

Palouse Land Trust

2019 Newsletter

Nature for All

"We are less when we don't include everyone."

-Stuart Milk



Challenging Sameness

If you are anything like me, you probably have a number of pastimes that connect you to the outdoors. I've been lucky to work in the conservation sector and experience the sights, sounds, smells, and feel of being connected to nature. This connection is comfortable, and I'm often able to share that connection with others who are much like me.



This issue of our newsletter focuses on inclusion and our broader commitment to equitable access to nature. The land trust has historically viewed our mission as protecting the resource values lands offer to society and serving the families that own the land. While this mission remains relevant today, moving forward, we recognize that we must also become a more culturally responsive and inclusive organization in order to solve the daunting challenges facing our environment.

I own that I have the innate tendency to do what people who look and act like me do. Because I am able-bodied and uninhibited by my cultural and ethnic background, I am free to be effortlessly connected to nature. But I've also become more aware that sameness is not sustainable and we must all shift our perspective and look through a different lens. If we wish to remain relevant, grow more effective, and garner broader support for our conservation work, we must become more responsive to the needs of our community.

I'm incredibly grateful to all of you who stepped up to make accessibility at Idler's Rest Nature Preserve become a reality. Beyond the addition of amenities like a new restroom facility and expanded parking area, the universal access trail will remove barriers to access so that people who are less able-bodied can experience the connection to nature's meaningful places, like the magnificent cedar grove along Idler's Rest Creek. Stay connected for updates on how we are getting closer to the finishline. In the meantime, we will continue to create and offer activities that are more inclusive and forge new partnerships within the community to connect more people to the power of nature.

A more diverse, inclusive conservation movement is a stronger, more innovative movement. Our board is intent on building deeper relationships to strengthen the diversity of our leadership. I look forward to talking with you about how we can advance the land trust mission and continue to protect meaningful places and uphold the values that make our community so special.

With gratitude,

Lovina Englund, Executive Director

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Building community through service

It doesn't take a bulging wallet or a large tract of land to make a huge impact in community conservation. All it takes is a big heart and a whole lot of love for the lands that inspire and define us. *Everyone* can effect positive change by sharing their skills, gifts, and energy through service and volunteerism on the lands we love.

Owen Tribble

"I love helping the land trust. Volunteering helps me really live the values that I hold close: preserving the land for future generations and healthy wildlife and protecting our natural resources and special places like Idler's Rest for people to enjoy not just today, but forever."



"Volunteers don't necessarily have the time; they just have the heart."

-Elizabeth Andrew

Roger Blanchard

"Sometimes life takes a turn and hands us an exciting opportunity. As a city parks employee in 1995, I worked as part of a team with PLT, local landowners, and developers to permanently conserve a parcel of land along Paradise Creek. That was PLT's first conservation easement, and that parcel is now a part of Moscow's Berman Creekside Park. That experience hooked me on the land conservation mission of the land trust. The following year I began volunteering as a PLT advisory board member.



PLT has come a long way since that first easement; from an all-volunteer board who were responsible for the day-to-day operations of the organization to what is now a LTA-accredited, professionally staffed land trust responsible for stewarding over 2,000 acres of forest, farmland, Palouse Prairie, and other open space. As a board member and current treasurer of PLT, I feel proud to have been able to contribute to that effort. I am also thankful to see that so many others who love the land have contributed their time, labor, monetary support, and partnership to help conserve our special landscapes for future generations. Together we can make a difference in our world."



Teamwork makes the dream work

Private land conservation is a bit of a misnomer. It infers that individuals are responsible for and solely benefit from permanent protections on property – but actually, it takes a team of dedicated people working together to achieve the conservation goals of the entire community. There is a seat for everyone at the table of local land conservation.

Native Palouse Prairie Initiative

The plan was ambitious: save what was left of the Native Palouse Prairie, an ecosystem now existent in tiny remnant islands scattered across thousands of acres.

How could one small land trust possibly accomplish such a monumental project? Certainly not alone.

Working together with the US Fish and Wildlife Service, Idaho Department of Fish and Game, Latah Soil and Water Conservation District, local conservation and prairie groups, private landowners passionate about protecting this special ecosystem for the benefit of current and future generations, and generous supporters like you, we've permanently protected over 500 contiguous acres of habitat in Latah County.

The establishment of the Dave Skinner Ecological Preserve in 2016 protected another 62 acres of high quality prairie habitat, and also created a

special opportunity for the research and scientific community. The space provides for academic, scientific, and ecological study of the endangered ecosystem by local schools and universities and is the testing ground for new and innovative adaptive management techniques that will be used by land managers across the West.

Thanks to your investment in this special partnership, 40 more acres have been conserved this year, bringing the total protected corridor to 542 acres. With your continued support, we can continue building relationships and collaborations to ensure that this special landscape will not only be permanently conserved, but cared for and managed forever.

Lewis Easement, Moscow, ID

Farmed since the 1930's, this 135-acre property came under threat of subdivision and housing development in 2006. Not only would this development spoil the beautiful views of Moscow Mountain that we all enjoy, but wildlife would be greatly impacted. Thanks to the shared vision of a committed group of people, the proposed development did not come to pass.

Neighboring landowners came together in 2009, pooled their money and resources, and purchased the property with the express intention of protecting it forever. Working with the land trust, Lewis Farms Northwest, LLC placed a

conservation easement on the property to ensure that it would forever remain in active agricultural production, educational research opportunities, and provide vital open space and wildlife habitat for generations to come.

Maple K easements, Colfax, WA

Permanent land conservation is just one of many land protection options available to property owners. It takes an eye for the future, commitment to the land and the community, and sometimes, a beautiful partnership with federal, state, and local entities.

Maple K Forest and Maple K Meyers Farm easements just outside of Colfax, WA are the perfect example of permanent land protection done collaboratively, and done with the community in mind.

Working with the Federal Aviation Administration, state wildlife and environmental agencies, local municipalities, conservation districts and leaders, the 509-acre Maple K Forest property was identified and selected as the ideal site for the Moscow-Pullman Airport expansion project's wetland restoration component. Now part of a contiguous protected corridor of over 600 acres, this land will forever support healthy wildlife habitat, active agriculture, open spaces, and preserve our rural heritage and history.



Top Left: The Lewis easement will continue to produce amber waves of grain for generations;

Top Right: The Maple K Forest and Maple K Meyers properties permanently protect vital wildlife habitat and open spaces.

Left: A late summer day overlooking the Dave Skinner Ecological Preserve and other protected properties.

Nature for all

According to the groundbreaking study, The Nature of Americans, released late last year, “Americans face a significant gap between their interests in nature and their efforts, abilities, and opportunities to pursue those interests in their lives.”¹

This disconnect is attributed to perceived and actual barriers to access with the outdoors, competing priorities for time, declining direct dependence on natural systems for our livelihoods, shifting expectations about the amount of nature to consume, and the all-encompassing pull of technology.

But thanks to your generous support, we’re breaking down these barriers together, and ensuring that there truly is nature for all on the Palouse and north-central Idaho.

Connecting the next generation

It’s not just additional educational or youth programming that can bridge the divide between young people and their connection to the natural world. Your support is working every day to ensure that adults and children alike are exposed to the magic, wonder, and importance of nature here in our region and across the globe.

¹: DJ Case and Associates. (2018). The Nature of Americans. Retrieved from www.natureofamericans.org.

Strengthened relationships with schools and outdoor classroom experiences are

only part of the good work you’re making possible. Collaborative programming with local groups like PCEI and the Moscow Food Co-op are connecting families and new members of our community to the special ecosystems and spaces that foster strong bonds to nature and the outdoors.

Aside from programming, physical improvements at Idler’s Rest like the installation of a rest room facility will help families spend more time in the forest playing, learning, and exploring rather than worrying about where to go when the littles... have to go.

Encouraging one’s own path into nature

While it’s easy to think of hiking, biking, hunting, fishing or camping as the best ways to connect to the natural world, finding a bond with the outdoors comes in many, many different ways for different members of our community.

You’re helping more people find the healing, spiritual, and emotional power of the land through wellness activities like guided sound meditation and yoga beneath the cedar boughs.

Working to ensure that new members of the community or those who are unsure where and how to recreate responsibly, we are opening doors to access that many may not have even realized existed. Through organized group experiences,

tours, new relationships with departments at UI and WSU, and excursions on the land, more people are overcoming the fear and uncertainty of visiting a new outdoor space or venturing out on the forest trails.

Broadening access for all

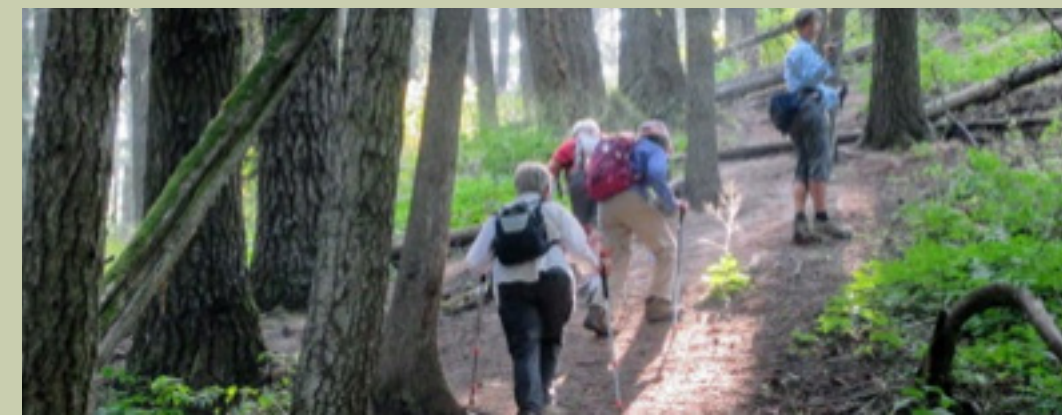
Everyone deserves access to nature regardless of any physical, mental, or health conditions. Nature isn’t just for those with perfect vision, or who can walk without a mobility assistive device. It is for everyone, and over the past several years you’ve given so generously to make major accessibility improvements at Idler’s Rest possible.

This summer, business partners Mike of Ray Day Jr. Logging and Sam of DeAtley Crushing laid the literal ground work for expanding the parking area. From clearing trees, to preparing a new site for a handicap accessible parking space, to initial excavation for the installation of a new ADA-accessible restroom facility at Idler’s Rest, the stage is set for a more inclusive, accessible, and user-friendly way to enjoy nature.

Most recently, Dan and Mike of DKW Excavation have been instrumental in grading the new access trail along the parking lot, as well as finalizing excavation for the restroom. We’re excited to continue working with them this fall to move closer to achieving the dream of universal access to the cedar grove.

Thanks to your commitment to community and Idler’s Rest, folks of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds will be able to enjoy the space and experience the essential connection to nature that all humans need and deserve.

Clockwise from top right: WSU International students snowshoeing for the first time at Idler’s Rest; Summer in the cedar grove; La Treks women’s hiking group tackling the trails; guided sound meditation in the clearing; McDonald Elementary students learning about the amazing diversity of life in the forest.





With an eye toward the community - and the future

Connection thanks to conservation

The crisp breeze. The scent of grass and soil. The thrill of the hunt. The play of the lure in the water. These are some of the most magical parts of hunting, fishing and connecting with the land in the northwest. But for those with mobility or health challenges, even simple access to the outdoors can be an insurmountable challenge.

In partnership with Youth Outdoors Unlimited (YOU) and Fallen Outdoors, Tom and Cheryl Kammerzell are using their permanently conserved land to ensure that veterans and those with physical disabilities or terminal illnesses are able to benefit from the power of nature and time on the land.

“Since 2011 we’ve worked with Youth Outdoors Unlimited, a Moses Lake-based nonprofit that gives kids with disabilities or terminal illnesses a chance to hunt and fish. For some of these kids, it’s their greatest wish and we’re so happy to provide the land to make their dreams come true,” Cheryl and Tom explain as we tour the wheelchair accessible hunting blind on their property outside of Colfax.



YOU was seeking a private property that could guarantee that participants had the best hunting experience possible, and the Kammerzell’s conserved property was the perfect fit. Now part of a long-term agreement, program participants have exclusive hunting access on the property, ensuring a meaningful, special experience with the land and the power of nature.

“There’s absolutely no cost to the family, and the group outfits the kids with all the equipment, hunting licenses, lodging, food, gear, and mounting to make the experience as complete as possible. It’s absolutely amazing to watch these kids – *it’s like going on your first hunt every single time*. Watching the change that comes over these young kids as they learn how to spot, track, take, and process their first deer or coyote is really powerful.”

Thank you for continuing to support all that private land conservation means to our entire community. You ensure that people of all abilities are able to experience our special landscape and take part in our rural hunting and fishing history, heritage, and way of life on the Palouse and north-central Idaho.

Photos courtesy of the Kammerzells and Youth Outdoors Unlimited.

“In 2001, my brother Brad called me from Boston and asked if I could start looking for the “perfect” property on the Palouse – one with forest, open space, wildlife habitat, hopefully a waterway of some sort, and room to raise alpacas,” muses Judy LaLonde. “Does Brad know anything about alpacas?” I wondered. But OK! If that’s his dream, I’ll help!”

When Judy found the 80-acre property on McKeehan Road, just outside of Troy, ID she knew it was the one that Brad had been dreaming of. Sight unseen, he purchased the property and moved out west to start Big Meadow Creek Alpacas.

“He loved the land immediately. He loved the animals, he loved the area, he loved that he was able to preserve the natural state of the land in the face of urban development. When he passed away unexpectedly in 2008, I was left with the property and the alpacas, and I knew the greatest way I could honor him and his memory was to permanently conserve the land.”

Partnering with Palouse Land Trust, Judy placed 49 acres of the property into a conservation

easement in 2013, named for her late brother, Brad Neuman.

“This property is Brad’s legacy, and now mine. I’m so proud to continue honoring Brad’s memory by leaving the property as a bequest to the Land Trust in my will. Both now and long after I’m gone, I know that this special place will always be here for the community and for the wildlife, fish, and everything else that depends upon it.”

Judy and a wee member of the Big Meadow Creek herd.



The Permanence Circle: Creating your land legacy

Including Palouse Land Trust in your will is one of the easiest gifts you can make, and one that will share your passion for the landscape for generations to come. It’s an incredibly powerful gift that not only honors your connection to the land, but is customizable to your needs and desires, and helps reduce the burden of federal and estate taxes.

Your estate advisor can include simple language in your will that leaves a lasting gift to PLT. Your bequest could be a gift of specific assets, a dollar amount, or a percentage of your estate.

Joining the Permanence Circle is a deeply meaningful way to ensure that the lands you love will endure for generations upon generations to come. We would be honored to provide more information on how you can create your land legacy today.



Your support of Palouse Land Trust sows the seeds of conservation not just for today, but for generations to come. Your investment in the lands that define and sustain us is so much more than an important financial committment - it's creating the future you wish to see for our entire community.

Thank you for ensuring that the lands we love will endure for generations to come.

Become a Conservation Hero and commit to conservation all year long with monthly gifts or payroll deductions at work. Contact us to learn how you can become a hero today, or visit [palouselandtrust.org/conservation-heroes-1](https://www.palouselandtrust.org/conservation-heroes-1).

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