Klamath River, Continued

and implementing a no-herbicide-use policy, the Yurok Tribe will improve the quality of water flowing into the Klamath from three tributaries: Pecwan, Writhepec and Ke’pél Creeks. Each of these sub-watersheds is important to Klamath salmon and steelhead. By reintroducing fire into forest management, the Tribe will restores marshes that traditionally supported subsistence hunting and gathering.

This milestone completes the first phase of the project. Now, we move to the next phase: protecting the entire lower watershed of Blue Creek. One of the most productive tributaries in the Klamath Basin and also sacred to the Yurok people, All migrating Klamath River salmon and steelhead hold at the mouth of the Blue Creek, which is a refuge when main-stem water temperatures rise to lethal levels. In the face of climate change, preserving Blue Creek is both a safety net and a key to recovering the Klamath’s legendary fish runs. »

Thank you for your support!

We’d like to thank the generous individuals, foundations, businesses and organizations that make our work possible. Recent gifts are listed below. For a complete list, visit www.westernrivers.org

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Project Launched on North Santiam River

Western Rivers is expanding its efforts in the Willamette Valley by committing to purchase nearly 350 acres on the North Santiam River, a major tributary of the Willamette River.

Historically, the North Santiam River was the largest producer of Willamette Basin winter steelhead and the source of approximately one-third of spring Chinook salmon.

Today, those runs are in danger. Both species are now listed as Threatened under the Federal Endangered Species Act. Oregon Chub, a native resident fish, is also listed as Endangered in the Willamette Basin.

WRC will acquire two miles of North Santiam River frontage with rich channeled habitat.

Important Willamette Tributary

While the Willamette is highly degraded, some of the Basin’s best remaining salmon, steelhead, trout and chub habitat is found in the North Santiam River below Big Cliff Dam. The North Santiam is also home to important resident populations of native Santiam cutthroat and rainbow trout.

The property, located near the town of Stayton, has more than two miles of North Santiam frontage and includes seven side channels and sloughs, as well as portions of...
Second Property Purchased on Bear River

The Bear River carries snow melt down from three Rocky Mountain states and supplies the Great Salt Lake with 60 percent of its fresh water. Where it meets the Great Salt Lake, the Bear River spreads in a vast delta. An oasis in the desert, these marshes provide nesting areas and abundant food for more than 200 birds species migrating along the Pacific and Central Flyways between Mexico and Canada. The millions of feathered visitors that congregate here eventually spread out over the Western Hemisphere and beyond.

In 1929, the area was set aside as the Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge, signifying its global importance. Three years ago, Western Rivers Conservancy found several opportunities to expand the footprint of the 74,000-acre Refuge by acquiring adjacent wetlands in the Bear River Delta.

In partnership with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the Friends of the Bear River Refuge, WRC has made its second major land purchase in the Delta. In June, we bought the 600-acre Lucky Seven-Pintail Club, utilizing generous support from the Stephen Bechtel Fund. Our purchase secures immediate protection for these wetlands, which will now be restored to even greater health for species like tundra swan, black-necked stilt, snowy plovers and marbled godwits. WRC will convey the property to the USFWS to add to the refuge.

This most recent acquisition builds on WRC's 2010 conveyance of the nearby Feather and Finn property to the refuge. Together, these acquisitions enhance waterfowl habitat by protecting open water areas adjacent to grasslands and sheltered nesting sites.

Second Property Purchased on Bear River

The property includes seven side channels lined by riparian forests that support healthy salmon habitat.

Four More Miles of Gunnison Purchased

The acquisition will expand the Dominguez Escalante National Conservation Area.

The millions of feathered visitors that congregate at the Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge eventually spread out over the hemisphere.

Four More Miles of Gunnison Purchased

The property supports habitat for healthy salmon.

NORTH SANTIAM RIVER, CONTINUED

Dieckman Creek. Willows line the river, which is bordered by mature stand of black cottonwoods, big-leaf maples and red alders. The property contains intact wetland and complex native prairie, and has good floodplain habitat restoration opportunities.

Besides fish species, a number of at-risk or listed wildlife species have been documented here, including four listed Species of Concern: pileated woodpecker, hooded merganser, western pond turtle and red-legged frog. There is also potential and/or suitable habitat for Pacific lamprey, Lewis' woodpecker, olive-sided flycatcher, little willow flycatcher, western bluebird and vesper sparrow.

Purchase and restoration of this land will be a big step forward for native fish and wildlife, and will aid recovery of listed species in the Willamette Basin.

NORTH SANTIAM RIVER, CONTINUED

The property includes seven side channels lined by riparian forests that support healthy salmon habitat.

Plans Move Forward For New State Park

Western Rivers Conservancy has conveyed the second portion of the Murtha Ranch to the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD). This purchase, which will help ensure the survival of rare desert fish.

When the Murtha family’s ranch came on the market in 2008, WRC acted quickly to buy and protect this extraordinary, large block of sagebrush-steppe habitat—a landscape being fragmented elsewhere across the West.

Upon purchase, we took measures to bolster the John Day as the best remaining stronghold for mid-Columbia River summer steelhead, a Threatened species. We gave special attention to rehabilitating the lower three miles of Hay Creek, one of the only tributaries on the lower John Day where summer steelhead spawn and rear. In conjunction with fish rehabilitation, WRC initiated a comprehensive restoration strategy with partners, including treating hundreds of acres of noxious weeds and replanting native grasses and plants.

OPRD soon surfaced as an ideal long-term steward. They share our vision to protect sensitive and diverse habitats while enabling compatible public access for fishing, boating, hiking and hunting. The resulting Cottonwood Canyon State Park, slated to open in 2013, will bring to life WRC’s initial vision of a wild conservation and recreation experience unparalleled in Oregon.

Plans Move Forward For New State Park

A look at the Cottonwood Canyon State Park in Oregon.