

# News



Southern Oregon  
**LAND**  
CONSERVANCY

## 161 New Acres Preserved in Evans Creek Watershed

**S**OLC's newest conservation easement is on 161 acres of mixed evergreen forest, oak woodland, chaparral, and riparian habitat owned by Tish Manley in the Evans Creek Watershed. Tish and her husband Stretch purchased a portion of the property in the late 1970s, seeking refuge from the the harsh winters in Montana where they lived previously, and also with the intent of securing a sustainable firewood supply for winters in the Rogue Valley.

At the time, Jackson County had zoned the land as Open Space Development, and many parcels around them were in the process of being divided up for home sites on smaller acreages.

"The longer we lived here, as more and more houses went in and access to undeveloped areas was fenced off, I felt that it was important to have an area that was relatively untouched, selfishly, mainly for me to enjoy, but also as a sort of gift to the neighbors and especially the wildlife," says Tish.

They sought advice and took classes in forest management through the OSU extension service. In the 1980s, they bought an adjacent 80-acre lot that bordered public lands and a private timber operation. The parcel had previously been divided



Photo by Tish Manley



Photo by Tish Manley



Photo by Spencer Riffle



*The legacy Tish would like to leave is the careful stewardship and protection of the land she has restored and improved during the past 40 years.*

into nine tax lots for development.

The legacy Tish would like to leave is the careful stewardship and protection of the land she has restored and improved during the past 40 years. She continues ecological thinning activities and propagates forest trees for replanting. Recently, she partnered with the Natural Resources Conservation Service to do thinning and fuels work on the property.

Forester Marty Main, who worked with Tish on a Forest

Stewardship Plan for the property, says, "I've had the good fortune to work with many people over my career. Tish is a wonderful person. I've come to believe that the most powerful force for sustainable land management is someone who cares. That's what it takes to integrate multiple values to care for the land. Tish epitomizes that."

We hope that Tish, and the people and wildlife of the Evans Creek Valley, will continue to enjoy her gift of conservation for decades to come.



## New Board Member Spotlight: Dan Thorndike

SOLC welcomes Dan Thorndike, general counsel and corporate secretary at Medford Fabrication, to our Board of Directors.

“I was lucky to grow up fishing, hiking, skiing, climbing, cycling and kayaking locally, regionally, and in far-flung locations



around the world. With family roots in the Rogue Valley reaching back to the early 1900s though, I’ve always been tied to Southern Oregon,” says Dan.

Following college in Colorado and law school in Washington, he returned. Dan has served on a

number of statewide organizations, commissions, and boards focusing on conservation and resource management, particularly water, including the Oregon Environmental Council, the Oregon Water Resource Commission, and the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board.

“I [have] witnessed the increasingly important and active role that land conservancies can play in achieving long-term, landscape-scale ecological, cultural, and economic outcomes, benefiting everyone. SOLC has long been one of the leaders in the regional land

conservancy movement, so I was pleased to be able to join the board,” says Dan.

Dan is married to Joan, a native of Santiago, Chile who is one of the pioneers in establishing organic cut flower production in the United States. She runs Le Mera Gardens. Their daughter Isabella has joined Joan in the cut flower world, both as a grower and as a designer with her studio, Jacklily Seasonal Flower Designs. Their daughter Camila has long been a leader in the environmental movement, locally, regionally, and nationally. She took a temporary break from organizing to pursue her MPA from Harvard’s Kennedy School. Talk about family values!

## Going the Distance with New Education Programs

With schools currently unable to take field trips, our new Education Program Manager Tara Laidlaw is hard at work getting creative with our education program offerings. We are exploring new ways to share our lands with learners from afar, including virtual tours, digital interactive maps, and live Q&A sessions via Zoom. Offerings for families to use outside of school hours are being developed such as a StoryMap for Oredson-Todd Woods that guides visitors in a

trailside exploration of forest ecology. We are also delighted to launch a volunteer docent program to ensure that we have skilled and enthusiastic help at our Rogue River Preserve on public access days and (when we can host them again) school field trips. Throughout all of these projects, we are seeking opportunities to make our education offerings as accessible and inclusive as possible, and we are



Photo by Mike Potts

starting with Spanish translations of the “Outside Every Day” videos on YouTube from earlier this year. For more information, email [tara@landconserve.org](mailto:tara@landconserve.org).

## Rogue River Preserve Updates

Conserved in 2017, the Rogue River Preserve (RRP) is one of the most ecologically and historically significant properties we have ever conserved. We actively manage the 352-acre property to maintain its rich natural and cultural heritage, and so it can serve as a model for land stewardship. We also conduct scientific research, provide educational opportunities for children, youth and adults, and host public and volunteer events on the property.



### Bird Haven – The Floodplain Forest

During annual bird surveys this year, biologist Frank Lospalluto recorded Red-eyed Vireos in the floodplain forest. A bird common in eastern North America, it is rare on the West Coast. In the 1970s, birders described a breeding colony at the nearby Dodge Bridge County Park that disappeared. The vireos are located where there are many large black cottonwoods. Nearby, the forest also supports a breeding Bald Eagle and Red-tailed Hawk pair, likely nesting Great Horned Owls, and Barn Owls, AND two baby Turkey Vultures discovered in a tree cavity! Big trees and big dead trees provide a haven for wildlife.



Turkey Vulture photo by Frank Lospalluto



Red-eyed Vireo photo by Jim Livaudais



### Nature Strong-Community Strong Virtual Event Replaces 2020 Conservation Celebration

Friday, October 16, 2020, 6 p.m.



We are all heart-broken for our friends and neighbors who have lost their homes, possessions, and businesses to the terrible fires. Right now, the most urgent need is to help these families and individuals. With that in mind, we are refraining from holding our 2020 fundraising event, the Conservation Celebration. Stay tuned for the new spring date.

In times like this, the desire for connection to the communities we love feels stronger than ever. We are excited to invite you to a very special virtual event, Nature Strong-Community Strong, on Friday, Oct. 16 at 6 p.m. featuring our new Executive Director Steve Wise and award-winning Author and Photographer Tim Palmer. Gather online with your fellow conservationists, order dinner in from one of our selected restaurants, then sit back and enjoy an enthralling presentation full of hope, promise, and the spirit of resiliency.

For more information and to register for the free presentation, visit the events section on our website [landconserve.org](http://landconserve.org), call us at 541-482-3069, or email [info@landconserve.org](mailto:info@landconserve.org).



### New Bee Research Project

Recent European research reveals a dramatic decline in insect populations. But is this the case here? Unlike Europe, Oregon lacks even baseline data on insect biodiversity. The Oregon Bee Atlas is an initiative to describe the bees of Oregon with the help of highly trained volunteers. The Preserve was selected as one of five study sites. Lincoln Best, taxonomist with the Oregon Bee Atlas said, “Our work at the Rogue River Preserve adds considerably to the inventory of Oregon’s bees, and the surveys led by Judith Maxwell, a team leader for SW Oregon, will contribute to a statewide project to assess methods for monitoring bees.” The Preserve was identified as a key location due to its position on the Rogue River, an important insect dispersal corridor.” We are excited about this partnership and enjoy having access to bee experts. Last spring, a bee at the Preserve was photographed and Lincoln identified it as a female bumble-bee digger (pictured), a solitary ground-nesting bee that resembles a bumble-bee.



# New Chapter for Sourdough Gulch Ranch



In our spring newsletter, we wrote to you about an incredibly diverse and beautiful 809-acre property

in Wolf Creek called Sourdough Gulch Ranch that was donated to us in December of 2019. Knowing we would sell the property to use the proceeds to fund future conservation work, the donor entrusted us to put a conservation easement on the property to protect its conservation values forever, regardless of who might own it in the future. It sold quickly and the perfect buyers are settling in, excited to work with SOLC to preserve this gem they now call home.

Trey Campbell and Catherine Swanston-Campbell were yearning to return to the rural lifestyles of their youth in Oklahoma, Canada, and Australia when they found Sourdough Gulch Ranch.

“It feels awesome to be here, even just breathing the air. It’s great to be reminded that places like this still exist and that we can help it stay this way,” Catherine says with a hint of her



Australian accent.

Having lived in bigger cities for the last 20 years, they could not be happier fishing in the nearly 8-acre pond and enjoying the forest paths and pastures. The Campbells dream of having all five of their children (ages 15 to 31) be a part of this homestead, along with their own families as they grow, and the generations that follow.

With their daughter Brionne (23) and her fiancé Liam Cole (24) recently getting engaged on the property, their dream is already unfolding!



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## Our Mission

To protect and enhance precious land in the Rogue River region to benefit our human and natural communities.

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*Two-Part Series: Land Trusts' Role in Climate Change and Climate Resiliency*

## PART 2: Land Trusts, Climate Change, and Resilient Places

Land trusts' work of conserving land—preventing land alteration and fragmentation—is part of the solution to climate change by increasing carbon storage and reducing emissions. Wherever land is conserved, the benefit is realized because climate change happens at the global level; location does not matter with respect to carbon storage and emissions.

An additional approach to land conservation, put forth by The Nature Conservancy and others, has emerged where location does matter. Certain places in our region are expected to retain high-quality habitats and be more resilient in the face of changing conditions. These “resilient lands” feature topographical diversity and complexity with diverse temperature and moisture levels, minimal barriers

(such as roads and houses) to species movement, and varied ecological niches. It is hoped that conservation of these places will help sustain native biodiversity and help flora and fauna adjust to the changing climate. By including resilient lands in our conservation efforts, our goal is to sustain biodiversity as well as contribute to carbon storage and reduced emissions.