



# WallowaLands

Spring 2017

News from Wallowa Land Trust & Annual Report

Keep It  
Rural!

**Geologic  
Wonder  
Preserved**

photo by Dave Jensen



Spring greetings friends  
of Wallowa Land Trust!



I am proud to present to you our 2016 Annual Report where you can see your investment in Wallowa Land Trust come to fruition with measurable results. Collectively, staff and volunteers put in 5,950 hours of sweat and labor in 2016. While some of those hours required considerably more sweat than others, I know you will be pleased with what we accomplished. Here are a few highlights. In 2016 we:

- adopted our first-ever strategic Conservation Plan to guide our land protection work in Wallowa County;
- earned national accreditation, a distinction which verifies we meet national standards for excellence, uphold public trust and achieve permanent conservation efforts;
- hired our third staff member, Heidi Wilson, who manages our office and is the glue that keeps us together;
- established a Land Steward program with dedicated volunteers to steward our protected lands;
- produced a video showcasing the beauty of rural Wallowa County and the importance of our work;
- revised and reprinted our popular book “Moraines of Wallowa Lake” by Ellen Morris Bishop;
- coordinated with nine different local nonprofits for a successful *Into The Wallowa* summer outings program;
- conducted our fifth year of monitoring for the threatened wildflower, Spalding’s catchfly, on the East Moraine of Wallowa Lake;
- met with elected officials in Wallowa County, in Salem and in Washington, DC;
- received a grant from the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to acquire a 266-acre conservation easement on the Wolfe Farm; and,
- collaborated with Wallowa Resources and The Nature Conservancy to protect working lands and promote sustainable agricultural practices through a \$3.2M NRCS investment.

Also during 2016, I was honored to be elected board president for our statewide land trust association, the Coalition of Oregon Land Trusts (COLT). COLT serves as the central voice for the land trust community in our state, helping strengthen organizations like Wallowa Land Trust throughout Oregon. It has been an enriching and rewarding experience to connect with other land trusts and partners working to better their communities through collaborative land conservation. Thanks to the work of COLT, there is now a statewide effort to protect Oregon’s rich agricultural heritage, drawing attention to the important role farms and ranches play in supporting our rural economies and providing a myriad of benefits to the natural environment – from wildlife habitat to carbon storage.

With your support, we wake up each day - rain or shine, deep freeze or spring runoff - to keep Oregon, and specifically Wallowa County, a special place with unparalleled opportunities to connect with the land. Whether you are a farmer or a hiker, a hunter or a birder, or all of the above, keeping landscapes open with places for plants, fish and wildlife to thrive benefits us all.

Thank you for protecting this incredible place now and for future generations.

Sincerely,  
  
Kathleen Ackley  
Executive Director



Columbia Spotted Frog (*Rana luteiventris*)

**229** Columbia spotted  
frog egg masses found on  
the Wolfe Farm

**185 acres**  
surveyed for rare plants  
on East Moraine  
of Wallowa Lake

**750**  
hours  
donated  
by volunteers



**916** people  
attended Wallowa  
Land Trust events

**190 acres**  
surveyed and treated for  
noxious weeds on the  
Wolfe Farm and the  
Kimball Preserve



**102 trees**  
planted at the confluence  
of the Lostine and  
Wallowa Rivers



Thank you to our 2016 donors

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Thank you to all the individuals and businesses who supported us in 2016 with volunteer hours and in-kind gifts!

We apologize for any oversight we may have made in recognizing your support. Please call our office at (541) 426-2042 and we will update our records.



Assets as of 12/31/2016

Cash & Receivables:	\$ 543,763
Conservation Property:	\$1,395,720
Beneficial Interest in Assets held by Oregon Community Foundation:	\$ 50,538
<b>Total Assets:</b>	<b>\$1,990,021</b>
 Total Liabilities:	 (\$ 16,953)
Total Net Assets:	\$1,973,068
 <b>Total Net Assets &amp; Liabilities:</b>	 <b>\$1,990,021</b>



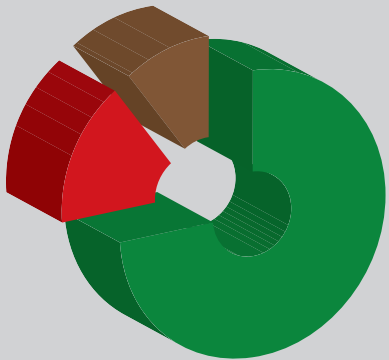
2016 Foundations and other Grantors

- Bergstrom Foundation
- City of Enterprise
- Coalition of Oregon Land Trusts
- Conservation Alliance
- Land Trust Alliance
- Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Nez Perce Tribe
- Oregon ACE Program
- Oregon Community Foundation
- Oregon Humanities
- Oregon Parks & Recreation Department
- Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board
- Soroptimist Club of Wallowa County
- Wallowa County Cultural Trust Coalition
- Yarg Foundation
- US Forest Service
- US Fish & Wildlife Service Partners

2016 Expenses

Conservation Projects/Stewardship:	\$192,646
Management & General:	\$ 29,503
Fundraising:	\$ 18,733
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$240,882</b>

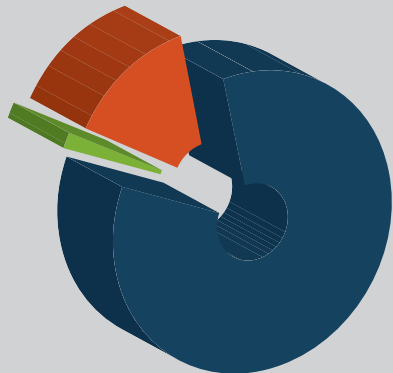
- Conservation Projects/Stewardship - 80%
- Management & General - 12%
- Fundraising - 8%



2016 Income

Grants:	\$226,709
Unrestricted donor contributions:	\$ 34,270
Other:	\$ 8,497
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$269,476</b>

- Grants - 84%
- Unrestricted donor contributions - 13%
- Other - 3%



Long-billed Curlews Make Wallowa County Home



For many nature enthusiasts, traveling to exotic locales to catch the sight of a rare bird is part of the joy of birding. For those of us less inclined to wander thousands of miles for a fleeting glimpse of feathers, there is an alternative.

Wallowa County is home to about 294 species of birds, plenty to keep the avid birder busy year round. In fact, you can see the largest North American shorebird - the long-billed curlew (*Numenius americanus*) - right here in Wallowa County.

The long-billed curlew breeds in central and western North America, including Wallowa County. In winter these birds head south,

migrating to the coasts and interior Mexico, where you can find them in wetlands, tidal estuaries, mudflats, flooded fields, and occasionally beaches.

In Wallowa County you might spot a curlew in an agricultural field or traipsing through native grasslands. Curlews like open habitat with relatively short grass and little woody vegetation. The curlew's unique bill curves downward and can measure up to 8 inches in length. The bill allows the bird to forage for earthworms and other deep-burrowing prey such as shrimp and crabs. Curlews are light cinnamon-colored with a brown streaked crown. They dig a shallow nest on the ground where both male and female incubate the eggs. The female isn't

much for sticking around though and typically abandons the chicks one to three weeks after hatching, leaving the young ones in her mate's care.

Curlews are often seen in the fields of the Wolfe Farm outside Wallowa. Landowner and avid birder Megan Wolfe says, "I noticed the curlews moving into the fields around our house four or five years ago. They like the plowed fields and nest along drier edges and probe around with their long bills when the soil is moist. They've been incredibly interesting to watch and have a rather beautiful evening call."

This special bird merits our attention as it is considered a sensitive species in the state of Oregon. The curlew is

also on the 2016 State of North America's Bird Watch List which lists species most in danger of extinction without significant conservation actions to reverse declines and reduce threats. It is estimated that there are only about 140,000 long-billed curlews in North America. Populations will continue to decline if habitat loss is not addressed. Native grasslands are one of the most imperiled habitats in the West and are disappearing rapidly around the globe.

Next time you are cruising around Wallowa County, keep your eyes peeled for curlews and other unique bird species. No reason to be a snow bird and head south for the winter when there are plenty of critters to see out your back door.





# Geologic Wonder Preserved

52 acres of the East Moraine permanently protected

“It is our wish that this land remains open and undeveloped forever.”

Standing on the crest of Wallowa Lake’s East Moraine, it’s remarkable to think that this geologic wonder has endured since the last ice age, some 300,000 years ago. Few places in Oregon provide such an extraordinary vista, where one can look back in time and imagine the past while seeing the present. Now, thanks to Bruce and Mary Lou Ham and their family, 52 acres of this landscape are forever protected so that a future traveler might experience the same awe and wonder.

The age and relatively pristine and exposed nature of the moraines surrounding Wallowa Lake make them an incredible resource, providing rare insight into the geologic record. It is in reality not one moraine (from the 18th century French term *morena* meaning “mound of earth”) but multiple moraines created by glaciers advancing and retreating over several thousands of years. The oldest

moraine is approximately 300,000 years old and the youngest is 17,000 years old.

Put your hand on one of the enormous, ancient boulders dotting the East Moraine and you are touching a stone that was deposited by the most recent glacier. These ancient guardians, called erratics, have stood watch over Wallowa Lake since long before the pyramids were built or the Roman Empire flourished. Once stewarded by the Nez Perce, today these prehistoric boulders are visited by people from all over the world.

“It is our wish that this land remains open and undeveloped forever. We hope that in 1,000 years your descendants and ours will enjoy the views we cherish now. It is also our hope that the mule deer of the Wallowa Mountains will retain a small but vital winter range for their long term survival and benefit, and that others will come to understand these benefits as well,” says landowner Bruce Ham.

Making their vision a reality, the Ham family

donated a conservation easement on 52 acres of their East Moraine property. They have agreed to permanently extinguish any future development and subdivision rights and to manage the land in a manner that maintains and enhances the native grassland. The conservation easement extends from Wallowa Lake to the crest of the East Moraine, providing panoramic views of the Wallowa Mountains, Wallowa Valley, the Zumwalt Prairie and out to Hells Canyon. It is a favorite wintering spot for mule deer and glows with blooming arrowleaf balsamroot in the spring. It is now the Land Trust’s perpetual responsibility to ensure the terms of this conservation easement are met. The Hams will continue to own and manage the property, and pay property taxes as they always have.

“We are incredibly lucky that the East Moraine has been cared for by people who understand the value of this landscape – culturally, ecologically and economically. Wallowa

Lake, the moraines and the mountains that surround them are central to our identity as a community and I applaud the Hams and others like them who are making a significant gift in protecting this landscape,” says Kathleen Ackley, Wallowa Land Trust’s executive director.

Wallowa Land Trust will continue to work with the Ham family and other East Moraine landowners on a publicly accessible trail along the crest of the moraine. This property is part of Wallowa Land Trust’s larger Wallowa Lake Moraines protection effort. The Wallowa Lake Moraines have long been a conservation priority for county residents, public officials and visitors, not to mention the Land Trust and the Wallowa Lake Moraines Partnership. We will continue our efforts with numerous other landowners on the East Moraine to create a seamlessly protected and publicly accessible landscape.



Almost eight years ago, an incredible young woman arrived in Wallowa County. Fresh out of Whitman College and armed with a bachelor's degree in environmental humanities, Julia Lakes was ready to make her mark in our corner of NE Oregon. And boy has she! When Julia first brightened our doorstep, it was as an eager intern. We knew we had something special and ran circles to figure out a way to keep her here. Lucky for us, she agreed and we hired her on as Wallowa Land Trust's very first paid staff member.

Working only part-time in the beginning, Julia was tasked with getting the word out in Wallowa County that there was a relatively new nonprofit in town working on land conservation. Her warm personality, quick wit and ready smile made an impression on all she met and her name quickly became synonymous with Wallowa Land Trust. Anyone who has met Julia understands what a rare flower she is. She is uncommonly smart, passionate about the land and driven to make a difference. Julia is responsible for Wallowa Land Trust's popular "Into The Wallowa" summer program, now in its eighth year. She helped make our annual picnic a fun county tradition and published a book on Century Farms of Wallowa County. The board realized what a true gem she was and raised the funds to promote Julia to a fulltime staff



member and increase her responsibilities in 2013. As conservation director, Julia successfully shepherded the organization through the grueling land trust accreditation process, helped develop a strategic conservation plan and completed four conservation projects, the most recent being the

protection of 52 acres on the East Moraine of Wallowa Lake.

Wallowa Land Trust would not be where we are today without Julia. Neither would several other organizations. From the Wallowa County Weed Board to the Farmer's Market, Julia has left Wallowa

County a better place than when she found it.

Our hearts are heavy with her departure, but we know that wherever she goes she will be a gift to the world. Her infectious smile, compassion and bran muffins will be missed. She leaves some large, empty boots on our doorstep.



by Julia Lakes

I spent much of this past long, cold winter huddled over the computer and on the phone working through the legal complexities of finalizing our second conservation easement on the Wolfe Farm outside Wallowa. In early March, though, Kathleen asked me if I'd be interested in attending the coho release on the Wolfe Farm. Coho salmon release? On the very spot I'd been spending most of my waking hours thinking about and staring at aerial photos of? Yes please! On a gray day the following week, I joined Nez Perce tribal members, fisheries experts, elected officials and members of the public along the bank of the Lostine River, at the site of a former Nez Perce encampment, to witness the triumphant return of 500,000 coho salmon smolts.

The event marked the first time in forty years that coho salmon (*Oncorhynchus kisutch*) have swum the waters

of the Lostine River. I watched as a tank truck brimming with little fish backed up to the Lostine and, through a plastic hose, thousands of silver fish cascaded into the river. It gave me the shivers. At one time, some 20,000 coho, or silver salmon, returned to the Lostine River each year, a tributary of the Grand Ronde River. However, by the early 1900s most of the coho stock was wiped out and the last coho was seen in the Lostine River sometime in the 1980s. According to Becky Johnson of Nez Perce Tribal Fisheries, factors contributing to the coho's demise included a failed hatchery experiment, overfishing and eventually irrigation diversions and hydroelectric dam construction.

While I cannot in any way take credit for the coho release, it was an honor to be there for the event surrounded by so many colleagues who had been waiting decades for this day. The Nez Perce Tribe and other partners have

been working actively to recover this fish species, once a staple of the Tribe, for more than thirty years. This is part of a larger recovery effort that includes reintroducing Pacific lamprey with a vision of reconstructing the Tribe's traditional food web.

After the thousands of smolts were released, I walked downriver and watched the young fish acclimatizing themselves to this long-lost homeland. They wiggled against the current and nuzzled into the riverbank. My

heart lifted with the knowledge that the Land Trust is in the process of permanently conserving this ground. Back at the office that afternoon, I felt more inspired than usual to pour over the title report, maps and legal descriptions which require scrutiny before we complete a conservation easement. Soon, another 260 acres of the Wolfe Farm, including over a mile of the Lostine River, will be permanently protected. I trust this area will be welcoming to coho for many, many years to come.





## Welcome to the Board: Christian Ambroson



When I was 14 my family made a life changing move from the suburbs of Portland to Wallowa County. Within about a month I was in love with this beautiful valley. After graduating from Joseph High School in 2004, I left for about ten years – during which I received a Bachelor of Arts degree in sociology from Franciscan University in Ohio and a J.D. from Willamette University.

After practicing law for three years in Central Oregon, Salem, and Portland, I made a career change and moved back to Wallowa County where I work as the Development Coordinator at Fishtrap.

Civic and community engagement have always been important to me. I joined Wallowa Land Trust's governing board because of my deep passion for rural life and culture.

My passion for the rural life here in the Wallowa Country is demonstrated by my commitment to giving back to the community. I also sit on the board of the Wallowa Valley Center for Wellness, and the Wallowa Valley Arts Council. I am excited to bring these experiences, my open mind, and my legal background to the table in service of Wallowa Land Trust as its newest board member!

## Volunteer Spotlight: Pam & Randy Slinker

Pam and Randy Slinker first visited Wallowa County in the early 1960s to visit the ranch Randy's father had purchased. It didn't take them long to put down roots here though, figuratively and literally. They moved to the county in 1973 and three years later bought the property next door - the Alder Slope Nursery - and have nurtured it into a thriving business since.

the care of the Kimball Preserve on Wallowa Lake. Pam says, "We'd both rather do the work than sit on a committee or in a board meeting." The Slinkers conduct Wallowa Land Trust's annual monitoring of the Kimball Preserve. They walk the property several times a year, ensuring that the Preserve is well managed and cared for. They also pull weeds, pick up litter and keep track

of habitat conditions.



photo by Nathan Slinker

Randy explains, "Once we saw Wallowa County, we knew it was a place where we could make our home." Pam adds that "we didn't know anything about running a nursery then, but we learned quickly!" Alder Slope Nursery offers local residents everything from annual bedding plants to exotic fruit trees and native shrubs. Most recently the Slinkers became part owners of the ever-popular Terminal Gravity Brewing.

Despite their busy schedules, the couple make time to give back to the community. Currently Pam and Randy serve as Volunteer Land Stewards for Wallowa Land Trust and are charged with

has undeveloped, natural shoreline, letting you imagine what the lake must have been like 100 years ago," says Pam. "It is absolutely gorgeous and we are happy to be a part of taking care of it so it stays that way." According to Randy, they never fail to see interesting wildlife when on the Preserve. "Osprey, bald eagles - they are always in the trees and nest nearby."

Thank you Pam and Randy for volunteering your time to care for the Kimball Preserve!

Are you interested in volunteering? Contact us at (541) 426-2042 or [info@wallowalandtrust.org](mailto:info@wallowalandtrust.org)

# Helping Family Farms and Ranches

By Mike Running

“There’s much uncertainty in our future, but assuring that agricultural lands will continue to be productive is a small step in eliminating the unknown.”

For those who make their living off the land, Wallowa County seems to have everything: rich soils, abundant water, and stunning natural beauty. But farmers and ranchers here and across Oregon are facing unprecedented pressures. Not only are Oregon’s farmers the oldest in the nation, but an astounding amount of farmland is expected to change hands over the next two decades: more than 10 million acres, an area the size of Massachusetts and Vermont. Combined with routine economic uncertainty and land management puzzles, Oregon agriculture today faces complex challenges.

In response, Wallowa Land Trust joined forces with

The Nature Conservancy and another local stewardship organization, Wallowa Resources, to apply for funding from the federal Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). In 2016, we were awarded a \$3.2 million grant through NRCS’s Regional Conservation Partnership Program to offer tools and incentives to willing landowners that will improve soil health, enhance irrigation efficiency, and purchase conservation easements on more than 16,000 acres of farm and ranch land in Wallowa County.

Joe Dawson of Diamond D Farm & Ranch understands how he and other farmers will benefit. “These types of investments in our

agricultural lands are vital for our future. They assist in succession planning as well as infrastructure, to make sure the land stays productive and viable for future generations.

“There’s much uncertainty in our future,” Dawson adds, “but assuring that agricultural lands will continue to be productive is a small step in eliminating the unknown.” Collaborative and creative efforts like these in Wallowa County will go a long way to help family farmers.

Read more at [www.oregonlandtrusts.org/2016-state-of-the-lands](http://www.oregonlandtrusts.org/2016-state-of-the-lands)

*Mike Running is the Communications and Outreach Manager for the Coalition of Oregon Land Trusts.*



Wolfe Farm Tour  
photo by Leon Werdinger



# Modest gift, mighty impact

By Kathleen Ackley

Until recently, I never thought of myself as capable of making a planned gift. What do I have of value to leave a charity except an old dented Hyundai? It never occurred to me to name a nonprofit as the beneficiary of my retirement account. A recent seminar on estate planning changed my mind.

Currently, a huge amount of wealth in America is held in retirement assets – up to \$25 trillion. This includes \$7.6 trillion held in IRAs. This is an incredible asset, much of it made up of small value accounts such as my own. Because of the high tax rate on this asset, up to 40% depending on the age and income of the individual, leaving it to a family member or loved one means that the IRS will take a considerable bite out of that gift. However, if you leave it to a qualified nonprofit such as Wallowa Land Trust, the charity receives 100% of your gift.

Once I found this out, I went online to Calvert, which holds both my traditional and SIMPLE IRAs, and did a quick search on “designation or change of beneficiary form.” Five minutes later, the form was filled out and ready to be sent off. It was quick and painless and now Wallowa Land Trust can list me as a planned gift donor. Wallowa County is my home and knowing that I can contribute even this small amount to protect it for future generations gives me a deep sense of satisfaction.

I hope you will join with me in making a nonprofit the beneficiary of your retirement account. It’s a simple act yet has the potential to make a significant impact on the nonprofit you choose, whether your account is valued at \$1,000 or \$100,000. If you choose Wallowa Land Trust – thank you! And, please let us know so we can thank you in your lifetime.

**PART II: TYPE OF RETIREMENT ACCOUNT** (Please check all applicable plan)

☒ IRA (Traditional, SEP, SIMPLE, and Roth)

☐ Supplemental 403(b)(7) Plan (employee funded)

☐ Basic 403(b)(7) Plan (employer funded)

**PART III: BENEFICIARY(IES)** (Please designate as follows).

BENEFICIARY NAME: Wallowa Land Trust

BENEFICIARY SSN: 20-1037078

BENEFICIARY DATE OF BIRTH: PO Box 516

BENEFICIARY ADDRESS: Enterprise,

BENEFICIARY CITY: Oregon

BENEFICIARY STATE: 97828

BENEFICIARY ZIP: 501(c) 3 nonprofit

RELATIONSHIP TO PARTICIPANT:

“It’s a simple act yet has the potential to make a significant impact.”



photo by Mike Straw

# Calendar of Events 2017

Explore, learn and celebrate the Wallowa Country with us this summer! Unless otherwise noted, all events are free and open to all ages.

## Into The Wallowa outings – Saturdays 9am to noon

- June 24:** **Oregon Walk the Land Day**  
*on the Zumwalt Prairie with The Nature Conservancy and avian ecologist Andie Lueders*
- July 1:** **Botanical Drawing on the East Moraine**  
*with artist Jennifer Klimsza, Josephy Center for Arts & Culture*
- July 8:** **Bugs Bugs Bugs!**  
*with entomologists Diane Knox and Jim Hansen*
- July 15:** **Birds and the Science of Flight**  
*with biologist Kendrick Moholt, Bioresources*
- July 22:** **Lostine Fish Weir**  
*with Shane Vatland, Nez Perce Tribe*
- August 5:** **East Moraine Geology Hike**  
*with geologist Ellen Morris Bishop*
- August 12:** **Nature Storytelling with Technology**  
*with Mike Midlo, Fishtrap*
- August 26:** **TBD**
- September 2:** **Habitat Restoration on the East Moraine**  
*(might be TRAIL BUILDING!)*

## Into The Wallowa lecture – Wednesday 7 to 9pm

- July 19:** **Introduction to Nez Perce Life in the Wallowas**  
*with historian Tim Nitz, National Park Service*

## Wallowa Land Trust’s Annual Picnic – Saturday 4 to 8pm

- August 19:** **Lundes Home in Joseph**

Space is limited; to sign up or receive more information on an outing, contact [info@wallowalandtrust.org](mailto:info@wallowalandtrust.org) or (541) 426-2042.



photos by Leon Werdinger





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Enterprise, Oregon 97828

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*Wallowa Land Trust's mission is to protect the rural nature of the Wallowa Country by working cooperatively with private landowners, Indian tribes, local communities and government entities to conserve land.*

*Staff*  
Kathleen Ackley, Executive Director  
Heidi Wilson, Office Assistant



photo by Leon Werdinger

*Board*  
Mark Lacey, Chair  
Paul Flanders, Treasurer  
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