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Terra Firma Times

Fall 2014

Extraordinary Habitat Donated

In 1970, Larry Tesler and some friends purchased 80 acres near the west bank of the E. Fork Illinois River in Takilma. He resided there for a short time, but soon decided that his career in computers was better served by living in the San Francisco Bay Area. Larry is a computer scientist in the field of human-computer interaction. He is best known for advocating the “cut, copy and paste” method of text editing on computer screens. Even though he didn’t stay in Takilma, Larry continued to visit periodically to enjoy the land and the company of local friends.



values, including an active floodplain where the river often changes course. Active floodplains create the perfect habitat for wildlife, reduce erosion and contribute to more and deeper pools in the river, which are ideal places for fish to spawn and live.

Over ½ mile of the East Fork Illinois River flows through the property, which is home to coho and Chinook salmon and

steelhead. The streamside (riparian) area and wetland habitat are ideal for birds and other critters.

The remainder of the property is a mix of evergreen forest, oak woodland, meadow, and chaparral that provides habitat for a wide variety of upland wildlife and plants. This site is abundant with cougar, bear, bobcat, gray fox, spotted skunk, dusky-footed woodrat and flying squirrel.

Another great attribute of the property is that it borders other protected land, the 212-acre Meadows tract, which is conserved through SOLC. Together, 255 acres of connected land along the upper Illinois are protected forever.

leen Barton donated the 43-acre lot to SOLC to ensure the land was protected from clear-cutting, development and other intensive land use activities. Thank you Larry and Colleen for your generous donation of this extraordinary property to the Southern Oregon Land Conservancy!



Larry Tesler

“With this donation, I know that the Land Conservancy will protect a dynamic and life-sustaining river segment for future generations.”

The property has high conservation

Between the 80-acre parcel and the river sits a vacant riverfront lot of 43 acres last used by 19th century gold miners. In 1999, its absentee owner made plans to clear-cut and sell it. To spare the stress on the fragile ecosystem, Larry and two friends purchased the lot before logging could begin. In 2010, he bought those friends out so that decisions about the use of the land would be easier to make.

Last month Larry and his wife Col-

Founded in 1978, the Southern Oregon Land Conservancy protects and enhances precious land in the Rogue River region to benefit our human and natural communities.



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- Craig Harper, Conservation Proj. Mgr.
- Kristi Mergenthaler, Land Steward
- Erik Rolstad, Development Dir.

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Warm Wishes

The staff and board wish you a happy, safe and joyful holiday season.

May all good things be yours in the year ahead.





A Taste of Wisdom

Last week at my Rotary Club meeting, one of our members, Jeff Monosoff, gave the weekly reflection. It was a Buddhist teaching about a master and one of his students who complained often. Weary of his student's complaining, the master asked the student to pour a cup of salt into a glass of water and taste it. The student did as he was asked and replied that it tasted bitter.

The master then asked the student to put a cup of salt into a lake and taste it. This time the student said the water tasted fresh. The master explained to the student that the pain in life is the cup of salt, and the amount of bitterness one tastes depends on the container we put the salt in. "So when you are in pain, the only thing you can do is to enlarge your sense of things. Stop being a glass. Become a lake."

This teaching has been going through my mind ever since I heard it. One way to expand our sense of things is by being in nature. A big view. A towering forest. Looking up at the night stars. Standing on one of the Table Rocks. Climbing a peak. All these experiences remind us how large our world is, and somehow, quite miraculously, our worries or troubles begin to diminish. Or perhaps an argument becomes trivial. A hurt seems inconsequential. Our fears become less.

Nature has the ability to remind us that we are part of something much larger, something greater. It can reframe our sense of things.

We're approaching the holiday season and what for many of us is a time of giving, sharing, spending time with family, feeling grateful.

It's also a good time to remember how we're all connected, in the larger sense, to the amazing, beautiful Earth we share.

The next time I drink a glass of water, I will remind myself that I can expand my sense of things, just by remembering the infinite beauty of our natural world.

With gratitude and happy holiday wishes,

Diane

And the Winner is....!

Thanks to the 125 folks who attended this year's 36th anniversary celebration event in October, more funds were raised for land conservation than in any previous year, The Save an Acre auction "sold" 143 acres, topping last year's number by 20! These funds are used to expand our conservation work and help protect more land in the coming year. Funds raised in 2013 helped complete five conservation projects encompassing nearly 1,000 acres of land.

Some hot deals were also won at the silent auction including overnights to regional lodging facilities, dinners, and fancy parties.



Guests enjoy a glass of Wooldridge Creek wine

Thank you to the 100 businesses that supported the event and to all those who attended. A great time was had by all.

The Peace of Wild Things

by Wendell Berry

When despair for the world grows in me
and I wake in the night at the least sound
in fear of what my life and my children's
lives may be,

I go and lie down where the wood drake
rests in his beauty on the water, and the
great heron feeds.

I come into the peace of wild things
who do not tax their lives with
forethought of grief.

I come into the presence of still water.
And I feel above me the day-blind stars
waiting with their light.

For a time I rest in the grace of the world,
and am free.

Charles Bennett



Master Recycler, Father, Jackson County Planner, Land Conservancy Board Member and Chair of the Lands Committee – Charles Bennett is a busy man, deeply invested in community. We thought we'd highlight his efforts and ask a few questions.

Where did you grow up and what sparked your interest in land conservation?

My early years were in Green Bay, Wisconsin. We would spend our entire summer camping in Door County, which is on the peninsula of Lake Michigan. Camping, fishing, and biking were my favorite pastimes as a kid. Even with several hefty doses of poison-ivy rashes and sunburns, that is where my love of the outdoors was born. One of my favorite shows as a kid was Mutual of Omaha's Wild Kingdom. Although it may be a cliché, my favorite book was the Lorax by Dr. Seuss. I've always wanted to "speak for the trees".

What are your hobbies, interests?

When I'm not shuffling my two teenage boys around to all their activities, I enjoy photography and I've recently had an interest in birding.

Why do you volunteer with the Land Conservancy?

My wife and I believe in supporting a wide spectrum of environmental and social issues. My wife supports the United Way, Rotary and others while I became a Master Recycler and support the Land Conservancy. I like working with land-owners who want see the land we enjoy today available for future generations. We are lucky here in Rogue Valley to see most of our hills still undeveloped and our farm and forest land still viable. Although I'm kept pretty busy as a Board Member, all the opportunities to visit our protected lands makes it more than worth it.

Do you have a few favorite protected lands?

It's easy to love all the lands that we monitor. Part of that love comes from the experiences with the people associated with those lands. Early monitoring trips with Dan Kellogg and Su Rolle in the Colestin Valley stand out as some of my favorites, although there is something I very much enjoy



Charles and his son, Carson, help pull noxious weeds at the Williams Creek Preserve

Volunteer Spotlight

about the serpentine soils in the Illinois Valley and their unique flora and fauna. I also love that some of our protected lands are readily available to the public through the Jacksonville Woodlands and City of Ashland.

Any closing comments?

I've been on the Board for a long time, and although I volunteer so that I may somehow "speak for the trees", I really value and appreciate the relationships I have with everyone who is involved with the Land Conservancy. The Land Conservancy brings good people together to do good things.

Thanks for helping make that happen, Charles!

Erik Rolstad Joins the Team

It was a long drive from Salt Lake City to Southern Oregon, but worth every mile. Erik Rolstad joined the Land Conservancy as Development Director at the end of September and he's been on the go ever since. After a national search that lasted several months, we found the right person to lead our fundraising efforts.

Although Erik is new to Southern Oregon, he has lived and worked in numerous states throughout the Western United States. Most recently, Erik lived in Utah where he served as the Director of Individual and Planned Giving for Salt Lake City's local PBS



station KUED-7. Originally from Sante Fe, New Mexico, Erik moved to Utah in 2001 and worked for many years as the Executive Director of SPLORE—a grassroots nonprofit organization that provides accessible outdoor recreation to children and adults with disabilities.

Erik spent much of his childhood exploring the unique cultural, historical and natural landscape surrounding his home town. This laid the foundation for Erik's interest in people and their interaction with the natural environment—which has been a central theme throughout his personal and professional life.

He is excited to join the Southern Oregon Land Conservancy staff and, along with his wife Jill, to be a resident of the Rogue Valley. You can find him most weekends hiking on the rivers, roads and trails around the region.

Erik can be reached at erik@landconserve.org

Welcome New Members

Andre and Heather Allen
Maryann Aruti
Julianne Ashmead
Candace Barnhill
Jeff & Barbara Beaupain
Alan Campbell
Marianne Carroll
Alex & Meera Censor
Barbara Clinton & Jim Selin
Barbara & Brian Comnes
Art & Kathy Coolidge
Dean & Mary Anne Cropper
Chelsea Davis
Richard & Dorothy Davis
Bob & Julie DiChiro
Audrey Eldridge
Keith Emerson & Charlene Harwood
Peggy Evans
James & Carolyn Ferguson
Patrick Flannery & Paula Brown
Deborah Gadsbury & Thor Thompson
Paris Geiken & Scott Toll
Esther Goldberg
Connie Goodrich
Tonya Graham
Maie Grynck & Larry Nadig

Edward & Barbara Helman
John & Dorothy Hershey
James Hetland
Judith Holy
Carolyn & Donald Hunsaker
Gabriel Jackson
Richard & Nisha Jackson
Peggy Jahnke
Linda Kappen
Dan Kaufman
Diana Kelley
Jon Keeley Kirkendall
Susan Knapp
Joseph & Molly Kreuzman
Sarah Larsen
Josh LeBombard & Rebecca Slosberg
Michele Lorenz
Larry & Linda Marshik
Thomas Martin
Danette McCann
John & Della Meengs
PJ Meier & Colin Carnegie
Della Merrill
Paisley & Erin Meyer
William Meyers
Ross & Susan Miles
Jeri A. Moffitt

Bonnie Morgan
Michael Nabielski
Linda Newberry & Richard Ruble
Sue Newberry
Betty Parker
Karsten Peterson & Eugene Wier
Ann Pine
Paige Prewett
Zeph & Kari Robertson
Blair Samuelson & Theresa Mershon-Samuelson
Wayne & Dale Schumacher
Karen Lee & Pate Scott
Louise Shawkat
Lynn & Doris Sjolund
Nancy & Joseph Strahl
Eric Strong
Lawrence Tesler
Deborah Tingle
Janis Mohr-Tipton & Paul Tipton
Heather Tugaw & Taylor Houshour
Joyce Ward
Ramana & Stacy Waymire
April Wells
Greg & Valri Williams
Karolina Wyszynska & Doug Lavagnino

Conservation Area Update



Applegate River Valley

The Southern Oregon Land Conservancy is focusing its efforts in areas of the Rogue River region that will yield the greatest results. We've recently chosen to give added attention to the Applegate River Valley for two reasons.

First and foremost, the Applegate Valley has extraordinary conservation values. The Applegate is one of the Oregon Plan's Core Salmon Areas, and is home to several at risk animal and plant species including coho salmon, Siskiyou mountain salamander, Gentner's fritillary, Pacific fisher, and the blue-gray gnatcatcher. The Applegate also contains numerous key, diminishing habitats such as late successional forests, oak savanna, pine-oak woodlands, wetlands and cool-water streams.

Another reason we chose this area is because we have strong, effective partnerships with local landowners and conservation organizations there. SOLC currently works with the Applegate Partnership and Watershed

Council to identify priority lands and to reach out to landowners. We also work with The Freshwater Trust (based in Portland) to connect with streamside landowners.

Currently, 201 acres of land are conserved in the applegate: five private properties and one magnificent property on Williams Creek owned by the SOLC.



Right now, we are focusing on the agricultural areas on the valley floor and adjacent uplands. A large percentage of the forested uplands is owned and managed by the Federal government – U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Manage-

ment – and is currently better protected than many private forest lands.

An important thing to emphasize is that SOLC's work is entirely voluntary. If landowners wish to protect their land from future mismanagement, we may be able to help them. Some landowners are reluctant to restrict any future activities on their land, and we respect their choice, while other landowners view us as helpful allies in protecting the lands they have nurtured.

Many landowners tell us, "We never want our farm to be cut up or turned into a Big Box Mart," or, "We devoted the last 40 years to caring for our forest. We hope it will never be clear-cut."

Permanent conservation can help ensure that those things never happen and that landowners' precious lands are protected forever.

Our focus in the Applegate River Valley will result in expanding the protected acreage in that area and benefit all of us in the Rogue River region.

Printing for Conservation

Printing for Conservation is a partnership between Pronto Print and the Southern Oregon Land Conservancy. By purchasing print and print-related items through this program, you can support our work!

For every Printing for Conservation purchase made, Pronto Print will donate 12% back to us!
Details at www.landconserve.org

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Young Stewards of the Woods



What do middle schoolers do in the Woods? Well, one exceptional John Muir combined 6-8th grade class visits the Oredson-Todd Woods

in Ashland and cheerfully works on land stewardship – they chip trails, remove noxious weeds and even do light ecological forest thinning. Marcia Osoke’s class has adopted this protected property and visits the Woods four times a year. This is the third year of a terrific partnership between John Muir School, Ashland Parks and Recreation, and Southern Oregon Land Conservancy.

Parks staff provide tools and stewardship guidance, the Land Conservancy leads natural science lessons, and the students get things done. During their most recent visit, student hiked into this protected natural area (while one student strummed his ukulele) and removed non-native Himalayan blackberry and cut resprouting madrone trees. The small group lesson was a quiz on tree identification and the layers of the forest. If you ever encounter kids working in the Woods, give them a big thank you!

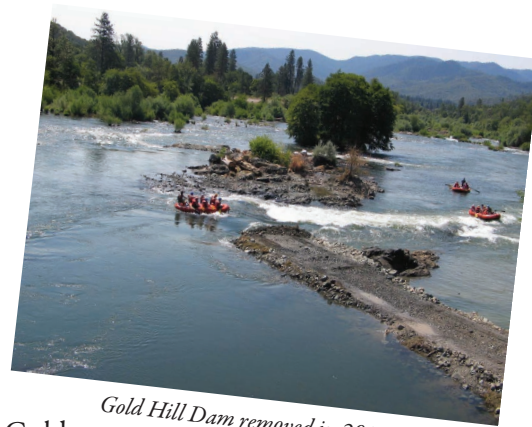
Since 2012, conservation easements have protected 13.2 million acres of farmland in the US.

Working to Restore the Rogue

Southern Oregon Land Conservancy is a member of the Rogue Restoration Group, an alliance of conservation organizations devoted to environmental restoration in the Rogue River Basin.

In the past 6 years this group has been crucial to the completion of important environmental projects in the Rogue including the removal of major dams, e.g., Gold Hill and Gold Ray Dams, restriction of suction dredge mining, and a program to increase instream flow in local streams.

Our primary role is in conservation of streamside land to provide healthy refuges for fish and wildlife in and near streams, and in upland areas that affect water quality and habitat. In 2013, we received donations of conservation easements that included riparian areas along three different fish-bearing streams in Jackson and Josephine counties. This year, we received a donation of 43 acres of riparian land along the E. Fork Illinois River in Josephine County, and are seeking to secure additional property along the Rogue River near Shady Cove.



Gold Hill Dam removed in 2008

We Need our Farms and Farmland!

Can you count to 72 million?

Farmland is a precious resource that continues to be converted to nonfarm use. Since 1982, farmland has decreased by 72 million acres in the United States. In Oregon, which has progressive land use laws that strive to protect prime soils, the loss has been less devastating than surrounding states. Nonetheless, Oregon lost 700,000 acres of farmland between 1982 and 2007 and continues to lose about 20,000 acres of farmland a year. This is too much, way too much.

Conservation agreements are a remarkable legal tool used to protect private farmland. So far, we have conserved 2,462 acres of farm and ranchland in the Rogue Basin that cannot be converted to non-farm use. Since 2012, conservation easements have protected 13.2 million acres in the United States on 76,441 farms.

We need our farms. Let’s work together to protect them!

Sources: NRCS, American Farmland Trust, State of Oregon



Are Your Ducks in a Row?



Frank Lospalluro

Have you considered leaving a lasting legacy to protect the landscape of Southern Oregon for future generations of plants, animals, and people?

Making a bequest through your will or estate is easier than you may think and can be accomplished through a few simple steps.

The Southern Oregon Land Conservancy accepts gifts of stock, real estate, land and other assets.

For more information please contact Erik at 541-482-3069.

Oregon Land Trusts Visit Southern Oregon

Who’s that charming bunch? It’s the members of the Coalition of Oregon Land Trusts (COLT), who held their quarterly board meeting in Southern Oregon last month. The 19-member statewide organization works to promote the work of Oregon Land Trusts through education and outreach, and increase awareness and funding for conservation at the state level.

The Southern Oregon Land Conservancy, which hosted the event along with COLT, shared our 36-year history with two dozen guests, including State Representative Peter Buckley.



Moving Closer to VISION 20/20

Our VISION 20/20 Initiative is moving ahead thanks to many donations this year from members, friends and supporters. Over the next 6 years we want to protect an additional 10,000 acres. It’s possible, if we have the capacity to not only work with interested landowners, but also ensure that the lands we protect today will stay protected for the future. That takes not only staff and volunteers, but funding. Every conservation protection project we undertake requires a financial investment to ensure the long-term protection of that land.



Every dollar donated to the Southern Oregon Land Conservancy is used wisely to advance our VISION 20/20 Initiative.

Did you know that common birds, like Oregon’s state bird, the western meadowlark, could someday be at risk? In some states, it already is. Even the gray squirrel could be at risk if we don’t protect the habitat it needs to survive. The lands we protect safeguard the places that our animal companions need to thrive.

As the year comes to a close, most of you will receive a request letter in the mail asking you to make a year end gift. Please consider a donation to help our common birds and animals continue to call Oregon their home.