

PHOTOS FROM TOP:
The 2014 Wild Desert calendar
with a Hart Mountain cover
photo by Jim Davis;
the first Wild Desert calendar, in
2005, with a Bruce Jackson photo
of Steens Mountain on the cover;
photographer Tyson Fisher in the
Owyhee Canyonlands on a quest
for a calendar photograph



For 10 Years, a Team of

VOLUNTEERS

Has Created the ONDA Calendar
that Celebrates Oregon's Wild Desert

By Corie Harlan and Lindsay Jones
ONDA Development Staff

More than a decade ago, a crew of self-proclaimed “desert rats” dreamed up the idea of a photography collection dedicated solely to the beauty of Oregon’s high desert. What started as a small seed has since blossomed into ONDA’s iconic Wild Desert Calendar – an incredible all-volunteer-based effort that has been connecting people to the wonders of Oregon’s high desert for 10 years. As ONDA celebrates this milestone, we set out to discover and honor anew the people, stories and adventures behind this extraordinary endeavor.

In the beginning

Back in the late ’90s, between desert trips and rock climbing excursions, Jim Davis, an amateur photographer and longtime ONDA member, came across the Friends of Nevada Wilderness calendar. Intrigued by its ability to showcase the beauty of underappreciated desert landscapes, he bought it year after year. Over time, a realization crept up on him. With Oregon’s numerous coastal sunset and moss-dripped forest calendar offerings, an effort featuring the wildest and most significant areas in Oregon’s high desert would be completely unique. And even better, it could increase awareness and inspire action on behalf of the magnificent, relatively unknown desert landscapes ONDA and its members work tirelessly to protect.

Davis cultivated support for the project during frequent trips with fellow “desert rat” friends and photographers, through serendipitous crossings of paths at Smith Rock, and in meetings with ONDA’s board and then-executive director, Bill Marlett. Then in 2004 the original Wild Desert Calendar Committee, consisting of Jim Davis, Greg Burke, Bruce Jackson, Thomas Osborne and Mike Sequeira, received a green light and a small budget to make a calendar a reality.

Fueled by beers, chips and salsa, the original team spent countless hours in Davis’s living room selecting photos, picking quotes, researching lunar cycles and meteor showers, and wrestling with color management. The first Wild Desert Calendar arrived in 2005. “We’d log over 300 hours in those early years to make it happen,” recalls Osborne, the group’s graphic designer. Jackson also provided essen-

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INSIDE DESERT RAMBLINGS:

Protect: Study shows rural counties with protected lands reap economic benefits. Page 4.
Defend: ONDA, partners appeal court’s action on Steens wind turbine proposal. Page 5.
Restore: Wilderness Stewardship Program celebrates successes. Page 6.

Creating a Conservation Legacy We Can be Proud of

By Brent Fenty, Executive Director



Brent Fenty

For most of us, the end of the year serves as a time for reflection. Like many of you, I watched in dismay the partisan bickering that led to and ultimately erupted around the recent government shutdown. Public lands around the country were held political hostage despite the fact that both sides of the debate seemed intent on emphasizing their love and respect for natural treasures like our National Parks. Even in Utah, where state government has tried to do away with public lands altogether, officials acknowledged the significant impacts that National Parks and other federal lands have to local economies. Although the government has reopened, bipartisan and collaborative solutions, such as ONDA's work with local landowners on the Cathedral Rock and Horse Heaven Wilderness Proposal, remain tied up in the congressional gridlock.

Secretary of Interior Sally Jewell, who is responsible for the management of vast swaths of public land, including millions of acres in Oregon's high desert, gave a speech on October 31st to the National Press Club. In her remarks, she emphasized that we need to "think about what conservation legacy we will leave for the next 50 years, for the next 100 years" and that the Obama administration "is ready and willing to step up where Congress falls short." We can only hope that Secretary Jewell's words are not just empty rhetoric and that the administration is ready to step up to enact a conservation legacy that future generations of Oregonians can be proud of.

In Oregon's high desert lie significant conservation opportunities. Between Hart Mountain and Sheldon National Wildlife Refuges, the Secretary could establish a National Monument or expand the existing refuges to provide needed protections for pronghorn and Greater sage-grouse, a species whose populations have plummeted over the past few decades and is currently being considered for listing under the Endangered Species Act. The need for permanent protection of this area was first described by ONDA in 1993 and then reiterated by former Secretary of Interior Bruce Babbitt in 2004. It's hardly a new idea, but giving this area the protection it deserves would be a key step in maintaining and recovering sage-grouse populations.

And in the far southeast corner of the state, the Owyhee Canyonlands, spanning 2.2 million acres in Oregon alone, stands as the largest unprotected roadless area in the Lower 48. The Owyhee provides critical habitat for a number of sensitive species, including North America's largest herd of bighorn sheep and plant species found nowhere else in the world. It is impossible to visit this landscape without being captivated by its beauty and wildness. What better place could there be to establish lasting protection for our public lands? I have heard many people say that the time has come to protect this incredible area. I disagree; the time is overdue.

Our neighbors to the east in Idaho protected their side of the Owyhee nearly five years ago. Our neighbors to the south in Nevada are working on a proposal that would protect their side of the Owyhee in the next couple years. As Oregonians, we should be embarrassed by the lack of political will to protect the largest and most spectacular portion of this amazing area. I've had many friends join me on trips to the Owyhee Canyonlands; inevitably at some moment in the trip, someone remarks, "How is this place not a National Park?" This summer, my wife and I took our daughter on a road trip around the West that included visits to a number of our most impressive National Parks. There is no doubt in my mind that the Owyhee is just as spectacular.

If you are one to take on a New Year's resolution, I hope you will consider a vow to contact Oregon's congressional delegation every month and encourage them to give the Owyhee Canyonlands the protection it deserves. You be the judge: Wilderness, National Park, National Monument? Let them know that you won't stop calling until they get it done. While you are at it, send Secretary Jewell an email asking her to connect the Hart and Sheldon wildlife refuges. If you can't speak from personal experience, maybe the resolution is to get out to enjoy Hart Mountain and the Owyhee firsthand or to join other ONDA members volunteering in Oregon's high desert. As Edward Abbey once said, "The idea of wilderness needs no defense. It only needs more defenders."

Thanks for all you do to make ONDA successful, and I hope to see you out in Oregon's high desert!

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tial experience, name recognition and a pool of quality images for the blossoming project in the first few years. The calendar really hit its stride around the third year when it became a now much-beloved ONDA membership benefit. And best of all, the quality of photos continued to improve, as talented photographers inspired by the calendar headed out to the desert and returned to share their own images, in a cycle that continues today.

The perfect shot

The strongest tie among “desert rats” is surely their love of place. “A ‘desert rat’ is someone who can hang out in the desert – the dust, the dirt, the solitude, the crazy weather – and really, truly enjoy it,” relays Davis. For many photographers, getting the perfect shot comes second to the wilderness experience. They come to these high desert places seeking solace and find inspiration in the great silence, the ever-changing light and the unobstructed sky. “Rivers, mountains, playas, canyons, the colors at the extremes of the day. The expansive view. It’s all out there and I find new inspiration with every outing,” muses Burke.

Photographers are also drawn to the challenge of the high desert. “The desert can be a hard

place to shoot because so much of its beauty is subtle and many of its secrets are hidden. You need to unlock it,” notes Davis. Many of the best photographers have their own way of doing just that. Tyson Fisher employs another favorite pastime in scouting for a photo: trail running. Jackson will sit quietly in a place to absorb its unique energy and rhythms. When a photographer has been thinking about a specific shot for a while, like Davis’s Mickey Basin shot, and only has a narrow window of time and a glimpse of promising weather to pull it off, the result can be a whirlwind road trip adventure to capture the photo – a “blitz” trip. “Blitz means lightning in German,” Davis shares with a smile.

The resulting images from these adventures are powerful ones. Fisher, a calendar contributor for more than five years, enjoys turning his meaningful experience into a photo people can see and enjoy – a photo that makes these places real, not just words on a map. Indeed, this is a goal for many of the photographers and volunteers involved with the calendar. “I think a lot of people are unaware of the beauty that is right out our back door,” ventures Burke. “Many of these images are met with astonishment and the common refrain: ‘Is that in Oregon?’” Davis is proud of the role the calendar has played over the years in in-



ONDA’s calendar photographers pursue the perfect shot. Jim Davis made a special trip to make this photograph of Mickey Basin, the August 2012 calendar photo.

“Many of these images are met with astonishment and the common refrain: ‘Is that in Oregon?’”

— GREG BURKE, CALENDAR PHOTOGRAPHER

roducing others to the wonder of the high desert. “These places in Oregon are wonderful, you just have to capture them,” he says. “The calendar provides a place to show how spectacular these places really are. These are places worth visiting and protecting.”

The next ten years

The calendar has become a visual feast more spectacular with every passing year. It’s now available at retail outlets around the state as it continues to introduce more people to Oregon’s high desert. And incredibly, today’s effort remains driven by volunteers who donate their time, talent and energy every year.

The inspiration for the calendar will always be Oregon’s high desert, but it is ONDA’s mission that infuses the project with more meaning and importance. “ONDA’s work in conserving and protecting Oregon’s wild desert was and is something that resonated with me as a landscape photographer,” says contributing

pro Sean Bagshaw. In return, the calendar has been hugely instrumental in furthering ONDA’s mission. These images resonate, even with those who have not yet had a chance to visit these awe-inspiring places.

As more photographers become involved and shooting and editing techniques advance, the Wild Desert Calendar will just keep getting better and better. With the calendar already eagerly anticipated each year by ONDA members, Central Oregonians and increasingly in west-side communities, the shared hope is that it will continue to reach more people and shine a light on the need to protect, defend and restore Oregon’s high desert.

In other words, Davis and the rest of the Wild Desert Calendar crew hope to make a “desert rat” out of you yet.

Special thanks to the following calendar contributors:



The original Wild Desert Calendar Crew in 2004 – Thomas Osborne, Jim Davis, Mike Sequeira, Bruce Jackson and Greg Burke.

Study Shows Economic Benefits of Protected Lands

By Chris Hansen
Owyhee Coordinator

Permanent protection of public land in the Owyhee Canyonlands could boost the economy of Malheur County.

So says a recent study by Headwaters Economics, a firm that specializes in analyzing the impact of public lands on communities throughout the West. ONDA asked the economics research group to look at how Malheur County, which encompasses the Owyhee country, compares to 11 similar counties in the West on per capita income, jobs and other factors. The data indicates that protecting the Owyhee Canyonlands could increase per capita income while sustaining the agricultural sector of the economy already in place.

The impetus for the report came out of ONDA's work with local residents. Over cups of coffee, during field trips and before service clubs, we've made an effort to listen to citizens' concerns about what potential land protection might mean for them. We commissioned the study to offer a clearer picture of what some form of permanent protection in the Owyhee Canyonlands



Rafting the Owyhee. Communities with protected lands have higher incomes, a study by Headwaters Economics finds. Photo: Leon Werdinger

might mean for the people and businesses in the area.

Headwaters's research, which uses U.S. Department of Commerce information and other data, says rural, western counties with national parks, national monuments or other permanent protections on federal land enjoy above-average job growth and higher levels of per capita income. On average, for every 10,000 acres of protected land a rural, western county has, per capita income increased by \$436.

To offer a comparison to Malheur County, Headwaters

pinpointed 11 other counties with key similarities, including a population of less than 35,000, a drive of more than 45 minutes to a commercial airport and a similar desert landscape. The major difference was the comparison counties also are home to at least 500,000 acres of protected public lands. The peer counties included Kane County, Utah, home to the Grand Staircase Escalante National Monument. Owyhee County in Idaho also made the list: The Owyhee country there became wilderness in 2009. The study found that the counties

with permanent federal land protections on average have grown faster, sustained their existing agricultural sector better, experienced less economic hardship and benefited more from travel and tourism business activity than Malheur County.

In addition, a significant economic strength for each of the comparison counties is its service sector, which includes everything from doctors and engineers to teachers and accountants. This economic sector is also of increasing importance in Malheur County, where it -- along with government -- accounted for all long-term net employment gains over the past four decades. Traditional industries like logging and ranching still contribute to rural economies, although not in the same magnitude they did previously.

The research provides valuable insight into the economy of Malheur County. On the whole, the study suggests protecting landscapes like the Owyhee Canyonlands is beneficial for rural counties, helping growing new economic sectors while aiding existing ones. We look forward to sharing this research with others in the coming months.

Oregonians Gain New Public Land on the John Day River

By Ben Gordon
John Day Coordinator

September 25 marked the opening of Cottonwood Canyon State Park, which exemplifies high desert beauty with its steep canyons and grassy bluffs framing the main stem of the John Day. What had been the Murtha Family Ranch, an active cattle operation for decades, is now a public treasure as Oregon's second largest state park thanks to ONDA's partners at the Western Rivers Conservancy and Wyss Foundation.

Anyone familiar with this stretch of the John Day River knows what a benefit to conservation and recreation these lands represent. The once off-limits cattle ranch is now an 8,000-acre playground for hiking, camping, boating, horseback riding, fishing and hunting. The park also adjoins 10,000 acres of BLM land that the public can access.

On their own, Cottonwood and the adjoining public lands give desert lovers reason to celebrate. What magnifies this news is the prospect of having a 53,000-acre wilderness area directly upstream from the new state park. ONDA's Lower John Day Wilderness Proposal, which seeks to add wilderness designation to the canyons along a stretch of the Wild and Scenic John Day River, would provide permanent protection while greatly enhancing conservation and recreation opportunities near Cottonwood Canyon State Park. If you are interested in seeing this happen, get involved! Contact Ben Gordon at ben@onda.org.



Cottonwood Canyon State Park, once the Murtha Family Ranch, covers 8,000 acres on the John Day River, close to ONDA's Lower John Day Wilderness Proposal. Photo: Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

LEGAL DOCKET

By Mac Lacy
Senior Attorney

Steens Mountain is one of the most valued places in all of Oregon, yet it continues to face threats. ONDA is continuing in its defense of Steens to preserve its open spaces and ecological integrity.

Part of that effort now focuses on an appeal of a recent District Court decision. In August, District Judge Michael Mosman deferred to BLM's environmental review of proposed transmission lines across the landscape—part of a plan for an industrial-scale wind facility on Steens.

Yet the feasibility of the wind project is now more in doubt than ever. Earlier this year, the developer withdrew its application to connect to the interstate power grid, meaning that it would be unable to deliver power generated by the project. Also, Southern California Edison cancelled the power purchase agreement, leaving the project with no buyer for its power. Based on these developments, the developer, Columbia Energy Partners, conceded in September that the project was “dead”—but qualified, “for now.”

ONDA and its partners maintain in the appeal that the BLM failed to properly grapple with harm that would accrue to Greater sage-grouse, bald eagles and other species if wind turbines and transmission corridors slice across Steens Mountain. Among other things, the court accepted BLM's assertion that sage-grouse in Oregon are “secure” and “doing relatively well.” Yet the sage-grouse is suffering an all-time population low. Study after study by leading sage-grouse scientists and even the Department of the Interior's own expert agency, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, confirms that projects like this will continue the steady fragmentation and destruction of irreplaceable sagebrush habitat.

On a positive note, BLM has withdrawn a proposal to carve up Steens Mountain with more than 100 miles of constructed roads, following legal pressure from ONDA.

In June 2011, BLM quietly issued a decision to “maintain” 133 miles of vehicle routes scattered across hundreds of thousands of acres on Steens Mountain. The agency “categorically excluded” the project from detailed environmental review typically required under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

When ONDA learned of the “CX” decision, we pointed out to BLM that NEPA forbids excluding wide-ranging, landscape-scarring

“ONDA and its partners maintain in the appeal that the BLM failed to properly grapple with harm that would accrue to Greater sage-grouse, bald eagles and other species if wind turbines and transmission corridors slice across Steens Mountain.”



projects such as this—particularly given the project's location within a congressionally protected area. The CX decision approved blading, grading and other construction on routes that ONDA had documented as primitive or in some cases nonexistent. Many of BLM's lines on the map sliced through citizen-inventoried roadless areas and irreplaceable sagebrush habitat. The project would have facilitated weed invasions and lower nest success rates for sage-grouse hens, among other threats—without meaningful environmental review or public input.

BLM blocked our request to deal with the project in the context of discussions following our successful challenge to the agency's Steens Mountain Travel Management Plan. In that case, ONDA established that Interior illegally approved a BLM travel plan establishing 555 miles of driving routes on the mountain. ONDA data showed many of the routes did not actually exist, and the Steens Act prohibits establishing new motorized routes on Steens Mountain. That left ONDA with no choice but to file a new lawsuit in December 2012. Two months later, the agency withdrew the CX decision. After verifying that the BLM had not yet done any work on the most sensitive primitive or non-existent routes, ONDA voluntarily dismissed its case in May 2013.

The BLM has not, however, withdrawn other, identical decisions approving maintenance on about 600 other miles of routes scattered throughout the rest of the agency's Burns District. ONDA expects a decision this winter on its lawsuit challenging those CX decisions.

Act now: Speak Out to Protect Greater Sage-Grouse

BLM Releases Draft Plan
– Your Comments Needed

By Dan Morse
Conservation Director

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) – which manages more than 10 million acres in Oregon where Greater sage-grouse continue to face impacts from development, roads and poor grazing management practices – released draft plans in late November to protect the imperiled bird throughout the state. When final, these pivotal plans will shape public lands management for the sage-grouse's remaining habitat and determine its future in southeast Oregon.

The BLM plans, as well as efforts by the state of Oregon, eastern Oregon counties and a wide array of stakeholders, are all part of the push to protect the sage-grouse and perhaps prevent an Endangered Species Act listing. ONDA has been at the forefront of efforts to protect sage-grouse for many years, and we are advocating for the strongest possible protections for the species and its truly important high desert habitat. We are urging significant improvements to the BLM's draft sage-grouse plans, including designating large-scale conservation areas managed primarily to benefit sage-grouse and other wildlife, strengthening mitigation measures where development must occur and reducing the total amount of habitat disturbance caused by roads and other developments.

ONDA needs your help in urging the BLM to strengthen its plans. Tell the BLM how important sage-grouse are to Oregon's high desert and that we must significantly improve sage-grouse protections.

To learn more and submit your comments to the BLM, visit the ONDA website at:
ONDA.org/sagegrouse

Success Stories from the ‘Department of De-Fence’

By Jefferson Davis
Stewardship Coordinator

Ah, the sweet smell of success. After decades of hard work, the volunteers of ONDA's Wilderness Stewardship Program are reaching three exciting long-term milestones in eastern Oregon, and these achievements signal the opening of a number of new opportunities.

What does success in eastern Oregon look like? Well, at Hart Mountain it looks like a growing population of pronghorn roaming free over a fenceless landscape. In 2012, ONDA and other collaborators celebrated the complete removal of all 250 (or more) internal fences within Hart Mountain National Antelope Refuge. These fences were a source of mortality and injury to the local populations of pronghorn and Greater sage-grouse. The removal of these eyesores is also a strong signal of the refuge's commitment to keep this core sage-grouse habitat cow-free. It took nearly two decades, and seemed impossible at first, but now it is done.

What's next at Hart Mountain? In 2014 volunteers will continue to help the refuge monitor sage-grouse, and we have added a trip in the fall to assist with monitoring mule deer

ONDA Field Trips

Look for our full calendar of volunteer work trips by February 14 at:

ONDA.org/volunteer

populations. Perhaps the most exciting project at the refuge is a new collaboration to retrofit the existing outdated boundary fence, which is required to keep cattle and feral horses out of the refuge. The work will raise the lower fence wire to 18 inches and replace it with smooth/barbless wire so pronghorn can crawl under it safely. We will also be attaching hanging reflectors to the fence where it is near a lek to help sage-grouse avoid colliding with it. Studies have shown that these reflectors reduce fence-caused mortality by 75 percent.

At Steens Mountain, ONDA and other groups are zeroing in on the final year or two of fence removal within the cow-free wilderness. Again, we have already shifted to the next phase of work in the area by using volunteers to comb the landscape to help the BLM finalize maps of where the remaining fences are, and to catalog all the cache piles of fence material for long haul out on horse and mule back. Current BLM estimates are that fence dismantling will be completed next year.

And at Pine Creek Conservation Area, ONDA volunteers and staff have mapped and dismantled all the old interior fences. One more trip next year will finish it off until land swaps go through as part of the Spring Basin Wilderness implementation. Just like at Hart Mountain, this fence removal work signifies the conservation area's strong commitment to remaining "cow free" and to continue the strong trajectory of habitat



ABOVE: A standing O in celebration of pulling out the last of more than 250 miles of barbed wire from Hart Mountain. Photo: Jim Davis



LEFT: In the backcountry of Pine Creek Conservation Area, volunteers show how much fence a determined group can get rid of in a morning. Photo: Larry Ward



Pronghorn antelope.

recovery occurring there. Work has already begun on hauling out piles of fence materials for recycling, and exciting new demonstration projects have begun. Everyone now knows that ONDA volunteers are great at tackling seemingly impossible fence removal projects, but the demonstration projects at Pine Creek will show how volunteers and collaborations can be used even more creatively to restore flowing water and upland habitat to backcountry springs, reverse juniper expansion

and dramatically change riparian areas where standard techniques were failing.

These are exciting times for ONDA's Wilderness Stewardship Program. We have gained confidence and skills, made powerful collaborations to achieve lofty goals and are riding that momentum to topple the next round of seemingly insurmountable tasks.

What will the future hold? Come join our team and find out. Lend a hand, have fun and make a real difference.

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Bill Crowell of Seattle joined ONDA in 2006. Here he shares what ONDA means to him.

Q. What attracted you to ONDA?

A. After retiring, I was looking for something that involved hard work and the outdoors, where I could contribute to restoring natural habitat. When I stumbled upon the ONDA website...it conveyed the majesty, power and mystery that I had felt growing up on the edge of the sagebrush desert of south-west Idaho.



Bill Crowell

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

A. Many parts of the Oregon desert appeal to me, but my favorite is the Hole in the Ground on the Owyhee River. My godparents, Conley and Stacia Davis, had a ranch there during the '30s and '40s raising horses for the remount service. It is truly a special place, and there is true magic viewing it from the rim.

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

A. The part of the ONDA community I know best is the volunteers. They seem always to feel comfortable in one another's company and are dedicated to restoring the desert. Many are "annual friends" who see one another but once a year yet act as though it were only last week. I don't think I have ever found it so easy to become part of a group.

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

A. Both ONDA and the desert would benefit if ONDA was able to draw in Oregonians from a wider range of backgrounds, outlooks and age ranges. Many folks, west and east of the Cascades, have difficulty understanding the importance of the natural desert in our lives. ONDA's primary mission is – and should be – restoring and conserving the natural ecosystems of the desert. But I would hope there could also be attention to preserving the human historical and cultural heritage to help us better understand what the relationship between humans and the desert has been, is now, and should become.

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



ANNOUNCEMENTS

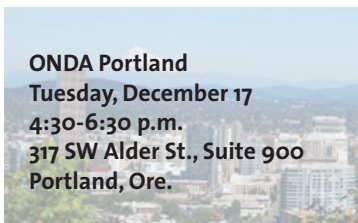
Welcome 2014 with Wild Desert Calendar!



The 2014 Wild Desert Calendar features stunning images from treasured Oregon landscapes, including the Owyhee Canyonlands, John Day Basin, Steens Mountain and Deschutes River. Check out all the wild beauty today – get your calendar online, at local vendors throughout Oregon or at ONDA's Bend office: ONDA.org/calendar

Many thanks to Devon Comstock for September's quote, excerpted from her short story, 'House of the Birds'

Save the Date: ONDA Portland Office Open House



ONDA Portland
Tuesday, December 17
4:30-6:30 p.m.
317 SW Alder St., Suite 900
Portland, Ore.

Mark your calendars and join ONDA (and office mates American Rivers and Pacific Rivers Council) for a holiday open house in our new downtown Portland location! Sip Salmon Safe beer and enjoy Owyhee Canyonlands artwork and photos while staff share about our vital desert conservation work. Cheers to wilderness!

Staff News



The Owyhee Canyonlands finds a place in Portland! Our Owyhee organizer, Chris Hansen, recently moved to Bridgetown to build more votes, visibility and momentum for Oregon's high desert. Visit him downtown at 317 S.W. Alder St., Suite 900 or contact him at chansen@onda.org / 971.244.0836 x301 to see how you can help ONDA on the west side.

Your Donations at Work in Oregon's High Desert

Thanks to you ...

Seven work trips to restore waterways, pull obsolete fence and perform other critical work in the high desert have taken place since July. Don't miss the release of the 2014 volunteer trip calendar: Sign up to receive email alerts at ONDA.org.

Hundreds of people learned more about ONDA at 10 events in four months and more than 300 became new ONDA members in 2013. Join the fun at ONDA.org/events.

More than 1 million acres of wild desert surrounding Hart Mountain and the Lakeview area was inventoried in 2013 to encourage new protections that would benefit wildlife, including Greater sage-grouse and pronghorn antelope.

68 meetings with high desert landowners and discussions with 56 businesses moved campaigns to protect 5 million acres of wildlands forward in 2013.

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



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OREGON DESERT TRAIL

ONDA Plans to Publish Trail Information

Last summer, outdoor enthusiasts tuned in as Sage Clegg made the maiden trek across ONDA's 800-mile Oregon Desert Trail.

This summer, they will be able to experience it for themselves.

In November, ONDA submitted the completed guide material, maps and GPS data to public land management agencies. Shortly into the new year, we intend to make it all available to the public.

These steps are the culmination of the Oregon Desert Trail project, which spanned more than three years. The trail runs from the Oregon Badlands Wilderness just outside Bend to the Owyhee Canyonlands near the Idaho border.

In ONDA's submission, we have asked that the proposed trail be recognized as a "Connecting Trail" to the existing Fremont National Recreation Trail and the Oregon High Desert National Recreation Trail under the National Trails Act. Such recognition would highlight nonmotorized recreation opportunities in Oregon's high desert,



Sage Clegg and Adam Drummer hike in the Steens during her 800-mile trek. Photo: Jeremy Fox

ensure that the trail is considered in land use planning, add the route to maps and potentially create stewardship opportunities and resources for signage and maintenance.

We soon hope to post the material on ONDA's website, complete with downloadable PDFs. Starting in the spring, we also

hope explorers will share stories of hiking, biking and horseback riding Oregon's newest long-distance trail.

We are grateful to volunteers and donors who made this dream possible of a route connecting eastern Oregon's most scenic and ecologically significant places.

View ONDA's film about the trail, "Sage Steppes: 800 Miles on the Oregon Desert Trail," at: www.youtube.com/watch?v=P-uLPtFAUBE



A DESERT LOVE AFFAIR

GIVE BACK TO THE HIGH DESERT

Do you remember the moment when you first fell in love with Oregon's wild desert? Perhaps it was the awe and deep quietude of a wide-open vista. Maybe it was during a visit to Steens Mountain, the Badlands or the Owyhee Canyonlands.

Within each of these individual moments lies a shared love of place that unites ONDA's dedicated donors. Honor that memory and the places you treasure when you make your special year-end donation today.

Turn your passion into action! **Give at [ONDA.org](https://www.onda.org) or via the envelope included in this newsletter.**

Thank you for standing alongside ONDA to protect, defend and restore the places you love. Oregon's high desert is a wilder place because of you.