# WOOD RIVER LAND TRUST

## SPRING 2023



RESTORE WARM SPRINGS PRESERVE After a long public process, the community made it clear - restore Warm Springs Preserve! WILDFLOWER WONDERS Explore vibrant blooms on trails you've helped protect. FROM FOUNDER TO FOREVER Carrying on the vision of our founding members.



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## A LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Perseverance is not a word that many of us use every day, but here at the Land Trust it is part of our culture, it is essential to our success. As many of you know, the Land Trust has had a long and somewhat treacherous history with the Warm Springs Preserve. Starting way back in 2004, we identified the then-former golf course as one of the most significant open spaces remaining in the north valley. And now, with its purchase and protection by the City of Ketchum, this 65 acres of the last remaining undeveloped creekfront property in the city can be restored to a more natural and healthy state (see the following article for all the exciting details). But Warm Springs is just the latest of our success stories, many of which have taken years, and in some cases decades, to come to fruition.

That is the secret of the Land Trust, we are here year after year providing innovative solutions to some of the Valley's biggest challenges. And because of our longevity and the breadth of our activities ranging from our traditional land and water conservation to recreational and community engagement, we can work with non-traditional partners to bring innovative solutions to make a lasting difference. Problems that are often too large or daunting to be tackled by any one organization, we can be thought leaders in bringing new ideas and making people aware before it's too late. Issues like water supply, fire and natural disaster resilience, transportation, and regional planning, and of course the biggest issue we have facing us today: growth and community housing.

But today is different, we can no longer just be persistent, we also need to be proactive. We have all seen how quickly our community is changing. We need to double our efforts in the coming years to not only protect the last significant open spaces in our Valley, we also need to partner with our regional governments and other NGOs to enact regional planning efforts to balance our growth with the capacities of our natural resources.

Many of us have come from other parts of the country, and I bet most of us can't go back to what we once remembered. Sprawl and unplanned growth have turned most of the populated areas of our country into vehicleburdened wastelands of asphalt with no history or unique sense of place. We are one of the fortunate few, we still have healthy wildlife populations, beautiful open hillsides, and productive family farms. But we are starting to feel the stresses. Our highway is bumper to bumper every rush hour and our beloved Big Wood River dried out in Bellevue just last year.

The perseverance that served us so well these past 29 years now needs to include the persistence to push for change, to bring our community together for the greater good so we can protect and sustain this wonderful place we call home.

Scott Boettger, Executive Director

After a long public process, the community made it clear - they want us to

# RESTORE WARM SPRINGS PRESERVE

Our home river, the Big Wood River, flows from near the summit of Galena Pass for 137 miles, picking up numerous tributaries as it flows south-Prairie Creek, Baker Creek, and the North Fork of the Big Wood. So what's the big deal about a one mile section of just one tributary?

Any one stretch of river is more than just a body of water; it is a living ecosystem that supports an incredible variety of plants and animals. From the tiniest microorganisms to large mammals, we all rely on the health of our local rivers and watershed.

Warm Springs Preserve, recently acquired by the City of Ketchum, and the section of Warm Springs Creek it contains, demonstrates a collaborative effort to not only retain, but to enhance a beloved community space that is treasured by both humans and wildlife. What we choose to protect and take care of as a community is a direct reflection of what we value. Throughout the Preserve's Master Planning process one thing was clear: our community values the Warm Springs Preserve and Creek.

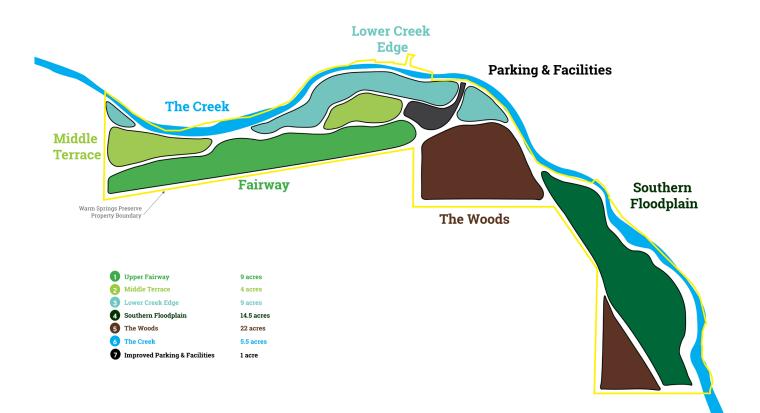
After months of stakeholder engagement and feedback through online surveys and public open houses, the Master Plan has emerged.

The one linear mile stretch of creek included in the Master Plan and its approximately 15 acres of restored floodplain is the only remaining opportunity for large-scale restoration in the lower Warm Springs Creek because of past development practices.

Using process-based restoration, the Land Trust and partners will:

- Reconnect nine acres of historic floodplain in the lower creek edge and increase space for water and sediment storage to mitigate flooding,
- Increase in-stream and riparian habitat quality along 1.3 miles of Warm Springs Creek,
- Enhance vegetation diversity,
- Improve nutrient cycling,
- Stabilize stream banks,
- Improve irrigation efficiency, with the opportunity to conserve over 150 acre-feet of water annually.

"I'm all for the river restoration ... I think that should be the priority of timeline for fundraising efforts" -Spencer Cordovano, *Ketchum Planning and Zoning Commissioner* 



Situated in the wildland-urban interface, Warm Springs Preserve is a wonderful example of how balancing accessible recreation and conservation is possible. The area has a long history of providing year-round recreational opportunities to locals and visitors, with today's users including everyone from dog owners to anglers, cross country skiers to disc golfers, and those just looking for a moment out in nature. For generations, Warm Springs has connected people with nature and each other. Now, thanks to the commitment of advocates, partners and donors, it will continue to do so as a healthier and happier place for generations to come. Restoring Warm Springs Preserve and ensuring its vibrant future is about more than just protecting a piece of land or section of stream. It's preserving what makes this Valley such a special place to live: natural beauty, thriving wildlife, outdoor recreation, and our sense of community and connection to one another.



# **OPPORTUNITY AREAS**















### FAIRWAY

The outdated irrigation system will be replaced; new donor benches, picnic tables, and ADA pathways will be added. The expanse of lawn provides year-round recreation including off-leash dog walking, trail hiking, and Nordic skiing.

### MIDDLE TERRRACE

Middle terrace to be graded with soil from the excavated floodplain and revegetated with native meadow species to enhance biodiversity. Pockets of aspen groves provide shaded seating areas; open space and soft surface pathways provide access for people and dogs.

### LOWER CREEK EDGE

Restored floodplain ecosystem with new side channels and irrigation will enhance ecological services and wildlife habitat, as well as include ADA accessible viewing deck(s) and interpretive signage.

### SOUTHERN FLOODPLAIN

Minimally touched zone with minor grading updates, soft surface pathways, invasive species removal, and instream fish habitat. Updates will reduce potential flood damage to neighbors and benefit fish and wildlife.

#### THE WOODS

Approximately 22 acres of forest within the property, bordered by U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management owned land.

### THE CREEK

Installation of gravel point bars for select access to the creek for people and dogs. In-stream fish habitat (wood & boulders) and native riparian vegetation.

### PARKING & FACILITIES

Paved parking lot and welcome building that will include year-round public restrooms, storage of maintenance equipment, donor recognition wall, history and Preserve map, bike racks, and water fountains.

## RESTORE WARM SPRINGS PRESERVE

## WE'VE PROTECTED THE PRESERVE, NOW LET'S HELP NATURE DO ITS THING

Last year, the City of Ketchum galvanized the community to come together to save Warm Springs Preserve! With the community's adoption of the Master Plan, we are ready to get to work restoring it.

By implementing a series of restoration techniques and upgrading the irrigation system to keep more water in the creek, we can bring life and vibrancy to the lower floodplain and harness the chance to restore one of the most important tributaries of the Big Wood River. Together, we will leverage community dollars with federal grant matches.

> Get involved in this exciting project by learning more, or making a gift today! Visit woodriverlandtrust.org or contact Courtney Jelaco at 208 788 3947.

# WILDFLOWER WONDERS



## EXPLORE VIBRANT BLOOMS ON TRAILS YOU'VE HELPED PROTECT

There's nothing quite like wildflower season in the Wood River Valley. Two of the properties protected with your support, Rinker Rock Creek Ranch west of Hailey and the Sellgren Trail in Sun Valley, put on quite the show of flowers during peak season. Get ready to grab your bike or lace up your hiking boots to experience everything these trails have to offer during the late spring and throughout the summer months.

It's important to respect the environment and the delicate balance of nature. Stay on established trails, and avoid trampling on the flowers. Bring plenty of water and snacks, and be prepared for changing weather conditions. And of course, don't forget your camera!







## RINKER ROCK CREEK RANCH

Rinker Rock Creek Ranch is one of the Land Trust's greatest success stories, but still manages to fly under the recreation radar. In 2019, management of the Ranch was transferred to the University of Idaho to become a center for research on the intersection of ranching, habitat protection and restoration, and recreation.

Throughout much of May and June, this property is a sea of yellow lupine in all directions. Great for gravel biking, walking, wildlife watching, or even just a scenic drive, the wildflowers provide a truly amazing backdrop.

To get to the Rinker Rock Creek Ranch from downtown Hailey, head west out of town on Bullion Street. Continue along Bullion as it turns to Croy Canyon Road. After about 4 miles you will take a left onto Rock Creek Road. Continue along Rock Creek Road for 1.6 miles to reach the informational kiosk.



Learn more about Rinker Rock Creek Ranch!



## SELLGREN TRAIL

It may be just .8 miles long, but the Sellgren Trail easement has a lot to offer as it ensures public access to the Valley View trail loop in Sun Valley Company's White Clouds trail system.

To access the Sellgren Trail via the Sun Valley Company's White Clouds Trail system, park at the Carol's Trailhead, and head out on the Valley View Trail. As you wrap around the back of the trail system you will find the Sellgren Trail section!

From arrowleaf balsamroot to lupine and penstemon, the trail is usually lined with wildflowers by early June, as it gently winds its way up to stunning views of Baldy and the Smoky Mountains. Take a moment to rest at the bench up top and soak in the views.



Learn more about the Sellgren Trail!



## CELEBRATE YOUR LOVE PLACE AND COMMUNITY

## RICHARD CARR SOCIETY LEVERAGES IMPACT, COMPASSION

With today's ever-changing landscape and the need to conserve what matters most, your gift to the Land Trust has renewed importance. Richard Carr, a conservationist and former chair of the Land Trust, knew the importance of taking action to conserve the lands and waters we all love. He also recognized that our community is only as strong as those who care.

With a gift of \$5,000 or more, you'll join a group of conservation leaders who care deeply about saving our Valley's critical landscapes while there's still time. As a member of the Richard Carr Society, you will receive invitations to special events and updates focused on the difference you are making.

As we get ready to host the third annual Richard Carr Society celebration, with keynote speaker, author and mountaineer, Rick Ridgeway, we are grateful for the difference this generous group of supporters has made for our Valley.

If you would like to join the Richard Carr Society, contact Courtney Jelaco, Development Director, at cjelaco@woodrivelandtrust.org or (208) 788-3947

> "In the beginning it was about the adventures in the most remote places, and over time it became about saving the home planet." Rick Ridgeway



## From Founder to Forever

## Carrying on the vision of our founding members

All it took was one visit 33 years ago for Pam Feld to decide to call the Wood River Valley home. It was the people and unbelievable access to nature that pulled her in. She knew right away that this place was special and worth protecting. Alongside a handful of community members, Pam helped found the Wood River Land Trust.

A visionary group from the start, the initial founders understood the critical need for investing in the future of the Valley. The change and growth we feel today was evident back then too. The group's goal was to ensure that generations to come could experience the natural beauty of the Valley and the adventurous lifestyle that brought Pam here. It's this same commitment to the future that inspires Pam to continue to be a supporter of the Land Trust today. As Pam explains, "It's a vision, and it can take years to make happen. It takes time, but the Land Trust makes it happen."

She firmly believes that 'if we don't protect it, we're going to lose it." The recent acquisition of the gateway to Croy Canyon exemplifies the kind of project Pam could have only dreamed of back in 1994– creating connections between

protected lands while balancing accessible recreation and critical wildlife habitat that ranges from sagebrush to wetlands to cottonwoods, all while bringing the community together around a shared goal. As the Valley's growth continues, she treasures the Land Trust's persistence in protecting open space, restoring the Big Wood River, working with other organizations, and creating the Greenway (where you've likely seen her and her Border Collie, Pato).

The foresight, dedication, and unwavering determination of Pam and fellow supporters drive our mission forward. But you don't have to have been with us from the beginning to share the same legacy. When you include the Land Trust in your planned giving and join the Founders' Circle, you are envisioning a future for our Valley that is abundant, healthy, and diverse, and ensuring that vision will live on for generations to come.

Please contact Courtney Jelaco at (208) 788-3947 for more information.



From left to right: Scott Boettger, Kent Pressman, Pam Feld, Carol Brown; at a strategic planning retreat in 1997

# THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS

You make all of this possible! This list represents the generous donations made throug March 31, 2023, and includes the members of the Richard Carr Society

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## In Memory Of

Judy Brossy From Fred Brossy Judy Brossy From Elaine and John French Richard Carr From Nelson Weller Dick Hare From Dan Hare Dick Hare From Michelle Gillern Dick Hare From Mindy Bush Gary Hornbuckle From Barbi Reed l eftv From Jack Kueneman Fern Perkins From James W. Perkins William G. Tennille III From James Deering Danielson Foundation Chris Thompson From John Hill Bruce Weber From Marvin Weber Mike Wirth From Lori Nakaoka

"I am thrilled to know that my old man's legacy will live on in such a meaningful way." - Dan Hare, Dick Hare's son



119 E. Bullion Street Hailey, Idaho 83333 www.woodriverlandtrust.org

Wood River Land Trust is a 501(c)(3) organization (Tax ID: 82-0474191). Contributions are tax deductible as allowed by law. Public financial information is available by contacting our office.



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## STUDENTS SUPPORT A BETTER BIG WOOD RIVER

Are you looking for a way to cast for more than fish, and reel in some good vibes the next time you're out fishing? Look no further than bidding on the local fly boxes being prepared by a handful of students from the Sage School.

In a heartwarming display of community service, these juniors and seniors have taken on a project to tie flies, and create custom sets of flies for the Wood River Land Trust to raffle off at our Big Wood River Clean Up.

"These students are fishing fanatics and know a lot about fly fishing, but have a lot to learn about river restoration and especially the projects of the WRLT that impact their local wading spots and the fish that bring them so much joy. " said the students' faculty advisor, Reese Hodges.

The students have been working tirelessly for the past few months to raise money, gather supplies, tie flies, and design the sets. The money raised from the sale of the flies will go towards our river restoration projects - a big win for our entire community!

STAY TUNED FOR DETAILS ON HOW TO BID ON THESE FLY BOXES AT THE BIG WOOD RIVER CLEAN UP THIS FALL!