

# KS WILD NEWS

The Journal of the Klamath-Siskiyou Wildlands Center



WINTER EDITION  
2016

# WINTER EVENTS

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### **December 14: Re-Wilding at the Crossroads of the K-S**

*Wild Birds Unlimited, Medford Oregon 6-7pm*

Join this guest talk! Jeanine Moy will share photos of wilderness areas from local photographers, discuss the importance of restoring critical places on our landscape, and high-light some of the wildlife species that are supported through re-wilding efforts. Learn about some of our biggest local opportunities we have to participate in a community of stewardship.

### **December 15: Talk w/ Local Wolf Author Becky Elgin**

*Book Release & Signing, Northwest Nature Shop, 6-7pm*

Space is limited please sign-up online at [www.kswild.org](http://www.kswild.org)

### **January 14: Snowshoe Hike Mt. Ashland**

Trek with us on a snowshoe expedition up the powdery peaks of Mt. Ashland to see the spectacular panoramic views of the valley with Ashland nestling inside it. Carpool leaves at 10am. Please bring your own equipment (Snowshoes can be rented at Get N' Gear).

### **February 12th: Siskiyou Filmfest**

*Grants Pass High School Performing Arts Center, 3-8:30pm*

Our festival focuses on the the activism, science and history of the environmental movement and features award winning films about people creating real world solutions to today's environmental challenges on a local, regional and global scale.

**Visit [www.siskiyoufilmfest.org](http://www.siskiyoufilmfest.org)**

### **March 11: Tracking with Coyote Trails**

*Grizzly Peak vicinity - location TBD*

Tap into your wildlife connections and learn about local fauna. Collaborating with expert tracker and director of the Coyote Trails School of Nature, Joe Kreuzman will lead us on a hike to learn to read signs of wildlife what it tells us about their travels and behavior, and the implications for our local, interconnected landscape.

### **FOR ALL HIKES**

Please check details for your hike & sign-up online at [www.kswild.org](http://www.kswild.org) to obtain meet-up and car pool details.



# 2016 SUCCESSES FOR THE KS

TOGETHER, WE DO AMAZING THINGS!

## WRANGLE CAMP

### MEADOW REHAB

KS Wild protects damaged wet meadows at Wrangle Camp caused by off-road vehicles. Thanks to the Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest and the NW Youth Corps for teaming up with us to protect this special place.

## OREGON SPOTTED

### FROG

A broad coalition of local and regional conservation groups including KS Wild secured a victory on the Fremont-Winema to protect rare and threatened frog populations from excessive public lands grazing.

Crater Lake National Park

Grants Pass

Medford

Ruch

Ashland

OR

CA

Crescent City

Orleans

## JIGSAW

KS Wild members respond to a proposal by the Klamath Falls BLM to “regenerate” (clearcut) native forests and convince the timber planners to go back to the drawing board and conduct a thinning project that still retains forest habitat and watershed values.

## PARKS EDDY RESTORATION

Meadow restoration of off-road vehicle damage and decommissioning of streamside roads has greatly benefited the Parks and Eddy Watersheds in the Shasta Trinity National Forest. Thanks to all of you who acted on KS Wild’s action alerts to help this restoration occur!

Mt Shasta

Eureka

Hayfork

Redding

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 harbor renowned biological diversity and are some of the most spectacular in America.

# WEATHERING THE STORM

## LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

It is a privilege to serve as KS Wild's Executive Director, and to celebrate this incredible corner of the world. In this season of transitions, now is a ripe opportunity to showcase important land and water conservation successes of 2016, and to share our vision of the future.



Elections have consequences. The future of our beloved public lands remains unclear. We don't know how far an unchecked, anti-environmental Congress will go to hand over our land, air, and water to private interests.

One thing is certain, KS Wild's work is more important than ever before. We can weather the storm by banding together and building support for our land, air, and water while holding our elected leaders accountable.

2016 was a banner year in our effort to protect one of the greatest regions of life on earth – southern Oregon and northern California's Klamath-Siskiyou region. KS Wild made major strides in forest protection and restoration, by stopping old-growth logging while advancing common sense thinning in our national forests.

We were successful in pushing back against corporate mining and gas pipeline construction proposals, ensuring that our spectacular rivers like the Rogue, Smith, and Illinois stay wild and free of toxic pollution and dirty fossil fuel infrastructure.

Wild areas were preserved, with the retirement of grazing on 30,000 acres of high Siskiyou meadows home to rare plants, while we worked with partners to keep Off Highway Vehicles from the historic and pollinator rich Wrangle Camp meadows. Our work continues to protect fish and wildlife that need clean water and protected landscapes.

But our mission is far from complete.

In threat there is opportunity. KS Wild is proud to stand in solidarity with a conservation community, and resolves to do everything possible as leaders to protect natural treasures for generations to come. We are dedicated to defending what we love: the greater public good that comes from healthy public lands and clean water.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED CARE OF THE KLAMATH-SISKIYOU,

JOSEPH VAILE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



# LOOKING AHEAD TO 2017



## **THE CASCADE-SISKIYOU AND WILD ROGUE**

Sixteen years ago, President Clinton established the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument – the first monument designated for the sole purpose of protecting biodiversity. Today, KS Wild is working alongside our allies at the Soda Mountain Wilderness Council to seek expansion and a doubling in size of the Cascade-Siskiyou. In addition, we are engaging local outfitters and businesses to help secure passage of legislation to establish the Rogue River National Recreation Area and expand the Wild Rogue Wilderness.

## **REFORMING INDUSTRIAL TIMBER PRACTICES**

Rogue Riverkeeper has also joined the Oregon Stream Protection Coalition to increase stream buffers on private timberlands throughout the state. Comparatively weak regulations govern the Siskiyou Region (which includes the Rogue River) under the Oregon Forest Practices Act, which makes rivers and streams on private timberlands in southwest Oregon more susceptible to erosion, pollution, and run off.

## **ENCOURAGING RESPONSIBLE USE & RECOVERY OF PUBLIC LANDS TRAILS & ROADS**

After securing protections for meadows, botanical areas, and roadless wildlands in the Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest on Travel Management Plans, KS Wild turns our attention to the Six Rivers National Forest to secure similar protections through their travel management process.

## **GROWING THE GRASSROOTS**

Community engagement is critical to moving conservation efforts forward in the Klamath-Siskiyou. Small, dispersed rural communities define our region. Over the next year, KS Wild will continue to build up a base of supporters in rural areas like the Illinois and Applegate Valleys and in Mount Shasta, the Coast, and along the Rogue River by working with local groups in those communities to increase our collective effort to protect our rivers, forests, and wild areas.



# WILDLANDS CONSERVATION

## FROM PROTECTION TO RESTORATION

*Sensitive Meadow of Historic Wrangle Camp*  
Photos by: Amy Schlotterback

### WILDLANDS AT THE CROSSROADS

The rare beauty of our Klamath-Siskiyou wildlands provides the type of inspiration that great poets, painters, and adventurous explorers thrive on. These wildlands sustain local communities with clean water and other ecosystem services. They are the pride of local residents, and a major attraction for visitors and new residents looking for a higher quality of life. Every year, tens of thousands of visitors come to southern Oregon and northern California to experience this treasure trove of craggy peaks, wild rivers, and ancient forests.

Our wildlands are ancestral forests persisting in pockets across the landscape like windows to the past, and remain as a stronghold for biodiversity. They are the few pristine rivers that lessen the impacts of dams and pollution in intensely developed landscapes. They are the rugged mountains that serve as a refuge for species in a changing climate.

### HOLDING STRONG, YET URGENTLY NEED CONNECTION

As species are being forced to adapt to the rapidly changing climate, we work toward a more interconnected and resilient landscape of wildlands. Ecological research in the last couple of decades has come to stress the importance of habitat connectivity and permeable landscapes that allow for migration of species, genetic exchange, and the flow of life.

Today's wildlands are small remnants of a once-interconnected landscape that developed for millennia. Some of these pristine areas are protected as Wilderness Areas or through other administrative designations, but many other wilderness-quality lands face a variety of threats from human development. As species are being forced to adapt to the rapidly changing climate, we work toward a more interconnected and resilient landscape of wildlands.





Wrangle Camp's new fence (above) protects the meadow's sensitive botanicals and natural spring from off-road vehicle damage (upper left).

## WRANGLE CAMP FENCING PROJECT ON THE SISKIYOU CREST

We are thankful for the strong community network that is ready to participate in conservation actions. This past summer, we worked with the Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest and the Northwest Youth Crew to protect sensitive meadow habitat from off-road vehicle damage. As the youth completed the fencing project, long-time visitors to the historic camp drove up and thanked everyone for their work. We hope for this collaboration to serve as a precedent for more public engagement on the land and to foster a larger community of stewardship.

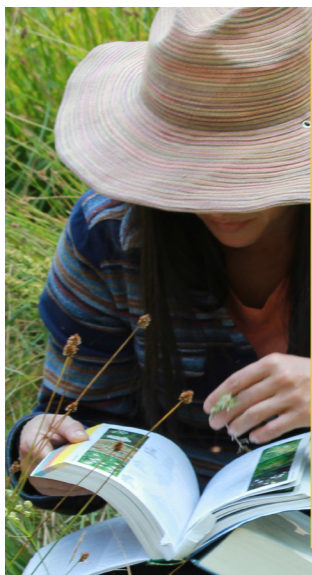


## ADVOCATING FOR CASCADE-SISKIYOU NATIONAL MONUMENT EXPANSION

Local scientists have identified the intersection of the Cascade and Siskiyou mountain range as a vitally important wildlife corridor, and uniquely significant area for wildlife diversity. Indeed, the Siskiyou Crest allows genetic flow between the large wildlands of the region and provides for mobility and habitat niches in our time of accelerated climate change.

## CITIZEN-STEWARDS OF PUBLIC LANDS:

*Our Adopt-a-Botanical Area Program trains and mobilizes volunteers to act as watchdogs and stewards of some of the most biologically rich places of the Klamath-Siskiyou. Botanical areas are designated by the Forest Service and BLM for such treasures as endangered plants, old growth forests, and rare assemblages of plant species. All are welcome to join our training events, weed pulls, trash clean ups, and adopt your very own botanical area!*



# WILDLIFE ADVOCACY

THE KLAMATH-SISKIYOU IS  
HOME TO SPECTACULAR WILDLIFE

The collection of native fauna in the Klamath-Siskiyou is an impressive scene: Northern spotted owls nest in ancient forests and produce young owlets at a greater rate than anywhere else. Rare Pacific fishers roam mixed-conifer forest canopy and rear their young in old madrones and oaks, while salmon and steelhead make a cyclical pilgrimage between ocean habitat and the headwaters of our wild rivers.

The forests, wildlands and rivers of the K-S provide refuge for a remarkable variety of wildlife species. Many endemic species – those that are found nowhere else in the world - have evolved in patches isolated by the intricate network of waterways and mountain ranges. For this reason, the K-S is second only to southern Appalachia in amphibian diversity. The boundaries of many species' ranges converge here creating diversity in animal groups, like birds that migrate between our conifer forests and those in central Mexico. A fantastic display of neotropical migrants find a home in the wilds of southern Oregon and northern California.



Photos Courtesy: US Fish and Wildlife

## PROTECTING AT-RISK SPECIES

Part of our work at KS Wild is to track management decisions by the US Fish and Wildlife service to list at-risk species as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act. In continuing a 22-year battle to protect their declining populations, we filed lawsuit with three of our conservation allies to list the Pacific fisher. Other species we continue to fight for include the Siskiyou Mountain Salamander, the Wolverine and four species of Lamprey.

Unfortunately, we live in an era where conservation is political. KS Wild leverages widespread community support to encourage elected officials to protect wildlife and wildlands, and we are glad to be leaders in providing opportunities for public education and action. In 2016 we celebrated the return of gray wolves to our region with a series of community education events. It was a fantastic start to public conversations about predator management with biologists, writers, educators, and wildlife managers.

We look forward to further developing these partnerships and helping look for on-the-ground solutions to wildlife conflicts.



## SUPPORTING A WILD WAY OF LIFE FOR OUR FELLOW FAUNA

With the myriad of issues facing our wildlife, we recognize it is critically important to be a voice for wildlife. KS Wild takes a multi-pronged approach to protecting wildlife in our region. Foremost, we act to protect large blocks of intact forest that many imperiled wildlife species rely upon for habitat and sustenance necessary to reproduce. These large blocks of habitat often provide a “source habitat” for wildlife contributing to population stability and recovery. Conservation efforts in the K-S have protected large wildlife habitat hotspots associated with the Kalmiopsis, Marble Mountains, Siskiyou Crest, Trinity Alps, and the Cascade Range.

## TAKING STEPS TO ADDRESS WILDLIFE THREATS

There are serious regional and global threats to biological diversity which must be addressed. Logging and road building activities pose major threats to species dependent on intact forests, such as the Northern Goshawk, the marbled murrelet, Northern spotted owl, Pacific fisher, the red tree vole, green sturgeon, and Coho salmon. The larger, global threat of climate change is particularly troublesome for species with lower dispersal capability or adaptations to high elevation, such as our Oregon Spotted Frog, Western Pond Turtle, and Siskiyou Mountain Salamander.

Additionally, lack of funding remains a significant barrier to the greater effort to protect wildlife. Support for game management and wildlife conservation is a problem with the decline of hunting and fishing in Oregon, and the absence of any support from national legislation. The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife has been unable to fulfill funding needs, reporting a \$32 million budget deficit last year, and not for lack of trying. Unsuccessful fundraising attempts have included creative attempts such as a selling conservation-themed stamps and specialty wines.

### VICTORY FOR OREGON SPOTTED FROGS

Perhaps the most imperiled frog population in Oregon consists of the threatened Oregon Spotted Frog population on Jack Creek in the Fremont-Winema National Forest. Its small population has plummeted by 80%-90% as its habitat has been hit by drought and extensive cattle grazing.

The Forest Service acknowledges that the remarkable Jack Creek wetlands are a wholly unique groundwater system, unlike any other in the world, that supports an ecosystem of rare and sensitive plants. This is simply not the right place for a cattle feedlot.

After years of illegal grazing, KS Wild and our allies have secured an initial court victory that requires the Forest Service to do its job and protect rare frogs and their fragile riparian habitat.

## LOOKING TOWARD THE FUTURE

We carry on in 2017 with further resolve to promote habitat restoration and landscape connectivity, protect endangered species, and integrate the best available climate science into management decisions and public education.





# DEFENDING HEALTHY FORESTS



Photo by: Shane Stiles Photography

*Old and young Douglas Fir Trees share refuge in the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument.*

The Klamath Siskiyou Mountains are host to very diverse mosaic landscape, including mixed evergreen and subalpine forests, serpentine vegetation, redwood forest, oak woodlands, savannas and meadows. The region boasts 36 different species of conifers, more than any other temperate forest. Endemic conifers include the Port-Orford cedar and Brewer's (or Weeping) spruce found nowhere else in the world. Many conifers here exist at the edge of their range (including Englemann spruce and Alaska yellow cedar) creating transition zones and mixed ecosystems of unrivaled complexity and beauty.

## DAMAGED BY CLEARCUTS

While these forests still contain irreplaceable biological legacies, widespread clear-cutting has seriously reduced old-growth habitat and native forests throughout southern Oregon and northern

California. Virtually all of the private, state, and county forests in the region have been previously logged. The intact native forests that anchor the terrestrial and hydrological health of the region are found almost exclusively on lands managed by the Forest Service and the BLM, and for decades these public lands were primarily utilized for unsustainable timber production.

The good news is that, unlike much of North America, the Klamath-Siskiyou still have scattered networks of wildlands and intact forests capable of acting as "source populations" for at-risk species. But ongoing old-growth logging and post-fire salvage timber sales continue to remove habitat and connectivity for rare old-growth dependent species.

## 2016 HIGHLIGHTS:

### A BIG YEAR FOR FOREST PROTECTION EFFORTS IN THE KLAMATH-SISKIYOU

- Applegate Watershed residents stood strong to protect their backyard forests from BLM logging plans.
- Proposals to expand the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument moved forward.
- Conservationists and scientists came together to work for real recovery of post-fire forest ecosystems on the Klamath National Forest.
- Off-Road Vehicle damage in the Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest was repaired.
- We prevented the Klamath Falls BLM from "regenerating" native forests.



## PROTECTION AND RESTORATION

Local communities, scientists, conservationists, and even some far-sighted federal land managers are striving to develop a social consensus to restore and rehabilitate the vast tracts of public lands that have been damaged by prior logging and continued fire suppression. The idea is to retain remaining native and ancient forests, protect streamside ecosystems, and to thin dense second-growth tree farms while reintroducing fire to fire-dependent forests. KS Wild is committed to protecting the best of what still remains and promoting restoration forestry where it will do the most good.

Focusing on the public lands that comprise the Rogue and Klamath River watersheds, KS Wild monitors and influences federal management of over 8 million acres of these forests. Our efforts are focused primarily on the Medford and Klamath Falls BLM Districts, and on the Klamath, Six Rivers, Shasta-Trinity, Rogue River-Siskiyou and Fremont-Winema National Forests. Our goal is to protect the remaining wildlands, watersheds and wildlife while encouraging restoration of forests that have been harmed by logging, mining, grazing and fire suppression.

### OUR RECIPE FOR SUCCESS

KS Wild's work over the past two decades has kept tens of thousands of acres of native forests standing and has assisted restoration of previously logged stands throughout the region.

- We participate in the public "NEPA" planning process for all federal forest projects on public lands.
- We groundtruth proposals and projects as they are implemented to ensure compliance with environmental laws.
- We provide information to the public and to decision-makers regarding forest management activities and science.
- We work legislatively for the protection of special and unique places.

*Fire Sculpted Forests of Rough & Ready in the Kalmiopsis*  
Photo by: Nate Wilson





## LAND OF WILD RIVERS

The Klamath-Siskiyou region is comprised of the mighty Rogue River watershed in the north (where our Rogue Riverkeeper program works) and the iconic Klamath River watershed in the south, but also includes the spectacular Illinois, Applegate, Salmon, Trinity, Upper Sacramento, Smith and Chetco Rivers. These beloved rivers support Coho and Chinook salmon, steelhead, cutthroat trout, green sturgeon, and Pacific lamprey.

The western Siskiyou Mountains of southern Oregon contain more federally recognized Wild and Scenic Rivers than any other National Forest system in the lower 48 states. There are several more that are worthy candidates for additional Wild and Scenic designations, including Rough and Ready and Baldface Creeks.

### SHOW ME YOUR COHO!



Many of these rivers and their tributaries are degraded by dams, dredging for gold, toxic runoff from mining operations, destruction of riparian and floodplain habitat, water withdrawals, urban development, sedimentation and other associated impacts from logging and road-building. While salmon and steelhead are part of our cultural identity, these living river icons are increasingly threatened today. Throughout the West Coast of North America, once-thriving salmon populations are in trouble.

Few experiences are more evocative of the Pacific Northwest than the sight of a salmon leaping a waterfall. People gather to watch as they make their way to ancestral spawning grounds each year at Rainie Falls on the Rogue River or the mouth of Wooley Creek on the Salmon River. Some rivers of the Klamath-Siskiyou are strongholds for wild salmon, including the federally listed Northern California/Southern Oregon Coho Salmon. Right here in our region we have an opportunity to restore an iconic piece of natural history, if we make smart land management decisions.





# WORKING FOR CLEAN WATER

KS Wild protects rivers and fish by advocating for management decisions that help restore riparian health while opposing projects that harm salmon and water quality. We aim to “protect the best and restore the rest.” We save forests that stabilize soils and provide critical habitat for salmon while encouraging road removal and maintenance to minimize sedimentation from a crumbling logging road system.

We are proud to have launched the Rogue Riverkeeper program in 2009 to watchdog Clean Water Act implementation in this southern Oregon salmon stronghold. Retaining streamside forest canopy cover, preventing destructive in-stream mining activities, and reducing the impact of poorly maintained logging roads on streams and creeks are continuing priorities.

## PROTECTED WILD RIVERS

Tens of thousands have written in support of protecting the Kalmiopsis region from toxic nickel strip mining. Hundreds more turned out at local public forums to voice their support for wild salmon and clean water. We are on the cusp of securing protection under the 1872 Mining Law, while more permanent solutions are being explored through the Congressional action.



## SAFEGUARDING LOCAL RIVERS & CLEAN WATER

Rogue Riverkeeper is leading a statewide effort to reform the state’s suction dredge mining laws in order to better protect sensitive salmon and bull trout habitat. Earlier this year, a five-year moratorium on suction dredge mining in Oregon waterways kicked in.

## NO LNG CAMPAIGN

In a surprise March announcement, after nearly 10 years of effort, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission denied the permits to build the Pacific Connector Pipeline. Our Rogue Riverkeeper program is working in partnership with Rogue Climate and other allies to oppose the 230-mile long pipeline and export facility. We continue our fight since pipeline companies recently appealed and hope to construct what would become Oregon’s largest greenhouse gas emitter.



# ANNUAL DINNER RECAP

Each year, KS Wild's Annual Dinner attracts supporters from all corners of the Klamath-Siskiyou. Our annual gathering and benefit supports conservation efforts across southwest Oregon and northwest California, and on October 1st, more than 300 guests and volunteers packed the Historic Ashland Army for the 12th Annual Dinner for the Wild.



In honor of the big trees and wild rivers of the region, Melissa Matthewson and John Fisher-Smith shared short stories that illustrated a profound love of the wild places of the Klamath-Siskiyou. While Melissa read her own piece, Awe, John was generous to stand in for Pepper Trail, who penned The Mountains of Paradox.

We extend heartfelt gratitude to all of you who helped make this year's Annual Dinner one of our most successful! More than 120 artists, farms, local businesses, and recreational outfitters contributed to this year's Annual Dinner. Volunteers donated their time and energy. We would especially like to thank AZ Catering and Events, Momentum River Expeditions, and Full Circle Real Estate for their support, and the wonderful Maria Kelly for being emcee extraordinaire!



*Annual Dinner Photos by: Mike Dickenson*

In all, your generous support helped raise more than \$50,000 for KS Wild's conservation campaigns!

## HIKE THE ROGUE RIVER TRAIL

MAY 22-26, 2017

RESERVE YOUR SPOT TODAY!

[www.arta.org/specials/hike.htm](http://www.arta.org/specials/hike.htm)

Join ARTA and KS Wild for an unforgettable trip along the Wild and Scenic section of the Rogue. ARTA will ferry all camping gear and food by boat, allowing you to enjoy a steady pace (about 8 miles per day) with a light daypack and then enjoy comfortable nights of riverside camping with fresh, hearty meals, thick, heavy sleeping pads, and glorious decadent chairs. The rich flora, fauna, and human history make the Rogue River a unique treasure. \$875 per person (\$100 donation goes to KS Wild).

## SUPPORT KS WILD





**GIVE \$40 OR  
MORE THIS  
WINTER  
& RECEIVE A  
2017 CALENDAR!**

**GIVE A GIFT OF ANY  
SIZE THIS SEASON &  
WE'LL WELCOME YOU  
AS A NEW MEMBER.**



## **SUPPORT THE BUSINESSES THAT SUPPORT US**

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### **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.*

**KSWILD.ORG**

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Cover photo: Mt. Ashland Winter Wonderland By: Amy Schlotterback

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