

KS WILD NEWS

The Journal of the Klamath-Siskiyou Wildlands Center

Summer 2020



MOVING FORWARD

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NOTES FROM THE TRAILHEAD

We are all facing a whole new set of challenges for which we've never prepared. With the global pandemic upending our plans and our lives, each of us is finding ways to adapt to a new reality. For KS Wild and its staff, we have transitioned to working-from-home but have continued keeping a watchful eye on the forests, waters, and wildlife of the Klamath-Siskiyou. As Executive Director, the health and safety of the KS Wild team is my top priority these days.

As our communities begin to understand what "reopening" means, please know that KS Wild has still been working at full capacity. We are able to do so because of supporters like you. The vast majority of our staff work from the safety of their homes, while agencies like the Bureau of Land Management and Federal Energy Regulatory Commission keep proposing new timber sales and fossil fuel projects, despite the circumstances. Because of their selfish actions, you might catch a staff member or two in the office, or out in the forests holding these agencies accountable. We have instituted safety protocols and procedures to keep our employees safe.

As part of this process, we are very sad to have cancelled many of our much-loved hikes and stewardships events for the (un) foreseeable future. We have been shifting to more of an online connection to keep bringing our supporters together. We hope our digital events inspire and empower you to stay resilient and keep standing with us as we navigate forward.

In his 2012 book *Spillover: Animal Infections and the Next Human Pandemic*, author David Quammen maps the ecology and spread of infectious diseases transmitted between animals and humans. More than a decade ago, scientists were sounding the alarm over coronaviruses. His book is a great read for these times, but it's what he said in a recent interview that has stuck with me over the past couple of months:

**“People sometimes ask me...’How scared should we be?’
Being scared is useless. Educate yourself about what can be done,
both in the short term and the long term, and do it.”**

We know what to do. We need to be better caretakers and neighbors to Mother Earth. We must stop rampant deforestation, which is not only happening in other countries but in our own backyard of the Pacific Northwest. We must alter our travel habits and reform our country's transportation infrastructure to limit CO2 outputs. We have to elect leaders who believe in the scientific method and recognize that the expertise of scientists can help us better plan and prepare for future disruptions. It's likely our world and future generations will face more climate-related crises like this if we don't change our behavior.

In this issue of *KS Wild News*, we ask ourselves: What's next? We know that collective action and a redefining of “the way things are” is the only way forward. Read our Climate program's list of top policy recommendations for public lands that will help our region and our planet adapt to a changing climate. Learn about Jordan Cove LNG's attempts to override Clean Water Act authority from the state of Oregon, and take action. Look at the stark contrast between the lack of public access to public lands during the pandemic while the timber industry pushes through old-growth logging projects. While the rest of us shelter-in-place, it is absolutely clear the Trump Administration continues to sacrifice public and environmental health at the expense of profits for corporate polluters.

With your ongoing support, KS Wild will always advocate for the region's forests, waters, and wildlife from wherever it is safest to do so. We hope to see you out on the trails and rivers again soon.



*Michael Dotson is KS Wild's
Executive Director.*

KS Wild's history is rooted in direct action and mobilizing change. When we say "Love where you live, defend what you love," it means we defend our planet, and all beings on it, against the systemic powers of corruption and white supremacy.

We stand in solidarity with communities of color in this country and around the world, and we will not stay neutral in the face of injustice. Racial justice is an environmental issue. Silence is not an option.



UNTIL WE MEET AGAIN IN THE WOODS... **WE MEET ONLINE.**

Visit www.kswild.org/events for updated event information and to sign up for an event. We have been transitioning many events online, and may have limited events when possible, following Governor Brown's orders and protocols for gatherings. We look forward to getting back outside together!

LEGACY GIVING: Protecting the Klamath-Siskiyou for Future Generations **Thursday, June 18, 12-1pm, Online**

Thoughtful financial choices we make will outlast our lifetimes. Join KS Wild staff and family law attorney Sarah Vaile to learn more about leaving a legacy of protection for the wild places and clean waters of the Klamath-Siskiyou.

SUNDAY BRUNCH CONCERTS WITH ALICE!

One Sunday a month at noon on Facebook Live

Hosted by KS Wild star supporter Alice Dimicelle along with guest performers. Let's shake loose and celebrate the wild, together at home, where we can really dance like no one's watching!

DIGITAL ACTIVIST TRAININGS

Monthly Online, Thursday, June 25, 12-1pm

KS Wild and Rogue Riverkeeper staff will give you the tools, training, and current campaign details to get you inspired and ready to take action.

Rescheduled!

ROGUE TRAIL RAFT-SUPPORTED HIKE

Five days: October 3rd-7th

Join KS Wild and American River Touring Association (ARTA) on the Rogue River Trail for this annual adventure. Friendly, helpful guides ferry all the heavy stuff and prepare all the delicious meals. Call or visit ARTA at arta.org or 209-962-7873, for current updates and information about this trip.

CHANGING TIMES

Climate change will reshape our landscapes. How ecosystems respond depends on many factors. This map depicts areas where species and habitats are likely the most resilient to climate change. With a large portion of intact forests and high levels of geographic diversity, the Klamath-Siskiyou has many areas with the capacity to allow ecosystems to shift and respond in the face of climatic changes.

Data source: Conserving Nature's Stage, 2015.





WHAT'S NEXT? A CLIMATE SOLUTION.

If this time has shown us one thing, it is that we can make dramatic change for the common good. As we enter the next phase of the global pandemic, many are asking an important question: Can we move forward in a new way that builds a more just society as we save our planet from the climate crisis?

KS Wild has been thinking a lot about the answer to that question. Here in the Pacific Northwest, we have a huge asset: our forests and wildlands are part of a natural solution to climate change. We know that forests stabilize the climate. Forests capture and store enough carbon to offset nearly 20% of pollution that causes climate change. At the same time, these forests are also under increasing stress from warming temperatures and clearcut logging.

To date, forests in the U.S. are largely ignored in plans to address climate change. KS Wild's Climate Program is doubling down on our efforts to ensure that forest conservation and resiliency are central in climate policy. Deforestation continues across vast swaths of industrial and public lands in the KS region. State and federal land managers have no direction to protect forests, waters, and wildlife for future generations. As KS Wild advocates for policies that prioritize climate, we are asking for these four changes:

Forests have been left out of climate policies. There is no accounting for the amount of carbon that forests store and what practices are increasing or decreasing that carbon storage. That needs to change.

ASK 1: Update state and federal policies to ensure that forests continue to capture and store carbon. Policies should direct land managers to build resiliency in forests and stop practices like clearcutting and old growth logging that remove carbon from forests.

For decades, public budgets have subsidized oil, gas, and timber industries that are contributing to climate change. Public money that has been subsidizing pollution must now go to clean energy and climate solutions. That includes projects that make forests resilient, mitigate the impacts of wildfires, and maximize forest carbon storage.

ASK 2: In the post-COVID-19 economy, make financial investments through state and federal appropriations in projects that prepare our environment and communities for the threat of global climate change. Update the Northwest Forest Plan to prepare ecosystems for climate change.

Since 1994 the Northwest Forest Plan has guided management of 25 million acres of National Forest in the Pacific Northwest. The U.S. Forest Service is set to update this plan which will guide how our national forests are managed. Climate smart strategies would identify the most vulnerable watersheds, recreation areas, and habitats, and then shape land management projects to lessen climate impacts.

ASK 3: Update the Northwest Forest Plan to ensure that climate adaptation strategies guide land management on national forests. Reform state forest management policies that are contributing to climate change.

About 40% of California and Oregon's forests are owned by industrial and other state, tribal, and private landowners. The laws that govern these lands are outdated. The Oregon Forest Practices Act (OFPA) allows rampant clearcutting, aerial herbicide spraying, logging right over streamsides, and are a leading contributor to carbon pollution in Oregon (Oregon Global Warming Commission).

ASK 4: Update the OFPA to encourage carbon storage by lengthening the time between logging, limiting clearcutting, and protecting streamside forests.

As we enter a new era and rebuild an economy that has been rattled by the COVID-19 pandemic, let's make the necessary changes to save our planet from climate change. We know we need to transition away from fossil fuels, but we also need to protect our forests and begin a process to adapt our natural landscapes to climate change.

When we look at future climate projections, and zoom in to the Klamath-Siskiyou, we see that it is going to get hotter. We see about the same amount of rain, but less snow. With the increased heat, our landscape will be drier, and we are likely to see more wildfires. We could also see more flooding, as the rain will occur in downpours and as rain-on-snow events.

Increasing summertime temperatures may lead to droughts, low flows in salmon bearing streams, stress on populations of plants and animals—all of which double the effects of other ecosystem stressors. Species that need cool temperatures, like salmon, will have a difficult time thriving, as will cooler weather crops and species at higher elevations.

DID YOU MISS THE FIRE & CLIMATE SUMMIT?

Fire experts, ecological restoration professionals, indigenous eco-cultural specialists and practitioners, and local organizations collaborated to create the Fire and Climate Summit, which hosted weekly webinars through the month of May. All four are now available on our website and as a podcast.

www.kswild.org/fire-climate-summit.

WATER QUALITY PROGRAM UPDATE



Each summer, Rogue Riverkeeper works with volunteers to collect water samples at popular recreation sites across the Rogue Basin to test for *E. Coli* bacteria and let you know where it is safe to recreate.

And it's that time again! Waterkeepers across the country, including us, are making significant changes to their water quality monitoring programs to address the potential risks due to the coronavirus pandemic. Here's what you can expect from our water quality monitoring program this summer!

Testing of high profile sites. Instead of our normal 22 sites, we will sample and test high profile sites only so as to provide important data results to the public and the Department of Environmental Quality.

Conduct in-house field work. In order to protect our community, Riverkeeper staff will be collecting and testing samples this summer limiting others exposure to the coronavirus.

Increase personal protective gear. We will be increasing safety protocols by using gloves, masks, eye protection, and waterproof boots and increasing safety measures in our lab as well.

You will still know where it is safe to swim! We will continue to post our weekly sampling results to the Swim Guide App and our website so you know where it is safe to recreate. However, we urge you to follow the current restrictions for recreation and social distancing to keep you, your family and community safe.





On March 19th, as many of our communities in Oregon were grappling with the impacts of the pandemic, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) conditionally approved certification of the project under the Natural Gas Act. The approval is contingent upon a number of conditions that must be met by the Canadian corporation Pembina, including receiving Clean Water Act and Coastal Zone Management Act permits that have been denied by the state.

In April, Rogue Riverkeeper joined the Klamath Tribes, impacted landowners, and more than 25 organizations to file a rehearing request with FERC to challenge approval. The state of Oregon also filed a challenge arguing that FERC improperly issued an approval despite multiple failures by Pembina to acquire state permits.

Despite multiple permit denials from the state, Pembina filed a petition with the U.S. Secretary of Commerce to override the Coastal Zone Management Act denial. It also filed a petition to FERC claiming that the state of Oregon waived its authority to issue the Clean Water Act Section 401 denial. Based on these attempts, Pembina seems to recognize that it cannot meet standards for state approvals without trying to change the rules in its favor.

It all boils down to this: In the middle of a global health crisis, the Trump administration is changing rules and approving fossil fuel export projects like Jordan Cove LNG that threaten our waterways, communities, and climate. While we are all doing what we can to navigate these uncertain times, we must also fend off efforts from Pembina to push this through while everyone else is understandably riding the waves of a pandemic.

It's critical that Oregon stand strong in its denial of the permits for this project. With your support, we will continue to track and respond to any efforts to override the state's denials. Together, we can push back to stop this harmful project once and for all.

Go to rogueriverkeeper.org to take action today!



For many of us who love the great outdoors, the social distancing and travel restrictions associated with the COVID-19 crisis has been a stark reminder of the immense value of wildlands to our bodies and souls.

The list of public lands that were closed to help flatten the curve is extensive and includes Crater Lake National Park, most boat ramps, many trailheads, campgrounds, and pretty much all developed facilities including Forest Service and BLM offices. Limited public access to these public resources has been a financial disaster for outfitters and guides, and a significant challenge to those of us who seek an outdoor outlet to stay healthy and sane.

FORESTRY VS FUELS

One of the most troubling aspects of the pandemic's impact on public land management has been the abrupt halt to many prescribed fire projects that were intended to increase forest resiliency prior to the onset of fire season. In addition to delaying and halting the utilization of spring burns, the public lands shutdown also put a halt to planning and implementation of fuels projects throughout the region. Additionally, recreation management stopped, and federal biologists and hydrologists who protect wildlife and watersheds were sent home.

In contrast, the BLM's controversial old-growth timber sale program didn't miss a beat. During the heart of the crisis as federal, state, and county officials were urging people to "stay home, stay safe, and save lives," the BLM was busy pushing its old-growth logging agenda.

The Medford BLM held a timber auction for the "Blown Fortune" timber sale, which would remove forests on either side of the I-5 freeway north of Grants Pass. Meanwhile, the Klamath Falls BLM re-doubled its planning efforts to replace old-growth forests with dense flammable plantations in the "North" timber sale near the town of Keno. Through-



out the Covid-19 pandemic, KS Wild, along with our friends at Cascadia Wildlands and Oregon Wild, have stayed vigilant while working from home to protect public lands from the BLM's insatiable logging agenda.

LOVE WHERE YOU LIVE, DEFEND WHAT YOU LOVE

As our communities and forests open back up, there are new opportunities to work together to protect the values that make our mountains and rivers beloved by so many. Now is the time for us to collectively envision what a more sustainable and compassionate relationship to the earth— and each other—can look like.

We can reinvest in the neglected recreation infrastructure of public lands by rebuilding and maintaining trails and campgrounds. We can work with land managers to implement fuel reduction and prescribed fire projects to help mitigate fire risk to our communities. We can encourage our friends and families to explore and steward the forests and watersheds of the Klamath Siskiyou.

FINDING SOLACE IN THE FOREST

Whether it's a bike ride around Crater Lake, floating the Wild and Scenic Rogue River, or hiking through old-growth forests in the Marble Mountains Wilderness, our region has natural wonders that inspire the mind and challenge the body. The COVID-19 pandemic is a reminder of how precious these experiences are and how lucky we are to live in such a special place. We have mountains, forests, lakes, rivers, and beaches that are not available to most people in America, or even to most people in the world. Let's pull together to support each other while also taking this moment to be grateful for the clean water, vibrant forests, and inspiring mountains that grace our home.

LONG LIVE OR-7

OR-7 was the first wolf in southern Oregon and northern California in nearly a century. After a 1,000-mile journey, OR-7 paired with a female wolf from northeast Oregon, establishing the Rogue Pack in southern Oregon's Cascade Mountains. Together, the pair has produced several successful litters, forming the source of many of the wolves that are just now recovering on the west coast. OR-7 was last seen in Oregon in fall 2019, but was not part of the state's count in April 2020 causing officials to presume he is dead. He would have been 11 years old, which is considered an advanced age for a wild wolf.



OR-7's journey across thousands of miles captured national attention because he offered a story of hope and recovery. We connected with this story of a wild wolf traveling across a huge area in search of a home and a mate. He will leave a lasting mark on wolf recovery in the western United States.

FISHER DENIED PROTECTIONS

After acknowledging in 2019 that Pacific fishers are threatened with extinction by a combination of logging, rodenticide poison use by marijuana growers, climate change, and forest fire, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) once again reversed course and denied protections for most fishers while only listing a small subset of the species as threatened in the southern Sierra Mountain Range. Remnant



fisher populations in southern Oregon and northern California remain unprotected.

KS Wild, along with other partnering conservation organizations, have been fighting for the Pacific fisher's protections for nearly 20 years. Protection can't come soon enough for the fisher because old-growth timber sales continue to whittle away habitat that the species needs if it is to recover and thrive. Southern Oregon should be a key refuge for the fisher, yet the USFWS refuses to protect this population at the same time that the BLM is ramping up clearcutting of fisher habitat. To learn more about threatened species in the Klamath-Siskiyou, visit www.kswild.org/safeguarding-wildlife.

GIVE NATURE A VOICE

MAKE AN ACTIVIST TOOLKIT COME TO LIFE



WE ARE RESILIENT, WE EVOLVE, WE EMERGE STRONGER

The reality of social distancing can feel so limiting, as we are separated from our community, our friends, and our usual activities. However, there are new opportunities to emerge and grow at this time as an advocate for forest and water defense. Your voice matters and our decision makers need to hear from YOU about the concerns and priorities of southern Oregon and northern California communities. When we speak up and take action together for forests and rivers, we stay connected and empowered.

Similar to patterns set by nature—as in the murmurations of birds, the shoaling of fish, or the swarming of insects—subtle shifts in our response to the collective can create great ripples of change. Your actions at this time, no matter how small, have a great effect on the environment and society around you.

There are many ways you can defend our region's unique ecosystems and wild old growth forests. We are grateful to be able to experience and protect the unique and spectacular natural treasures of the Klamath Siskiyou region. Working together with our supporters who are taking action at home, KS Wild is adapting into a more nimble, resilient force for nature.

THE NEXT MOVE IS UP TO YOU!

Download our Activist Toolkit at kswild.org/take-action to get started. The effective strategies and tips you will find there include how to write a letter to the editor and how to contact your land managers to comment on destructive projects.

WELCOME TO THE KS FAMILY

KS Wild would like to welcome to the team our newest Board Members, **Katie Jorgensen** and **Jeff Scroggin**.

Katie works as a government hydrologist and is looking to use her scientific experience to give back to community efforts to protect the immense beauty and diversity of the Klamath-Siskiyou bioregion. In her spare time she enjoys skiing, camping, mountain biking, going to farmers markets, rafting, hot springs, traveling and yoga. Katie is pleased to be a steward in this organization's dedicated effort to promote healthy ecosystems.

Jeff is a policy analyst based in Oregon, a University of Oregon alumnus, and a lifelong Oregonian. He first fell in love with the beauty of the Klamath-Siskiyou region when backpacking through its diverse forests and stunning riparian areas with KS Wild.

If you know Katie or Jeff, please extend your welcome and thank them for serving to further the KS Wild mission. You can read more about the KS Wild Staff and Board on our website: www.kswild.org/staff.

WHAT TO EXPECT FOR THIS YEAR'S ANNUAL DINNER?

For the past 15 years, the KS Wild Annual Dinner and Auction brings together supporters like you to celebrate our victories and to support the work ahead. As our biggest fundraiser, this event is not just a fun time for the KS Wild family—it is also very important for our financial sustainability. Several hundred supporters attend each fall, and with this year's event scheduled for September 26th there are still a lot of unknowns. We were already planning our 2020 Annual Dinner and Auction when the Covid-19 pandemic hit, and

our planning committee has been anticipating a variety of possible situations. One thing is for sure: The KS Wild Annual Dinner and Auction will happen! We are seeking creative solutions in order to offer you a fun and engaging event and with your support we will still have a successful fundraising event. At this time, we will definitely have a virtual option of attendance, so that even if there is a small gathering, all our supporters will have a chance to be part of the fun.

Look for more information about the Annual Dinner throughout the summer and save the date - September 26, 2020 - for an Annual Dinner like no other.



SAVE THE DATE
Saturday, September 26th

KS WILD'S ANNUAL DINNER
IN THE WILD



PLANNED GIVING:

PROTECTING THE KLAMATH SISKIYOU FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

One thing that most KS Wild supporters understand is that protecting wild places and sustaining a healthy environment is an endeavor bigger than any of our individual lives. That is why you all show up, stand up, take action, volunteer, and donate—you know how important it is to make a lasting difference. You know your actions today help protect wild places, endangered species, and clean water beyond your lifetime.

You have been helping KS Wild defend the remaining wild places of the Klamath Siskiyou region for decades, and we will be doing this work for many more decades to come. That dedication is why many supporters like you have made planned gifts to KS Wild.

Planned gifts are financial decisions made now that have an impact long into the future. These gifts can be in the form of bequests, life insurance policies, stocks or securities, trusts and more.

One such gift has recently created stability at KS Wild. When our beloved canvasser, and tireless voice for the wild, Gary Powell passed away last year he left his home in Ashland's historic Railroad District to KS Wild. Gary dedicated his life to defending, protecting, and loving this region. It was Gary's wish to continue his support for the wild beyond his time here, and we are excited for this opportunity to create a permanent home for KS Wild. In this time of great uncertainty, Gary's generosity enables KS Wild to put more of our resources towards protecting the forests, waters, and wildlife of the Klamath-Siskiyou. Gary's gift and dedication to our mission will live on as a part of the organization's legacy.



We make choices about how we travel, spend our money, and use our time in order to make a positive impact. There are also thoughtful financial choices we can make that outlast our lifetimes and secure future protections for wild places, public lands, and clean water. If you would like to learn more about how your planned gift can help support KS Wild's work, visit kswild.org/planned-giving or join us at our Planned Giving online event this June 18th. Email brandy@kswild.org for more information.

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.

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