

RIVERLANDS

News from Western Rivers Conservancy

Issue 9

Winter 2006

Headwaters of the Smith River Protected

GOOSE CREEK PURCHASE CLOSES

To bring back California's wild salmon runs, the first priority is to protect the healthiest streams, like the Smith River on the Redwood Coast. To this end, Western Rivers Conservancy (WRC) has just taken a significant step to ensure that the Smith will run clear and cold forever, just as salmon and steelhead require. WRC has purchased 5,100 acres along Goose Creek, largest tributary and headwaters to the South Fork Smith River. This completes the first phase of a project to conserve

9,501 acres – the remaining privately-owned portions of the Goose Creek watershed.

WRC acquired the Goose Creek lands from Green Diamond Resource Company, and conveyed them to the U.S. Forest Service to be part of the adjacent Smith River National Recreation Area (NRA), where Goose Creek's incredible scenic and

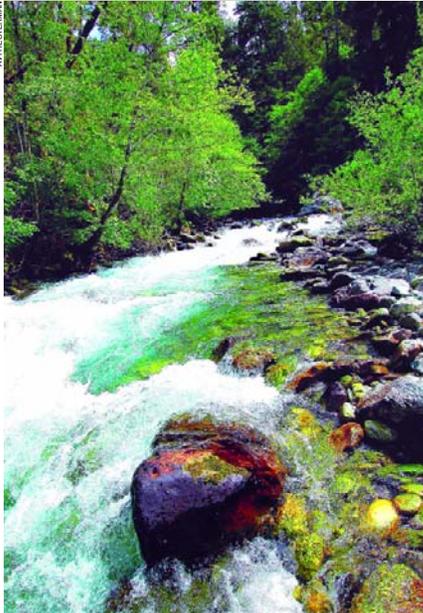


The Smith River is famous in California and across the globe for its clear waters and record-size steelhead.

wildlife resources will be protected for future generations. WRC has partnered on this project with the Smith River Alliance, California Trout and Del Norte County.

Thanks to the efforts of California Senators Dianne Feinstein and Barbara Boxer and Representative Mike Thompson, the Goose Creek Project has received \$3.1 million from the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund over the past two years, allowing the conveyance of the first 5,100 acres

Please see Smith River, back page



We're conserving the watershed of Goose Creek, the largest tributary to the South Fork Smith River.

New Project will Create Salmon Refuge on the Hood River

ANOTHER DAM REMOVAL PARTNERSHIP

In an exciting new opportunity, Western Rivers Conservancy is joining a comprehensive effort to remove a dam and restore Oregon's Hood River, an important salmon and steelhead stream that flows from the glaciers of Mount Hood northeast into the Columbia River Gorge.

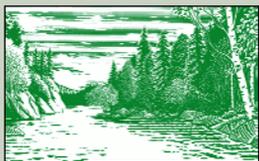
Western Rivers Conservancy is working alongside PacifiCorp to remove the hydropower project on the river and establish a salmon and wildlife sanctuary immediately upstream from the city of Hood River. PacifiCorp will remove Powerdale Dam, the only dam on the mainstem river, and donate approximately 600 acres of land along three miles of the river. WRC will acquire adjacent private lands to complete and extend the



We are helping to create a salmon and wildlife sanctuary just upstream of the city of Hood River.

sanctuary. An historic powerhouse on the property is slated to become an environmental and education

Please see Hood River, page 3



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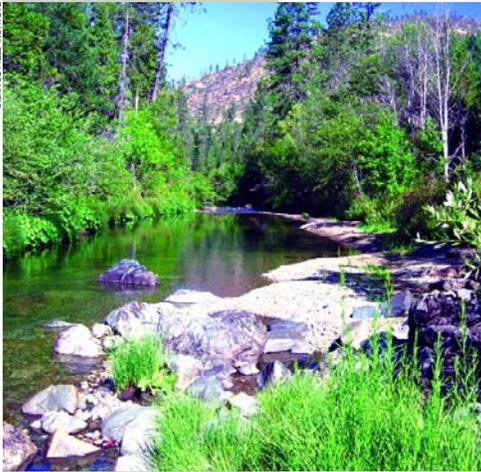
WRC Buys Ranch Along Oregon's Deer Creek

BIOLOGICAL 'HOT SPOT'

On January 10, WRC President Phil Wallin showed up on the courthouse steps in Grants Pass, Oregon, and successfully purchased the Deer Creek Ranch at a foreclosure sale auction. In May 2006, we will take title to this 870-acre ranch located on Deer Creek, a major tributary to the Illinois River in the heart of the Klamath-Siskiyou bioregion. This region is one of Western Rivers Conservancy's top priorities for conservation because of its rare biological diversity and healthy streams like Deer Creek and the Illinois River.

Working with the Siskiyou Field Institute, Southern Oregon University and Humboldt State University, WRC and partners will convert the ranch buildings on the property into a center for research and education focused on the surrounding rare ecosystems. As an outdoor classroom and laboratory, the Deer Creek Ranch is strategically located near

A ranch house on the property will be headquarters for the future research and education center.



A diverse riparian fringe shelters Deer Creek's clear waters, at its confluence with Squaw Creek.

biological 'hot spots' such as Eight Dollar Mountain and Squaw Creek. These nearby sites support an unusually high diversity of rare and endemic flora and fauna. For example, the forested lands along the Deer Creek Ranch include fens that host an abundance of the carnivorous *Darlingtonia californica* (cobra lily). The research and education opportunities at Deer Creek will benefit students, community members and visitors alike for years to come.

A private foundation in Atlanta, Georgia, committed a \$3 million challenge grant to fund the project. WRC plans to hold the property until the Siskiyou Field Institute and Southern Oregon University take ownership later this year. ■

Headwaters, Habitat Link and Forest Protected in Sandy Basin

Western Rivers Conservancy has purchased the headwaters of the Little Sandy River!

The 332-acre property is on the western flank of North Mountain and includes seventy acres of old-growth forest and a wetland that forms the beginning of the Little Sandy River.

The North Mountain property, purchased from Longview Fibre Company, is an in-holding within the

Bull Run Watershed Management Unit, which is the source of Portland's drinking water supply. With funding provided by Portland General Electric (PGE) as part of their Clackamas River hydro relicensing, WRC will likely convey this property to the adjacent Mount Hood National Forest that manages the Bull Run Watershed Management Unit.

Western Rivers Conservancy has added another property to the habitat link we are creating between

OUR BACKYARD PROJECT MOVES FORWARD

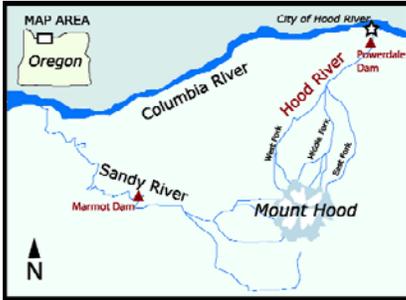
the old-growth forest reserves in the Salmon-Huckleberry Wilderness Area to the south and the Bull Run Watershed Management Unit to the north. WRC purchased an 80-acre forested property on the northern edge of the Salmon-Huckleberry Wilderness Area from Weyerhaeuser Company. We will convey this property to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in early 2006. WRC began to create this habitat connection in 2001 when we purchased the Dodge Ranch along two miles of the Sandy River, and in 2002, when we purchased a 204-acre property along Wildcat Creek. These properties will link critical habitat and migratory corridors for species that depend on old-growth conditions.

We reported in our Fall 2005 newsletter that PGE donated to WRC a 47-acre parcel that harbors the last significant concentration of riparian old-growth forest along the middle Sandy. Recently, WRC conveyed this rare, remnant stand of old-growth forest to the BLM. The property is now managed as part of the BLM's Sandy River Area of Critical Environmental Concern. ■



Remnants of old-growth forest are rare and important habitat in the Sandy River basin.

Hood River, Continued



center to benefit the Hood River community.

WRC will work with partners to devise a strategy for restoring salmon, steelhead and wildlife habitat along three miles of the lower Hood River, helping to restore the river corridor to its natural condition. This will involve determining the best long-term land manager and creating a local stewardship group to enforce a conservation easement over the lands. WRC will partner with a metal recycling company to remove a three-mile-long steel flume.

When the project is complete, the Hood River will become a significant refuge for endangered runs of Columbia River salmon. Removal of the dam and flume will restore free passage to migrating salmon and steelhead.

The historic Mount Hood Railroad crosses the river on the edge of downtown, adding a charming and scenic element to the project. Moreover, the public will have continued access to the stream for fishing and other recreational uses compatible with the project's conservation goals.

This is the second time Western Rivers Conservancy has partnered with a utility to remove a dam and create a salmon sanctuary on an important Columbia River tributary. Portland General Electric, our partner on the Sandy River, will remove Marmot Dam in 2007. ■

WRC Will Conserve Tract Along South Fork Trinity

TREASURED CALIFORNIA FISHING STREAM

California's South Fork Trinity River is a celebrated tributary to the Klamath River that once hosted an abundance of native steelhead, chinook and coho salmon. However, populations of anadromous fish have been declining since the 1960s due to harmful sediment loading caused by flooding, landslides, logging and road-building.

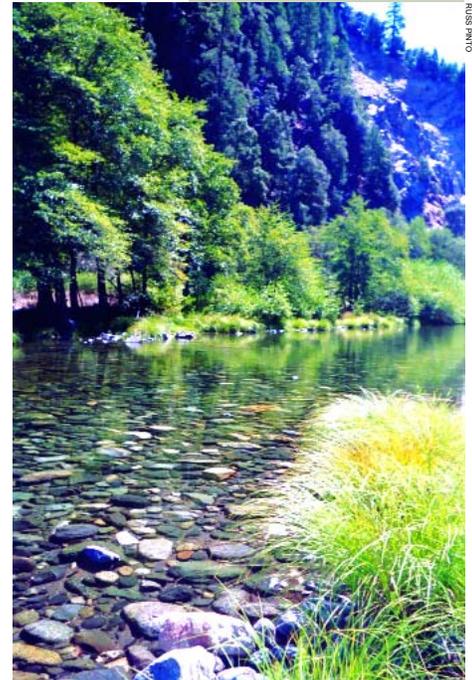
As California's longest Wild and Scenic river, the South Fork Trinity is now the subject of increased restoration efforts, particularly efforts to limit the potential for harmful sediment loading.

Joining in this effort, Western Rivers Conservancy recently signed an agreement to purchase a 160-acre private in-holding within the Shasta-Trinity National Forest. The property has one-half mile of frontage on the river in the heart of the most productive spawning reach for steelhead and chinook salmon. However, the property's steep, unstable steam banks have a high erosion potential, and are vulnerable to logging and slope failure.



WRC will purchase the land and partner with the local Trinity River Land Conservancy to conserve this important part of the river from any further loss of habitat for salmonids and other wildlife. Once protected, the property will be a place to tell the recovery story of the decimated spring chinook runs.

The result will be cleaner, clearer waters along this critical spawning reach, helping to bring back the Trinity's once-great runs of salmon and steelhead. ■



We're protecting 160 acres along one of the best salmon and steelhead spawning reaches on the South Fork Trinity River.

Introducing Riverlands Express

WRC LAUNCHES E-NEWSLETTER

In November, we sent the inaugural issue of **Riverlands Express**, our new e-Newsletter. It's a free and simple way to get updates on our latest river conservation news, right in your e-mail inbox.

Visit www.westernrivers.org to subscribe today. ■

Subscribe to our new, quarterly e-Newsletter at www.westernrivers.org





Western Rivers CONSERVANCY

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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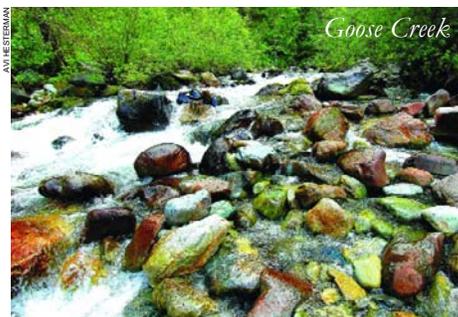
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Smith River, Continued



into the NRA. In a highly competitive funding process, Goose Creek continues to stand out as a nationally significant acquisition.

Once the project is complete, the NRA will provide improved access to the rugged, scenic area for fishing, hunting, backcountry camping and kayaking.

The Goose Creek Project is supported with grants from the Richard and Rhoda Goldman Fund, Resources Legacy Fund Foundation, Compton Foundation, Heller Charitable and Educational Fund, Weeden Foundation, Norcross Wildlife Foundation and Wildlife Forever. ■

Three New Members Join Board

WRC is thrilled to welcome three new members to our Board of Directors.

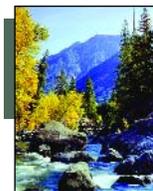
Doug Ballinger is President of Printra, a Bay Area company specializing in Internet software for the printing industry. An avid fisherman and river enthusiast, Doug is also on the Board of Directors of California Trout.

Nan McKay has been a leading voice for water quality in the Pacific Northwest for decades. Nan now serves as Environmental Sustainability Program Officer for the Russell Family Foundation in Gig Harbor, Washington.

Jon Roush has been a leader in conservation since the 1970s, having served as Executive Vice President of The Nature Conservancy and President of The Wilderness Society, as well as as a sustainable rancher in Montana. He now lives in Portland where he and his partner, Joyce Chinn, run a consulting practice. *Welcome, new Board Members!* ■



*Doug Ballinger,
Nancy McKay
and Jon Roush*



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. We are grateful to each and every one of them. Thank you! ■

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