





KS WILD NEWS

The Journal of the Klamath-Siskiyou Wildlands Center Fall 2014

www.kswild.org www.rogueriverkeeper.org

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Cover photo: Stair Creek Falls cascades down into the Wild Rogue River in Mule Creek Canyon. Photo courtesy of Pete Wallstrom, Momentum River Expeditions.



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UPCOMING HIKES

Sunday, September 14: Birding for Kids Hike

Join this family-friendly hike to explore Ashland Pond. Carpool meets at the Northwest Nature Shop in Ashland at 10am.

Sunday, September 21: Siskiyou Botanical Area Hike

Enjoy epic views and visit a special botanical area. Carpool meets at the Northwest Nature Shop in Ashland at 10am.

Sat & Sun, October 18 & 19: Bear Creek Salmon Hike

Explore Bear Creek to see spawning Chinook salmon from 1-3pm. Hike meets in the Lynn-Newbry parking lot in Talent.

Saturday, October 25: Illinois River Salmon Hike

See Chinook salmon spawning in the Illinois River from 1-3pm. Hike meets at Illinois Forks State Park near Cave Junction.

Sunday, October 26: Bear Creek Salmon Hike

Explore Bear Creek to see spawning Chinook salmon from 1-3pm. Hike meets in the Lynn-Newbry parking lot in Talent.

Saturday, November 1: Applegate River Salmon Hike

See Chinook in the Applegate River from 1-3pm. Hike meets at the north entrance of Fish Hatchery Park near Grants Pass.

Sunday, November 2: Illinois River Salmon Hike

See Chinook salmon spawning in the Illinois River from 1-3pm. Hike meets at Illinois Forks State Park near Cave Junction.

Saturday, November 8: Lower Rogue River Hike

Explore the Rogue River canyon and one of our region's most iconic trails. Carpool meets at Ray's Market in Talent at 10am.

For all hikes, bring plenty of water, comfortable walking shoes, warm layers, and a lunch. Call Morgan at (541) 488-5789 or visit www.kswild.org/hikes for more information, directions, and to sign up for a hike.

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.

NEWS AROUND THE KS

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.

1) MORE ROGUE WILDERNESS

Congress could take action this year to designate over 50,000 acres of new wilderness on the Wild & Scenic Rogue River. See page 7.

2) KALMIOPSIS RIVERS AT RISK

Mining companies want to develop large industrial nickel strip mines in the pristine headwaters of the Smith and Illinois Rivers. See page 3.

3) RIGHT-SIZING A ROAD NETWORK

Common-sense reforms on the Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest are threatened by irresponsible off-road vehicle users. See Page 9.

4) FIRE-EVOLVED FORESTS

The summer of 2014 brought several major wildland fires. After fire, forests naturally create important habitat for insects, birds, and mammals.

Grants Gold Beach Medford 2 3 Yreka Eureka Reddina

loseph Vaile

Yet, agencies continue to aggressively push harmful post-fire logging. See page 10.

5) CLEAR CREEK FEATURED HIKE

This magical spot in the High Siskiyou Wilderness is blanketed by thousands of acres of old-growth forests while boasting soaring peaks, alpine meadows, and pristine watersheds. See page 12.

6) BOTANICAL SPOTLIGHT: HORSE MOUNTAIN

Adopt-a-Botanical Area volunteer plans trash clean-up day. See page 11.

2

SUPPORT GROWS FOR PROTECTING WATERSHEDS FROM STRIP MINING

This summer, KS Wild helped deliver 15,000 letters to the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management in support of a mineral withdrawal for public lands in critical watersheds in southwest Oregon, including the North Fork Smith River (Baldface Creek), Rough & Ready Creek, and Hunter Creek.

A broad coalition of local and national conservation groups has requested that these public lands be withdrawn from the 1872



HOME OF THE INSECT-EATING PLANTS: Carnivorous darlingtonia plants overhang the canyon wall on the North Fork Smith River.

Mining Law in response to proposals for nickel strip mining in the area.

Red Flat Nickel Corporation has staked claims on approximately 3,980 acres in the North Fork Smith River watershed adjacent to the Smith River National Recreation Area. All federal public lands in the Smith River watershed in California were withdrawn from the Mining Law in 1990. However, in Oregon, some of the most productive salmon, steelhead and cutthroat trout habitat in the Smith River system is still open to mining.

Red Flat Nickel has also staked claims on 2,000 acres of land in the headwaters of Hunter Creek and the Pistol River, which provide vital salmon and steelhead habitat, and drinking water for local communities. Mine development there has been opposed by the Curry County Board of Commissioners.

Senator Wyden, Senator Merkley, and Representative Defazio have repeatedly urged the Obama Administration to withdraw much of this area from mining due to their exceptional qualities and the inadequacy of the 1872 Mining Law. Join the movement to protect the incredible wildlands and wild rivers of the south Kalmiopsis. Check out



CHETCO CANYON: The magnificent Chetco River, along with the Illinois River and the North Fork Smith, are all Wild and Scenic Rivers of the Kalmiopsis Wilderness.

www.kswild.org to learn more and take action.

OREGON CAVES WATERSHED WORTHY OF PROTECTION

A bill to expand the Oregon Caves National Monument by more than 4,000 acres passed out of the House Natural Resources Committee this summer. Companion legislation already passed the U.S. Senate earlier this year.

KS Wild has been working to make this legislation a reality for over seven years. The area is an outstanding natural gem in the region. The bill would designate the River Styx, which flows through the caves, the nation's first subterranean Wild and



BIGELOW LAKES VISTA: It is time to protect this magnificent gem for all future generations to enjoy and explore.

Scenic River. Also included in the legislation is a voluntary buyout provision for a large grazing allotment upstream of the Oregon Caves. KS Wild has been making annual payments to the rancher in exchange for not grazing the sensitive botanical areas. These payments go toward a final compensation to permanently retire the Big Grayback and Billy Mountain allotments.

The National Park Service, which manages the monument, has been concerned for years about cattle threatening their surface drinking water supply. About 80,000 tourists visit the national monument each year and it generates nearly \$5 million in local revenue and supports 70 local jobs in Josephine County. As this newsletter went to press, the House bill was headed for possible consideration by the full House. Keep your fingers crossed!

WYDEN BILL THREATENS FORESTS

Senator Ron Wyden recently released a new version of his O&C forest bill. If passed, this legislation would affect public forests in an area fifteen times the size of Crater Lake National Park, drinking water for 1.8 million Oregonians, fire management, wild rivers and recreation throughout the state.

KS Wild applauds the Senator for identifying areas in southern Oregon for protection, but troubling aspects of his bill mandate logging near sensitive streams, clearcutting mature forests, and limit public participation in public lands management. For their part, Representatives Peter DeFazio and Greg Walden have also passed legislation in the U.S. House that would effectively privatize portions of these forests.

There is widespread agreement that the focus of forest management should be toward thinning younger, fire-prone forests near homes and communities while protecting clean water and fire resilient older forests in our prized western Oregon Backcountry. It's time to make your voice heard, visit www.kswild.org to take action.

HOW CLEAN IS THE WATER?

VISIT SWIM GUIDE FOR CURRENT CONDITIONS

In the course of our work protecting clean water, we hear many questions from the public about water quality. How clean is the water in the Rogue where I raft? Why is the water in Emigrant Reservoir so nasty? These are both questions that we can answer with general information, but often there is limited access to recent data to give a specific answer about the water quality in a particular location.

Rogue Riverkeeper has spent a fair bit of time monitoring local streams for fecal bacteria, turbidity, pH, temperature, and conductivity with a number of great partners through-



WATER TESTING IN ACTION: Once a week, a volunteer visits each of the streams or reservoirs to collect a water sample.

out our region. Our past efforts have documented steadily declining water quality throughout the Little Butte Creek watershed, improving water quality on Evans Creek, and highlighted the source of pollution on Ashland Creek so that steps could be taken to improve the situation.

This summer, we've been trying something new so we can know exactly how safe and clean the water is at _____ (insert your favorite swimming or boating spot here) with current information, and get you the answers quickly.

We are doing weekly water quality sampling from June through October at a number of popular recreation hotpots, such as Emigrant Reservoir, Lost Creek Reservoir, the Applegate River near Ruch, the Illinois River near Selma, the Rogue River near Gold Hill and Grants Pass, as well as integrating City of Ashland testing on Ashland Creek.

Afterwards, we take the samples back to the water quality lab in our office to find out how much fecal bacteria is in the water at those places. In other words, does the water at these sites meet state health standards? We investigate, then then publish updates on our website, email list, and the Waterkeeper Swim Guide, a website and mobile app (for iPhone and Android) that provides up to date information on water quality for an expanding network of beaches and rivers throughout North America. As always, our data is also provided to state and federal agencies and used to guide decisions that affect our watershed.

ROGUE RIVERKEEPER MISSION:

To protect and restore water quality and fish populations in the Rogue Basin and adjacent coastal watersheds through enforcement, advocacy, field work and community action.



www.rogueriverkeeper.org - (541) 488-9831

Even with the serious drought that is reducing stream flows and concentrating pollution throughout our region, we've been pleasantly surprised so far. Warnings are now posted on Ashland Creek due to elevated bacteria, and Lost Creek Reservoir had a toxic algae scare in June. As this newsletter went to press, the other sites have tested safe so far.

Stay tuned for more updates. Summer isn't over yet and with toxic algae in the news from the Klamath River, the Great Lakes, and the Gulf of Mexico, it's important to monitor public waters and work to keep them clean.

SWIM GUIDE LOCATIONS: View current conditions on our website or with the Swim Guide App. Then check out your local swimming hole, fishing spot, or rafting put-in and keep enjoying the Rogue River and all its tributaries.



Are you interested in helping with water quality monitoring? We're looking for folks to collect samples throughout our watershed. Maybe we can help answer the question you've always wondered about where you go swimming. Please contact forrest@rogueriverkeeper.org to find out more.

Save the Date!

Sunday November 9th, 2014

Rogue Riverkeeper hosts the 2nd Annual Wild & Scenic Film Festival On Tour at SOU's Music Recital Hall!





WILDERNESS IN THE KLAMATH-SISKIYOU

The Klamath-Siskiyou region is home to the largest expanse of wildlands on the West Coast.

Some of these pristine wild areas are protected under the Wilderness Act as Wilderness Areas, but many other wilderness-quality lands are unprotected and face a variety of threats including logging, road-building, over-grazing, and irresponsible off-road vehicle use.

These wild areas provide a network of high quality habitat for thousands of species. The Klamath-Siskiyou wildlands also provide spectacular recreation opportunities for over a dozen nearby communities. 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.

The past can tell us so much about what makes these Klamath-Siskiyou wildlands special. Over geologic time, the Klamath-Siskiyou region escaped glaciation and served as a refuge for many plants and animals that went extinct because of glaciers in other areas in the West.

Today, an extraordinary number of species, many of which live here but nowhere else on the planet, offer insight to the importance of this region in past climatic shifts. This biologic divsersity also tells us that Klamath-Siskiyou wildlands will be an important refuge for wild nature now the climate has entered a new era of rapid change.

In addition to their pristine wild areas, the Klamath-Siskiyous have great potential for additional wilderness protection. Right now, a bill to expand wilderness protections for the Wild Rogue is in Congress awaiting action.

You are a vital part of KS Wild's work to protect the wild, world-class rivers and forests that still lack protection. Join us today to ensure wild nature will remain in the Klamath-Siskiyous for generations to come.

7



ROGUE-UMPQUA DIVIDE & SKY LAKES

Part of the Cascade mountain range, this area includes the headwaters of the mighty Rogue, Umpqua, and Klamath Rivers.

GRASSY KNOB & COPPER SALMON

This "Siskiyou Wild Rivers" area has some of the most spectacular rivers in the world, including the salmon-rich Elk, Sixes, Illinois and Rogue Rivers.

WILD ROGUE

One of southern Oregon's best known and most beloved wilderness areas, the Wild Rogue Wilderness is visited by tens of thousands of rafters, kayakers, and hikers each year.

KALMIOPSIS

The magnificent Chetco, along with the Illinois and the North Fork Smith, are all Wild and Scenic Rivers of the Kalmiopsis Wilderness.

SODA MOUNTAIN

Protected for its incredible biodiversity, here you can see Great Basin shrubs and Siskiyou flowers rubbing shoulders with Cascade conifers.

RED BUTTES & SISKIYOU

This unusual east-west mountain range features high alpine lakes and gorgeous views of the seemingly endless wild Siskiyou mountains.

RUSSIAN, MARBLE MOUNTAIN, & CASTLE CRAGS

The Russian Wilderness hosts the miracle mile with over 17 conifers found in one square mile area—the highest density on the planet! And don't miss the impressive Marble Rim.

TRINITY ALPS, CHANCHELULLA, & YOLLY BOLLY

In the southern Klamath Range, these wilderness areas have steep and varied terrain. The aptly named Trinity Alps are dotted with lakes and jaw-dropping granite ridges. With 550 miles of maintained trail, there are ample opportunities for week-long backpacking adventures.

OFF-ROAD VEHICLE MADNESS EXTREME ORV USERS RESORT TO INTIMIDATION

There is nothing more disheartening than traveling to the backcountry hoping to enjoy all the beautiful things that public lands have to offer—vibrant meadows and wildflowers, clean healthy streams and creeks, intact wildlife habitat—instead only to find your special place trashed by vehicle ruts.

In addition to destroying special places that belong to all of us, extreme off-road vehicle (ORV) enthusiasts are also increasingly attempting to intimidate public land managers and elected officials who try to protect our natural heritage.

You may have heard of the ORV militia who made national news by bringing their quads and their guns to Recapture Canyon in southern Utah. Recapture Canyon supports sensitive aquatic resources and boasts archeological treasures. It is open to hiking and equestrian use and there are literally hundreds of miles of motorized trails nearby for those who won't get out of their rigs. That didn't stop 50



RUTS DESTROY MEADOW: As the Rogue-River Siskiyou National Forest prepares to make reasonable changes to how roads are managed, extreme off-road vehicle users rip up meadows and intimidate county and government officials.

hardcore Tea Party folks from converging on these wildlands with their ORVs hoping for an armed conflict with the big bad federal government.

The Klamath Siskiyous aren't immune from this militant ORV fever. In Josephine County a group called the "Oath Keepers" opposes the concept of public lands in general and reasonable travel management in particular. They have taken to attending federal and county meetings in an attempt to intimidate and coerce people into their point of view. And what are their demands? That American taxpayers should subsidize motorized recreation on every logging road in the West. So much for rugged individualism.

In fact, most Americans do not support the wanton destruction of meadows and wildlife habitat by a few ORV enthusiasts. KS Wild and our allies are working hard to make sure reasonable voices for wildlife and watersheds are heard above the radical fringe.



KLAMATH-SISKIYOU FORESTS OF FIRE

What a summer. Fires again burned both far and wide. In what is becoming the "new normal," a combination of dry fuel conditions, drought, and high temperatures made fire management increasingly difficult as firefighters were put in harms way. But it doesn't have to be like this

The forests of the Klamath Siskiyou Mountains are dependent upon fire. For millennia, lightning storms have ignited blazes that sparked the unique plant communities, tree composition and biodiversity that define the region. Our forests are



FIRE RETURNS TO THE BACKCOUNTRY: The photo above shows the result of a mixed severity burn in the 2013 Douglas Complex Fire.

evolved to accommodate the regenerative force of fire.

ENTER SMOKEY BEAR

Only you...can change an irrational fire policy. For nearly a century we have tried to exclude fire from forests that were born to burn. We also replaced fire resilient old-growth forests with dense, flammable, young fiber plantations. Add logging slash to the mix while building more and more homes in the "wildland urban interface" and you have an unintended recipe for disaster.

ACKNOWLEDGING THE CHALLENGES

While touring this summer's Oregon Gulch wildfire, Governor Kitzhaber identified two of the most significant fire management challenges that confront our public forests: (1) Climate change and its impact on drought, weather, and fuel moisture levels; and (2) The failure of Congress to fully fund Forest Service fire management and fire planning. Solving climate change and congressional dysfunction may be a tall order, but it's a significant step forward that elected leaders are acknowledging and discussing the need to change the way we prepare for and react to fire.

RISING FROM THE ASHES

Now that we are more than ten years removed from the massive Biscuit Fire, it is becoming more possible to look at the effects of that fire objectively. The naturally recovering Kalmiopsis Wilderness is doing just fine and its world-renowned biodiversity is more impressive than ever.

We can stop throwing money and firefighters into the backcountry to "fight" wildland fires and we can redouble our efforts to create defensible space around homes and communities in fire-prone landscapes. Let's focus on collective efforts where they will accomplish the greatest good and put our shoulders to the wheel. We've got a lot of work to do.

9 10

EXPLORING OUR BOTANICAL AREAS FEATURING: HORSE MOUNTAIN

A weekend field trip to the beach and a Botanical Area is nothing short of the ultimate rejuvenation. Earlier this summer, KS Wild collaborated with the California Native Plant Society to train volunteers for our Adopt-A-Botanical Area Program. Volunteers also learned how to search for and record rare plants.

After some beach botanizing north of Arcata, CA, as shown in the photo to the right, we ventured inland to the Horse Mountain Botanical Area, located in the Six Rivers National Forest. The area features serpentine soils, which are rich in heavy metals



BOTANICAL WONDERLANDS: KS Wild's Adopt-a-Botanical Area volunteer program engages over 100 volunteers to oversee and protect more than 120 botanical areas throughout the region. Interested in volunteering? Give us a call at (541) 488-5789.

and lack most plants' favorite nutrients, such as nitrogen. Plants that can survive in these conditions are specially adapted, and many have diverged into species that are endemic to the Klamath-Siskiyou region. One endemic plant that grows up at Horse Mountain is the recently described Trinity Monkeyflower, *Erythranthe trinitiensis*, pictured below on the far right. Other plants may be locally rare, such as the Columbia Lily, *Lilium columbianum*, pictured below on the left, which grows here at the southern edge of its range.

To the astute observer, these treasures are no secret. Unfortunately, even a casual observer will find it obvious that Horse Mountain Botanical Area's beauty is at odds with the mounds of scrap metal, shotgun shells, and forsaken appliances that lay strewn upon old mine tailings. Since our visit to this area, the Horse Mountain botanical adopter and the Adopt-a-Botanical Area Program have planned a trash clean up day for September 27. Come join us in keeping Horse Mountain clean for all to enjoy!







FEATURED HIKE: CLEAR CREEK

HIGH SISKIYOU WILDERNESS HIKING & SWIMMING

Northern California's High Siskiyou Wilderness is simply stunning. Blanketed by thousands of acres of old-growth forests while boasting soaring peaks, alpine meadows, and pristine watersheds, the High Siskiyou Wilderness is a living vision of the ecological splendor that once graced the Siskiyous before the arrival of Forest Service "management."

While the nearby Indian Creek and Dillon Creek watersheds have been degraded by extensive clearcuts, salvage logging, road construction, and mining, almost the entire Clear Creek watershed has been protected as Wilderness. It is perhaps the only large forested



CLEAR CREEK LIVES UP TO ITS NAME: The clean, cold water of Clear Creek originates in the mighty High Siskiyou Wilderness Area and serves as a critical Klamath River tributary. Perfect for swimming, fishing, and boating, the trip to Clear Creek is well worth the journey.

watershed in the Siskiyous to have entirely escaped the logging and road construction bonanza of the 1970s and 80s.

Clear Creek lives up to its name and then some—indeed for wilderness lovers it is almost too good to be true. Deep turquoise pools invite summer swimming in its translucent cold water. The sediment pollution, removal of riparian vegetation, and loss of habitat complexity that curses many Siskiyou watersheds is nowhere to be found. Instead it is a Wilderness watershed defined by wildlands, wildlife, and wild wonder. It is one of the last places where one can experience the Siskiyou Mountains on their own terms. While Congress has wisely protected Clear Creek as Wilderness, many of the public lands in the mid-Klamath remain threatened by logging and mining.

Backpacking through-hikes can take one all the way from the top of the iconic 7,309-foot Preston Peak to the confluence of the Klamath River and Clear Creek. Or a family can car camp at No Man's Camp at the lower end of the watershed and enjoy some of the best swimming holes in the region. There is simply no way to go wrong when planning a visit to Clear Creek.

The trailhead is located approximately 30 minutes downstream of Happy Camp. Be sure to take a High Siskiyou Wilderness map.

FOCUS ON OUR KS WILD FAMILY

BLACK PETALTAIL (TANYPTERYX HAGENI)

The Klamath-Siskiyous are a great place to go dragon hunting. Within the order Odonata, which means 'toothed-ones,' there are 92 species of dragonflies and damselflies identified in this bioregion. They spend most of their lives, from one to as many as five years, as a nymph, looking like a tiny dragon, hiding under logs, and eating aquatic larvae including mosquitoes. Adult dragonflies only live a few weeks and are voracious predators of mosquitos and other small flying insects, which they catch and eat in midair.



The Black Petaltail (*Tanypteryx hageni*) belongs to the most ancient family of dragonflies inhabiting the Earth before dinosaurs. Black Petaltails are associated with serpentine soils and Darlingtonia fens. They spend five years as uniquely amphibious nymphs burrowing in mud, vulnerable to disturbances that come from recreation and resource extraction. KS Wild monitors sensitive, priceless wetlands to protect these and other species from ecologically destructive human activities. This species was seen this summer in the Parks Eddy watershed, which was identified by the Shasta-Trinity National Forest as a priority watershed for restoration. KS Wild generated voices of support for their restoration project at a critical time when others tried to mount opposition against it. Long live the mosquito-slaying dragons!

THANK YOU KAITLIN TIDWELL, SUMMER LAW CLERK

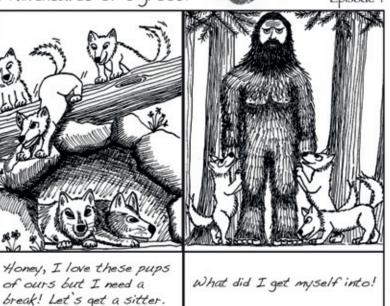
We were thrilled to have Kaitlin Tidwell as KS Wild's summer law clerk to support our public lands conservation program this summer. A native Oregonian, Kaitlin hails from Molalla, a small town in Clackamas County, and is currently pursuing a law degree from Lewis & Clark.

After earning her undergraduate degree from the University of Oregon, Kaitlin spent her first year of law school at Pace University in New York State where she decided she much preferred Oregon. Now back in the Northwest, Kaitlin is living out her new favorite motto, "love



where you live, and defend what you love." This summer, Kaitlin worked wonders on every project she got her hands on, from researching wolf policy to writing objections to logging proposals. We'll miss you Kaitlin! Good luck in your final year of law school.

The Adventures of Bigfoot!



PLEASE SUPPORT THOSE WHO SUPPORT US!

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