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Cover photo: Red Buttes Wildlands, Siskiyou Crest. George Sexton.



KS WILD NEWS

The Journal of the Klamath-Siskiyou Wildlands Center
Winter 2013



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**DON'T GET CABIN FEVER —
JOIN KS WILD FOR
A HIKE IN THE REGION!**



Forrest English

UPCOMING HIKES

Sunday, January 20: Wild and Scenic Illinois River Hike
Join KS Wild for a wintery low-elevation hike to the beloved Illinois River to explore serpentine ecosystems and riparian forests. Carpool leaves Evo's Coffee in Ashland at 9am and Ray's Market in Selma at 10:30am. Bring rain gear and lunch for this moderate hike (length is weather dependent).

Saturday, February 23: BLM Heritage Forest Hike
Learn about our local BLM forests and hike the historic Sterling Mine Ditch trail. Carpool leaves Evo's Coffee in Ashland at 9am and the Country Market in Ruch at 10am. Bring rain gear and lunch. This is a moderate 7-mile hike.

Saturday March 30: Takelma Gorge Hike
Come explore the spectacular Takelma Gorge where the rushing Rogue River has carved a 150 foot deep canyon through volcanic rock. Carpool leaves Evo's Coffee in Ashland at 9:30am and Guitar Center in Medford at 10am. Come prepared for all weather and bring water and lunch for this easy 3-mile hike.

**CHECK OUT OUR NEW LNG DOCUMENTARY:
ROGUERIVERKEEPER.ORG/LNG**

KS WILD'S MISSION:

The Klamath-Siskiyou Wildlands Center is an advocate for the forests, wildlife and waters of the Klamath and Rogue River Basins of southwest Oregon and northwest California. We use environmental law, science, collaboration, education and grassroots organizing to defend healthy ecosystems and help build sustainable communities.

NEWS AROUND THE KS

Covering nearly 11 million acres, the Klamath-Siskiyou region stretches from the Umpqua in the north to California's wine country in the south, from the Pacific Ocean to the mighty Cascades. The mountain ranges and river valleys that define this region house renowned biological diversity and are some of the most spectacular in America.

1) GOFF FIRE

23,000-acre lightning strike fire in the Red Buttes wildlands. Klamath and Rogue-Siskiyou National Forest. See page 5.

2) ALYSSUM

OPB provides in-depth coverage of a noxious weed associated with mining that threatens biodiversity in the Siskiyou Wild Rivers Area. Visit kswild.org/alyssum.

3) PORCUPINE TIMBER SALE

Porcupine Creek, east of McCloud. Shasta-Trinity National Forest. Old-growth pine forest at-risk to logging.

4) COTTONWOOD TIMBER SALE

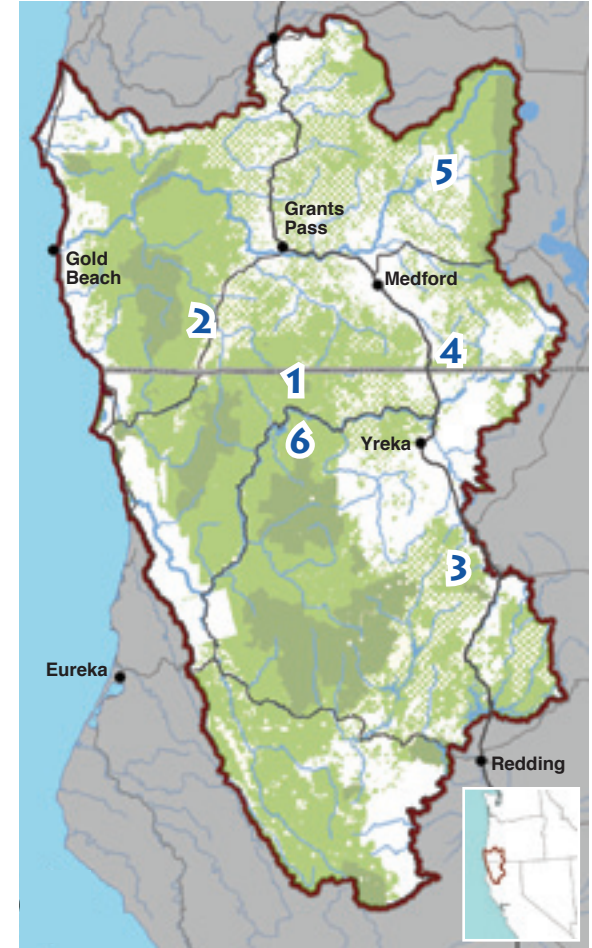
BLM near Little Hyatt Lake. Heavy equipment damages soils in wet weather. KS Wild and Soda Mountain Wilderness Council document impacts.

5) LNG

Pacific Connector has (again) filed an application with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), this time to export Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) out of Coos Bay. Rogue Riverkeeper and our allies submitted detailed comments for what FERC should be analyzing when reviewing this precedent-setting application to export U.S. natural gas.

6) JOHNNY O'NEIL & LITTLE CRONAN TIMBER SALES

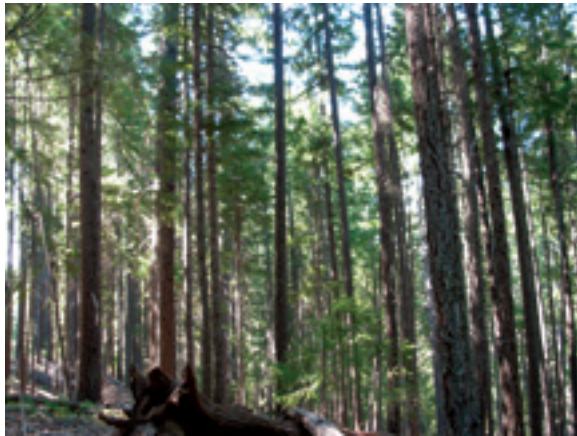
KS Wild successfully negotiated with the Klamath National Forest (KNF) to protect riparian forests from logging and promote small-diameter thinning and prescribed fire on the Mid-Klamath. See page 3. In contrast, the KNF is proposing to log old-growth and riparian forests on the North Fork Salmon River in the Little Cronan timber sale.



Joseph Vaile

HARD WORK PAYS OFF FOR KLAMATH FOREST RESTORATION

Ten years ago when we started monitoring timber sales on the Klamath National Forest, almost every project logged old-growth trees and harmed water quality. A decade of hard work has largely turned the Forest Service towards a more sustainable direction in which forest restoration rather than exploitation is emphasized.



George Sexton

MOVING FORWARD: There is no doubt that change for the better is occurring and that the future of our public lands is brighter thanks to public involvement and participation.

So when the Klamath National Forest recently proposed thinning and prescribed fire treatments to help restore the heavily logged forests in the McKinney-Horse Creek Watershed we were cautiously hopeful that the “Johnny O’Neil” project would do more good than harm.

The best way to ensure that proposed restoration is not a trojan horse for logging interests is to head out to the forest to “groundtruth” and then create a science-based paper trail that supports treatments that will improve forest and watershed health and opposes harmful practices.

In the case of the “Johnny O’Neil” project, we supported Forest Service efforts to thin previously logged plantations and small fire-suppressed trees, protect old-growth forests and restore fire to a fire-adapted landscape.

Unfortunately, the timber sale also called for building new streamside logging roads, “gap creation” clearcuts in riparian reserves, and logging adjacent to occupied spotted owl nests. So KS Wild and our friends at the Klamath Forest Alliance and the Environmental Protection Information Center filed a formal “objection” to those harmful aspects of the project.

In late September, we met with the Forest Service, and in response to our objection they agreed to implement the forest restoration activities and drop the harmful proposals.

The change from exploitation of forests to stewardship has been long and difficult, and it requires persistence, flexibility and vigilance. But there is no doubt that change for the better is occurring and that the future of our public lands is brighter thanks to public involvement and participation.

POST-ELECTION, STATE OF JEFFERSON

The mountains and rivers of the Klamath-Siskiyou overlap the State of Jefferson, named for the failed 1940s effort to establish a state in the California/Oregon border region. Now that the votes are in, what does the 2012 election mean for the mythical State of Jefferson?

OBAMA WINS SECOND TERM

President Obama did not take a deep interest in public land issues in his first term, but KS Wild is hopeful that more can be done in the coming years to protect our wildlands and rivers. With more than 60% of our region managed by the federal government, we need to ensure the Obama Administration engages on public lands policy in a positive, meaningful way.

WYDEN LIKELY TO TAKE OVER CHAIRMANSHIP

Diane Feinstein won her fourth term to represent California in the only U.S. Senate race in the KS. Since the Democrats held on to the Senate, Oregon’s Ron Wyden is now likely to assume chairmanship of the powerful Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee. Senator Wyden is an advocate for collaboration on environmental issues, which offers KS Wild and our partners the opportunity to have our voices heard loud and clear. He will likely take up county revenue reform, forest thinning, gas exports and public land protection proposals that he has advanced in the last three Congresses.

DEFAZIO, WALDEN LANDSLIDES; CALIFORNIA REDISTRICTING

In Oregon, Democrat Peter DeFazio easily beat Art Robinson, a well-funded Tea Party candidate. Greg Walden held on to the district that includes all of eastern and much of southern Oregon. Walden is in a leadership position in the U.S. House, which remains in Republican control. In California, Democrat Jared Huffman, a former environmental attorney, won in the 2nd congressional district. After redistricting, more of the western portion of California’s KS region was included in this environment-friendly district. Much of the eastern portion remains in a district won by Republican Doug LaMalfa, who will likely follow in the footsteps of his predecessor, Wally Herger.

WORK TO DO

While the U.S. Congress remains divided and politics continue to be divisive, KS Wild will be working to see durable long-term protection for old-growth forests and wild rivers in our region. We will be looking to stop the LNG export proposal in southern Oregon and protect areas like the Wild Rogue, Oregon Caves, Chetco River and the great wildlands in northern California. Throughout, we will work to ensure that climate change is addressed as the real and urgent threat that it is. Please join us!



Jack Ohman, Oregonian

FIRE RETURNS TO THE SISKIYOU CREST

After decades of Forest Service fire-suppression (think Smokey Bear), the “Goff” wildfire recently returned fire to the forests of the Red Buttes Wilderness. As soon as the smoke cleared, KS Wild staff hit the trail to assess the impacts of the fire on this beautiful wild landscape.



George Sexton

MOSAIC BURN: Mixed fire severity beneath the iconic Red Buttes shows healthy, natural fire patterns.

Many supporters of KS Wild are familiar with the forests, lakes, meadows, peaks and watersheds that make the Red Buttes such a special destination. In addition to being a hiking mecca, the Red Buttes portion of the Siskiyou Crest mountain range is uniquely situated on an east-west orientation providing habitat connections for wildlife between the Klamath, Cascade and Sierra mountains. At-risk species ranging from the iconic Pacific fisher and Northern spotted owl to little-known butterflies and salamanders rely on these wildlands for habitat and as a dispersal corridor.

Renowned as a refugia for rare wildflowers and odd plant assemblages, the meadows, wetlands and barrens that dot the Siskiyou Crest are the result of high iron and magnesium content in the soils called serpentine. The result is the reddish-orange bedrock that gives the Red Buttes their name. Combine that with eons of isolated evolution, and the result is a botanical paradise seen nowhere else on earth.

WILDFIRE RESTORES UNIQUE FOREST VALUES

Another main driver of the complexity of the Siskiyou has been wildfire. The Red Buttes are located in a “lightning strike alley.” Before the Forest Service began suppressing backcountry wildfires, the forests would burn frequently, contributing to the spectacular diversity of conifer and plant life. It is a fire-evolved and fire-dependent ecosystem.

Lightning ignited the 23,000-acre Goff fire on August 3, 2012. Despite decades of fire-suppression, Goff burned well within its historic range of variability. Approximately 7,000 acres burned at an extremely low severity, 8,000 acres burned at low severity, 6,000 acres burned moderately, and 1,000 acres experienced severe fire effects. This mosaic of fire impacts is ideal for perpetuating the diversity of this wild landscape.

FIRE IS SCARY

While the Goff fire was long-overdue from an ecological perspective, for the folks living in the remote and isolated Seiad Valley, where private ranches abut the upland Forest Service wildlands, the fire was a very real threat. Livestock were evacuated, the Siskiyou County Fairgrounds were opened to house those displaced by the burn, and it was touch-and-go for several days to protect homes. Fortunately, no structures or lives were lost.



George Sexton

FIRE RETURNS: The 2012 Goff fire brought fire back to the Klamath River wildlands.

LET'S PLAN AHEAD

Along with the privilege of living in a beautiful and remote fire-prone forest setting comes the responsibility to prepare for the inevitable. To their credit, local citizens and the Forest Service have been working near communities and houses to clear brush and small trees in preparation for fire events before they occur. What has been lacking is a coherent fire management strategy for the wildlands in the backcountry.

While the Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest on the north side of the Red Buttes has a mechanism to allow for the return of fire in the backcountry under the right conditions, the Klamath National Forest to the south of the Red Buttes still attempts to suppress all wildfires. This means that the only wildfires likely to burn are those that occur in the most extreme conditions.

The \$27,430,000 that taxpayers spent fighting the Goff fire could have been better spent preparing for the inevitable return of wildfire. Together, we can reverse the effects of fire-suppression through careful use of prescribed fire and protect homes and communities from fire by creating “defensible space” around structures. What we can't keep doing is dumping millions of dollars into a self-defeating effort to stop all wildfires in backcountry wildlands that have always had fire and always will have fire.

POST FIRE RECOVERY IS ALREADY UNDER WAY

The Goff fire reduced fuel loads, halted conifer encroachment into meadows, and will result in a wildflower and mushroom bonanza. The forests are healthier and more resilient as a result. The only thing that can stop the natural recovery that is already underway is if the Forest Service decides to punch new logging roads into the post-fire soils, unleash the bulldozers and log the burned trees that are the building blocks of forest succession. With your help, we'll be watching and working to ensure that the Siskiyou Crest stays wild and wonderful.

ANNUAL DINNER MOST SUCCESSFUL YET!

KS Wild's 8th Annual Dinner and Auction was a tremendous success thanks to the dedicated support of hard-working volunteers, local businesses and generous individuals in our community. With 300 supporters in attendance, we raised a new record of more than \$40,000 to support conservation work for the Klamath-Siskiyou. Thank you so much!



All photos courtesy of Keith Henry

Please support those who support us! The following businesses and individuals donated generously to our annual event. Event sponsors are in bold.

FARMS, FOOD, AND WINERIES

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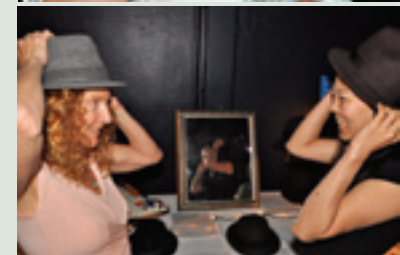
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RAIN BRINGS MUCH NEEDED WATER AND... POLLUTION?

One of the leading causes of water pollution worldwide is stormwater, which is created when rain and melting snow flow across streets, parking lots, industrial sites, construction areas and any place where natural vegetation has been removed. When precipitation falls on these areas, a variety of harmful pollutants get picked up and washed into stormdrains throughout our cities and towns.



Dean Naujoks

STORMWATER POLLUTION: Oftentimes, inadequate aquatic protections at construction sites are ineffectual during heavy rains.

Stormwater often picks up high levels of oil, grease, fecal matter, trash, dirt and heavy metals, yet municipal stormdrains do not flow to water treatment facilities. To the contrary, most stormwater is piped and discharged to the nearest stream or river, pollutants and all.

“Impervious surface” is the term given to areas where natural ground cover has been replaced with surfaces, like asphalt, that do not allow water to permeate into the ground. In addition to pollutants in stormwater, impervious surfaces cause a much more rapid introduction of water to our streams and rivers, dramatically altering the natural hydrology and leading to increased flooding and damage to streams. Studies have shown noticeable negative impacts to watershed health with as little as 2% impervious surface.

STORMWATER AND THE CLEAN WATER ACT

The Clean Water Act, which seeks to ensure that all waterways in the United States are safe for swimming, fishing and drinking, turned 40 years old in October. To achieve the goal of swimmable, fishable, drinkable waters, the Clean Water Act requires permits to discharge pollution to our waterways, including stormwater from a variety of sources.

The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) administers permitting in Oregon for stormwater runoff from construction sites, municipalities, aggregate operations and industrial sites ranging from scrap metal yards to gold mines. These permits set limits on pollution and require the use of pollution control devices, spill control plans and education about the effects of stormwater. One important aspect of Rogue Riverkeeper’s work is to advocate for strong permits and ensure that facilities and industries are meeting pollution limits.

LOGGING ROADS, POLLUTION AND THE U.S. SUPREME COURT

Unfortunately, not everyone is willing to do their part to protect our public waterways and would prefer to use them as their own free dumping ground. In the last year, we have seen unprecedented attempts by industrial and municipal interests to fight their Clean Water Act obligations, including lobbying Congress. With names like “Clean Water Cooperative Federalism Act,” “Reducing Regulatory Burdens Act” and the “Silviculture Regulatory Consistency Act” some legislators are doing their best to weaken the Clean Water Act.

Yet, courts continue to uphold this cornerstone law. For example, a 2010 ruling in federal court makes it clear that roadside ditches from active logging sites are regulated under the Clean Water Act in order to protect clean water and salmon populations. This case, *NEDC v. Brown*, will be before the U.S. Supreme Court in December 2012.

Sediment from logging roads is one of the biggest pollution sources threatening salmon populations in the Pacific Northwest, and the Clean Water Act is clearly a reasonable tool to regulate this form of pollution and help threatened salmon recover. As a voice for those wild salmon and the communities that rely on them, Rogue Riverkeeper and allies submitted an amicus brief to the U.S. Supreme Court.

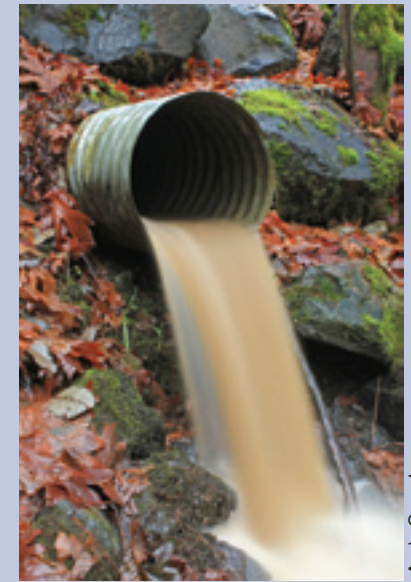
Logging operations should have to play by the same rules as nearly every other industry in America. Unfortunately, Senator Ron Wyden thinks differently, because he introduced legislation last year to exempt logging operations from the Clean Water Act. So far, that bill has not advanced.

WHAT WE’RE DOING ABOUT STORMWATER

Rogue Riverkeeper is working hard to apply, defend and strengthen the Clean Water Act to keep our waterways safe. We’ll continue to partner with our allies and supporters to oppose rollbacks at the national level and ensure that we have the tools to protect our water resources locally.

We monitor stormwater permits throughout the Rogue Basin for compliance, and engage in the process of new permitting to ensure that the Rogue River and its tributaries get the best chance we can give them. For example, all of the municipal and industrial permits throughout the watershed are up for renewal in the next year, so we are working to make sure those permits are as strong as they can be.

YOU CAN HELP: Visit rogueriverkeeper.org to take action, and sign up for our eNews to stay updated on ways you can help reduce stormwater pollution.



Andy Cressler

RECOVERING SALMON: We must get a handle on logging road stormwater pollution to protect fish.

ROGUE RIVERKEEPER KEEPS SWIMMING UPSTREAM

Lesley Adams has been with KS Wild for over a decade—first as an intern, then as the Outreach Director and most recently as the Program Director of Rogue Riverkeeper. She has helped build KS Wild into a powerhouse. The relationships she nourished throughout our community allowed KS Wild to fight for roadless area protection, save some of our last old-growth forests and advance permanent protection proposals.

As a lasting legacy, Lesley founded Rogue Riverkeeper in 2009 to better focus our aquatic advocacy within the Rogue Basin. It's with some sadness that we report Lesley is moving on from Rogue Riverkeeper to a new job as the Western Regional Coordinator for the Waterkeeper Alliance, of which Rogue Riverkeeper is a member.

Lesley is now working with more than 30 Waterkeepers west of the Mississippi Basin. While we'll miss her very much, we can't think of a better person for that position and look forward to seeing her collaborative, yet relentless, brand of activism extended throughout the West. We're also thrilled that we get to work with her in this new position. She will be chairing Rogue Riverkeeper's advisory board so don't be surprised to see Lesley still representing the interests of fish and clean water in the Rogue Basin!

Rogue Riverkeeper's very own and talented Forrest English was promoted to Program Director. Forrest has been on staff since 2010 with a focus on water quality sampling and analyses, suction dredge mining oversight and polluted stormwater mitigation. Stay tuned for more updates on the next, exciting chapter for Rogue Riverkeeper!



George Sexton



Lesley Adams

FEATURED HIKE: DEVIL'S RIDGE

The Devils Ridge Trail lives up to its name and then some. It is an unrelentingly steep climb on the Pacific Crest Trail from the Klamath River up the ridge to the Red Buttes Wilderness.

Why would anyone want to hike a brutally steep trail through a recently burned forest? While not everyone's cup of tea, for those that love backcountry wildlands and who yearn for a winter hike to get the quads and lungs burning, Devil's Ridge is a godsend.



George Sexton

EXPLORING POST-FIRE WILDLANDS: Cook and Green Pass provides easy access to the Goff fire.

The 2012 Goff fire (see page 5) burned beautifully along the trail, healing the effects of decades of fire suppression and putting the forest on a more sustainable and fire-adapted path forward. And the views are stunning. With each step up and towards the Siskiyou Crest, new vistas open up, and new wild forests stretch out in all directions.

The trailhead, just west of the town of Seiad Valley on Highway 96, is snow-free throughout the winter, so the wildlands of the vast roadless area south of the Red Buttes are accessible year-round. Although some months it would take snowshoes and a whole lot of gumption to get anywhere near the top of the ridge.

Several of the trails that access the three peaks of Devils Ridge have been largely lost to time and Forest Service neglect—the trail up Portuguese Creek and the trail up the ridge between Canyon Creek and Darkey Creek have not been maintained and are difficult, if not impossible, to follow. So the Pacific Crest Trail, heading straight up to the three devilish peaks that give the ridge its name, is the last and best way to explore the wild forests and watersheds of this amazing landscape.

During the summer months, Devils Ridge can be accessed from the Cook and Green Pass high up on the Siskiyou Crest. But for a breathtaking winter hike that will test your muscles and reward your senses, starting at the low elevation trailhead on the Klamath River is the way to go. Take plenty of water, a good map, and a buddy or two.

ROGUE RIVERKEEPER MISSION:

To protect and restore water quality and fish populations in the Rogue Basin and adjacent coastal watersheds through enforcement, advocacy, field work and community action.

www.rogueriverkeeper.org — 541.488.9831



February 8 & 9, Grants Pass

KS Wild is proud to sponsor the 12th Siskiyou FilmFest, carrying on a Siskiyou Project tradition of providing accessible environmental education for youth and the general public.

FOCUS ON OUR KS WILD FAMILY

MORGAN LINDSAY

This fall KS Wild combined pieces of two long-standing positions to create a new staff position, Membership & Outreach Coordinator. KS Wild is pleased to introduce Morgan Lindsay as the newest member of the KS family.



Forrest English

Morgan comes from the high desert of California's Eastern Sierra where she worked for three years protecting and restoring Mono Lake as Policy Coordinator for the Mono Lake Committee. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Environmental Studies with a minor in chemistry from Mount Holyoke College in Massachusetts.

As Membership & Outreach Coordinator, Morgan is now handling KS Wild's print and web-based communications, membership, volunteers, and events. So if you have questions about your membership or want to volunteer, please contact her at morgan@kswild.org. Morgan has also started a list of all the amazing places she needs to explore out in the KS—so send her your suggestions. Welcome Morgan!

GRAY WOLF (CANIS LUPUS)

This December marks the one-year anniversary of the first confirmed wolf in western Oregon in 65 years! Last year, a two-year-old wolf known as OR-7 left his home pack in northeastern Oregon and struck out on his own. OR-7 headed into the wildlands of southwest Oregon before continuing south of the KS region, where he currently resides east of Redding, California.



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Once OR-7 crossed into California, he became the first confirmed wolf in the state since 1924. California Fish and Game recently accepted a petition from KS Wild and our allies to list the wolf on the California endangered species list, just like it is in Oregon. The commission will now take a year to consider the petition while the species has candidate status.

This is great news for OR-7 and any other un-collared wolves in California. KS Wild is dedicated to protecting wolves and their habitat. Join the "KS Wolf Pack" to receive updates on advocacy opportunities and to connect with other people helping to recover this keystone species. Email morgan@kswild.org to join the pack.

MANY THANKS TO ALL OUR SUPPORTERS

VOLUNTEERS AND COLLABORATORS: Kimberly Baker, Jordan Beckett, Reine Bravo, Janette Brimmer, Frank & Stella Bungay, Theresa Bush, Jon Carlson, Regina Castellon, Rosie Demmin, Geronimo Diaz, Megan Fehrman, Joanne Fisher, Deborah Fox, Erika Giesen, Hannah Gogulski, Caroline Granat, Allee Gustafson, Kalea Hall, Jeff, Rowan & Aubyn Heglie, Keith Henty, Karen Horn, Rob & Linda Joseph, Craig Keffeler, Maria Kelly, Andy Kerr, Kent Knock, Dave Levine, Josh Laughlin, Dave Majzler, Meadow Martell, Claire Martin, Charlie Martz, Edgar Morton, Gail Perrotti, Kimberley Priestley, Tim Ream, Dan Roper, Helen Rosen, Steve Rouse, Helen Reinhold, Savel Sabol, Paula Sendar, Ann Smith, Evan Smith, Kat Smith, Barry Snitkin, Michael Tufts, Barbara Ullian, Sarah Vaile, Ann Vileisis, Pete Wallstrom, Greg Walter, Dave Willis, Casey Wright, Christine Yee and all the GrazingWatch, RiverWatch and Adopt-a-Botanical Area volunteers.

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