

Fall 2017

News



Southern Oregon

LAND
CONSERVANCY

We Did It! 160 Acres Conserved in Colestin Valley

When Katharine Bronwen and Stan Dean were looking for their dream land in Southern Oregon, conservation was already a high priority. Once they found a piece of property in the Colestin Valley that fit the bill, the landowners reached out to SOLC. "We knew we wanted to put a conservation easement on the property from the beginning," reflected Stan. Over the course of almost two years, SOLC worked together with the landowners to develop a conservation easement that works for the property and also meets Katharine and Stan's long-term goals. We are proud to say, "We did it!" Thanks to Katharine and Stan, we are honored to add their 160-acre property to our SOLC family of protected lands.

The owners' love of the property is apparent in how well

they care for the land. Thinking back, Stan recalled, "Many areas on the property were full of weeds such as starthistle, but now it looks so much better." The property, located in one of the most important wildlife corridors in Oregon, features high-quality oak woodlands. It supports special status plants and animals such as golden triteleia, Ashland thistle, and the Pacific fisher. Importantly, conservation of this property adds to the lands that are already protected in the SOLC Colestin-Siskiyou Summit Focus Area. In total, we have protected 2,035 acres in the focus area because of thoughtful landowners like Katharine and Stan. For them, knowing that their property plays a big role in the larger conservation effort of this rich, biodiverse region, adds to the value of leaving a personal and permanent land legacy.

"Conservation easements are a great way to make a long term difference. SOLC staff was fun and knowledgeable to work with."

- STAN DEAN



CONSERVATION VALUES

Every conservation project has a list of conservation values worth saving for that particular property. Here are the highlights of the Colestin property:



Home for declining wildlife such as Acorn Woodpeckers



Outstanding oak woodlands & mixed evergreen forest



Excellent native bunchgrass plant communities



Meadows and chaparral

Director's Message

Moving forward together



As we look ahead to our 40th anniversary next year, it's a good time to recognize how much this organization has accomplished—and how much important work there is still left to do. On June 27, Diane Garcia signed the purchase

agreement for the Rogue River Preserve. It was a momentous occasion for our staff, our board, and the many individuals, foundations, and corporations who generously supported the conservation of the Heart of the Rogue. With one simple act, a signature on a page, 352 acres of wild land—seasonal pools, meadows, oak woodlands, and two miles of river frontage—were protected. Thank you, Diane, for your 14 years of amazing dedication as executive director. And thanks to all of you, our supporters, for your generosity, passion, and trust. The Rogue River Preserve is a living legacy.

I am extremely excited to be the new kid on the SOLC team, and I'm in awe of the vision and the hard work of the countless individuals who nurtured SOLC from an all-volunteer organization to a mature, accredited land conservancy.

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

We have many opportunities, and a few challenges, in the months and years to come. The management plan for the Rogue River Preserve is underway. Improvement projects will begin later in 2018. In the meantime, hikes and events will continue on the preserve. Beyond the preserve, SOLC priorities include protecting additional high-conservation-value lands, improving the organization's financial reserves, and raising SOLC's visibility and membership in all the communities of our region.

We have a talented and committed staff, passionate and smart board members, dedicated trustees, and incredible supporters. Together, we can climb even the most rugged trails and reach summits that seemed like dreams just yesterday.

Want to share an idea? Have a suggestion? Or, just want to say hello—give me a call (541.482.3069) or send me an email (cathy@landconserve.org).

Cathy Dombi, Executive Director

Cathy



Rogue River Preserve island photo by Mike Potts

SOLC Works To Save Oaks

Photo and article by Evan Barrietos, SOLC volunteer documentarian



Oak woodlands are truly special places. Ecologists like to rave about how many species they host, but on a personal level, I just find them enchanting. With gentle terrain, and parklike canopy, they are an idyllic place to wander. Unfortunately,

the virtues of oak woodlands have also been their downfall.

Because they occur at lower elevations, oak woodlands are located where people want to live. Since the arrival of settlers, agriculture and development have replaced all but 10% of Oregon's historic oak woodlands. Remaining habitat is often degraded by fire suppression and invasive plants. As a result, species like Lewis's Woodpecker and Southern Oregon Buttercup have declined as well.

Conserving Oregon's remaining oak habitat is a challenge because much of it is on private property. Fortunately, SOLC is the local expert on protecting private land with conservation easements (CE) and conserving oaks is one of their top priorities. Last month I joined their Land Steward, Karen Hussey, on a trip to monitor a CE property outside of Eagle Point.

A key part of Karen's job is be a trusted source of information for private landowners who place their land into conservation easements. Staff meet with all landowners every year, listen to their stories, and work with them to create a plan to enhance the conservation value of their land.

After chatting with the landowner, Karen and I headed into the oaks above the house to put up some boundary signs. During our trek we admired some ancient oaks, remnants of an impressive wildflower bloom, and deer/elk beds. I had to leave after a couple hours, but could have spent several days exploring the plants and enjoying the views of that property.

If you happen to own oak habitat that you'd like to protect, consider reaching out to SOLC and/or the Klamath-Rogue Oak Woodland Health and Habitat

Conservation Project. If you don't own oak habitat, I highly recommend spending some quality time at Roxy Ann Peak, the conserved Jacksonville Woodlands, and Table Rocks. The oaks need more admirers!

Evan is the monitoring and outreach assistant for The Nature Conservancy in SW Oregon. He hosts a blog, *The Naturalist Lens* at natlens.wordpress.com.

WILDLIFE IN THE OAKS

Oak woodlands provide shelter, food, and nesting sites for over 300 animal species—more than any other habitat. Gray squirrels, deer, elk, Band-tailed Pigeons, and Wood Ducks, among others, eat the acorns. Neotropical songbirds glean insects from the leaves, while nuthatches and woodpeckers forage in and under the bark. Oak mistletoe, a partial parasite, provides berries for bluebirds and robins during the winter and is a host plant for butterflies. Dead oak branches and trees provide outstanding cavities for nesting. Oaks host more lichen and moss species than any other tree, supporting invertebrates which in turn support birds and other wildlife.

CARING FOR OAKS

- > RETAIN DEAD OAK TREES AND BRANCHES
- > PROTECT BABY OAKS FROM GRAZING/ MOWING
- > DO NOT WATER NATIVE OAKS
- > CONTROL INVASIVE NONNATIVE PLANTS LIKE STARThistle
- > SET ASIDE "NO MOW" AREAS AND RETAIN WOOD PILES
- > AVOID DISTURBANCE DURING BIRD BREEDING SEASON (FEBRUARY-AUGUST)

What's Happening at the Rogue River Preserve

On June 27, 2017 the Rogue River Preserve officially changed hands from the MacArthur family to the Southern Oregon Land Conservancy. This spring and summer we held four work parties; pulling more than an acre of Scotch broom with the help of our community volunteers, an AmeriCorps team and WorkSource youth crews. We hosted six hikes and held the largest Annual Member Picnic ever! Local experts and staff surveyed butterflies, dragonflies, flowers, lichens, birds, and mushrooms. It's been a busy summer at the Preserve. If you have not had the opportunity to participate yet, check out our fall hike series.



Top: Annual Member Picnic and ribbon cutting



Left: RRP signing with previous RRP owner, Maria MacArthur & Board President Pat Acklin



Right: Community volunteer work party

Left: Wildflower hike. [Photo by Evan Barrientos]

Right: AmeriCorps crew

Below left: RRP island work party with a WorkSource Rogue Valley crew and community volunteers. [Photo by Mike Potts]

Below right: Dragonfly exploration outing



A Legacy of Land

A personal journey to land conservation

Celia Hulett's choice to permanently protect her family's land was inspired by the experiences they all shared and the loving care her parents demonstrated for the land over their life-times. Here are Celia's personal reflections:



I was faced with the difficult task of selling a place that had been in my family for almost fifty years. My father bought the land in 1957. We stayed in a little cabin there for a week each summer. The cabin had no electricity or running water, and we loved every minute we had there. After my father's retirement, my parents moved there to live out their golden years, and they were indeed.

After my father died and my mother could no longer live there, I put it on the market with great reluctance; afraid that a new owner would log it and destroy something that my family had spent 50 years preserving. As time and the process went on, I realized that the buyers that were attracted to the property were very likely to say one thing and do another.

I finally decided that a new approach was necessary. If I wanted a buyer interested in conservation, I should go to the Southern Oregon Land Conservancy. Having explored all other possible alternatives, it became obvious the only way to preserve the property would be to put a conservation easement on it, and so I did.

There are few things a person can do in their lifetime that have a lasting and permanent effect on our world. Conservation easements are one of them. And I have the great personal satisfaction of knowing that the little group of Lady's slipper orchids that were part of my father's rites of spring will be there for all who wish to make their own spring pilgrimage.

Editor's Note: A conservation easement was completed in 2003, permanently protecting 40 acres. Since then, the property's ownership transferred twice, and the land continues to be lovingly conserved and enjoyed.

We Are Stronger Together

Welcome SOLC new board members

"Serving with such great board members, other volunteers and an exceptional staff is a true honor and privilege." - JIM HUBER

We are thrilled to announce the recent appointments of Jim Huber and Roger Pearce to the SOLC board of directors. Jim Huber lives in Grants Pass, where he was the director of the city's Community Development Department (1997-2009) working on diverse issues such as wetlands resource planning, urban forestry, and transportation. More recently, Jim served as the planning department director for the City of Medford until retiring in 2016. Jim is no stranger to SOLC, having served on the Lands Committee since 2013, "I support SOLC because I believe in its mission and I love the partnership-approach to achieving its goals."



Roger Pearce is an attorney specializing in land use and real estate. A University of Oregon graduate, Roger lived and worked in Seattle for 23 years. He has been a frequent visitor to Southern Oregon, until moving to Ashland a few years ago. Roger is a Rotary Club of Ashland member. He is on the Mayor's ad hoc City Hall Advisory Committee, chair of the Ashland Planning Commission, and board secretary for the Ashland New Plays Festival.



"I have been a friend and supporter of SOLC for many years because I believe SOLC's approach to land conservation really works." - ROGER PEARCE

Frank Lospalluto, Thank You!

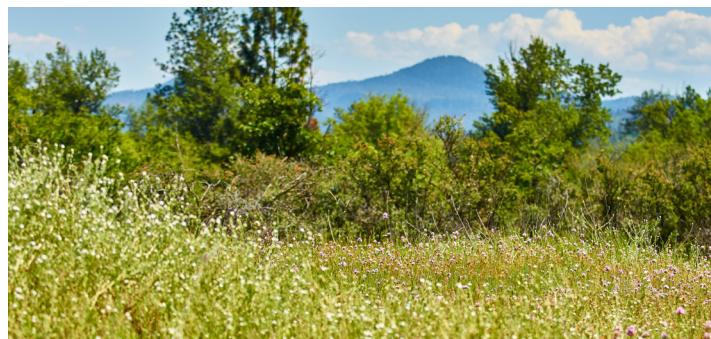
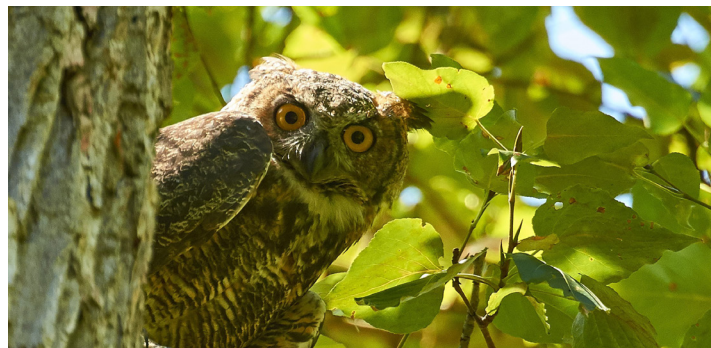
Birder, biologist, lands volunteer

Frank, a local bird biologist, is one of our most valued long-term volunteers. He shares his time with SOLC in many ways such as leading dynamic and fun community bird hikes and conducting bird point count and general bird surveys. Frank also donates his spectacular photographs of birds, flowers, and landscapes for our outreach materials as well as providing framed prints for our silent auction every year. Stewardship director Kristi Mergenthaler said:

"Frank is the most gifted ear birder—fluent in bird songs and calls—in Southwest Oregon. We are extremely lucky he shares his expertise as a birder and naturalist with our organization. I can also rely on him to hike all day through poison-oak and up steep terrain to help me reach the rugged corners of our conserved properties."

Frank also volunteers with the Rogue Valley Audubon Society and other nonprofits, and he works with the Klamath Bird Observatory.

Frank is partnering up with Bob Hunter to guide a fall birding hike at Howard Prairie on October 8. Go to landconserve.org for details and to sign up.



Fall Outings & Events

- September 30** Landmark Member Outing
- October 7** Rogue River Preserve Work Party
- October 8** Birding Howard Prairie
- October 14** Rogue River Preserve Walkabout for Families
- October 15** Rogue River Preserve Fish Tour
- October 21** White Oak Farm and Forest Tour
- November 18** Williams Creek Work Party
- November 19** Mushrooms at Rogue River Preserve

For details and to register visit landconserve.org

Photo highlights by Frank Lospalluto:

Top Right: (1st) Juvenile Great Horned Owl, (2nd) Rogue River Preserve, (3rd) Greenwood Preserve monitoring visit.

A Message from SOLC Board President

The next chapter



This is an exciting era for the Southern Oregon Land Conservancy. We are adding significant new lands to the 64 properties that have been successfully conserved over the past 39 years. We have before us the challenging task of enhancing

our conservation work on the Rogue River Preserve, while making it accessible for stewardship, education, and research. And we have new leadership at SOLC.

We start the next chapter led by a new executive director, Cathy Dombi. Cathy's nonprofit experience, enthusiasm, and engaging personality are serving her well in her first few months on the job. SOLC already has a terrific staff, and Cathy and the team are working hard to keep the organization moving forward.

The SOLC board has also seen some leadership changes. Keith Emerson is now chairing the Lands Committee, our most active group, which vets prospective conservation projects and advises on stewardship issues. Julie Lockhart has become our treasurer and chairs the Finance Committee. And, I am honored to

serve in my new role as president of the organization. Eric Poole continues as vice president and our very able past president, Pat Acklin, remains on the Executive Committee, providing continuity.

We are fortunate to have a strong Board and Trustee Council to set the strategic direction and develop best practices. Due to term limits, this year saw the departure of Charles Bennet, former chair of the Lands Committee, who has contributed his expertise in planning and development of land projects. We will miss Charles's leadership, but we are grateful for his continued service on the Lands Committee.

To the Friends of SOLC who support our efforts, I will work hard to make the organization as positive and successful in its next chapter as it has been in the previous one. Please feel free to contact me at info@landconserve.org if you would like to discuss any aspect of our programs or direction.

Kevin Talbert, Board President

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kevin'.

Smart Giving

By Jeff Beaupain, Retired CPA and SOLC Board Member

Did you know that you are required to take a minimum distribution (RMD) from your retirement accounts every year after you reach age 70½? The RMD is taxable income that you must report on your individual income tax return.

However, you may elect to have all, or any portion, of your RMD donated directly to a qualifying charitable organization—such as SOLC—and this amount will not be taxed as income. This is a more effective philanthropy strategy than taking the RMD in cash, and then using the funds to make a donation.

Personal circumstances will vary, so it is important to consult with a qualified tax or legal professional.

Membership Matters

It's important. We can continue to live, work, and play on our lands by acting now to protect our natural resources and create healthy habitats.

It's easy. Check out online giving at landconserve.org. Mail your donation to SOLC, PO 954, Ashland, Oregon 97520. Or contact us for more giving options such as gifts of appreciated stock.

We are grateful! With your generous support, SOLC stewards over 10,000 protected acres in our region. Over time, sound management practices improve the conservation values of the land you help protect.

Thank you!

FOR PEOPLE. FOR NATURE. FOREVER.





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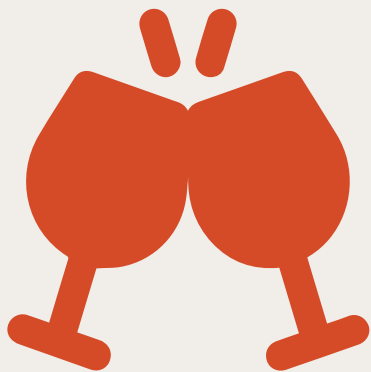
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CONNECT • SUPPORT • VOLUNTEER

Check out our website at landconserve.org for upcoming hikes and volunteer opportunities. Stay connected on current happenings by following us on Facebook. Become a member by making a donation online.

Join us as we celebrate 39 years of success!
Buy your tickets today at landconserve.org.



39th Anniversary

*Conservation
Celebration*

Friday, November 10, 5:30pm
at the Ashland Hills Hotel & Suites

Board of Directors

Kevin Talbert, President
Eric Poole, Vice President
Keith Emerson, Secretary
Julie Lockhart, Treasurer
Pat Acklin
Barbara Allen
Jeff Beaupain
Jim Huber
Dan Kellogg
Molly Morison
Roger Pearce
Donald Rubenstein

Staff

Paul Belson, Conservation
Project Manager
Cathy Dombi, Executive Director
Alex Liston Dykema, Attorney
Teresa Fernandez, Communication
& Outreach Coordinator
Karen Hussey, Land Steward
Kristi Mergenthaler, Stewardship Dir.
Della Merrill, Membership Director
Leslie van Gelder, Office Manager

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