



*Southern Oregon*

**LAND**

CONSERVANCY

For people. For nature. Forever.

# 2022 Impact Report





**Our Mission:** We conserve and enhance land in Southern Oregon to sustain our human and natural communities forever.



*About the cover: Herpetile bioblitz at Rogue River Preserve, photo by Richard Jacquot.*

*This page: American Dipper, photo by Frank Lospalluto.*

# A Note from the Executive Director

The stories and statistics in this annual report illuminate measurable progress over the last year. Southern Oregon Land Conservancy (SOLC) had plenty of that to share in 2022. Our land protected in preserves continued to grow, with transfers from The Nature Conservancy doubling our owned acreage. Those transfers extend SOLC's responsibility for rare vernal pool-mounded prairie habitat in the Agate Desert and its complex of associated plants and animals, including threatened species. In only its second full field season, our education program continued its rapid growth, fully booking available school dates at Rogue River Preserve and spilling over onto lands with SOLC conservation easements in Ashland, Central Point, Jacksonville, and Canyonville. And through the consistent commitment of our supporters, we can report a very strong financial position, both for our annual operations and in the reserve funds that ensure our future land stewardship.

Between those statistics, we're also delivering something less quantitative but equally impactful—the


increasingly rare quality of attentiveness, sometimes even peace of mind, that the experience of living nature can bring. Through Open Lands Days, guided hikes, a growing site steward and docent program, and broad diverse community partnerships, SOLC is playing a key role in building awareness of and commitment to stewardship over the long term. Broadening the ways that our conservation work can extend access to the land brings SOLC's mission to life: for people, for nature, forever. We're grateful for the continued engagement and support from a growing community, and look forward to continue expanding our conservation footprint—and shared love of the land—with your help.

Sincerely,



Steve Wise  
*Executive Director*





## NEW PROJECTS

# 322 Acres of Rare Habitat Transferred to SOLC

In 2022, we completed conservation transactions transferring 322 acres from ownership by The Nature Conservancy (TNC) to SOLC. The transfers consist of three preserves: **Whetstone Savanna Preserve**, a fee-owned property of 144 acres; **Agate Desert Preserve**, a fee-owned property of 49 acres (plus a 3-acre “buffer” conservation easement or CE); and the **Rogue Plains Preserve**, a 126-acre CE.

The preserves are located in our Middle Rogue-Agate

Desert Focus Area. These lands feature excellent examples of vernal pool-mounded prairie habitat supporting unique flora and fauna, including populations of the federally threatened vernal pool fairy shrimp and two endangered plant species, Cook’s lomatium, and large-flowered woolly meadowfoam.

The vernal pool-mounded prairie habitat is a dynamic and complex system, with shallow depressions among grasslands. During the wet rainy season, the

depressions fill with water, creating habitat for fairy shrimp and myriad other invertebrates. It is also an increasingly rare habitat on the valley floor, an area of high development pressure and resultant habitat loss. The Agate Desert landform centered around White City represents the northernmost extent of the range of a rare fairy shrimp. Several SOLC conserved properties in our Middle Rogue-Agate Desert Focus Area contain this unique habitat type, including our Rogue River Preserve.

Along with vernal pool-mounded prairie habitat, the Whetstone Savanna Preserve also features low elevation valley-bottom oak woodlands with chaparral, providing excellent wildlife habitat. This preserve is one of the hot spots for birding in the area, with chances to see Northern Mockingbirds and Blue-gray Gnatcatchers among many other bird species near the wonderful groves of old white oaks.

The successful transfers reflect the long-standing collaborative relationship between TNC and SOLC. To ensure the long-term management of the preserves, SOLC received an endowment from TNC earmarked for the careful stewarding of these special places. After years of care under TNC's watchful eye, we are honored to take over responsibility of these unique preserves.



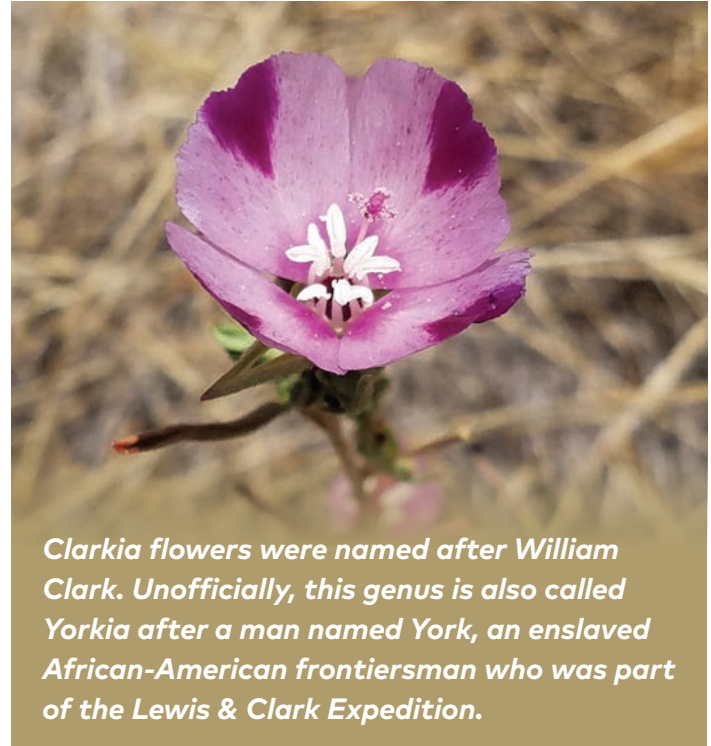
# Notes from our Preserves

## Little Things at Rogue River Preserve

Last year, as part of a research project along major rivers, the Oregon Bee Atlas discovered a new native bee record, the solitary bee *Diadasia angusticeps*, in Oregon at the Rogue River Preserve. Later it was also found at the Table Rocks by Atlas volunteers.

A historical record of this bee species from the 1940s described them foraging on clarkia flowers in a meadow by oaks and chaparral in central California—a habitat mosaic also found at the Rogue River Preserve. The *Diadasia* group are found in the western U.S., Mexico, and in more arid regions in South America; they are flower specialists or oligolectic, focusing on collecting pollen from specific plants like cactus, mallow, or clarkia. *D. angusticeps* adult females only gather pollen from clarkia to provision their nests, linking them beautifully to the short time the flowers are blooming. The nests are generally built in fine soils with a protecting turret, and in the tunnel a pollen mass is placed on top of each egg.

In the U.S., about 98 percent of native bees are



solitary. While a female may nest near other bees, she works alone building her nest in wood, plant stalks, or in the ground. Solitary bees are essential partners in pollinating native plants but also crops like alfalfa. We are grateful to learn about one more splendid creature that lives at Rogue River Preserve.

### **Harry & Marilyn Fisher Preserve: Pomp-Adore!**

In 2022, we were excited to begin to share the Harry & Marilyn Fisher Preserve with the community on five SOLC guided hikes and with partner groups like the Rogue Valley Audubon Society and Tribal members participating in the Indigenous Gardens Network. Interest in visiting the bluff was extraordinary. Please be

patient as we continue to develop visitor infrastructure and offer future visits while protecting the Bluff's extraordinary conservation values.

### **Agate Desert Preserves: We Count Flowers!**

One of our favorite activities at the three Agate Desert preserves last year was counting federally endangered Cook's lomatium flowers with our marvelous volunteers! It was a year of working with the "Weedketeer" site stewards pulling noxious weeds and monitoring vernal pool fairy shrimp, writing management plans, and preparing for a prescribed burn in 2023 at the Agate Desert Preserve. We were also tickled to offer some unique public outings to Whetstone Savanna Preserve.



Photo by Richard Jacquot



Photo by Gary Beall







# Our Volunteers

*141 special people volunteered a total of 1,548 hours in 2022!*

Whether we're pulling invasive weeds, collecting seeds, surveying endangered flowers, preparing for a party, attending committee meetings, or sharing our efforts with the public, the SOLC staff relies on enthusiastic volunteers to get our work done.

We offer our sincere gratitude to all who contribute your time and talent to support land conservation in Southern Oregon!

## 2022 VOLUNTEERS IN THE FIELD

**Rogue River Preserve:** 86 volunteers, 435 hrs.

**Agate Desert preserves:** 15 volunteers, 90 hrs.

**Pompadour Bluff:** 21 volunteers, 218 hrs.

**Williams Creek Reserve:** 2 volunteers, 28 hrs.

**Totals:** 90 individual volunteers for 771 hours!





Photo by Richard Jacquot



# Land-Based Learning in Southern Oregon

Our education program has continued to grow and thrive. In 2022, we facilitated 1,676 student-days of programming (up from 1,245 student-days 2021) on protected lands from Ashland to Canyonville. We also reached 33 educators through professional development workshops for teachers. These numbers are exciting, but the real magic is in the students' stories:

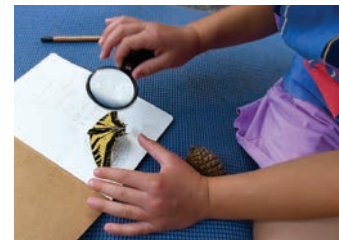
*"I never liked hiking but you changed that."*

*"This is the most calm I've ever been in my life."*

*"That was the first time I could hear myself think."*

*"The flowers are my friends now."*

Our programs use nature journaling to help students slow down, look closely, get curious, and communicate complex information. This practice develops science, language, and math skills that align with state education standards, but it also supports social-emotional competencies and ecological literacy—key elements for building lasting positive relationships and fulfilling SOLC's strategic goal to connect people with the land through generations.



# Conservation Partnerships in 2022

Land conservation and tending to the land only occur when spectacular people, youth, and organizations join together to keep our corner of the world beautiful, enhanced, and resilient. With partners, we are increasing our youth education programming to sow the seeds for conservation into the future.



Photo by Frank Lospalluto

Alder Creek Community Forest  
Ashland Parks & Recreation  
City of Ashland  
Coalition of Oregon Land Trusts  
Fire District 5  
Four Elements Forestry LLC  
Freshwater Trust  
Grayback Forestry  
Green Path Landscapes LLC  
Jackson County Cooperative Weed Management Area  
Jackson County School Districts 4 (Phoenix/Talent), 5 (Ashland), 6 (Central Point), and 9 (Eagle Point)  
Indigenous Gardens Network  
Jacksonville Community Center  
Jackson Soil and Water Conservation District  
Jacksonville Woodlands Association  
Klamath Bird Observatory

Klamath-Siskiyou Oak Network  
Lomakatsi Restoration Project  
M&M Services LLC  
Native Plant Conservation Program  
NOWIA Unete  
Oregon Bee Project  
Oregon Hunters Association  
Oregon Dept. of Fish & Wildlife  
Oregon Natural Resources Education Program  
Oregon State Extension – Land Stewards  
Oregon Watershed Council  
Rogue Basin Partnership  
Rogue Native Plant Partnership  
Rogue River Watershed Council  
Rogue Valley Audubon Society  
Rogue Valley Council of Governments  
Rogue Riverkeeper  
Selberg Institute  
Small Woodlands Association

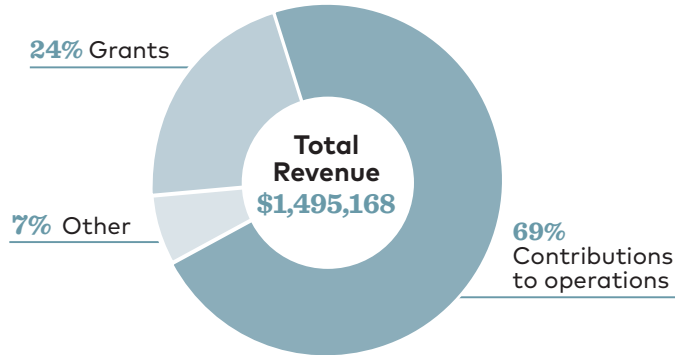
Scouts/BSA Troop 17  
Siskiyou Chapter Native Plant Society of Oregon  
Siskiyou Audubon  
Strauss Ecological Services  
Southern Oregon Climate Action Now  
Southern Oregon Fire Ecology Education Project  
Southern Oregon Regional Environmental Education Leaders  
Southern Oregon Wildlife Crossing Coalition  
Southern Oregon University  
The Nature Conservancy  
Sunny Wolf Charter School  
Trails Outdoor School  
The Understory Initiative  
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service  
Vesper Meadow Restoration and Education Program

# 2022 Financial Snapshot

Figures are based on audited financial statement.

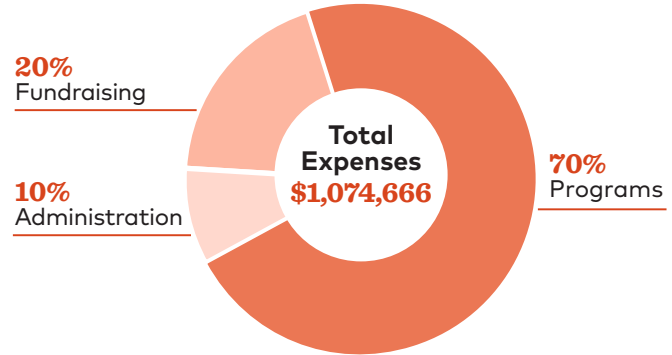
## Revenue

Contributions to operations	\$1,027,208
Grants	\$353,993
Other income	\$113,967
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$1,495,168</b>



## Expenses

Programs	\$752,271
Fundraising	\$214,929
Administration	\$107,466
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$1,074,666</b>
<b>Net Operating Revenue</b>	<b>\$420,502</b>



## Current Assets

Investments	\$3,345,949
Receivables	\$241,000
Prepaid expenses	\$2,179
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>\$4,285,259</b>

**In-kind Land Contribution** \$929,150

## Non-current Assets

Receivables	\$14,492
Property and equipment	\$175,920
Conservation lands	\$4,199,146
Conservation easements	\$3,321,700
Beneficial interest in charitable trust	\$358,400
Endowments	\$1,953,796

**Total Non-current Assets** \$10,023,454

**Other Current Liabilities** \$88,098

**Total Net Assets** \$14,220,615





## 2022 SOLC Staff

Steve Wise, *Executive Director*

Paul Belson, *Conservation Project Manager*

Rebekah Bergkoetter, *Land Steward*

Macy Canete, *Office Manager*

Alex Liston Dykema, *Attorney*

Teresa Fernandez, *Communications Consultant*

Kelly Gonzales, *Development Director*

Lyndia Hammer, *Stewardship Manager*

Araceli Jimenez, *Event & Volunteer Coordinator*

Kristi Mergenthaler, *Stewardship Director*

Bre Scott, *Donor Services Coordinator*

Tara Laidlaw, *Education Program Manager*



Left to right: Kristi Mergenthaler and Acorn, Tara Laidlaw, Rebekah Bergkoetter, Steve Wise, Lyndia Hammer, Bre Scott, Teresa Fernandez, Paul Belson.

## 2022 Board of Directors

Keith Emerson, *President*

Roger Pearce/Dan Thorndike, *Vice-Presidents*

Heather Hickmann, *Treasurer*

Jeff Beaupain, *Secretary*

Amy Amrhein

Teresa Cisneros

Jim Huber

Dan Kellogg

Molly Morison

Harry Piper

Eric Poole

Donald Rubenstein

Kevin Talbert

Kris Wall

## Trustee Council

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Paul Imperia, MD

Dan O'Connor

Judson Parsons

Sarah Sameh

Karen Smith

Nancy Tait

Jeanne M. Taylor

Bill Thorndike, Jr.

Sam Whitford

# Year in Review OUR EVENTS

## Group Hikes & Open Land Days

Photo by Linda Thomas



Photo by Richard Jacquot



Photo by Richard Jacquot



## Conservation Celebration May 21, 2022



Photos by Steven Addington

## Member Picnic & Annual Meeting October 8, 2022



Photos by Linda Thomas

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