

The background of the entire cover is a photograph of a desert landscape. In the foreground, there is a calm body of water, Lake Abert, which reflects the sky and the distant hills. The middle ground shows rolling, dry hills with sparse vegetation. In the background, there are more hills, including a prominent, rounded mountain peak. The sky is filled with soft, white clouds, and the overall lighting suggests a late afternoon or early morning setting with a warm, golden glow.

OREGON NATURAL DESERT ASSOCIATION

# DESERT RAMBLINGS

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SPRING + SUMMER 2023 | VOLUME 36 • NO.1

## The Wonders of Lake Abert

The only hypersaline lake in Oregon and the largest saline lake in the Pacific Northwest, Lake Abert is an oasis for migratory birds in Oregon's high desert.





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Backdrop: Wildflowers in the Owyhee  
Photo: Barb Rumer

## OVERHEARD

“I love many things about the high desert but probably the one thing that encapsulates it best is the smell of sagebrush after a rainstorm.”

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Photo: Jim Davis



Warner Lakes from Hart Mountain. Photo: James Parsons

Dear Oregon desert advocate,

Across the West and across the steppe, a chorus of voices continues the call to increase the pace and scale of conservation across millions of acres of federal lands. Whether you are a reader of the *New York Times* or the *East Oregonian* – or both – you have likely seen similar pleas from writers of all backgrounds: the time for action is now. We need bold congressional and Presidential action to conserve our public lands, waters and wildlife today and for the future.

With more than 35 years of your steadfast support and unwavering commitment behind us, Oregon Natural Desert Association continues to press forward on landscape conservation proposals across the high desert, each uniquely-tailored to meet the ecological, cultural and community needs in each corner of the region.

While these proposals in the Owyhee Canyonlands, Sutton Mountain and Greater Hart-Sheldon can quickly get wrapped in a wordy soup of wonky lingo — RMPs, ACECs, 202s and more — the goals are simple and clear: to conserve the desert's most important habitats and improve management to support thriving ecosystems.

In this issue of Desert Ramblings, we highlight efforts to restore Lake Abert, one of the Northwest's most important stopovers for migratory birds along the Pacific Flyway. We explore the vast sagebrush sea of the Greater Hart-Sheldon, where restoration projects are woven together with our conservation advocacy to conserve migration corridors for the majestic pronghorn and protect some of Oregon's richest habitat for the greater sage-grouse.

While doggedly pursuing these opportunities, ONDA is also digging in to defend against some of the newest threats to the high desert. As described on page 4, the rush to mine lithium at McDermitt Creek, while fueled by a worthy push toward decarbonization, threatens to bring the same toxic legacy and impacts to people, water and wildlife that is all too common in industrial mining operations across the West.

Pursuing these incredible opportunities and tackling these vexing challenges is possible only because of your support in all its forms: in the desert, in the office, at events, through advocacy and via your generous giving. You fuel our continued work to bring your voice, your values and your passion to conservation of Oregon's magical, fragile and simply spectacular landscapes and ecosystems.

Thank you for embracing opportunities to conserve Oregon's high desert, now and always.

For a wild desert,

Ryan Houston  
Executive Director





# The Balance of Life at McDermitt Creek

The campaign to defend this wildlife haven from industrial mining is heating up

by ONDA Staff



Photo: Gary Calicott

Standing at the edge of the McDermitt Caldera, rolling sagebrush hills extend far off in every direction to where greater sage-grouse lek and Lahontan cutthroat trout swim in the cool waters of McDermitt Creek. Lizards dart from shrub to shrub amongst the brilliant wildflower blossoms while a chorus of birds trill and buzz through the warm air.

When observing the bounty of plant and animal life here, it's clear that all of the players — from the fungi in the soil to the trout in the streams and the sage-grouse in the sagebrush — fill their niche in the ecosystem without interruption.

Unfortunately, industrial lithium mining is now proposed in this wildlife haven. Lithium-ion batteries are being touted as a solution to climate change, and international mining companies are exploring McDermitt Creek as a domestic lithium source. But is this the right place to dig huge pit mines?

Crews are conducting exploratory drilling and seek to expand those efforts to create nearly 30 miles of “temporary” roads in intact sagebrush steppe and pump up to 30,000 gallons of water per day to support their operations. In a place where the natural world is in balance, this major disturbance would have a devastating impact.

ONDA is prepared to defend these public lands from poorly sited mining for as long as it takes. In the months ahead, ONDA's campaign will operate on several fronts, including engaging the public in this critical work. We'll keep you posted on volunteer opportunities to document wildlife, plant, habitat and other values that would suffer from the damaging impacts of industrial scale mining. ♦

**You can learn more about this issue at**  
[ONDA.org/lithium-mining-in-oregon](https://onda.org/lithium-mining-in-oregon)

# Caring for the Lands and Wildlife You Love

Volunteering with ONDA is your key to happiness in 2023

by Gena Goodman-Campbell, *Stewardship Director*

In 2023, Oregon Natural Desert Association is offering a wide variety of opportunities for volunteers to get out into the high desert to care for the lands and wildlife you love. In addition to stewarding Oregon's natural areas, research indicates that your volunteer work is good for your mental health and happiness. Read on for some highlights of ONDA's spring volunteer trips and projects that are a good fit for a range of interests and ability levels.

## **If you're looking for a weekend opportunity:**

An annual spring favorite, ONDA's April 20-23 tree planting project on the South Fork Crooked River is an accessible and flexible volunteer trip. Volunteers will work together to plant 5,000 trees in pre-dug holes on the banks of this key tributary of the Crooked River. Volunteers are welcome to attend this trip for anywhere between one to four days. A variety of tasks with varying levels of intensity ensures there is a job for everyone.

**If it's your first-time volunteering:** Join ONDA on May 13 for a day trip to improve trails in the Oregon Badlands Wilderness. In partnership with the Bureau of Land Management, we will close user-created trails by placing debris and vegetation in trail scars. These single day experiences are de-

signed to introduce people to ONDA's restoration work and inspire a deeper connection to Oregon's high desert. Five spots will be held for first-time volunteers until three weeks before the trip.

## **If you're ready to get deep into the Sagebrush Sea:**

Make fences friendlier for wildlife and improve an important migration corridor for pronghorn antelope east of Hart Mountain National Antelope



94 degrees, covered in dust and still smiling — ONDA volunteers Jeff Noel and Yichin Flora Chiu know the secret to happiness. *Photo: Jim Harrison*

Refuge on ONDA's Beatys Butte Fence Retrofit trip May 11-14. Barbed wire fences throughout the high desert pose risks to pronghorn and other wildlife. Low-flying sage grouse are known to become entangled in fences. Pronghorn and deer may be unable to cross fences, which limit both their daily movement and their seasonal migrations. Volunteers will remove barbed wire and replace it with smooth, wildlife-friendly wire. ♦

ONDA SPRING  
TRIPS & PROJECTS

Registration for ONDA's spring trips and projects is open now, so visit [ONDA.org/trips](https://onda.org/trips) to learn more and sign up for the trips listed above or one of our many other volunteer opportunities. *Photo: ONDA Staff*





# The Greater Hart-Sheldon: Oregon's Desert Wildlife Stronghold

by Joanna Zhang, *Wildlife Coordinator*

The “Land Between” is a vitally important expanse of sagebrush habitat that connects Hart Mountain National Antelope Refuge in southeastern Oregon to the Sheldon National Wildlife Refuge in northern Nevada. It is also among the greatest conservation opportunities in all of the Sagebrush Sea.



*Photo: Angela Bohlke*

The Land Between is 400,000 acres of public land at the center of the Greater Hart-Sheldon, a region that supports hundreds of species of native plants and animals. Along with the two refuges, the Land Between has been identified as one of six habitat strongholds remaining for the imperiled greater sage-grouse. It is also an essential migration corridor for pronghorn antelope. Thousands of pronghorn have been counted moving about the landscape in spring and autumn. The latest research has also identified the Land Between as a core habitat for pygmy rabbit, as well as important winter habitat for mule deer. Both species have suffered habitat loss in Oregon and around the West.

Oregon Natural Desert Association has been committed to conserving and restoring the Greater Hart-Sheldon for decades. In addition to promoting opportunities to strengthen conservation management, our restoration investment in the area includes removing more than 300 miles of barbed wire fence that can injure and trap wildlife from Hart Mountain National Antelope Refuge. Outside the refuge in the Land Between, ONDA is surveying and modifying fence in partnership with the Bureau of Land Management to facilitate wildlife movement. We're also embarking on an innovative restoration plan for a conservation property in the region that incorporates the Traditional Ecological Knowledge of the Northern Paiute people.

ONDA volunteers will have opportunities to participate in this restoration work in 2023. Registration is now open for a fence project in the Land Between this May that will reconnect pronghorn migration routes by making fences safer for these fleet-footed creatures to cross.

On the conservation front, ONDA is engaged in multiple, complementary planning processes and initiatives in eastern Oregon that could provide greater protections for pronghorn, sage-grouse, mule deer and other flora and fauna in the Land Between. In an unprecedented convergence of federal and state policies, both the Bureau of Land Management and the state of Oregon are updating existing resource man-



agement and wildlife plans, each developing new strategies with an eye toward preserving habitat connectivity in the high desert. ONDA is especially highlighting the need and opportunity to conserve the Land Between in these plans. We look forward

to participating in as many as seven planning processes affecting this irreplaceable landscape over the next two years. Stay tuned for opportunities to advocate for wildlife conservation in the months ahead. ♦



Photo: Jim Davis



Photo: USFWS



Photo: Phil Mitchell



Photo: Greg Burke

*The Land Between Hart Mountain and Sheldon refuges supports a 400,000-acre migratory corridor for pronghorn, as well as key habitat for sage-grouse, pygmy rabbit and mule deer. The majority of this corridor is on public land managed by the Bureau of Land Management. The agency is currently underway with multiple, overlapping planning processes that could provide essential new protections for pronghorn, sage-grouse and other wildlife on this landscape.*





## The Wonders of Lake Abert

The only hypersaline lake in Oregon and the largest saline lake in the Pacific Northwest, Lake Abert is an oasis for migratory birds in Oregon's high desert.

by Anne White, *Wildlands Coordinator*

Birders and nature lovers have appreciated the wonders of Lake Abert for decades. With hundreds of thousands of shorebirds, waterbirds and waterfowl all congregating here at once, it can be a raucous place as the birds migrate north and south along the Pacific Flyway. But why here? How did this salt lake become an indispensable stop for impressive numbers of migratory birds?

In the cooler and wetter ice age, Lake Abert, Summer Lake, and the Chewaucan Marsh were part of a larger Lake Chewaucan that was several hundred feet deep and covered 500 square miles. Basin and Range faulting seven million years ago produced the elongated and shallow Lake Abert and uplifted the iconic Abert Rim to stand more than 2,500 feet above the lake. Although the lake now covers a much smaller area of 64 square miles, Lake Abert is still the sixth largest lake in Oregon.

Lake Abert is Oregon's sixth largest lake, stretching 15 miles in length along the iconic Abert Rim, and one of just three hypersaline lakes in the United States providing food and habitat for hundreds of thousands of migratory birds along the Pacific Flyway.

*Photo: Tyson Fisher*

Lake Abert's primary water source is the Chewaucan River, which originates in the Fremont-Winema National Forest near Gearhart Mountain. As a terminal lake, all water that flows into the lake stays in the lake and is lost only through evaporation as summer temperatures rise. Millennia of this cyclical evaporation have accumulated high concentrations of salt in Lake Abert, and today's lake is saltier than the ocean. Lakes with salt concentrations greater than five percent, such as Lake Abert, are classified as "hypersaline" lakes. Only three hypersaline lakes exist in the western United States: the Great Salt Lake, Mono Lake and Lake Abert.

These rare salty ecosystems are inhospitable to all freshwater organisms. However, in Lake Abert, two invertebrate species have adapted to thrive in these saline conditions. Here, brine shrimp and alkali flies occur in unfathomable numbers.



In optimal conditions, brine shrimp and alkali fly populations have been estimated at 300 billion individuals each — a biomass that totals more than that of an adult blue whale. This abundant food supply is crucial to fueling migratory birds along the Pacific Flyway to reach distant habitats as far away as Alaska and Argentina. Only the Great Salt Lake surpasses Lake Abert in importance to migratory bird species.

Of the more than 80 species of birds that stopover at the lake along their migrations, Wilson's phalarope, American avocets, and western sandpiper are among the most abundant. As many as 330,000 Wilson's phalaropes, 40,000 American avocets, and 15,000 sandpipers have been counted at Lake Abert. Nearly one-third of the interior population of the imperiled western snowy plover breed at Lake Abert. Even more bird species can be found along the shoreline and upland habitats, creating a unique and rewarding birders paradise in the high desert.

## A Balance Upset

Lake Abert's delicate ecosystem depends on consistent and reliable fresh water supplies to maintain optimal salinity to support the complex food web that feeds the abundant birdlife. Unfortunately, reduced water flow into the lake over the years has increased its salinity, affecting shrimp and fly production and even drying up the lake in some years.

In 2014, the lake went dry for the first time since the 1930s. Brine shrimp and alkali flies failed to emerge to the detriment of tens of thousands of hungry migratory birds. Low lake levels persisted for several years, finally appearing to recover in 2017. However, since 2018 the lake's water level has been declining and in 2021 the lake dried out again. In 2022, we saw the same situation for the lake: little to no water, sparse food, and far fewer birds.



American avocet are the largest shorebird to stop at Lake Abert. Usually arriving after breeding, avocets are easy to spot with their rust-colored head and long, curved bills. *Photo: Ron Larson*

Birds flock in the thousands at Lake Abert to feast on brine shrimp and alkali fly populations that number in the billions. In an effort to replenish fat reserves, some birds more than double their weight gorging on the abundant invertebrate species. *Photo: Ron Larson*



Snowy plover nest in the sand or alkali crusts, creating inconspicuous depressions that are particularly susceptible to predation and disturbance by human activity. *Photo: Ron Larson*



Several factors have conspired to reduce the amount of water reaching Lake Abert. Water rights have been over-appropriated, watershed monitoring is limited, and a poorly regulated reservoir has reduced flows from the Chewaucan River to the lake for decades. Compounding these management issues, drought and climate change have affected water availability throughout the region. With less than 15 inches of annual precipitation falling on the lake and an annual evaporation rate of 40 inches, Lake Abert operates at a deficit every year. These natural conditions mean the lake relies on inflows from the Chewaucan River to maintain water levels and optimal salinity.

## Can We Save Lake Abert?

While Lake Abert has been a conservation priority for ONDA and our community for years, a round of investigative reporting last year thrust the plight of this irre-

placeable ecosystem into the spotlight, increasing public awareness and spurring action at the state legislature and responsible state agencies. ONDA and our partners are working to ensure that decisionmakers are aware of the critical need to restore Lake Abert's water. As a first step, we have requested the State of Oregon improve data collection and monitoring to support better science-based watershed management.

We are also grateful for unprecedented new federal interest in saline lakes. In the waning days of 2022, Congress enacted and the President signed the Saline Lake Ecosystems in the Great Basin States Program Act. Sponsored by Oregon Sens. Jeff Merkley and Ron Wyden, the new program is an unprecedented federal investment in understanding these rare and irreplaceable ecosystems across the Great Basin, including Lake Abert. The more we know about saline lakes, the better we can manage and conserve them. ♦



Salt accumulates at the desiccated southern end of Lake Abert in 2014 while what little water remains appears red from an archaea bloom. *Photo: Ron Larson*





Alkali flies float in dense patches on the water, providing abundant food sources for more than 80 species of waterbirds, including Wilson's phalarope. *Photo: Ron Larson*



Brine shrimp feed, swim, and breath simultaneously utilizing their pleopods — feather-like appendages that move them through the water in a wave-like motion scooping water from their head to rear. *Photo: Ron Larson*

## IF YOU HAVE A QUESTION

about Lake Abert, chances are Ron Larson will know the answer. Ron first visited Lake Abert on a high school field trip in 1965 and was immediately enamored by the abundant “sea monkeys” swimming in the salty water. After earning a PhD in marine sciences, Ron worked for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Klamath Falls for nearly 30 years focusing on water development and endangered species conservation. In 2009, Ron’s curiosity drew him back to Lake Abert and he began devoting weekends to traveling to the lake to monitor conditions and observe the birdlife. He has fond memories watching sandpipers probe in the mud mere inches away and hyperactive phalaropes stalking flies on the water’s surface.

Ron has published numerous studies on the unique ecology of the lake and declining water levels, contributing greatly to our knowledge of this extraordinary, now imperiled ecosystem. Ron continues to conduct bird surveys, monitor lake levels, and advocate for conservation of this vital saline ecosystem.

If you’d like to read any of Ron’s published articles on the lake, head over to our website: [ONDA.org/lake-abert-resources](https://onda.org/lake-abert-resources)

LEARN MORE ABOUT  
LAKE ABERT

ONDA’s website covers the place, problems, and solutions: [ONDA.org/lake-abert](https://onda.org/lake-abert)  
Male and female Wilson’s phalarope. *Photo: J. Hertz*



# Species Spotlight: Big Sagebrush

By Rachel R. Renne

*PhD student, long-distance  
hiker and ONDA volunteer*

Throughout every trek in the high desert, one plant is a constant companion — the aromatic shrub, big sagebrush (*Artemisia tridentata* Nutt).

Easily recognized by its three small lobes at the end of each of its wedge-shaped leaves, sagebrush is native to 14 states. Big sagebrush is the most widespread of the *Artemisia* shrubs, with three of the major subspecies found in Oregon: basin big sagebrush, Wyoming big sagebrush and mountain big sagebrush.

Although in the past big sagebrush was deemed a nuisance, today it is considered a valuable part of the landscape. These shrubs engineer their habitat in surprising ways that improve conditions for both animals and plants. Big sagebrush helps maintain snowpack, promotes water infiltration, and its robust root system lifts water from deep within the soil. In addition to enhancing water resources, big sagebrush also concentrates nutrients in the soils directly beneath its canopy.

At first glance, landscapes defined by big sagebrush can appear as monotonous grey-green expanses of shrubs surging towards the

horizon. Stop and look closer and you will see that big sagebrush canopies support myriad species of grasses and wildflowers.

Whenever you find yourself in eastern Oregon in the company of this stalwart western shrub, appreciate how big sagebrush is quietly engineering and providing for the environment at your feet. ♦



Big sagebrush gets its scientific name (*Artemisia tridentata*) from the three small lobes at the end of each of its wedge-shaped leaves, which resemble a trident. Photo: Patrick Alexander



Wyoming big sagebrush south of Christmas Valley along the Oregon Desert Trail. Photo: Rachel Renne

**You can learn more about big sagebrush**  
at [ONDA.org/blog](https://onda.org/blog).



## A WARM WELCOME AND A FOND FAREWELL



In January, we welcomed *Michelle Smith* to our board of directors. Michelle works at the intersection of land, water, and communities. She serves as a Research Associate at the University of Oregon's

Environmental and Natural Resources Law Center where she focuses on water policy. She also serves as the Coalition of Oregon Land Trusts' Water Project Manager where she supports land trusts by building capacity to protect Oregon's waters for communities and ecosystems. Michelle holds a JD from Lewis and Clark Law School with a certificate in Environmental and Natural Resources. Drawn to the high desert by its big skies and sweeping landscapes teeming with life, history and culture, Michelle is a long-time ONDA volunteer and is excited to continue to support ONDA as a board member.

*"ONDA's successful mix of advocacy, stewardship, collaboration, and community engagement was on full display last week when on a rainy Wednesday evening a full theater of Portlanders joined ONDA's staff to learn about the Oregon high desert's unique wildflowers. From almost two hundred miles away, you could see people connecting with and caring about this unique landscape with big vistas teeming with life. These landscapes remind us of the rewards of sitting quietly and looking closely. I am excited to support ONDA's amazing staff and its awesome members in preserving and stewarding Oregon's high desert."*

Also in January, we bid farewell to *Lace Thornberg* who is leaving our staff after five years with ONDA focused on inspiring and engaging ONDA's community through communications. As our communications manager, each day Lace brought the desert to life for thousands of ONDA supporters through her endless creativity and impeccable writing and design. We offer our best wishes to Lace as she continues her career in conservation advocacy. ♦

### Get to know ONDA's board and staff

Visit [ONDA.org/about-us](https://onda.org/about-us)



## MEET MEET LIZ EVANS AND DEAN RUNYAN

### SUPPORT FOR ONDA COMES FROM A LOVE OF BIRDS AND LAND PRESERVATION

by Claire Cekander, Donor Relations Manager

Liz and Dean keep coming back to the desert for the birds. As self-described amateur birders, they cross the mountains from their home in Portland and venture into the desert to spend time at Malheur National Wildlife Refuge. They've explored other desert activities including fly fishing, gliding, and soaking up the solitude, but it is the abundance of avian species keeps them coming back. "The birds are unique out in Oregon's desert. We see a wider variety of species than what we see at home in Portland."

While Liz and Dean spend most of their time in the desert watching birds, they became ONDA members because they care about the fate of natural spaces and value the conservation of vast landscapes. "Conservation organizations are close to our hearts, and ONDA gives the desert the attention and support it needs."

When asked about why they donate to support ONDA's work, Liz and Dean answered like true conservationists who see the immense opportunity to conserve the desert, "The Oregon desert has vast undeveloped landscapes, an engaged audience of people who care, and a political environment favoring landscape protection." ♦

To make a steady contribution to high desert conservation and restoration, visit [ONDA.org/givemonthly](https://onda.org/givemonthly).





## A Victory for Science-Based Conservation

By Mac Lacy, *Senior Attorney*

When the Bureau of Land Management adopted its 2015 conservation plan for greater sage-grouse in Oregon, the agency committed to launching new scientific research on how sagebrush habitat is affected by livestock grazing in thirteen Research Natural Areas across the high desert. This research program was never initiated, so Oregon Natural Desert Association and our partners asked a federal court to intervene. A federal judge has now directed the bureau to close the “RNAs” to livestock grazing “without further delay.” Field study on these ecosystems will be valuable for supporting science-based management across millions of acres of sagebrush steppe in Oregon. ONDA and our partners were represented on this case by senior attorney Mac Lacy, assisted by public interest attorney Dave Becker.

Healthy sagebrush steppe at Hart Mountain National Antelope Refuge. *Photo: George Wuerthner*

## UPCOMING EVENTS

For all details and our full list of events, visit [ONDA.org/events](https://onda.org/events)



### The Land, its People and the Future

Monday, April 10 | 7:00 pm | Tower Theatre, Bend

Wednesday, April 12 | 7:00 pm | Hollywood Theater, Portland

Rounding out ONDA's 2023 High Desert Speaker Series, Wilson Wewa will share his reflections on the land, its people and the past, present and future of protecting the high desert in Oregon. Wilson Wewa is a storyteller, spiritual leader, and oral historian for the Warm Springs Paiute.

Learn more about the **High Desert Speakers Series** at [ONDA.org/speakerseries](https://onda.org/speakerseries)



### Sagebrush Sippers

July 2023 - Bend | July 2023 - Portland

Join fellow ONDA members and staff for these casual in-person community gatherings to mingle with other desert lovers and catch up on desert conservation efforts. Dates and more details to come. *Photo: ONDA staff*



# Marveling in the Malheur River Basin

by Beth Macinko, Stewardship Coordinator



## TRIP DETAILS

**Drive time:** 3.5 hours from Bend, OR; 6.5 hours from Portland, OR

**Spring+Summer highlights:** wildflowers, day hikes, dark skies, wildlife watching

From its headwaters in the Strawberry Mountains, the Malheur River flows southeast as the land transitions from forest to sagebrush. This river joins with the North Fork Malheur River in Juntura and continues east to its confluence with the Snake River near Ontario, Oregon. The Malheur River and its tributaries provide critical native fish and wildlife habitat, and the Malheur River Basin is an ideal desert destination for late spring or early summer camping trips.

For a visit to the Malheur River headwaters, stay at Malheur National Forest's Murray Campground or Big Creek Campground in Logan Valley. Hike the Lake Creek Trail north into the Strawberry Mountains or go south to the Malheur Ford Trailhead to hike along a designated Wild and Scenic section of the Malheur River. With an elevation around 5,000 feet, Logan Valley is usually snow-free by mid-May but be prepared for potentially frosty nights through June. Wildflowers are typically most abundant in late-June and you may even see salmon in the creeks in July. Although cut off from their historic habitat due to the Snake River dams, salmon are released annually into the Malheur River by the Burns Paiute Tribe to maintain their fishing tradition.

If you're seeking juniper and sagebrush hills, head north of Juntura to Chukar Park Recreation Site along the North Fork Malheur River. Bring your map and compass for cross country hikes on the surrounding lands to spot wildflowers blooming April through June and herds of mule deer and pronghorn that reside in this area during springtime. With a little research, you may find nearby hot springs to visit as well.

The Malheur River Basin is part of the traditional homelands of the Burns Paiute Tribe and today the Tribe owns two conservation properties that they manage for protecting culturally and ecologically significant species. The Tribe's Logan Valley property contains tributaries of the Malheur River and provides important native fish habitat. The Denny Jones property includes several miles of the Malheur River along with sagebrush covered uplands that are home to greater sage-grouse and other important sagebrush species.

Since 2011, ONDA has worked with the Burns Paiute Tribe to restore both properties. These projects include removing juniper to restore open sagebrush habitat and streamside planting of native trees and shrubs to improve waterways and enhanced wildlife habitat.

Visit [ONDA.org/our-approach/restore/burns-paiute-tribal-properties](https://onda.org/our-approach/restore/burns-paiute-tribal-properties) for more on ONDA's work with Burns Paiute Tribe.

**DRIVING DIRECTIONS:** For Logan Valley, head east from Bend on Highway 20 for 130 miles. Take 395 North for 42 miles to Seneca, turn right onto 1st Street/Forest Road 16 and continue 19 miles.

For Chukar Park, head east from Bend on Highway 20 for 187 miles. Upon entering Juntura, turn left onto Hildah Road and at the end of the block turn left onto Belulah Road and continue 6 miles. ♦

**For more desert outings, check out our Visitor's Guides at [ONDA.org/guides](https://onda.org/guides).**





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Protecting, defending and restoring Oregon's high desert since 1987. Learn more at [ONDA.org](https://onda.org).