

CONNECTING WILD SPACES + CREATING HAPPY PLACES

WOOD RIVER LAND TRUST

SUMMER 2024



WOOD
RIVER
LAND
TRUST



- PROTECTING LAND
Colorado Gulch Expansion
and Corral Farms

- RECONNECTING &
RESTORING
Warm Springs Preserve
and Elkhorn Creek

- DELIVERING ON OUR
PROMISE OF PERPETUITY
Stewardship, Accessibility,
and Engagement

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Dear Wood River Land Trust Community,

It is with mixed emotions that I share the news of my retirement as President and Founding Executive Director of the Wood River Land Trust after an incredible 27-year journey. It has been an honor and privilege to lead this organization and witness its growth and success.

Starting and growing an organization is akin to navigating the exhilarating rapids of a river. It requires a unique set of skills, unwavering courage, and the ability to adapt to the ever-changing currents. Throughout my tenure, I have embraced the mantra "read and run," which encapsulates the essence of our journey.

Just like skilled whitewater rafters, we faced challenges head-on, carefully assessed the currents of change, and made strategic choices that propelled us forward. We built a culture of unity and collaboration, valuing the power of connections and celebrating our collective achievements.

As I pass the torch, I do so with immense pride in our transformative impact on the Wood River Valley. Together, we have shown that with dedication, passion, and a willingness to embrace change, we can conquer any rapid that comes our way.

I am forever grateful to my incredible team for their unwavering support. It is your unwavering commitment and hard work that has driven our success and made the Wood River Land Trust the force it is today.

As I embark on this new chapter in my life, I am filled with excitement for what lies ahead. I have no doubt that under new leadership, this organization will continue to thrive, preserving and protecting the natural beauty of the Wood River Valley.

I would like to leave you with a quote that has inspired me throughout my tenure: "read and run." Let these words serve as a reminder that by embracing the adventure, embracing the rapids, and embracing the unknown, we can achieve remarkable things.

Thank you for being part of this extraordinary journey. Together, we have made a lasting impact on our community and the environment we hold dear.

My best,

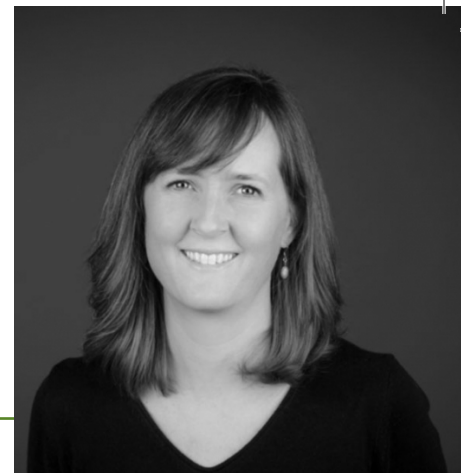
Scott Boettger
 President and
 Founding Executive Director



Scott and his son, Gunner in Tappan Falls rapid Middle Fork of the Salmon River 2017

A LETTER FROM THE

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



This year, we're celebrating a significant milestone: the 30th anniversary of the founding of the Wood River Land Trust. As our board and staff reflect on three decades of conservation achievements, we are filled with a deep sense of pride and gratitude for the impact we've been able to make with our community.

Too often we can get pulled into the day to day grind of deadlines, meetings, and the next project. But when I visit our preserves, walk along the river, and see people enjoying these places on a daily basis, I am humbled by the impact of our work together. I hope you'll join me this summer in visiting a preserve and sitting for a moment to reflect on how all this has come to be – just regular people from our community coming together time and again to create a better future.

As we look back on what's been accomplished, we also look ahead with determination and optimism. The challenges facing our Valley are real. How we grow affects our wildlife corridors, the health of our river, and our access to natural areas. The things we hold dear – our foothills and mountains, rivers and streams, and our connection to each other – are at risk if we forget how interconnected we are with the land and water we depend on and love. But we remain optimistic, because if the past 30 years have shown us anything, it's that through persistence, hard work, and partnership, we can make a difference.

Our work continues to be focused on three key areas:

- Protecting and Maintaining Wild Spaces and Happy Places,
- Restoring Systems and Connections, and
- Delivering on our Promise of Perpetuity.

In this newsletter you'll see how your support is helping do all this, in multi-faceted ways. Our traditional land protection efforts are going strong. With your help, we closed on two new projects this winter. That's two more important properties permanently protected. In addition to our tried and true work, you'll read about our new tool for conservation: our Community Planning program. You'll get updates on projects that are restoring creeks to their floodplains, and innovative partnerships aimed at helping imperiled pollinators. And, you'll read about the work being done to make sure the special places we protect in perpetuity are healthy and remain available to all members of our community.

As we celebrate our past achievements and look to the opportunities that lie ahead, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to each and every one of you who has contributed to the success of the Land Trust. Your support, dedication, and passion have been the driving force behind our conservation efforts. We are grateful for your continued partnership.

Thank you for being an important part of this journey.

Amy Trujillo, Executive Director

WOOD RIVER LAND TRUST

30 YEARS

CONNECTING WILD SPACES
CREATING HAPPY PLACES



Wood River Land Trust Board, 2000

CELEBRATING 30 YEARS OF CONNECTING WILD SPACES + CREATING HAPPY PLACES

This June, the Wood River Land Trust marks an extraordinary milestone—30 years of conservation and community enrichment in the Wood River Valley.

Founded in 1994 by a small group of concerned citizens, the Wood River Land Trust has become an essential part of our community. Together, we have created and opened 16 public nature preserves that provide the backdrop to our daily lives; protected almost 28,000 acres of wildlife habitat and working lands; restored over 19 miles of rivers and streams; and fostered a love for natural habitats and open spaces to ensure these places are cherished for generations to come. As we celebrate the achievements in our past, we're also looking toward the future, focusing on continued preservation accomplishments and commitment to the Wood River Valley.

We couldn't have done any of this work without committed people like you. We're looking forward to celebrating with you this summer, as we continue looking toward the next 30 years of conservation.

Please join us at these upcoming events this year, as we celebrate what is possible when our community comes together to protect the places we love.

Celebrating our Accomplishments



30th Anniversary Events

Boxcar Bend Work Party
JUNE 15TH, 2024

**Weed Warrior Day
at Howard Preserve**
JUNE 28TH, 2024

**Hailey Rocks! Summer Music
Series**
JULY 11TH, 2024

Big Wood River Clean Up
SEPTEMBER 21ST, 2024

**Howard Preserve Anniversary
Picnic**
SEPTEMBER 21ST, 2024

**Think Globally, Act Locally
Speaker Series 2025**
JANUARY–MARCH 2025



Expanding the Hailey Greenway

This spring, thanks to the generosity and support of our community, the Wood River Land Trust was able to add over 30 acres to the Colorado Gulch Preserve.

Through your generosity and unwavering commitment to conservation, we have been able to secure this important addition to the Hailey Greenway, ensuring its preservation for all of us and for future generations.

Our focus now turns towards evaluating the best opportunities for enhancing the habitat as well as the potential for trails and access. Over the coming year, we will be closely observing the land through different seasons, gathering valuable insights to inform our management plan. From winter wildlife closures to carefully directing trails through less sensitive areas, we are dedicated to implementing management strategies that balance the protection of this habitat for wildlife with providing access to our community.

As we celebrate this momentous occasion, we invite you to join us on the journey ahead. Whether through volunteering, spreading the word, or contributing to future projects, your support is invaluable in ensuring the long-term preservation of this property and other treasured landscapes throughout the Wood River Valley.

Thank you to all who made this possible!

PRESERVING CORRAL FARMS

Another Piece of the Puzzle

When Susan Graham approached us with the vision of donating a conservation easement to protect her family's farm in Camas County in perpetuity, we recognized the opportunity to make a lasting impact on the landscape. Spanning 160 acres of prime farmland, Corral Farms is our latest conservation success, protecting another piece of the rich agricultural heritage and ecological diversity of our region.

The significance of Corral Farms extends far beyond its picturesque vistas and fertile soils. Situated near the Centennial Marsh Wildlife Management Area, a designated Important Bird Area, this property plays a role in providing habitat for migratory birds and other wildlife. By protecting farmland from development near the Centennial Marsh, we ensure that vital migration routes remain open, safeguarding biodiversity and ecological resilience.

Corral Farms serves as a key link in a network of wildlife migration corridors identified by Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG), providing essential summer habitat for elk and mule deer and serving as a vital route for pronghorn and elk migrations. These corridors are essential for maintaining healthy populations of wildlife and preserving the natural rhythms of our ecosystems, as discussed in the March installment of our 2024 **“Think Globally, Act Locally” Speaker Series with IDFG’s Sierra Robotcek.**

A conservation easement on Corral Farms represents more than just a legal agreement; it is a commitment to stewardship and sustainability for generations to come. By voluntarily restricting development on the property, Susan ensures that the property’s conservation values are protected forever. This easement, and others nearby, not only safeguard prime farmland and wildlife habitat, but also contribute to the long-term health and resilience of the Camas Creek watershed.

In the coming years, we will continue to pursue opportunities for protecting important lands and water throughout our region, ensuring that wildlife not only survive but thrive in healthy, vibrant habitats. Through strategic partnerships, community engagement, and a commitment to excellence in land stewardship, we continue to make strides toward achieving our conservation goals. Working with landowners like Susan, and supporters like you, we can protect the landscapes we love for generations to come.



COMMUNITY PLANNING: BUILDING CAPACITY TO STEWARD A LIVABLE FUTURE

As an area with convenient and extensive access to nature, Blaine County and its cities fall into what a growing body of research refers to as a Gateway and Natural Amenity Region – a “GNAR” community. In the wake of the pandemic, increased visitation and “amenity migration” overwhelmed historically small towns. Post-pandemic, GNAR communities like Blaine County are grappling with the socioeconomic effects of changed demographics, as well as the environmental effects of an increased population. Understanding the impacts of these changes on our natural resources, the Land Trust is launching a new Community Planning program. Land use planning is another tool available to us, to protect our open spaces and natural resources.

Amenity Migration: driven by a desire to get close to the natural world and outdoor recreation

In many places, the social impacts of increased visitation and amenity migration is playing out against a backdrop of environmental turmoil. Like the rest of the world, Idaho is feeling the pressures of climate change. Warming temperatures are diminishing our winters– triggering earlier snowmelts, lessening the capacity of the snowpack to store water through the hottest months of the year, and overall compromising our water supply. More frequent and intense drought and wet periods further stress the ecology of the Big Wood River basin.

Nearly two thirds of Idaho’s voters think that climate change will harm future generations, while 85% identified bigger and more frequent wildfires as a top environmental concern. Thankfully, 89% of Idaho’s voters stand with the Land Trust and other conservation organizations– they support conserving forests, farms, and wetlands that naturally remove pollution from the air. Climate action relies on solutions in the global effort to mitigate climate change by reducing emissions, as well as a local responsibility to adapt to the real, living conditions of climate change.

Managing Growth for Conservation

The new Community Planning program at the Land Trust rests on an understanding of growth in the Wood River Valley, climate change in the region, and the importance of conservation to quality of life. After two years of community engagement – first with the wider community in 2022 and then with community partners across sectors in 2023 – the Land Trust is now publishing the scope, objectives, and approach of the Community Planning program. Most of all, the Land Trust seeks to draw the connection between community planning and local conservation objectives– that is to say, how community planning can build capacity to manage growth and steward a livable future.

THE SCOPE

Based on feedback from the wider community, the new Community Planning program has identified five focus areas of priority and concern in the community:

Habitat conservation: The community cherishes Blaine County’s natural environment and access to open space. People recognize the ongoing need to protect wildlife and natural resources, restore the Big Wood River and its floodplain, and prepare for natural hazards linked to climate change. More than ever before, the community recognizes the risk of losing surrounding open space to new, sprawling development.

Water availability: With a changing climate, the valley worries whether there will be sufficient water for a growing community, the local food system and the Big Wood River’s ecosystem and fishery. Consistently, the community sees additional opportunities to reduce demand for water and manage usage conjunctively, across the region.

Community housing: Migration to Blaine County during the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated the County’s longstanding housing challenges and created a crisis. At unprecedented levels, the market for housing remains profitable and drives new development. Yet, new market-rate housing doesn’t equate to housing for our local workforce and long-time community members–





much of the housing stock is unaffordable to them. Creative policy solutions are necessary to provide and protect housing for the people who keep the wheels of our community spinning.

Transportation mobility: The housing crisis and traffic congestion are closely tied in the Valley. The community is impacted by increasing length of work commutes into the Wood River Valley. With a legacy of supporting local transit services and active transportation facilities, the community voices support for sustainable transportation modes. Yet, data suggests that residents’ travel behaviors do not align with their stated values– Blaine County is largely car-dependent. The community supports walking, biking, and riding transit, as long as they can safely and conveniently get to where they need to go.

Livability: The community, especially long-time residents, is concerned about maintaining the “quality of place” that drew them to Blaine County. Residents say the values that underpin local life have been buffeted by growth and demographic changes. They also recognize the importance of shared spaces where people come together to enjoy nature, volunteer for community causes, and get to know each other. Our physical environment can be shaped to enhance social connectedness in Blaine County.

Connection to our Work: While three of the focus areas– habitat conservation, water availability, and livability – clearly connect to the mission of the Land Trust, the connection between transportation mobility, community housing, and conservation is more nuanced. How our community addresses transportation and community housing has direct effects on conservation. The connection is grounded in the principles of compact community design, and relies on transportation and housing objectives to counteract the forces that drive sprawling development. If communities are planned to allow for increased land use efficiency in smart places and incentivize sustainable modes of travel and community housing, our community is better positioned to conserve our surrounding natural beauty. Other benefits– like efficient use of natural resources, reduced emissions, and increased social cohesion– also result from compact development.

Our new Community Planning program exists to propel solutions that preserve our community’s cherished characteristics and prepare us for a livable future.

THE APPROACH

With an inclusive, interjurisdictional, and cross-sector approach to Community Planning, the Land Trust seeks to build the community’s capacity to manage growth. The aforementioned challenges - shared amongst Gateway and Natural Amenity Region (GNAR) communities - are exacerbated by climate change and tangible to the whole community. By coalescing those who are dedicated to quality of life in the Wood River Valley– active citizens, engaged philanthropists, partner organizations, and our leaders in local city and county government– we can maximize the impact of the resources available to us. Altogether, we are better positioned to meet community needs with sustainable solutions. Without proactive management, GNAR communities risk becoming victims of their own appeal— losing the qualities that made them attractive in the first place.

THE OBJECTIVES

The newly published program announcement - *Community Planning: Building Capacity to Steward a Livable Future* - outlines our scope of work across the five focus areas. The document describes the current conditions and fundamental dynamics of each focus area (Chapter 1: Community Profile). Chapter 2 highlights existing and overlapping policies already in place and set out by Blaine County jurisdictions, synthesizing them into a set of shared goals and highlighting where we can work together. The plan then establishes a framework for the new work of the Land Trust’s planning arm— one that emphasizes citizen engagement, data-driven solutions and coordination that transcends traditional boundaries.

Photo credits: Opposite left, Gerry Morrison. Lower right, Michael Olenick.

To download a copy of the plan, go to www.woodriverlandtrust.org, or email our Community Planning Director, Cece Osborn, to learn more: cece@woodriverlandtrust.org.

Behind the Scenes at Warm Springs Preserve

Warm Springs Preserve stands as a testament to community partnership. The City of Ketchum's purchase of the 65-acre Preserve along Warm Springs Creek in 2022, was only possible thanks to community support, and the community continues to be involved in shaping its future.

After acquiring the Preserve, the City partnered with the Wood River Land Trust to host a 9-month public Master Planning process to identify upgrades to infrastructure, amenities, and public access, and preserve and restore Warm Springs Creek. The final Master Plan was adopted in 2023, and was informed by the priorities outlined during the acquisition campaign, the expectations and limitations within the deed restrictions, and the community's feedback.

To date, approximately \$3 million has been raised through donations and grants to implement the full plan, but an additional \$1.5 million is needed to realize the project vision fully. The restoration project is fully funded, and the City of Ketchum and the Land Trust are now focused on funding the remaining aspects of the Master Plan such as the restrooms, ADA-accessible trails, and improved parking.

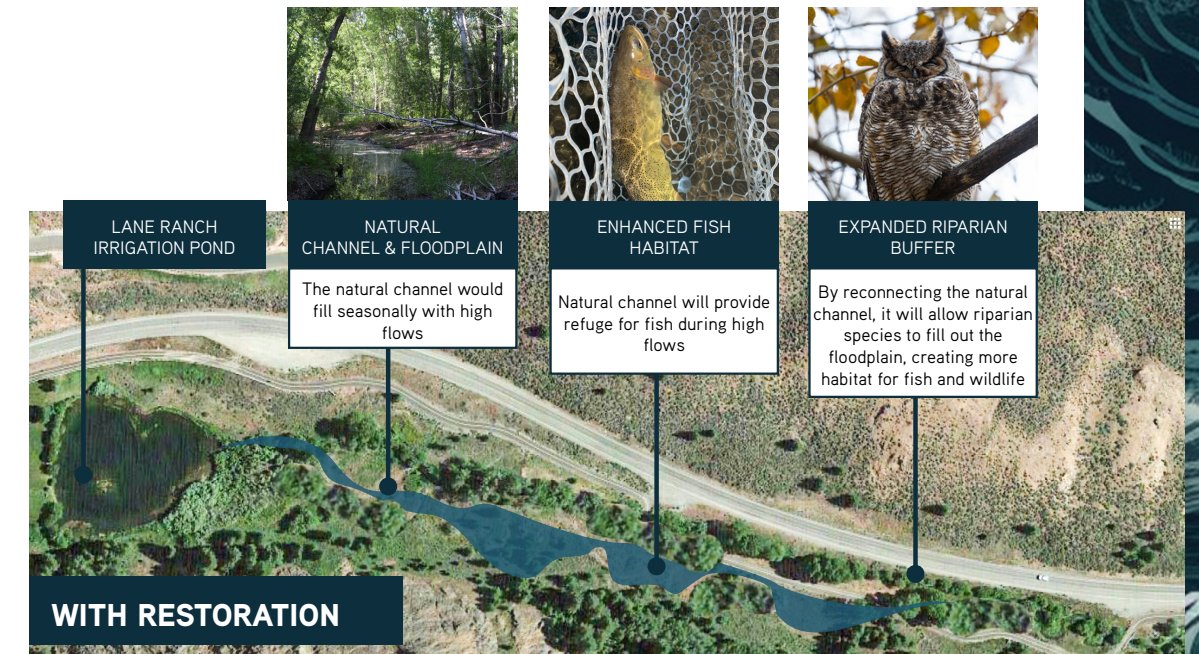
The timeline in the accompanying graphic describes where we are in this remarkable endeavor. In order to keep disturbance to the public to a minimum and reduce costs, all construction activity has been planned for 2025. But, there is plenty going on in the background in the meantime.

Engineering and design work continues this year, along with permitting and logistical coordination to explore connecting trails at the Preserve to other nearby systems. New disc golf baskets and Nordic ski trails have already been installed, with other amenities to follow in 2024. Major infrastructure work is scheduled to begin in spring 2025. While much of the work is behind the scenes, every task brings the project one step closer to fruition.

You can keep informed by signing up for our e-newsletter by emailing info@woodriverlandtrust.org. As Warm Springs Preserve continues to evolve and thrive, it serves as a reminder of the profound impact that collective action can have in shaping our Valley's precious resources. Thank you to all who continue to support this project. Together we will achieve our vision of creating a vibrant, accessible, and sustainable natural space for our community that will endure for generations to come.



Elkhorn Creek Enhancement Project



Elkhorn Creek is one of the important tributaries that feeds into the Big Wood River. These tributaries bring cool water to our river system and serve as refuge and rearing habitat for fish. Over the years, Elkhorn Creek has faced challenges, with its natural flow being disrupted by human intervention. There have been a number of restoration efforts over the years, the latest of which will continue connecting the creek to its historic floodplain.

The history of the Elkhorn Creek is intertwined with the story of human settlement in the valley. Once a meandering waterway, the creek was altered to accommodate human needs, one being a pond installed upstream of the Lane Ranch subdivision to aid irrigation. This modification, and others, diverted the creek from its original path, disrupting its natural flow and isolating it from its floodplain.

The Elkhorn Creek Enhancement Project aims to reestablish the creek's connection to its historic channel and floodplain at seasonal high flows. By cutting a notch in the berm and allowing the creek to access its natural course during high flows, we can revitalize the riparian corridor, and create more habitat for fish and wildlife. This restoration effort is a "win-win" scenario—it preserves the irrigation pond while enhancing the beauty and ecological value of the riparian corridor along the bike path.

This project is a good example of some of our simpler restoration efforts that can have an important impact. It's also a great example of our local community caring about the health of our rivers and watershed and taking action. This project is in partnership with the City of Sun Valley, and was generously supported by residents in the Lane Ranch neighborhood who understand the importance of this tributary and have a long history of stewardship for this part of the creek.

PRE 2024

1. Acquired the property
2. Public Master Planning Process
3. Applied for and we were Awarded the BOR grant and raised the necessary matching funds
4. Environmental Assessment/ Fundraising for Amenities/ Permitting and Regulatory Compliance

Environmental Assessment

Fundraising for Amenities

Permitting and Regulatory Compliance

Updating Preserve Design Based on Permitting Process

Bid Package Prepared/ Contractors Bidding

Acquire Wood

Earthwork

Irrigation

Building

1

2

- Planting
- Construction Report and Monitoring

1

Utilities

Paving

2

In-Stream

Wood

60% of preserve design plans are complete for permitting process to start

All permits in hand. Based on permitting process, begin other 40% of preserve design tweaks.

All funds raised for project. Final design 100% complete.

Under contract

2024 Q1

2024 Q2

2024 Q3

2024 Q4

2025 Q1

2025 Q2

2025 Q3

2025 Q4

Updates in Wood River Land Trust Preserves

For 30 years, we have invited the community to our preserves, providing access to the river and our foothills that otherwise wouldn't exist. The places that people love today could very easily have been private homes or subdivisions that blocked access to the community.

And while for years these preserves offered access with minimal infrastructure, the pressures on these places over the past few years have been immense. We saw dramatic increases in usage of the preserves during COVID when they were some of the few places that provided safe recreation opportunities close to home.

We found we needed more defined trails and infrastructure in order to maintain quality habitat and balance the numbers of people who visit the preserves. We also saw that, while our preserves provided such relief during COVID, there are people in our community who were not able to access them. This initiated our efforts to find ways to provide Universal Access in our preserves to ensure equitable access to the natural beauty of the Wood River Valley.

Universal Access trails are designed to accommodate people of all abilities, providing a welcoming space for everyone to enjoy the outdoors. In total, the Wood River Land Trust will be opening almost two miles of accessible nature trails to the public this summer.

Universal Access trails adhere to specific standards to ensure accessibility for more individuals. These standards, including tread surface width, maximum obstacles height, and running grade limits, are essential for creating a safe and inclusive environment.

While we strive to upgrade the majority of existing trails to Universal Access status, it's important to note that not every trail can be converted due to environmental considerations. Trails located in the floodway, for example, pose challenges for continued maintenance.

The Simons/Bauer Universal Access trail, set to be completed by summer, will connect Lions Park to the Mountain Humane campus. The trail features a stone aggregate tread surface and includes a boardwalk section to minimize disturbance to wetlands. A connection to Croy Creek Road will have its own unique trailhead, expected to be completed by the end of fall. An important note: this trail will be closed during winter months to protect wintering wildlife. This action is consistent with local efforts to minimize the impacts of recreation on wintering wildlife.

The accessible trails in Colorado Gulch are complete and open to the public. These trails will open up new opportunities for community members to explore and connect with nature. Springtime can create wet and muddy conditions for

trails and the Wood River Land Trust team will be doing our best to try to maintain the trail accessibility throughout the spring wet season.

As we continue to improve accessibility in our preserves, we remain committed to providing inclusive spaces where everyone can experience the wonder of the Wood River Valley. By following Universal Access standard guidelines and implementing thoughtful management strategies, we aim to ensure that our trails are enjoyed by all for generations to come.

We invite you to explore these newly accessible trails and witness firsthand the beauty of our preserved landscapes. Whether you are strolling along the Simons/Bauer Trail, or taking in the sights of Colorado Gulch, or visiting the boardwalk at the Croy Creek wetlands, we hope you will join us in appreciating the power of access and inclusion in nature.



Enhancing Habitat for Native Bees and Insects

Since 2020, Wood River Land Trust has embarked on a number of stewardship projects aimed at enhancing habitat for our imperiled pollinators. Part of that effort has been to participate in an innovative project aimed at improving plant diversity on the edges of agricultural fields to enhance habitat for native bees and insects. Made possible through funding from Syngenta, Croplife America, and

Simplot, this initiative represents a step forward in our commitment to conservation and biodiversity.

A COLLABORATIVE EFFORT: The 'Agricultural Pollinator Program' addresses the loss of habitat and diversity of food sources for native pollinating insects. By creating or enhancing pollinator habitat near agricultural fields, we aim to add diversity and seasonal availability of nectar resources for native insects, thereby bolstering their populations and supporting agricultural sustainability. Central to the

success of the Agricultural Pollinator Program is our collaboration with local producers, seed companies, Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG), and the University of Idaho (UI). Through partnerships with these landowners and entities, we can harness collective expertise and resources to maximize the impact of the initiative.

HOW IT WORKS: In our third year of the Agricultural Pollinator Program, Wood River Land Trust will continue to engage with three landowners and four project sites ranging from Arco to the Bellevue Triangle. At each project site, WRLT and partners worked with the landowners to identify a plot of land next to an existing agricultural field that was appropriate for planting native plants. WRLT then worked with the landowners, seed companies, and IDFG to develop seed mixes that would succeed based on annual precipitation rates and soil characteristics. Planting native seed is more challenging than planting crops like hay and barley because each native plant species has seeds with different shapes, sizes, and weight. Working with the Blaine County Soil Conservation District, landowners, local farmers, and IDFG, we used specialized equipment to plant these native seeds.

In the years following planting, WRLT is working with UI to evaluate how native insects are using our planted pollinator habitat compared to farmed fields. We are doing this by collecting insects at each project site three times per year. Entomologists at UI are identifying the insects and providing the project team with data analyses. At the end of this year, we'll be able to make conclusions about insect use of our pollinator habitat over the three years. During our site visits, we are also completing plant surveys to determine which native plants are successful in these types of environments. This will help us create best practices and recommendations for future pollinator habitat plantings through this program, or others.

Through strategic partnerships, innovative research, and engagement with partners and landowners, we continue to enhance habitat for native bees and other pollinating insects, which have been on the decline. Your support allows us to not only protect land, but find new and innovative ways to support healthier habitats and ecosystems.



FOSTERING COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IN CONSERVATION: WOOD RIVER LAND TRUST'S CITIZEN SCIENCE BIRD MONITORING PROGRAM

In the heart of Idaho's Wood River Valley, a diverse array of avian species finds sanctuary amidst the lush landscapes and pristine habitats. But ensuring the protection of these feathered friends requires more than just appreciation; it takes active participation and data-driven conservation efforts. Enter the Wood River Land Trust's Citizen Science Bird Monitoring Program, a collaborative initiative empowering community members to become stewards of their natural environment and provide important data to inform management decisions.

Now in its third year, the Citizen Science Bird Monitoring Program began with a grant from Cornell University. With primary objectives focused on increasing our capacity for avian data collection and fostering community engagement, the program seeks to create a network of trained individuals dedicated to helping monitor bird populations across Wood River Land Trust properties.

Central to the program's success is a robust training regimen designed in collaboration with the Intermountain Bird Observatory (IBO). Volunteers undergo comprehensive instruction, including online coursework through Cornell's eBird platform and specialized bird identification workshops led by seasoned birders. Armed with newfound knowledge and skills, participants are equipped to conduct surveys during migration and breeding periods.

During a part of the spring migration (May 15-21) and the breeding season (June 12-18), community scientists traverse designated routes within five Land Trust project sites, meticulously documenting bird sightings and species diversity. Utilizing eBird technology, volunteers compile data, providing invaluable insights into avian population trends and habitat utilization. By employing sophisticated analysis techniques, trends in species richness and distribution are compiled, laying the groundwork for informed conservation strategies.

The 2023 monitoring efforts yielded remarkable findings, with volunteers recording over 1,180 birds representing 99 distinct species. Notably, sites such as Draper Wood River Preserve and Sun Peak exhibited heightened species richness during the migratory period, underscoring the importance of these habitats as critical stopover points for migratory birds. Our volunteers' observations provide crucial baseline data essential for evaluating the efficacy of restoration projects and monitoring long-term avian trends in the Wood River Valley.

Beyond the realm of data collection, the program is a way for people to get involved with environmental stewardship. By fostering meaningful connections between participants and the natural world, the initiative instills a sense of ownership and responsibility towards conservation efforts. Each year we learn more about how to enhance the program and provide ongoing support for our dedicated volunteers.

If you are interested in joining our Citizen Science Bird Monitoring Program next season, please email ben@woodriverlandtrust.org



THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS

You make all of this possible!

This list includes generous gifts made through March 31, 2024

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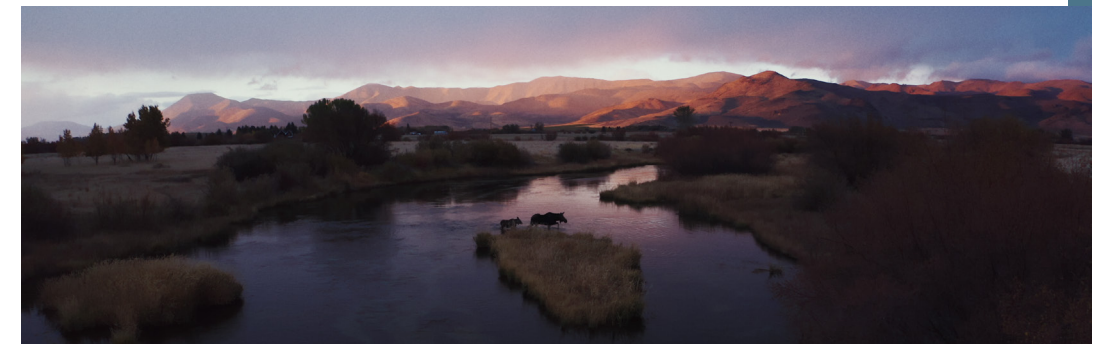
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Did You Know...

Noxious weeds threaten biodiversity because they crowd out native plants. To find out how you can help control the threat of noxious weeds, visit the Blaine County Cooperative Weed Management Area website



This Spring, Wood River High School Senior Piper Green joined the River Program for an 8 week internship. Piper took the time to share her experience as a Wood River Land Trust intern. Scan the QR code to read the full interview:

