

KS WILD NEWS

The Journal of the Klamath-Siskiyou Wildlands Center

Summer 2019



WE LIKE IT
WILD

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GET OUTSIDE



WINE AND WILDFLOWERS

Friday, June 14th, 10am-2pm

We will lead an easy, interpretive hike through low elevation meadows and old-growth forests to examine dozens of wildflower species (and some butterflies!). Post-hike, we will gather for a complimentary wine tasting and take action to protect the places we love.

MARIPOSA PRESERVE STAR THISTLE PULL

Monday, June 17, 4:30-7:30pm

Help pull invasive star thistle from a portion of the 222-acre Mariposa Preserve, an area that provides protection for rare plants within the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument. Co-sponsors: Native Plant Society of Oregon, Friends of the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument, and BLM.

BALDFACE CREEK AND SOUTH KALMIOPSIS

Sunday, June 23, 9:30am-7:30pm

This is a rugged all-day hike into a wild, remote area. We will follow a moderate to difficult trail into the Baldface Creek watershed.

BOUNDARY SPRINGS MEMBERS-ONLY HIKE

Sunday, July 21, 8am-4pm

Join us for a moderate 5-mile hike to the headwaters of the mighty Rogue River along a beautiful trail with cascading waterfalls, a lush riparian zone, and an intact post-fire forest.

SPEAKER SERIES ON FIRE MANAGEMENT!

Explore fire impacts to the landscape in an era of climate change at **REI in Medford, 6:30-8:30pm**

June 24: "Defensible Space: A Yearlong Commitment" with Richard Fairbanks

July 26: "Fire Management Across a Mixed Ownership Landscape" with Chris Dunn

August 29: "Fire and Climate Change" with Arielle Halpren

Once you sign-up online you will receive details including carpooling locations and what to bring. [kswild.org/events](https://www.kswild.org/events)

A WILD WONDERLAND

WILDERNESS AREAS IN THE KLAMATH-SISKIYOU



NOTES FROM THE TRAILHEAD



WILDERNESS: NOW MORE THAN EVER

This edition of the KS Wild News takes an in-depth look at the importance of wild places and designated, or “Big W,” Wilderness Areas protected under the 1964 Wilderness Act. In recent years, wilderness has come under attack from those that wish to exploit nature for profit and others that argue against a conservation focus on wild places. Read on to learn about the wonders of the wilderness in southern Oregon’s and northern California’s Klamath-Siskiyou, and the need to protect our last, best, wild places.

With the advances in technology in the past 150 years, human civilization has paved over vast landscapes with massive cities and developments. Agriculture has also taken a toll on wild nature. By some estimates, nearly 30% of the Earth is cultivated for industrial-scale farming. We have reshaped many of the Earth’s ecosystems to the detriment of wildlife, clean water, and the diversity of life. We need to save what is left for the future of humanity—for the future of life on this planet.

Not all human influence is incompatible with keeping the wild alive. For millennia native peoples used natural forces like burning to shape the landscape across much of the American West and elsewhere. Today, the use of cultural burning and other Traditional Ecological Knowledge can often help restore the ecological integrity of many natural areas.

The value of wilderness—of wildness—to people is well-documented. Our cleanest water comes from wilderness. Some of our best recreation happens in wilderness areas. It is a place for humans to get away from the hustle and bustle and to reclaim a sense of self.

As the author, Edward Abbey, famously wrote, “Wilderness is not a luxury but a necessity of the human spirit, and as vital to our lives as water and good bread.”

Yet, there is a more important reason to save wilderness; it is a moral reason. We should save what remains of wilderness simply because it is the right thing to do. Wild places are a refuge for plants and animals, and so they are a refuge for earth’s evolutionary processes. Wilderness can provide a source of genetic diversity often destroyed in the simplified, domesticated, and paved-over landscapes.



Wild places are not just glimpses into the past, but vital pathways to the future of life on our planet. We are answering this question today, “Will future generations yet born experience wilderness?” It is our obligation to leave some places wild and free from our imprint.

We need wilderness now more than ever before. Some argue that, because humans are changing the climate, spreading invasive weeds, and suppressing natural processes like wildfire, we have no real wilderness anymore. They say that we have entered a new era when, because we have in some manner manipulated every corner of the planet, we must manage all landscapes. However, in this era of climate change, wilderness areas provide a buffer against the worst impacts of losing wild nature. We now know that natural areas without other stresses like roads, domesticated livestock, and noxious weeds will fair best in the future climate. Wilderness is this place.

Wilderness will be even more important in the future. While it is true that human impacts are far-reaching, even into wilderness, still downtown Los Angeles is a far cry from the Red Buttes Wilderness Area in the Siskiyou Mountains. The wildest parts of our planet that remain are now few and far between, but they have significant inherent value. They are the pinnacle of the evolutionary process, where ecosystems still function and self-regulate. We must do our best to save what remains of these most natural spaces.

Wilderness gives us a reference. It reminds us of nature’s place in our world, and that we are a part of this wonder of life. Wilderness harbors the wildest parts of who we are and what we can become.

If we can save wild places, we can save ourselves.
Of that I am certain.



Joseph Vaile is KS Wild’s Executive Director

THE WILDEST WONDERS OF THE KLAMATH-SISKIYOU



Red Buttes Wilderness

The Klamath Siskiyou mountains are like no place else. They contain 11 congressionally designated wilderness areas that provide some of the best watersheds, wildlife, and wildlands in the world. The Wilderness Act was one of America's best ideas. The act created our National Wilderness Preservation System and provided the means to induct intact areas into the system.

GRASSY KNOB AND COPPER SALMON WILDERNESSES - OR

Tucked into the Oregon Coast Range, wedged in between clearcuts and logging roads, a Port Orford Cedar and salmon refugia remains intact.

KALMIOPSIS WILDERNESS – OR

Where the Earth's crust collides, serpentine is born. A land of strange botany and harsh geology. The mighty Illinois and Chetco rivers continue to shape the valleys.

WILD ROGUE WILDERNESS – OR

The wilderness comprised of the forested watersheds surrounding the Wild and Scenic Rogue River is a special place that needs more protection, now more than ever.

SISKIYOU WILDERNESS – CA

High peaks and old-growth forests fill the horizon. Home to the South Fork of the Wild and Scenic Smith River and the headwaters of the East Fork of the Illinois River, it's a must-visit kind of place.

SODA MOUNTAIN WILDERNESS - OR

CASCADE-SISKIYOU NATIONAL MONUMENT

Amongst biodiverse backyard botanical bounties, the eastern desert meets the Cascade and Siskiyou mountain ranges. Protected within the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument, a true treasure of biodiversity and beauty.

RED BUTTES WILDERNESS – OR /CA

Straddling the iconic Siskiyou Crest range and the Oregon-California border, Peridotite soils gave this wilderness its name. It boasts the last intact old-growth valley in the Upper Applegate.

MARBLE MOUNTAIN WILDERNESS - CA

Geological splendor protrudes from the ground as the Marble Rim emerges. Meadows of towering wildflowers blossom under tall canopies and snags.

RUSSIAN WILDERNESS - CA

Here lies the divide of the Scott and Salmon river drainages. Split by granite peaks full of glacial lakes—just jump in!

TRINITY ALPS WILDERNESS – CA

Wild and Scenic Trinity and Salmon rivers are at the base of this vast wild country. Vistas, lakes, deep trails, and gorgeous forests await adventurers.

YOLLA BOLLY WILDERNESS - CA

Located in the as-rugged-as-it-comes headwater country of the Wild and Scenic Middle Fork of the Eel River, mysterious deep canyons beckon.



BIG WIN

FOR THE CASCADE-SISKIYOU NATIONAL MONUMENT

In April, a federal court in Medford, Oregon, ruled against timber industry lawyers who were trying to remove protections for the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument in order to increase clearcut "regeneration" logging on BLM public lands. KS Wild stood shoulder-to-shoulder with our friends at the Soda Mountain Wilderness Council and Oregon Wild to stand up for wildlife and wildlands. Most importantly we have stood with you—the neighbors, hikers, birders, small businesses, city councils, and chambers of commerce that have worked for years to protect this special island of biodiversity and wild nature. It is through your efforts and support that we are one step closer to permanently protecting the astounding wildlife and wildlands of the Cascade Siskiyou. Thank you!

A RIVER NEEDS ITS WILDLANDS



This spring, 146 miles of Wild Rogue tributaries were permanently designated as National Wild and Scenic Rivers! This has been a decade-long effort. Waterways like Whiskey, Kelsey, and Mule Creeks, all along the Wild and Scenic Rogue River, now boast this reputable status.

These designations will help permanently protect the cold, clean water that is so important to the mainstem of the Rogue River and our salmon fisheries. While we celebrate these newly protected waterways under the recent public lands bill, we recognize that we must continue to work to protect the wildlands that surround them as well.

Originally, the Oregon Wildlands Act included these Wild and Scenic designations, as well as a Wild Rogue Wilderness expansion and the creation of a National Recreation Area. Unfortunately, Oregon's Congressman Greg Walden used the threat of wildfire to remove these important pieces of the bill from the public lands package during negotiations in December. However, Senators Wyden and Merkley are bringing them back.

On May 1st, Senators Ron Wyden and Jeff Merkley introduced a bill that would include protections for the wildlands surrounding the Rogue and Molalla rivers called the Oregon Recreation Enhancement Act. This bill would protect over 280,000 acres of wildlands in Oregon while also allowing for proactive management for wildfire.

Protections under this bill would include:

- 60,000-acre expansion of the Wild Rogue Wilderness
- 98,000-acre Rogue Canyon National Recreation Area
- 30,000-acre Molalla National Recreation Area
- 100,000-acre mineral withdrawal for National Forest land adjacent to the Kalmiopsis Wilderness Area

"These areas are among Oregon's most breathtaking landscapes. Not only do they fuel a robust recreation economy, they also are part of who we are as Oregonians. It is our responsibility to protect these lands...so our greatest resource is available to future generations." - Senator Jeff Merkley

Protected forest lands produce clean, cold, oxygenated water and healthy habitat for sensitive fish species to thrive. People need healthy rivers for recreation, tourism, jobs, and a sustainable local economy. Securing more protections for the lands of a watershed provide healthier waterways for everyone who depend on them.

That is why we continue to support the Oregon Recreation Enhancement Act (ORE Act). More wilderness and a National Recreation Area for the Wild Rogue would not only help protect this vital piece of the watershed, but would bolster local jobs and our tourism-based economy. Help us support the Oregon Recreation Enhancement Act and ensure a protected and sustainable Wild Rogue now, and for future generations.

OREGON DENIES WATER PERMIT FOR LNG EXPORT

In May, the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality denied an essential Clean Water Act permit for the Jordan Cove LNG project! This is a big win for the Rogue, our communities, and climate. Rogue Riverkeeper and partners have been working to stop this project for over a decade. While this is a huge victory, we must continue to stay vigilant. The company may appeal the decision or reapply. The project isn't dead, but it cannot move forward without this permit. For now, we celebrate this victory, and continue our work to put Jordan Cove LNG export to bed for good. Stay tuned for federal hearings this summer.



Rogue Riverkeeper Presents
the 7th Annual

WILD & SCENIC FILM FESTIVAL
WHERE ACTIVISM GETS INSPIRED

SAVE THE DATE

11.8.2019

**AT THE HISTORIC
ASHLAND ARMORY**

Films. Food. Silent Auction. Beer. Fun!

2019

THE WILD ROGUE AND WILDFIRE

If you have ever floated the Wild and Scenic section of the Rogue River, downstream of Grave Creek Bridge, then you know how special and iconic the forests are of the Wild Rogue. It is a vision of the best Oregon has to offer: expansive old-growth forest teeming with wildlife, unmarred by the logging roads and clearcuts that crisscross the rest of the Coast Range. It is a rafter's dream and a hiker's paradise. There is no place left like it anywhere.



Momentum River Expeditions

Earlier this year, conservation advocates came tantalizingly close to finally securing wilderness protections for over 45,000 acres of old-growth forests on BLM lands that surround the Wild and Scenic Rogue River. While a divided congress was able to agree on establishing and extending wild and scenic protection for many of the cold water tributary streams of the Wild Rogue, the ancient forests that blanket the watershed were left out of the final package of public lands bills that passed the senate in February.

THE NEED FOR WILDERNESS PROTECTION

Despite the immense ecological, recreational, and financial values that the Wild Rogue and its forests provide to the American people, Medford BLM timber planners primarily view wild forests as a timber resource to be converted into second-growth tree plantations. Recently, the BLM withdrew from the Northwest Forest Plan in an effort to increase logging levels through “regeneration harvest,” in which up to 95% of native forest canopy can be removed. Throughout southwest Oregon, we are seeing proposed “regeneration” logging projects on public lands in which the BLM acknowledges that it will increase fire hazard for decades by removing mature forest canopy and establishing dense, young timber stands.

FIRE RHETORIC LEAVES LANDS AT RISK

The timber industry has long opposed the idea of protecting the forests of the Wild Rogue and, when it appeared that wilderness protection might be possible in early 2019, Big Timber pulled out the stops to convince lawmakers that we must log these roadless ancient forests in order to save them from wildfire. Congressman Walden then latched on to the timber industry's fire rhetoric to thwart protection of the most ecologically and hydrologically important BLM forests in Oregon.

There is no doubt that the fire season of 2018 was extremely difficult on all of us who live here in fire country. Smoke in the Rogue Valley was simply awful; homes were lost, and in Paradise, California, lives were lost. That's as serious and tragic as it gets. It provides an opportunity for us to come together to make homes and communities more fire



KS Wild staff field-checking the impacts of the 2013 Douglas Fire on logged-over timberlands.

safe, to seriously address and tackle climate change, and to revisit a well-meaning yet self-defeating fire exclusion policy in the backcountry. For the timber industry to exploit a difficult wildfire season in order to advocate for backcountry old-growth logging is as disappointing as it is predictable.

A TALE OF TWO FIRES

We know how the forests of the Wild Rogue will respond to fire because we've already seen it first hand. In July 2013, a lightning fire ignited one fire in the roadless old-growth forests on the south side of the Rogue River, and another fire in the heavily clearcut and roaded BLM and private industrial timberlands of Douglas County. Guess which fire burned primarily at stand-replacing intensity, and which burned mostly at low and moderate intensity? While the timber plantations in the Douglas fire torched, the fire in the old-growth stands in the Wild Rogue burned low and slow. In other words, when two fires only a few miles from each other burned at the exact same time, in the exact same weather conditions, the old-growth forests of the Wild Rogue did just fine while the timber industry tree plantations were incinerated.

WE NEED ROGUE WILDERNESS

The large block of old-growth forests along the Wild Rogue have never been more important. As summers get hotter, they are a source of cold water, carbon sequestration, and provide a crucial hedge against habitat loss that is occurring throughout the region. These are the forests and watersheds that will see us through climate change and challenging politics to better days. Keep 'Em Wild.

WHAT ABOUT FIRE AND WILDERNESS?



In addition to the arguments that wilderness prevents resource exploitation, many now claim that protected Wilderness leads to unnatural fires. The timber industry and their allies use arguments that firefighting and fuels reduction are banned in Wilderness Areas, leading to threatening fires. Nothing could be further from the truth.

It is the conservation of wilderness-quality landscapes that ensures that fires will burn in a more natural, characteristic manner. A 2016 nationwide study looked at the “relationship between protected status and fire severity” and found that the more protection an area had, the lower the fire severity. Protected landscapes are often far from communities and have had less impacts of fire suppression and thus less fuel build-up. Protected areas certainly burn in wildfires, but less severe than heavily managed landscapes.

Fire fighting is permitted in Wilderness areas and there is a long track record of Forest Service and other fire managers suppressing fires in backcountry and designated Wilderness Areas. There is allowance to use whatever means a fire manager deems necessary to suppress fire.

Fire managers could decide to use fire in designated Wilderness for the benefit of the resource, and they often employ Minimum Impact Suppression Tactics (MIST) using the minimum amount of forces necessary to effectively achieve the fire management protection objectives consistent with resource objectives. According to Federal Fire Policy, fire managers may use wildland fire “to protect, maintain, and enhance resources,” but fighting fire and fuel suppression is often the chosen course even in designated Wilderness.

It is true that Wilderness ignitions are often in steep, rugged terrain and thus dangerous for firefighters. Whether Wilderness or not, managing fires for their benefits in steep, rugged areas has also been shown to lower exposure of firefighters to risk, and to reduce per-acre costs of fire management.

Even mechanical treatments and prescribed fires can be utilized to restore forests inside of Wilderness Areas, where such activities are consistent with agency regulations and when necessary to protect public safety. Because Wilderness is usually so far from communities, Wilderness Areas are rarely considered priorities for such treatments.



FIRE AND WILDERNESS POP QUIZ!

Inciweb

- 1) True or False? Oregon is a leader in protecting wild places as Wilderness.
- 2) What is the first priority for Forest Service management of wildfires in designated Wilderness Areas?
- 3) After the 2002 Biscuit Fire in the Kalmiopsis, did researchers find that post-fire logging increased or decreased fire hazard?
- 4) Which southwest Oregon Wilderness Area occurs entirely on lands managed by the BLM, and was lightly burned by the Klamathon Fire?
- 5) In the Summer of 2019, the Klamath National Forest punched a bulldozer fire-line starting at “Poker Flat” into a Wilderness Area. The fire-line was miles from the fire and was never utilized for fire suppression. In which Wilderness Area did this occur?
- 6) Why does the Shasta-Trinity National Forest conduct prescribed burns in the Trinity Alps Wilderness Area?
- 7) What is “Wildland Fire Use?”

Score: 7/7—Hotshot! 5 or 6—Trail Boss. 3 or 4—Fire Tech. 1 or 2—Tenderfoot.

Answers: 1) False. Oregon lags far behind Idaho, Washington and California in designated Wilderness Area. 2) Firefighter and public safety is the first priority for wildfire management. 3) Post-fire logging increased future fire hazard. 4) The Soda Mountain Wilderness Area. 5) The Siskiyou Wilderness Area. 6) To restore fire adapted ecosystems. 7) The use of natural wildland fires is to maintain and restore forest health.

WELCOME TO THE KS FAMILY

Jessica Klinke, Communications Manager

Having grown up among the rolling hills of California's Bay Area, Jessica learned at a young age to develop a deep appreciation for the environment, a sense of place, and a love of all things wild.

After receiving a Bachelor of Arts in American Studies from UC Santa Cruz, she found a passion for mission-driven work and honed her skills in fundraising, grant writing, and database management working in the non-profit sector. Never losing a sense of adventure and desire to do something completely different, Jessica moved to Chapel Hill to earn a Masters degree in Folklore from the University of North Carolina where she practiced ethnography, worked in the Southern Folklife archive, and studied audio documentation.



She is excited to apply her joy for telling a good story and advocating for a better world to further the mission and vision of KS Wild as the Communications Manager. She lives with her family on 100 acres in the shadow of Anderson Butte, where she keeps a herd of dairy goats, and loves where she lives!

Alexi Lovechio, National Forest Organizer

Alexi grew up in New England and received a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Studies from Keene State College in New Hampshire. After graduating and moving west to work with various land management agencies, she was immediately inspired by the rugged mountains and open landscapes on our public lands.



For the past three years, Alexi has worked with the Forest Service conducting vegetation surveys for a program that monitors sensitive habitat for endangered species throughout the Upper Columbia River Watershed. Alexi also has experience in the non-profit advocacy world, helping organize fundraising events and teaching environmental education. Being new to the area, she is really excited to learn about the rare and unique plants of the Klamath-Siskiyou, and all the biking and skiing the region has to offer.



PASSING ON A WILDERNESS LEGACY

FUTURE GENERATIONS WILL THANK YOU

KS Wild has achieved meaningful protections for wildlife and wilderness because supporters like you make countless contributions, volunteer their time, and take important action for our advocacy work. Together, we are a strong voice for conservation and restoration across eight million acres of public land in the Klamath-Siskiyou. An annual (or monthly) recurring donation provides support for efforts like Forest Watch and Rogue Riverkeeper. Make a difference at www.kswild.org/donate.

If you're looking to deepen your support for our wildlife and wildlands advocacy efforts, you might consider a planned gift:

- **Bequests:** Made through one's will or trust, it is important to include the legal name of the organization: Klamath Siskiyou Wildlands Center (EIN# 93-1246139)
- **Securities/Stock:** Gifts of stocks, mutual funds, and bonds are exempt from capital gains taxes and allows you to obtain a charitable income tax deduction equal to the market value of the securities. *KS Wild has a newly established brokerage account that makes donating stock simple. Your financial advisor can contact us directly.*
- **Real Estate:** Whether it's a residential or commercial property, one can receive significant financial benefits from donating real estate now (and retaining rights to live in it) or through your will. *(Did you know you can also rent out office space at a discount and receive charitable tax deductions? KS Wild is looking for office space to accommodate our growing staff. We'd love to hear from you.)*
- **Gifts of Will or Trust:** If you have life insurance, IRAs, pensions, financial accounts, or even a living trust, all of them can be turned into charitable gifts.

Please contact Michael Dotson at Michael@kswild.org or 541-488-5789 to learn more.

Support businesses that support KS Wild: kswild.org/business-members

KS WILD MISSION

KS Wild's mission is to protect and restore wild nature in the Klamath-Siskiyou region of southwest Oregon and northwest California. We promote science-based land and water conservation through policy and community action.

KSWILD.ORG

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Save the Date!
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KS Wild's Annual Dinner
@ the Ashland Hills Hotel

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Cover: Caribou Lake, Trinity Alps Wilderness, California