

# RIVERLANDS

News from Western Rivers Conservancy

Issue 8

Fall 2005

## Old-Growth Stand Protected Along Sandy River

### PARCEL CONNECTS ELK CORRIDOR

**W**estern Rivers Conservancy's ongoing efforts to create seventeen miles of conservation corridors for fish, wildlife and recreation in the Sandy River basin bore particularly good fruit this past summer.

Western Rivers Conservancy (WRC) obtained a rare, remnant stand of old-growth forest located just downstream of Marmot Dam. This 47-acre parcel harbors the last significant concentration of riparian old-growth forest along the middle Sandy. Given how locally rare this type of stand is along the middle Sandy, the ecological value is tremendous.

Western Rivers Conservancy has completed protection of another forested property in the Sandy River basin. The 120-acre remnant forest parcel sits atop the "Devil's Backbone," a scenic ridge that divides the Sandy and Little Sandy River basins. Rare, mature forest stands on this parcel serve as a corridor for the Bull Run elk herd's migration into

### PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Protected 167 acres in two parcels
- Secured \$1.6 million appropriation from the Land and Water Conservation Fund



Two large elk herds live in the Sandy basin.

the Sandy basin. The tract also contains a small tributary to the Bull Run River, and holds significant cultural value with the historic Oregon Trail tracing the Devil's Backbone on the property's edge.

Both properties were generously donated by Portland General Electric. The land was conveyed this fall to the Bureau of Land Management to become part of the Sandy River Area of Critical Environmental Concern.

In July, Congress awarded the Sandy River Project  
*Please see Sandy River, back page*



The Sandy River is a scenic and ecological treasure well worth protection.

## Survey of Outstanding Rivers Begins

### A ROADMAP FOR RIVER CONSERVATION

**T**he mission of Western Rivers Conservancy is to preserve the most outstanding rivers in the western United States, but exactly which rivers fit that description? To answer this question, WRC has launched a Survey of Outstanding Western Rivers to identify the streams that constitute our core heritage of natural, unspoiled rivers. The result will be a blueprint for our long-term effort to protect our best remaining streams.



Tim Palmer

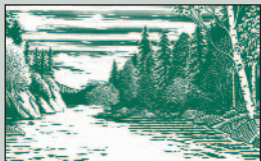
At the helm of this project is Tim Palmer of Port Orford, Oregon. An accomplished writer, photographer and conservationist, Tim has floated more miles of America's rivers and knows them better



Kayaker on the Illinois

than anyone else we know. In assessing the quality of rivers, Tim will look at more than just biological diversity. State by state, he will consult with knowledgeable people to identify those rivers that are truly special in terms of fish and wildlife, botany, geology, recreation and other key factors.

"This exciting study will tell us what we need to know about western rivers, and about the need to protect them before it's too late," Tim said. ■



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## WRC Poised to Make Purchase on Deer Creek, a Biological 'Hot Spot'

OREGON'S ILLINOIS RIVER VALLEY

The Illinois River watershed is thought to have the highest biological diversity in the Klamath-Siskiyou bioregion of southern Oregon and northern California. Two years ago, Western Rivers Conservancy protected nearly 900 acres along the Illinois near its confluence with the Rogue River. Now, we have another exciting project underway in the Illinois River Valley: conserving a large ranch on Deer Creek, a major tributary of the Illinois. The 870-acre property and ranch buildings will become a center for ecological research, environmental education and riparian restoration. As an outdoor classroom and laboratory, the facilities will be an asset to several area educational institutions involved in the project, including the Siskiyou Field Institute, Southern Oregon University and Humboldt State University.

WRC is just weeks away from closing purchase of the ranch, with plans for Siskiyou Field Institute to take over ownership next year. A private foundation in Georgia has offered a \$3 million challenge grant to fund the project. ■



*Paintbrush, a sensitive flower endemic to the region, blooms in fens along Deer Creek.*



*The future education center.*



### The Cobra Lily

The carnivorous **Darlingtonia californica** (cobra lily) is an eye-catching resident of the Illinois River valley, with patches growing in bogs along Deer Creek. The plant's serpent-like "tongue" and inverted pitcher are actually a mechanism for trapping and digesting insects.

*D. californica* is one of hundreds of plants endemic to the **Klamath-Siskiyou** region, which straddles the Oregon-California border. This area of top-quality streams also hosts some of the greatest botanical diversity in North America, and is one of WRC's top priorities for river conservation.

## Smith River's Headwaters Close to Protection

CONSERVING GOOSE CREEK

Western Rivers Conservancy is just a short step away from protecting the headwaters of California's Smith River by purchasing 3,200 acres along Goose Creek, the Smith's largest tributary. Once we complete clean-up of a former shop site, the land will become part of the Smith River National Recreation Area (NRA), forever ensuring cold, fresh water for the Smith River's celebrated runs of wild salmon and steelhead.

This purchase covers more than a third of the entire 9,483-acre privately-owned watershed of Goose Creek that WRC is committed to protecting. WRC is acquiring the land from Green Diamond Resource Company. The balance of the property will be purchased next year.

The Smith River on California's Redwood Coast is renowned for its health, rugged beauty,

### PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Secured \$1 million appropriation from the Land and Water Conservation Fund
- Set to close purchase of 3,200 acres on Goose Creek

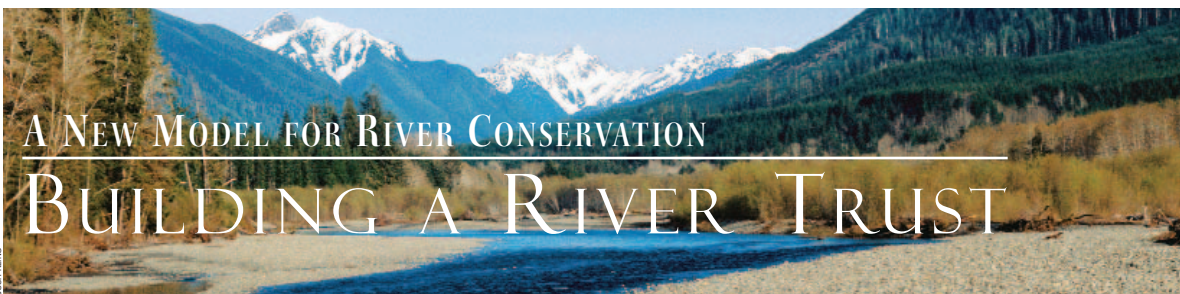
exciting whitewater and record-setting fish. Its emerald waters flow freely from source to mouth without a single dam – the last major river in California to do so. The Smith's robust runs of wild salmon and steelhead are critical stock for maintaining the health of the entire region's fishery.

The importance of protecting the Smith River was recognized with a second appropriation from the Land and Water Conservation Fund, totaling \$1 million. Thanks to the support of California Senators Dianne Feinstein and Barbara Boxer, and Congressman Mike Thompson, this appropriation will help the U.S. Forest Service acquire the next phase of lands along Goose Creek in FY2006.

All of the lands will become part of the adjacent Smith River NRA, a scenic playground and protected botanical area that includes over 300 Wild and Scenic miles of the Smith River. ■



*Goose Creek is a crystalline source of water for the Smith River, California's last major river without a single dam.*



# A NEW MODEL FOR RIVER CONSERVATION BUILDING A RIVER TRUST

## HOH RIVER TRUST LEADS THE MOVEMENT

It becomes clearer every day that river conservation, so critical to the future of the American West, is a task for the private sector. With government at all levels cutting back on its role, it falls to Western Rivers Conservancy and our partners to mobilize private creativity and resources

**River Trust:** A private, nonprofit citizen group dedicated to the conservation of a particular stream.

to conserve our most outstanding rivers.

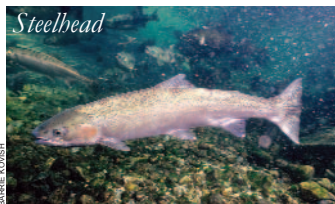
One model that holds great promise is the river trust, a private, nonprofit citizen group dedicated to the conservation of a particular stream. The river

trust looks at the whole river ecosystem, identifies its vital elements, acquires the lands that are critical for habitat or public access and works with local and regional partners to keep the river healthy for fish, wildlife and people. The river trust is a good neighbor to other river landowners and offers them options for conserving their land in perpetuity.

Leading the movement toward river trusts is our effort on one legendary salmon stream, the Hoh River. In 2004, WRC and the Wild Salmon Center incorporated the Hoh River Trust on Washington's Olympic Peninsula. The mission of the Hoh River Trust (HRT) is to conserve native salmon and wildlife habitat along the Hoh, ensure public access to the river and manage its lands for permanent ecosystem protection.

After just one year, HRT now stands on its own legs, with ownership along 3,400 acres of the lower

Hoh. This past summer, HRT hired an Executive Director and a Director of Land Management (see sidebar), and elected three new board members from the local community and the greater Puget Sound area.



BARBARIE KOVSHI

HRT is charting new territory, and WRC has been working with the Wild Salmon Center since 2003 to help set the organization on course. WRC acquired 3,400 acres of industrial timberlands along the Hoh and secured \$6.7 million in federal funding that allowed the Hoh River Trust to purchase the lands from WRC.



*The Hoh River Trust will be a model for river conservation on other western streams.*

## WRC's Next Steps

In addition to acquiring more industrial lands to complete a conservation corridor along the lower Hoh, WRC is taking other steps to foster HRT's growth and success, including:

- Committing seed funding for the next two years;
- Building a strong board of directors to raise HRT's endowment;
- Securing conservation easements from local landowners; and
- Helping to develop a plan to manage the lands for the long term.

The Hoh River Trust's success has affirmed WRC's belief that this is an important and repeatable model for private-sector river conservation. In WRC's five-year strategic plan, *Great Rivers of the West*, our goal is to begin delivering the river trust model to other watersheds across the West. ■



**Phil Davis,**  
Executive  
Director

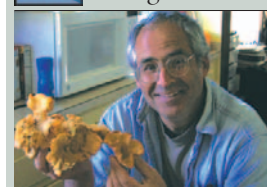


*After a successful 25-year career in business, Phil Davis' passion for fish, wildlife and rivers led him to take the helm at the Hoh River Trust. The Trust is in capable hands with Phil's demonstrated record of management, leadership and initiative.*

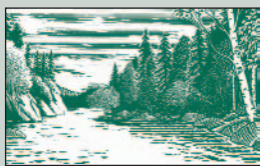
*"This is truly a unique opportunity to permanently protect one of the great river ecosystems in the lower forty-eight," Phil said. "I'm thrilled to be a part of this worthy endeavor."*



**Mike Hagen,**  
Director of Land  
Management



*A long-time Olympic Peninsula resident, Mike Hagen is well-equipped to head the Hoh River Trust's land management operations. Mike has an accomplished career in land management, forest restoration and natural resource policy, focusing on riparian or wetland edges – "where the woods meet the water."*



## Western Rivers CONSERVANCY

[www.westernrivers.org](http://www.westernrivers.org)

### OUR MISSION

*Western Rivers Conservancy acts to protect outstanding river ecosystems in the western United States. We acquire land to conserve critical habitat, provide for compatible public use and enjoyment and cooperate with other agencies and organizations to secure the health of the whole ecosystem.*

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Sue Doroff, *Vice President*  
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Josh Kling, *Project Manager*  
Russ Pinto, *California Director*  
David Wilkins,  
*Development Director*  
Jenny Andrews,  
*Communications Manager*  
Allison Barra, *Administrative and Development Assistant*

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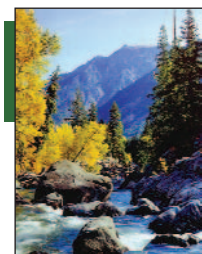
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## Sandy River, Continued



Inner Gorge

\$1.6 million from the Land & Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). This brings the total appropriations for the Sandy to \$10.7 million since 2001. Strong support for this project from Oregon Senators Gordon Smith and Ron Wyden and Representative Earl Blumenauer has been instrumental in securing appropriations from the LWCF. ■



## GIVE THE WORLD THE GIFT OF RIVERS!

Support the Work of Western Rivers Conservancy

Our operations are made possible by recent gifts from the people, foundations, businesses and organizations listed below. They are funding our work on the Hoh, the Sandy, the Smith and other great western rivers. They are getting real, tangible results for their investment. We are grateful to each and every one of them. **Thank you!** ■

### INDIVIDUALS

John Alfors  
Kenneth Anderson  
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Larry Holtz  
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Electric  
Sierra Nevada  
Brewing Company



Allison Barra

## Allison Barra Joins WRC Team

### OUR INVALUABLE NEW STAFF MEMBER

Western Rivers Conservancy is pleased to welcome Allison (Alli) Barra to our staff as Administrative and Development Assistant. Alli has quickly become a great asset to the organization, helping with administrative tasks and enhancing WRC's fundraising efforts.

Alli worked for the past two years in the field of environmental education, most recently coordinating a tour of the Columbia River for a group of teachers and community leaders. Alli graduated from the University of Rochester in New York with a degree in environmental studies and brings with her several years of nonprofit and administrative experience. She enjoys hiking, music and traveling. ■



### ONLINE GIVING MADE SIMPLE

*We've launched a new online giving page at [www.westernrivers.org](http://www.westernrivers.org)! Make your tax-deductible contribution today online or via mail to our Portland office. Call (503) 241-0151 for more information.*

