

# Palouse Land Trust

2017 Newsletter

*"Alone we can do so little;  
together we can do so much,"  
--Helen Keller*





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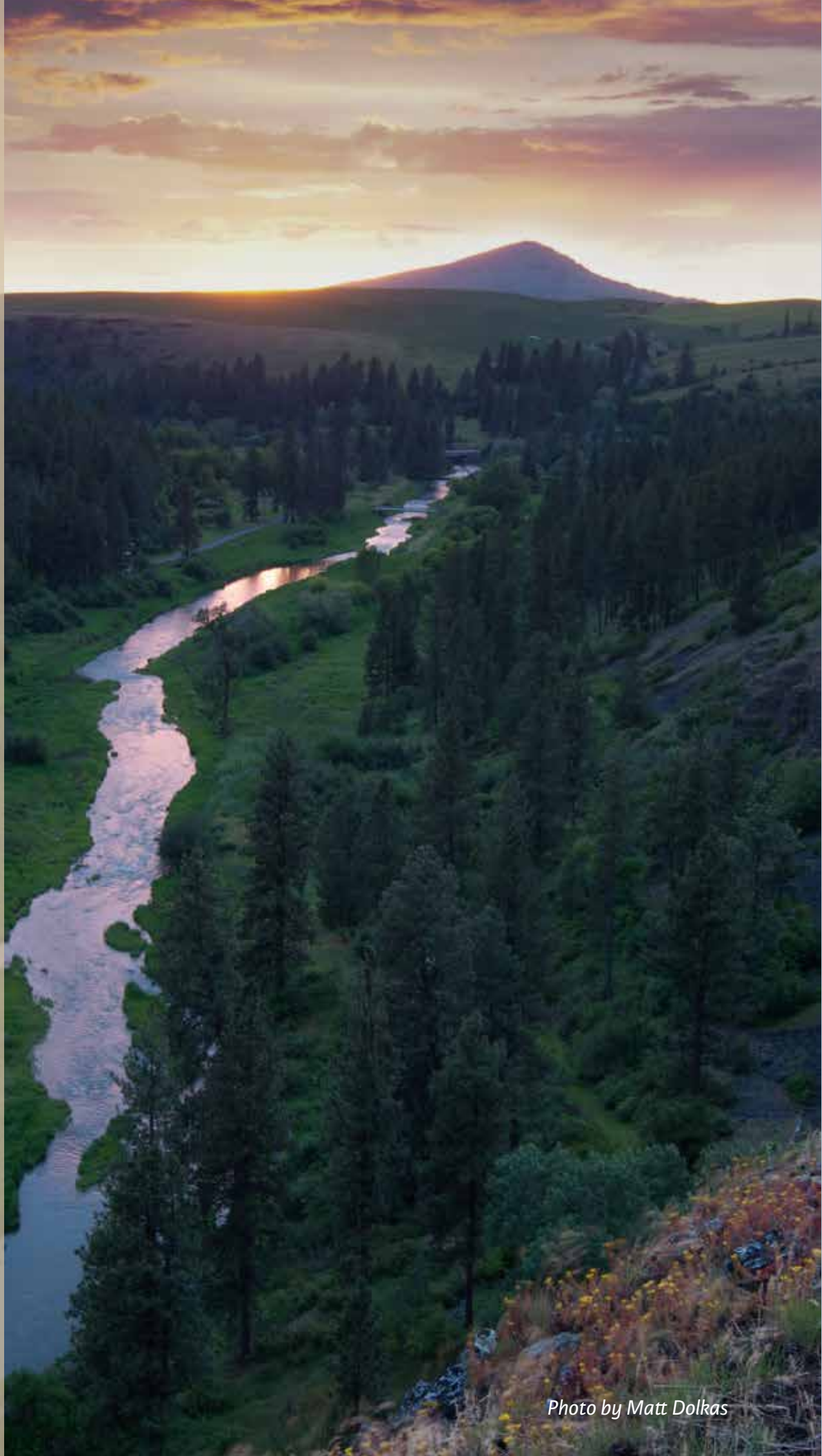
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Conservation Excellence



*Photo by Matt Dolkas*

***“The things you do for yourself are gone when you are gone, but the things you do for others remain as your legacy.”***

***- Kalu Kalu***

I hear that this is natural as you get older, but this year stood out to me as one where I’ve attended more memorial services than average. What struck me at each of them was that, even while feeling the loss of someone we really cared about, there was also an air of celebration of how they lived and what they taught us along the way.

I felt this bittersweet truth in the middle of a standing-room-only service as the community celebrated the life of our dear friend Jim Cooley. I knew Jim as we worked over the years to conserve the land that he and Zoe so dutifully cared for in Troy. It was wonderful to hear how others knew him as a thoughtful and caring professor; as a fun-loving, square-dancing friend; and as a larger-than-life, tougher-than-nails father. And it was moving to know that Jim’s vision – that future generations will enjoy the beauty and abundance of his land – will live on.

We also remembered our friend Dave Skinner for his passion and dedication to the Palouse Prairie. Standing on top of Paradise Ridge as a storm rolled in, we gathered together and dedicated our new prairie preserve in his honor. His eagerness to teach us all about native plants and our endangered prairie ecosystem inspired so many to keep at this important work.

I don’t know that Dave or Jim thought much about what people would say about them when they were gone. I don’t think they thought of themselves as extraordinary. I think they just got on with their lives, one foot in front of the other, doing the next right thing. What I love most about the Land Trust is that every day we see people doing the same.

We saw it last fall when two couples stepped up to purchase the land on Steptoe Butte to make sure this iconic landmark will be protected forever. We see it each spring and summer when community members come together to help take care of Idler’s Rest, a beloved community treasure. We see it when private landowners volunteer to work with local, state, and federal agencies to preserve critically endangered habitat or improve their farming practices because they know it’s the right thing to do for the future.

Every day we see people moving toward the kind of world that we want for future generations. One where our traditional farming and forestry economy is preserved; where our native wildlife and fish thrive; where our critically endangered Palouse Prairie flourishes; where our kids can play in and learn from nature close to home; and where our spirits can be restored by spending time outdoors.

Over the past 22 years, our community has made it possible to protect over 4,000 acres of working farms and forests, critically important wildlife habitat, and places for people to play. And thanks to people like you who have been there along the way, there is much more in the works. Today, there is more desire to conserve land than at any other time in the Land Trust’s history. Please know that you don’t have to own land to make a difference. Your support – from your time, to your expertise, to your contributions – makes it possible to achieve so much.

Thank you for everything you do to make our corner of the world a better place,

Amy Trujillo, Executive Director

**Right:** Dave Skinner’s wife, Jo Bohna, and Amy share memories of Dave at the dedication ceremony. *Photo by Erica Sloniker*





# Big things happen when all the pieces add up

When you give to the Land Trust, you help families throughout our region take the next steps toward permanently protecting special places for future generations. Each piece plays an important role in the larger landscape. From farmland, to wetlands, to important recreation areas, these are just a few of the special places that were conserved this past year, thanks to support from people like you.

## Wildlife habitat close to home

For nearly 20 years, Bill Voxman and Joanne Reece have taken care of a special oasis for plants and wildlife in the northern part of Moscow.

Knowing how important natural areas are for our communities, Bill and Joanne partnered with the Land Trust to protect just over 2 acres of their property, which is home to habitat for migrating birds and other wildlife. The protection of their land adds yet another permanent open space for the community of Moscow, and is in close proximity to both the Rabbit Hills Preserve (conserved by Gail and Mark DeSantis in 2009) and the Fosberg Farm (conserved by Maynard and Margaret Fosberg in 1999).



## Beautiful places to play

If you've done much rafting in Idaho, chances are you've floated the Lower Salmon River canyon. The stretch of river from Hammer Creek to Pine Bar is a popular day-trip and now, thanks to the efforts of a local ranching family, the Bureau of Land Management, and with help from the Land Trust, nearly 6 miles of stunning views along Green Canyon are permanently protected. Next time you float that stretch, know that you helped ensure that future generations will continue to be able to enjoy this beautiful view.





## Preserving our heritage

As you walk down the path to Monte and Helen Wilson's rustic cabin just outside of Potlatch, Idaho, you're likely to flush out a herd of deer, a great-horned owl, or maybe a red-tailed hawk. You might run into Monte, coming back from a long day of managing brush and weeds. Or maybe Helen as she sets out to do some painting under the large cedars nestled in the wet draw on the east side of the property. Time seems to slip away and before you know it, the golden light of evening floods the trees, giving the forest a magical feeling.

It's forestland like this throughout our region that provides homes for wildlife, timber for our local economy, and beautiful scenery. Preserving land like this helps save a bit of our rural heritage as well.

Monte Wilson's great-grandparents moved to Idaho in 1875 and settled in Viola in 1886. His grandparents eventually bought this land in the 1920s. Monte and Helen wanted to see the land and its history protected so they worked with the Land Trust to place a conservation easement on the land. The easement allows for responsible timber harvest and also allows for two small areas where their kids can eventually build homes while still protecting scenic views of the property for the public and maintaining quality wildlife habitat. It's a good example of how we can balance economic, historic, aesthetic, and conservation values to ensure a vibrant community into the future.



## Saving an endangered ecosystem

How do you preserve an ecosystem when the remaining pieces are limited to small, disjointed, remnant islands? When it comes to the Palouse Prairie, you rely on the incredible passion and dedication of local landowners willing to lead the way in preservation and restoration efforts.

Last year, Bill and Dianne French and Kas and Deb Dumroese added their properties to the growing network of protected Palouse Prairie habitat in Whitman and Latah counties. These two projects are part of a larger multi-agency initiative to protect this imperiled landscape. Thanks to the commitment of these conservation-minded families, and others, this incredibly special ecosystem will have a shot at not just surviving, but thriving.





# Seeing the forest for the trees

Idler's Rest Nature Preserve



# Over the past year, you've shared your stories of what you love about Idler's Rest.

We heard how connecting to this place has healed and fostered great things in many of us. And when nature is close to home, like it is at Idler's Rest, we're that much more likely to experience that power. **But what if there's something keeping you from experiencing it?**

## Taking stock

This past year, through public listening sessions, community fairs and events, and outreach on social media, we've also heard from people who don't or can't get out to Idler's Rest.

We heard that simply not knowing about Idler's Rest isn't the only thing stopping people from visiting the preserve. Issues like parking lot congestion, feeling uncertain of what to expect or where to go, or not being able to get up or down the steps at the trailheads, were common concerns preventing people from enjoying Idler's Rest. And thanks to your continued support, we're not just listening – we're finding ways to do something about it.

## Working together

As always, we're stronger when we work together. Support from people like you has made it possible

to bring community partners, volunteers, businesses, and outdoor groups together to plan ways to make Idler's Rest accessible to everyone. We have landscape architecture students at WSU designing the parking lot improvements and universal access improvements for the trails. We're working with neighboring landowners to explore the possibility of expanding the trail system. We have plans drawn up for better signage so that people can know where to go and partners lined up to provide programming, like guided hikes, to make people feel more at home exploring nature.

Funding for construction costs anticipated for the parking lot and universal access trail improvements is the next piece of the puzzle, and thanks to grants from the CLIF Bar Family Foundation, the Inland Northwest Community Foundation, and the Co-op Dime in Time program, we've got a really good start.

## You can make it possible

*You can help us get over the final hurdle. This fall, the Thomas O. Brown Foundation and a generous local family will match each dollar you contribute 2:1 for this special project. Our goal is to raise \$15,000 from the community to make this dream a reality. Your support this fall can make sure that people of all abilities are able to connect with the physical, emotional, and spiritual benefits of nature at Idler's Rest.*

**Please give as generously as you can.**

## Special places build community

"When friends and family come to visit, I include a walk at Idler's Rest as one of the top options for things to do. It's a short drive to a beautiful, unique place. One time I came back down the trail to find my mom, brother-in-law, and niece literally hugging the trees to feel how they swayed in the wind!

I've just started volunteering at Idler's Rest, and it's a wonderful way to spend a morning. I was able to pick what I wanted to do, tools were provided, I met interesting people, and I learned so much about the plants and history of Idler's Rest. It's amazing how much progress you can make when working together with a group. When I go back to hike the trails with friends and family, I'll be proud to know I played a part."

**-Juliana Cheatham, volunteer**



# Restoration and Recovery partnering for the prairie

Did you know that when you help preserve our native prairie, you're not just protecting something beautiful, you're also helping to bring back threatened and endangered species? One of those species that gets a lot of attention in prairie circles is the federally-threatened Spalding's catchfly.

When a plant or animal is put on the Endangered Species List, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service is tasked with coming up with a "Species Recovery Plan" to bring that species back from the brink. The Species Recovery Plan for Spalding's catchfly identifies certain Key Conservation Areas - areas that stand the best chance of supporting restoration and reintroduction efforts to bring back the threatened plant.

For years, the Land Trust has been part of a partnership of individuals and agencies working to permanently conserve land in the Key Conservation Area identified in Latah County so that restoration and reintroduction efforts can begin. At the heart of this Key Conservation Area lies a 62.5-acre property that contains some of the best Palouse prairie habitat in north Idaho.

Home to many rare and special plants and animals like the broad-fruit mariposa lily, Palouse goldenweed, grasshopper sparrow, and more, this property was a high conservation priority. Normally, the Land Trust works with local families to protect special places like this with conservation easements. In this case, however, the family had long ago moved to Oregon and needed to sell the land.



Thanks to a grant from the US Fish and Wildlife Service, a donation of a portion of the land value from the family, a donation of appreciated stock from a local

**Left:** A unique and breathtaking landscape, permanently protected because of you. *Photo by Don & Melinda Crawford*



# covery

community member with a passion for prairie, and the on-going support of people like you, we were able to purchase the land and dedicate it as the Dave Skinner Ecological Preserve. This special place lies on the southern slope of Paradise Ridge, south of Moscow. It is home to stunning, high quality prairie remnants, and is now an important Spalding's catchfly reintroduction and restoration site.

Due to the highly sensitive nature of the site, the Preserve is accessible by guided tours. The most beautiful time to visit is in the spring, so please let us know if you'd like to get on the list for a tour next spring.



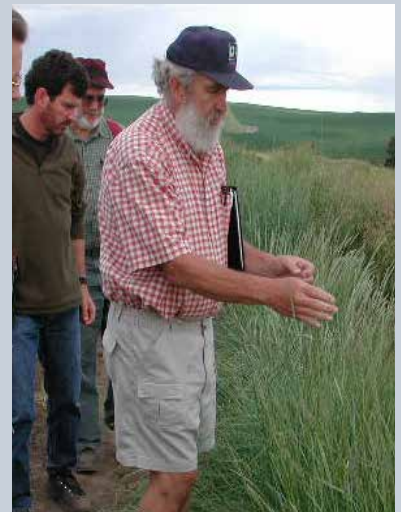
**Above:** A reintroduced Spalding's catchfly (*Silene spaldingii*) plant at the Skinner Preserve.

## Paying tribute to a true prairie champion

This spring, the newly completed prairie preserve was officially dedicated and named in honor of our friend, David Skinner, who passed away in early 2016.

Among his many accomplishments, Dave was a founding member of the Palouse Prairie Foundation, and worked for over 30 years with the USDA NRCS Plant Material Center in Pullman. He also co-authored the beautiful, new "Palouse Prairie Field Guide," and worked tirelessly to promote awareness and appreciation for the fragile Palouse Prairie ecosystem.

Dave's widow and friends lovingly spread a portion of Dave's ashes at the preserve in June during a special dedication ceremony, ensuring that Dave will always be a part of the landscape he so passionately supported.



**Above:** Dave Skinner, where he loved to be - in the field. Photo by Jacie Jensen



**Thank you** to everyone making a lasting difference in our community. Every year, with your support there are more places for wildlife to roam, more farms and forests conserved, and more places to play in nature.

*Thank you to the following contributors who gave so generously in 2016-2017. If you believe you have been omitted from this list in error, please contact Amy at 208-596-4496.*

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**—Joanne Sutton**

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**"I eagerly support the Palouse Land Trust annually because I know this organization will work to protect and encourage sustainability on the land around me...the Palouse region of which I'm so fond. "**

**—Nancy Mack**

## **Tremendous Opportunities**

The Land Trust grew out of an appreciation for our landscape and the role it plays in making our community a vibrant place to live. Today, there is more desire to conserve land than at any other time in the Land Trust's history. In recent years, families have brought us projects that have incredible conservation and community value, but regrettably, the funding needed to make some of those projects happen hasn't been available.

To help take advantage of our momentum and to be able to seize key opportunities as they arise, Land Trust supporters are now establishing a special Opportunity Fund.

This fund will help us move faster on projects, conserve iconic landmarks that define our communities and give us a sense of place, create new places for public recreation, and find ways to use land to build a healthier community. You can become a catalyst for creating a legacy of clean water, abundant wildlife, working landscapes, and the beautiful views the Palouse is known for all over the world.

Gifts of appreciated stock, charitable IRA rollovers, and bequests are easy and meaningful ways to contribute to the Opportunity Fund and share the special lands we call home with generations to come.

*For more information on how you can make a difference with the Opportunity Fund, contact Amy at [amy@palouselandtrust.org](mailto:amy@palouselandtrust.org) or 208-669-0722.*

*Photo by Don & Melinda Crawford*







*Working together for open space, wildlife  
habitat, and working lands on the Palouse.*

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**A Celebration of Conservation  
Wednesday, November 8 at 6:00pm  
The 1912 Center, 412 E 3rd St, Moscow**

Please join us for an evening of celebration to toast all that you have made possible this year. Bring your friends to this free event to celebrate the community and the land you love, and to be inspired by what's in store. Enjoy complimentary appetizers, drinks, and have the chance to win unique silent auction items that will support the conservation of special places on the Palouse. Check the auction packages out online at [palouselandtrust.org](http://palouselandtrust.org).

For more information and to RSVP, please call 208-596-4496 or email [Jaime@palouselandtrust.org](mailto:Jaime@palouselandtrust.org)



*Photo: Don & Melinda Crawford*