A close-up photograph of a butterfly with orange and black wings, perched on a cluster of bright yellow flowers. The background is filled with green foliage and some purple flowers, creating a vibrant, natural scene.

# NEW SEASON NEW WILDERNESS

THE WILDERNESS LAND TRUST  
—  
SPRING 2019 NEWSLETTER





#### MISSION

We Keep the Promise of Wilderness — by acquiring and transferring private lands (inholdings) to public ownership that complete designated and proposed wilderness areas, or directly protect wilderness values.

#### VALUES

We revere our remaining wild places, a legacy to pass on to future generations, the tenacity to work until the job is done and treating everyone with fairness.

#### VISION

We envision a National Wilderness Preservation System that is complete, secure and accessible.

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## Celebrating the Promise of Wilderness

Clean mountain air. Crystal clear water. Soul nurturing solitude. A true wilderness experience means unplugging, stepping away and surrendering your senses to nature's profound beauty. Our mission is to protect that experience and preserve it for you, your family, and all the generations that come after you.

Our work protects vital wildlife habitat, ensures clean water, and provides trail access for hunting, fishing, hiking, climbing, camping and horseback riding. Our process is efficient, effective and appeals to anyone who values wilderness and smart land management.

This newsletter is our opportunity to share some of the amazing stories we've had the privilege to write, thanks to everyone who tirelessly supports our mission to keep the promise of wilderness. Our success is YOUR success, and we will continue sharing our stories of the great lands we are protecting and the diversity of people who are making it possible.

We would also love to hear your wilderness story. Please email us at [Ingrid@wildernesslandtrust.org](mailto:Ingrid@wildernesslandtrust.org) with your favorite wilderness experience and we'll share it on our social media channels.



Brad Borst

WLT file photo



## A SAMPLE OF YOUR SUCCESS

From Colorado to Washington, we've taken important steps over the last six months to remove the threat of private development, save critical fish and wildlife habitat, and protect more wilderness for anyone with a love of the outdoors. Some of our recent wins include:

- We purchased three properties totaling 27 acres within the **Weminuche Wilderness** in Colorado behind beautiful Emerald Lake (pictured above).
- We returned 33 acres to Colorado's **Rocky Mountain National Park** after removing a 2,000 sq. ft. house and restoring the land to its natural state.
- We acquired the 324-acre California Condor/High Mountain/Trout Creek trail property, ensuring public access into the **Santa Lucia and Garcia Wilderness** areas.
- We transferred the 138-acre McGraw Creek property in **Hell's Canyon Wilderness**, Oregon, to the U.S. Forest Service (see story page 4).
- We closed on a 345-acre mining property in the heart of the **Wild Sky Wilderness** of Washington state (see story page 5).
- We purchased a 60-acre mining claim adjacent to the Little Chetco River, the last remaining private inholding within the 180,000-acre **Kalmiopsis Wilderness** in Oregon (see story page 6).

## What's on the horizon?

We are actively working in numerous designated and proposed wilderness areas this year in Alaska, California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon and Washington, and look forward to sharing more success stories with you throughout the coming year.

Keep up with our work at The Wilderness Land Trust by following our adventures on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. Thank you for your unwavering support of our work to protect our wilderness landscapes!





WLT file photo

## How Hells Canyon Got Its Name

Hells Canyon is a 10-mile-wide canyon located along the border of eastern Oregon, eastern Washington and western Idaho.

At 7,993 feet, it is North America's deepest river gorge. Most people assume its depth was the inspiration behind the name, but it was actually christened Hells Canyon because of the wild and dangerous boat journey copper and gold miners took down the Snake River in the 1880s to seek their fortune.

The United States Congress designated the Hells Canyon Wilderness in 1975 and it now has a total of 217,613 acres, with approximately 86,276 acres in Idaho and approximately 131,337 acres in Oregon. It is managed by the Bureau of Land Management and the U.S. Forest Service.

Mike Montgomery, U.S. Forest Service

## PROTECTING HELLS CANYON WILDERNESS

Wander through any of the 360 miles of trails within Hells Canyon Wilderness and you'll experience rocky slopes and grasslands dotted with Douglas fir, Ponderosa pine, western larch, prickly pear cactus and sagebrush. If you're patient, you may witness Rocky Mountain elk or bighorn sheep expertly navigating the steep canyons.

However, the threat of development and destructive grazing still haunts many areas of the Hells Canyon Wilderness, which is why we are thrilled to report that on February 20 we transferred the McGraw Creek property on the Oregon side of Hells Canyon Wilderness to the U.S. Forest Service for permanent protection. McGraw Creek is a 138-acre parcel that sits on a scenic plateau just below the rim of Hells Canyon. The land boasts a stunning view of the Snake River and can be accessed via a U.S. Forest Service trail from the river.

"I have hiked many wilderness properties, but the journey into the

McGraw Creek property is one of my favorites," says David Kirk, senior lands specialist with the Trust. "The trail works its way along the cliffs framing the Snake River and then shoots straight up to a large bench with commanding views of the rugged canyon. I was up there in early October, and the property was a patchwork of brilliant orange and red oak brush with a grove of old growth Douglas fir trees guarding the mouth of a side canyon. Standing in the quiet, watching the sunlight warm the landscape, I was overwhelmed with gratitude that we were able to protect this pristine place forever."

With the threat of development eliminated, the old-growth trees that stand majestically on the land will remain, as will the purity of the seasonal stream that flows through the property's meadows – providing shelter and nourishment for the elk, mountain goats and black bear that hikers have spotted on the property.

*"Standing in the quiet, watching the sunlight warm the landscape, I was overwhelmed with gratitude that we were able to protect this pristine place forever."*

– David Kirk, senior lands specialist



Steven Fey



*This critical land will continue to provide clean water for spawning salmon, old growth Douglas fir and western hemlock, and the abundance of wildlife that call this area home.*

## TENACITY RESULTS IN A WIN FOR WILD SKY

Jon Mulford founded The Wilderness Land Trust in 1992 with a long-range mission to acquire unprotected private land within designated wilderness and return it to public ownership. He cultivated the Trust's steady and tenacious work ethic with the understanding that some successes take time. In the late 1990s, Jon established a relationship between the Trust and a company that owned a 345-acre mining property in the Wild Sky Wilderness of Washington state.

A sale was not imminent at that time, but in early 2000, board member Bill Pope picked up the torch and continued the Trust's connection with the landowners. Bill says it best: "The Evergreen land was one of the largest private properties left in Wild Sky and I knew it was critical for us to protect it, no matter how long it took to make it happen."

While it took a few more years, we are thrilled to tell you we have closed on the purchase of the Evergreen property,

along with Jaspersen, a nearby 20-acre property. This critical land will continue to provide clean water for spawning salmon, old growth Douglas fir and western hemlock, and the abundance of wildlife that call this area home. It is truly a wild place that is safe from future mining and logging, thanks to the help of our passionate supporters.

We are now working hard to transfer these Wild Sky properties to the U.S. Forest Service for permanent wilderness protection.



## A FINAL THREAT ELIMINATED FROM THE KALMIOPSIS WILDERNESS

We are thrilled to report we have closed on the purchase of a 60-acre mining claim adjacent the Little Chetco River, the last remaining private inholding within the 180,000 acre Kalmiopsis Wilderness.

This southwest Oregon wilderness contains the headwaters of three national wild and scenic rivers – the Chetco, North Fork Smith, and Illinois – clean, clear waters that provide critical habitat for salmon and steelhead. The World Wildlife Fund has labeled this area as one of the most botanically diverse areas in North America.

Our acquisition eliminates forever the threat from a small mining operation, and the potential removal of thousands of tons of river gravel that would have directly impacted critical spawning beds and water quality of the Chetco River drainage.

After we finish restoring this land to its natural state, we will transfer the property to the U.S. Forest Service to become a permanent part of the Kalmiopsis Wilderness.

*A helicopter removes remnants of a mining camp from the Kalmiopsis*



David Kirk

*Little Chetco Cascade in the Kalmiopsis Wilderness*



## CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES LEAD TO ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

**A conversation with Wilderness Land Trust supporter Scott Jonas**

Scott Jonas loves his job working with a rapid-paced, highly innovative Silicon Valley chip company but he also craves something he can't get in his day-to-day life as a software engineer – the solitude of a long, remote trail. That's why he's grateful for his frequent escapes to Colorado's Indian Peaks Wilderness.

"Indian Peaks is only an hour from my house and it's spectacular," says Scott. "The alpine tundra is carpeted with wildflowers and the scattered rock gardens are home to columbines, purple fringe, Kings Crown and paintbrush. When I'm hiking, I often catch glimpses of pikas and yellow-bellied marmots foraging among the boulders. Sometimes what I first take for a smooth, round stone turns out to be a ptarmigan."

Growing up in southwestern Pennsylvania, Scott lived for day hikes with his scout troop and longer backpacking trips on the Appalachian Trail and in West Virginia's Dolly Sods Wilderness in the summer. At the time, he had no idea what a designated wilderness area was, but he remembers connecting with the land. "I learned about wildlife, trees, plants and the ecosystem," says Scott. "Although I'm not sure how reliable this information was because I recall being told that skunk cabbage was edible!"

Scott says his childhood experiences in nature had a lasting impact on him, particularly because many of the areas where they hiked and camped were fairly developed.

"I witnessed the toll logging, mining, construction and urban sprawl was taking on the land, and I longed to see unspoiled places," says Scott. "Later, when I read books like *A Sand County Almanac*, the urgency of protecting wild lands really resonated with me. This motivated me to move west and join nonprofits that protect public lands."

Studies cited in the *Oxford Handbook of Environmental and Conservation Psychology* illustrate that direct childhood experiences

Scott Jonas



*"I'm optimistic that the Trust's support will continue to grow, since it has such a great team and mission."*

in nature form a foundation for a sense of stewardship and active care for the environment, which is vital for the protection of a life-sustaining planet now and in the future. This certainly rang true for Scott who, in 2010, started searching online for a land conservation nonprofit he could support.

"My priority was wilderness preservation, since it's the highest level of protection. My search led me to The Wilderness Land Trust because their mission aligned with my goals. As a software engineer, I rely on tools that 'do one thing well' but can also work with other programs. The Trust exemplifies this philosophy. It's very focused on its mission of acquiring and transferring wilderness inholdings, and it effectively partners with landowners, businesses, government agencies and other nonprofits. I also appreciate getting regular project updates and being able to see the Trust's past and current projects on their new website."

Scott says the recent purchase of a 60-acre mining claim adjacent to the Little Chetco River in Oregon's Kalmiopsis Wilderness is his favorite Wilderness Land Trust project to date. Asked about his hopes for the future of The Wilderness Land Trust and our nation's wilderness, Scott says, "I'm optimistic that the Trust's support will continue to grow, since it has such a great team and mission. Nationally I'd like to see more land across the nation designated as wilderness because plants and wildlife need undeveloped space to thrive." Just don't eat the skunk cabbage.



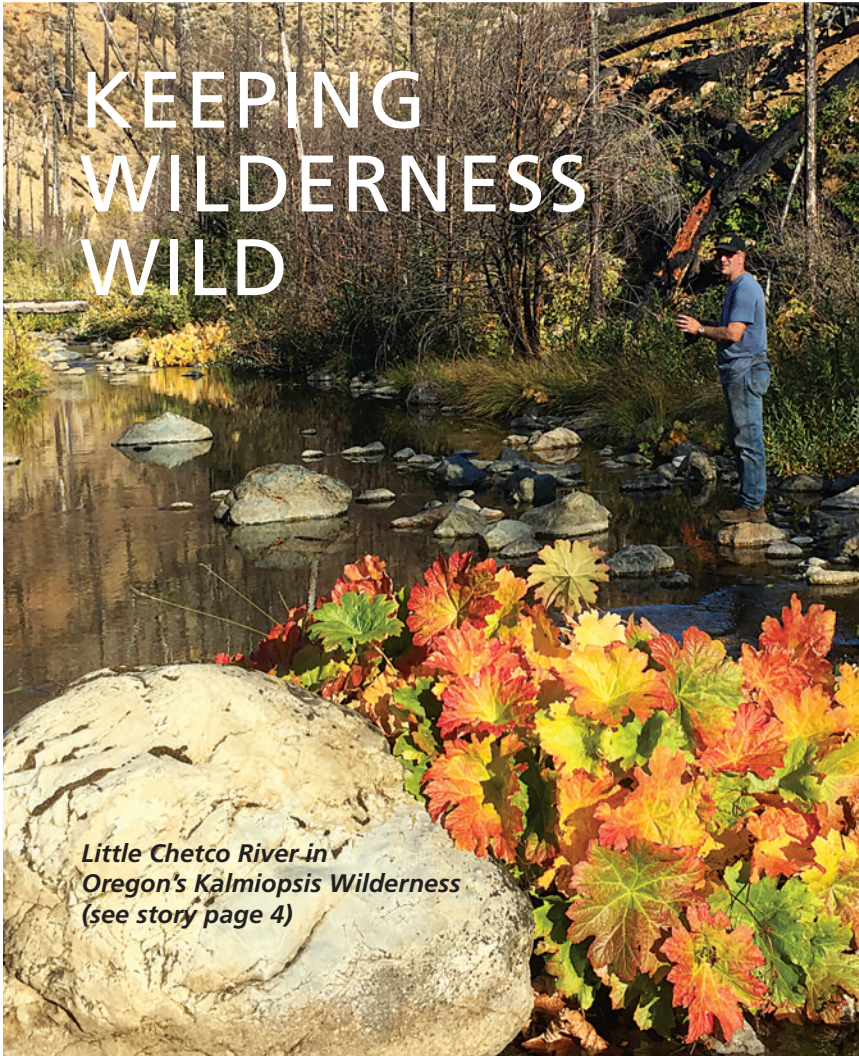


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SPRING 2019 NEWS



Little Chetco River in  
Oregon's Kalmiopsis Wilderness  
(see story page 4)

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