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Conservation Groups Move One Step Closer to Saving Nason Ridge for Fish, Wildlife and People

Fundraising campaign now underway to ensure permanent protection of Nason Ridge Trail and the fish and wildlife of Lake Wenatchee, the Wenatchee River and Nason Creek.

LAKE WENATCHEE, WA—Today, in a crucial next-step in the effort to conserve a forested mountainside above Lake Wenatchee and Nason Creek, Western Rivers Conservancy successfully purchased the popular Nason Ridge property from the Weyerhaeuser Company.

The highly visible property was slated for timber harvest and includes much of the 22-mile Nason Ridge Trail, as well as cross-country ski trails and over two miles of Nason Creek, a critical salmon spawning stream and a key source of cold water for the Wenatchee River.

“Conserving Nason Ridge will be a tremendous win for the Wenatchee River’s fish, for wildlife and for everyone who lives, visits and recreates in these mountains,” said Western Rivers Conservancy’s president, Sue Doroff. “It’s a special spot, and we’re glad we could step in and negotiate a deal with Weyerhaeuser that will allow for permanent protection of this important property.”

The desire to conserve Nason Ridge, which spans 3,714 acres, is deeply rooted in the local community. Wenatchee-based Chelan-Douglas Land Trust has been trying to protect the property for years and is now working in partnership with WRC to raise \$1 million to fund the permanent protection of the property. This crucial phase of the project is now underway.

“We aren’t finished yet,” said Curt Soper, executive director of Chelan-Douglas Land Trust. “We have to raise \$1 million in private gifts to fund permanent conservation of Nason Ridge. So we need everyone’s support.”

WRC will own the land until it identifies a long-term steward that shares WRC’s conservation vision for the parcel. During its ownership, WRC will allow public access just as Weyerhaeuser has done for years.

“Weyerhaeuser has been a member of the Wenatchee community for decades and we’re pleased we could work out a solution with Western Rivers Conservancy that will meet the needs of all involved,” said Scott Dahlquist, Weyerhaeuser’s senior director of real estate.

ABOUT THE PROJECT PARTNERS

Western Rivers Conservancy acquires prime river lands along the West's best rivers and streams to conserve habitat, protect key sources of cold water and provide public access for all to enjoy. It is the West's only organization dedicated exclusively to saving rivers through land acquisition—an approach that is effective, tangible and permanent. Its motto is “Sometimes to save a river, you have to buy it.” In Washington, WRC has conserved dozens of miles of river land along the Hoh, Skagit, Columbia, Big Sheep Creek and Icicle Creek. It created Robe Canyon Historic Park on the South Fork Stillaguamish and recently protected a critical hillside above Nason Creek, upstream of the Nason Ridge property. WRC has protected hundreds of miles of frontage on other great rivers around the West, including the John Day, North Umpqua, Klamath, Gunnison, Salmon, Yampa, Snake and Madison. To learn more, please visit westernrivers.org.

Chelan-Douglas Land Trust works with local organizations, businesses, and individuals to protect what we all hold dear: beautiful natural areas, a strong economy, clean air and water, abundant wildlife, and the freedom to enjoy it all. The Chelan-Douglas Land Trust started in 1985 as a volunteer organization made up of Wenatchee Valley residents with a vision of a healthy and prosperous future for Chelan and Douglas Counties. Since then it has grown to over 2,500 members committed to preserving the region's natural areas. Learn more at cdlandtrust.org.

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