

Wallowa Land Trust
Autumn 2021



WallowaLands

AUTUMN REFLECTION

Protecting the rural nature of Wallowa County

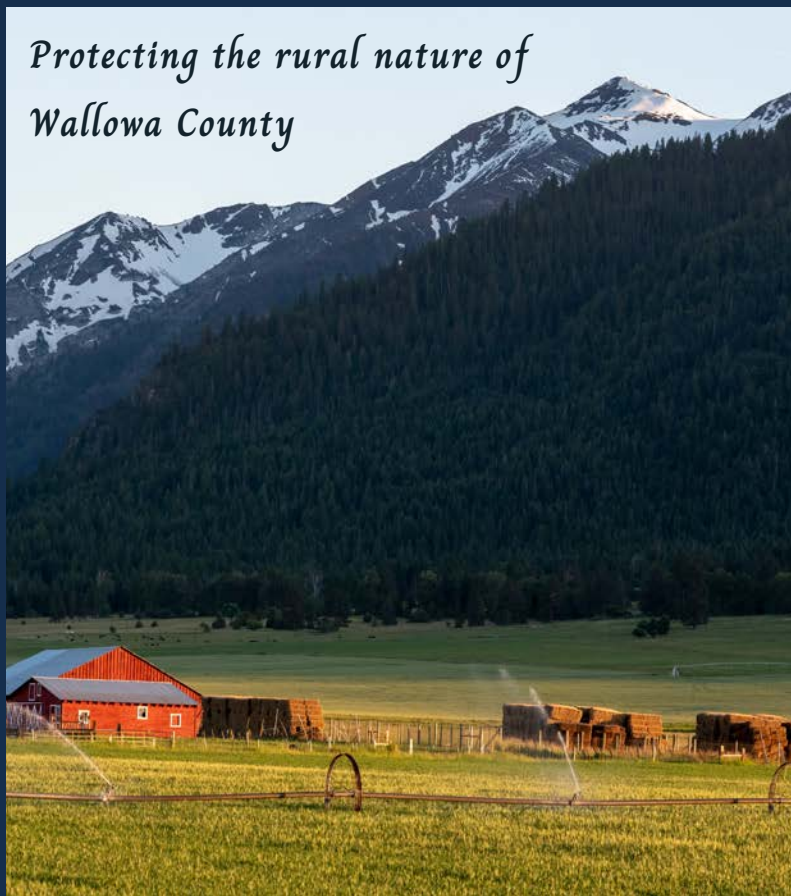


Image Credit: Leon Werdinger Photography

Human beings have emotional landscapes no less complex than the geography of North America. Our perspectives are deeply rooted in personal experience, especially as it relates to land. I reflect back on exploring a patch of woods near my childhood home, spending hours listening, playing, and learning to love the ground beneath my feet. How we feel about any particular landscape is directly bound to our personal history. This simple truth shines through in all the public comments received on the East Moraine Community Forest Management Plan.

Reading through the public input (see page 3), one thing is very clear: the East Moraine is fiercely loved by a great many people. When it comes to the future of this landscape, opinions are diverse, strongly held and come in great quantities. Considering the uniqueness of the Moraine, it's not surprising that such a special landscape evokes passions across a broad spectrum.

Difficult discussions are ahead and difficult decisions need to be made, but if we are continually reminded of the perspective of the land – of the trees, the rocks, the birds and the deer – then I think we have a good chance of developing a Management Plan that depends on our relationship with the land, not our consumption of it.

Relationships are at the heart of Wallowa Land Trust's work, relationships that take time to build and nurture. Oftentimes the successes are incremental and not easily quantified. In our results-oriented, data-driven world, the subtle art of connection is often overlooked and undervalued. I need to continually remind myself that success is so much more than acres protected. Success is hands in the soil, salmon spawning in the streams, and trees reaching for the sky. Success reaches far beyond our own lifetimes.

So, as I savor these last days of autumn, I will be reaching out asking for financial support as I always do this time of year. But I will also be looking for opportunities for meaningful connection with the world and people around me. I look forward to connecting with you soon.

With thanks,



Kathleen Ackley
Executive Director

NEWS FROM THE FOREST

THE LATEST UPDATE ON THE EAST MORaine COMMUNITY FOREST MANAGEMENT PLAN BY SARAH KLEINHANZL



Image Credit: Leon Werdinger Photography

From the crest of the East Moraine, you're able to see the world below: boats sailing on the blue waters of Wallowa Lake, and ponderosa pine trees swaying in the cool evening breeze to the south as a red-tailed hawk swoops above. To the north is the bustling town of Joseph, aglow with the setting sun just to the west.

The East Moraine is a special place. We know that, our members know that, and this community knows that. As conversation around its Management Plan marches on, we wanted to take a moment to say thank you.

Thank you to all our members who remain steadfast in prioritizing the protection of land in Wallowa County. If you made your voice heard by providing comments on the East Moraine Community Forest Management Plan, know that your input is crucial to the Plan's development. Your time and effort in sharing your thoughts does not go unnoticed.

The Wallowa County Board of Commissioners received public comments from approximately 70 people. Submissions came through the mail, the online survey link, and via email. And while not all sentiments were perfectly aligned, one thing remains clear: this community cares deeply about the East Moraine. (Continued on next page).



Image Credit: Jeff Baird

NEWS FROM THE FOREST cont.

There are a few themes that stand out from the comments submitted. First and foremost, there is concern around impacts to habitat due to increased use of the property. The health and wellbeing of native plants and wildlife is a top priority for many people. How will we protect the habitat with more people recreating on the Moraine? Controlling access was one such way that was mentioned numerous times. Grazing was mentioned by many as well. People recognize that this is a working landscape but want to ensure that habitat is not compromised. Currently, there is limited infrastructure in place to successfully implement rotational grazing, which will be necessary to maintain and improve rangeland health.

The topic of dogs also brought up a lot of strongly felt opinions. Public comments ran the gambit of, “no dogs should be allowed,” to “dogs should only be on leash” to “off-leash dogs should be allowed.” Obviously, some level of compromise will be necessary as we further refine the Plan.

So what happens now? With the public survey closed, the hard work begins. The East Moraine Community Forest Management Committee* is currently reviewing all comments, pulling out common themes and specific points that need further consideration.

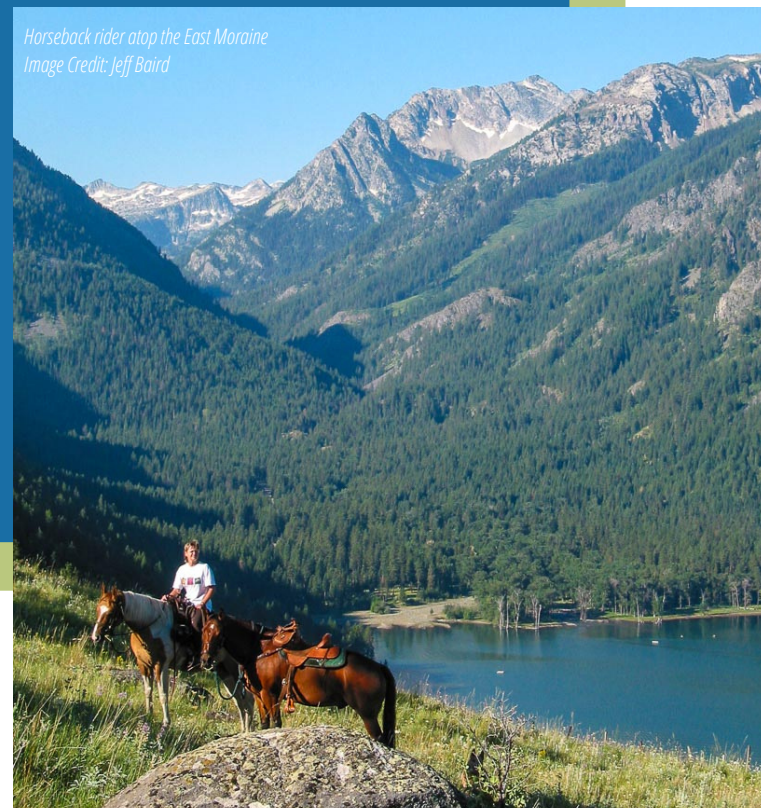
With the considerable input received, careful and thoughtful review will take time. The process will likely take a few months, with the committee meeting twice a month now through March 2022. This input will be used to make adjustments to the Plan where appropriate, with the goal of having a final version of the Plan in place prior to next Spring.

Acquisition of the East Moraine was a monumental undertaking that our community should be proud of. While the development of the Management Plan is time consuming and at times challenging, Wallowa Land Trust remains committed to protecting this magnificent landscape for many generations to come.

"Our grandchildren are the fifth generation
to delight in and love this land...
The land preceded us.
We want the land to survive us."

Quote from the Public Comments

*The East Moraine Community Forest Management Committee is made up of: Wallowa County Board of Commissioners, Wallowa Resources, Wallowa Land Trust, Oregon Parks and Recreation Department, Oregon Department of Forestry, Nez Perce Tribe, Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife and Oregon State University Extension.



Horseback rider atop the East Moraine
Image Credit: Jeff Baird

WELCOME BRIAN AND REBECCA

NEW FACES AT WALLOWA LAND TRUST



Image Credit: Roger Averbeck

BRIAN BAKER

Conservation Program Manager

Brian grew up in Baker City Oregon and spent his childhood in the greater communities of Northeast Oregon exploring the backcountries of Wallowa and Baker counties. He attended Linfield College before he took a position with the US Forest Service and spent the next 18 years working for the agency in fire management. "I can't imagine a more incredible place to live than Wallowa County, and having the opportunity to conserve some of its most idyllic landscapes is a privilege" says Brian. When not in the office, you can find him with his wife and two dogs exploring all the incredible outdoor opportunities that Northeast Oregon and Wallowa County have to offer.

REBECCA MILES

Board of Directors

Rebecca joins the Wallowa Land Trust board with a strong background in leadership and national, state and tribal policy. She is a member of the Nez Perce Tribe who grew up, and continues to live, in Lapwai, Idaho. For the past 24 years, she worked in many capacities for the Nez Perce Tribe, including being elected the first-ever female chairman and chief executive officer of the Tribe. For the past 11 years, she served as the Tribe's executive director. She currently serves on the Native American Right's Fund Board and full time as the Operation's Director at the Potlatch Fund. "As a former tribal employee who worked on important land and natural resource issues for my Tribe, I was honored to become a board member for WLT. The invitation says a lot about the commitment to the land and it's resources by not just partnering with tribal entities but to also say, 'this is a perspective we want within our organization as well'".



Image Credit: The Lewiston Tribune

VENTURING OUT

A SEASON OF EDUCATIONAL OUTINGS INTO THE WALLOWAS BY SARAH KLEINHANZL



In reflecting upon this previous summer, a feeling of joy comes to mind. Perhaps it was the ability to once again gather outdoors, the longer days and warmer evenings, or perhaps it was the renewed appreciation all of us felt for access to our treasured outdoor spaces in these times.

Regardless of the reasons, this summer was a wonderful time of learning, exploration and community building here in Wallowa County. We hiked on the Zumwalt Prairie among the wildflowers, removed loads of invasive knapweed from a conserved property, painted under the cottonwoods by Wallowa Lake and much more.

If you were able to join us for any of our Into The Wallowa outings or Stewardship events, we thank you for supporting our mission of conserving this beautiful corner of Northeast Oregon. If you were unable to attend our outings this past season, the following page will give you a glimpse into the fun we had and the things we learned! Keep an eye out for future opportunities to get involved in the months ahead. (Continued on next page).



Volunteer helping to pull wire fencing from a conserved property at a stewardship event. Image credit: Sarah Kleinhanzl

Geology Fact:

The youngest moraines in the area indicate that only 19,000 years ago, a glacier towered above us, completely filling the basin that Wallowa Lake occupies today.

Local geology expert Dr. Ellen Morris Bishop leads a geology lecture at the head of Wallowa Lake.



Image Credit: Roger Averbeck

A group of volunteers on the East Moraine after completing a stewardship event.

Volunteering for events like these are a great way to get involved with our local conservation work and directly help our ecosystems!



Image Credit: Sarah Kleinhanzl

Spalding's catchfly is an endangered species in Oregon. Our annual monitoring of the plant allows us to track its well-being overtime.

Local partner BioResources leads the survey at Iwetemlaykin State Heritage Site this summer.



Image Credit: Sarah Kleinhanzl



Image Credit: Sarah Kleinhanzl

A volunteer lending a hand to remove downed barbed wire fencing on the crest of the East Moraine.

Barbed wire fencing is a wildlife hazard, especially downed fencing, which deer and other animals can get tangled in.



Image Credit: Sarah Kleinhanzl

Birds we saw:

Western wood-pee wee, red-tailed hawk, northern flicker

Local bird expert Janet Hohmann leads a guided bird hike through Wallowa Lake State Park.



Image Credit: Sarah Kleinhanzl

Astronomy Fact:

80% of Americans can't see the Milky Way from their homes due to light pollution.

Wallowology staff and Wallowa Land Trust lead a collaborative Dark Sky Hike at dusk.

MAKE A GIFT

BY SCANNING WITH YOUR
SMART PHONE CAMERA



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Image Credit: Roger Averbeck



NEW
MERCH

AVAILABLE NOW

ON OUR
WEBSITE AND
IN OUR OFFICE!

