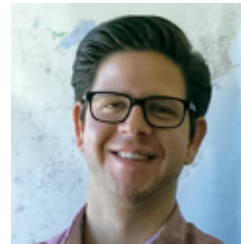
What would you like to see ONDA accomplish in the year ahead? 5 years from now?

I'd like to see a plan and strategy that has received commitment from the necessary governmental institutions to ensure that pronghorn can migrate, sage-grouse can breed, and that we start to turn the tide on unrestrained expansion out into the desert. Taking down fences that disrupt migration and destroy natural habitat is important.

Are you a proud, dynamic member like David? Support ONDA's mission and grow our community with a gift membership to a friend or loved one. ONDA.org/donate

ANNOUNCEMENTS

New ONDA face on Oregon's west side



Matt Kertman

You asked and we've answered: Oregon west-side friends, we're pleased to introduce you to Matt Kertman, ONDA's new Portland-based outreach coordinator. A native of the Southwest's Sonoran Desert, Matt brings a decade of experience in nonprofit communications

and outreach to his passion for wild, untrammelled places.

Matt's mandate is to broaden and deepen our relationship with ONDA supporters west of the Cascades. In addition to bringing a 2016 High Desert Lecture Series and the best-ever Year End Celebration to Portland, he'll soon announce a number of exciting volunteer opportunities for folks who want to roll up their sleeves and lend a hand in the new Portland office or at special events.

Have an idea you want to share? Want to offer your experience or skills as a volunteer? Or simply would like to sit down for a coffee or cold beer and chat? Feel free to email Matt at matt@onda.org or – better yet – call: 503-703-1006. He's excited to hear from you and to work together to safeguard our state's wild and free high deserts.

Kirsten Blackburn



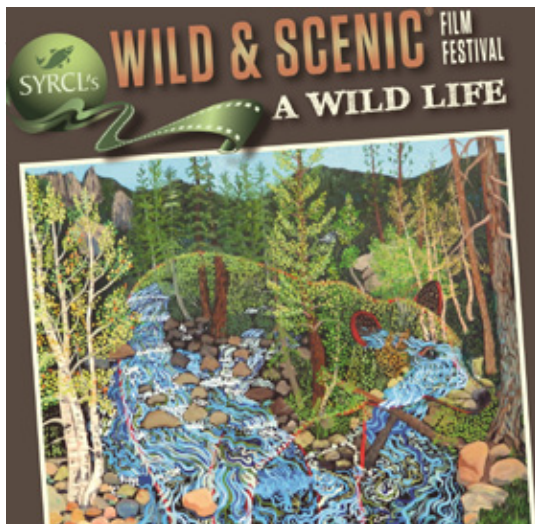
Kirsten Blackburn

Portland resident Kirsten Blackburn recently joined the ONDA Board of Directors. She holds a B.S. in Finance and International Business from the University of Montana, and works as Corporate Giving & Marketing Specialist at KEEN Footwear, striving

to fulfill the company's promise to build stronger communities and a healthier planet. Her spare time is spent climbing, hiking and camping around Oregon with her fiancé. She loves the smells, solitude and incredible terrain of Oregon's high desert and hopes to conserve more of it.

SAVE THE DATE

Upcoming events include:



OCT.
2
FRIDAY

Experience the best outdoor and nature films from the Wild & Scenic Film Festival, this year at Bend's Tower Theatre.

Matinee:

Doors 3 PM | Show 4 PM

Evening:

Doors 6:30 PM | Show 7:30 PM

Tickets available now:

www.towertheatre.org/tickets-and-events/wild-scenic-film-festival

NOV.
6

FRIDAY

Celebrate the release of the 2016 Wild Desert Calendar in Bend.

NOV.
12

THURSDAY

Year-end party in Portland at KEEN, 505 NW 13th Ave.

DEC.
4

FRIDAY

Year-end party at ONDA's Bend office, 50 SW Bond St., Suite 4.



www.facebook.com/OregonNaturalDesertAssociation

www.flickr.com/photos/oregonnaturaldesert

www.youtube.com/OregonDeserts



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



Nonprofit org
US Postage
PAID
Bend OR
Permit No 473

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

ONDA DESERT OUTING: **CARLTON CANYON-PAINTED CANYON LOOP, OWYHEE CANYONLANDS**

This loop hike showcases some of the most showstopping scenery in the Owyhee Canyonlands. Obelisks and 300-foot red-rock walls await, as do 12-foot-tall stands of sagebrush.

CLOSEST TOWN

Jordan Valley

DRIVE TIME

1.5 hours from Jordan Valley

WHEN

Spring or fall. Possible summer if not too hot. High-clearance 4WD vehicle required, road is impassible after even a quarter inch of rain

DISTANCE

8.5-mile loop

DIFFICULTY

Strenuous, cross-country hiking and multiple rock scrambles



Hikers travel into the Honeycombs of the Owyhee Canyonlands in 2013. This loop takes some know-how, but it's worth the effort. Photo: Steve Vido

DRIVING DIRECTIONS FROM JORDAN VALLEY

Take Highway 95 north for 27 miles and turn left at the sign for Succor Creek. Take this road 8.5 miles to a junction at the Rockville School, where you will head left toward Succor Creek. Continue for another 7 miles, passing the turnoff for Leslie Gulch on your left.

When you get to the next junction for McIntyre Springs Road, turn left and restart your odometer. Follow the McIntyre Springs Road straight, keeping Three Fingers Butte on your left until a junction at 5.25 miles. Turn right. Continue for another mile and turn left at another junction. Head another mile and keep left at another fork. After 11 miles, turn left for the final quarter mile to a dilapidated cow trough and your trailhead.

CARLTON CANYON-PAINTED CANYON LOOP HIKE

Head south on foot along the main road for a third of a mile, where you'll see the head of Carlton Canyon (approximate GPS coordinates: 43 degrees, 28'25.64"N and 117 degrees 14'8.21"W) dropping down the gulch to the right. Hike and scramble down Carlton Canyon. 3.75 miles from the road is a major canyon coming in from the right. This is the confluence of Painted and Carlton canyons (approximate GPS coordinates: 43 degrees 26'23.05"N and 117 degrees 16'41.24"W).

Hike back up Painted Canyon, heading north. About 5.25 miles in, you'll encounter an amphitheater off to the left. Stay straight to head toward your car. After 7 miles you'll spot a jeep track turnaround. Exit the canyon here and follow the jeep track for 1.5 miles back to your vehicle.