



Columbia Land Trust

CONSERVING THE NATURE YOU LOVE

# CONSERVATION REPORT

2018-2019



# The Path Forward

You have a place in Northwest conservation.

Old-growth temperate rainforests; lively city neighborhoods buzzing with people, pollinators and songbirds; mossy coastal wetlands and rolling oak-and-pine woodlands blanketed in wildflowers; major cities, growing towns, and rural communities; foresters, farmers, fishers, and city dwellers; immigrants, refugees, recent West Coast transplants, lifelong residents, and indigenous peoples—one river ties these lands, waters, creatures, and people from all walks of life together.

A basin the size of France drains into a brilliant blue ribbon that cuts through an entire mountain range, emptying into the Pacific Ocean right here in our little corner of the world. The Columbia River and its surrounding lands bind us to a collective bounty and a shared responsibility. We can enjoy a future in which communities large and small enjoy a healthy environment, clean air and water, equitable access to trails and parks, intact ecosystems, and thriving economies—but we can only do so if we embrace our role as caretakers of the land.

The path to this future is not easy. In fact, the challenges facing the nature of the Northwest grow more daunting by the day. Climate change is actively reshaping the landscape, with dwindling snowpack and drier, harsher wildfire seasons. Vast swaths of natural and working lands are being developed practically overnight, putting pressure on wildlife and the intricate natural systems that sustain us. Pollution threatens the health of people and wildlife alike. Communities of color and other marginalized groups continue to bear the brunt of climate change and pollution, and environmental solutions too often fail to address those inequities.

In the face of these challenges, we are confident that our staff, partners, and the people of the region will rise to the occasion. In many ways, we already are. In 2017, Columbia Land Trust launched its Conservation Agenda, a 25-year framework for conserving lands and waters with the greatest potential to keep the natural systems and wildlife of the Northwest intact and thriving. In the year and a half since, we have accomplished some truly remarkable feats of conservation, which you will read about in the pages of this report.

At the same time, we are seeing new avenues to conservation open up through local partnerships with agencies, tribes, allied organizations, businesses, and community groups. We are learning more about the political, social, and economic barriers to conservation so we can better help remove them. We are also working to connect people to nature in ways that are more responsive to community interests and needs. Our approach is twofold: act swiftly and with purpose to conserve the nature we love where we can today, and help build broad public support for nature for the long haul.

Over the next two years, we are continuing this critical work. Our conservation and restoration initiatives are setting the standard for similar efforts across the country, and you are the key to our success.





Columbia Land Trust

# FIVE WAYS YOU

MADE THE COLUMBIA RIVER  
REGION BETTER IN 2018

conserved 11,360

ACRES OF FORESTS, MEADOWS,  
AND WILDLIFE HABITAT



REALIZED A

## 12-YEAR VISION

to protect 20,000 acres of forestland from residential  
development on the southern slope of Mount St. Helens

launched

an aerial monitoring  
program to better  
care for the land



mapped 24,481  
acres of land

FOR RESTORATION

PLANTED  
126,440

NATIVE TREES  
AND SHRUBS



## You Make It Happen

The four-year objectives outlined in our agenda, and listed at the beginning of each section of this report, require \$1.2 million per year. We are poised to leverage this amount into \$100 million of conservation. Thanks to generous individual donors, businesses, foundations, and funding agencies, we met our goals for both 2017 and 2018. Over the next two years, we need your continued investment. This unprecedented campaign calls on the entire community to come together, fearless and united for nature.

Support the places and services imminently threatened by development, pollution, and the impacts of climate change. Your investment today will help permanently protect the nature of the Northwest. We have the plan, the staff, and the determination to make it happen. All we need is you.

Every dollar you donate to Columbia Land Trust is leveraged into \$20 for conservation. We accomplish this by securing private and public grants to fund comprehensive, collaborative projects.

Our conservation agenda guides where and how we conserve land. We are working at a grand scale to conserve land across the Columbia River region's rich tapestry of lands. We trust you'll continue alongside us as we take on the audacious task of conserving, caring for, and connecting people to the nature of the Northwest today for generations to come.





## Conservation Opportunity Areas

The Conservation Agenda identifies conservation opportunity areas (COAs), geographies vital to the health of our region and its wildlife. To establish COAs, we analyze the current presence of wildlife species and habitat, landscape connectivity, climate resilience, expert opinion, and local knowledge. The map on the next page depicts our highest priority COAs color coded to reflect each of five ecologically distinct regions. Throughout this report, we have noted when site-specific projects exist within COAs. Increasingly, new projects fall within these areas of strategic focus.

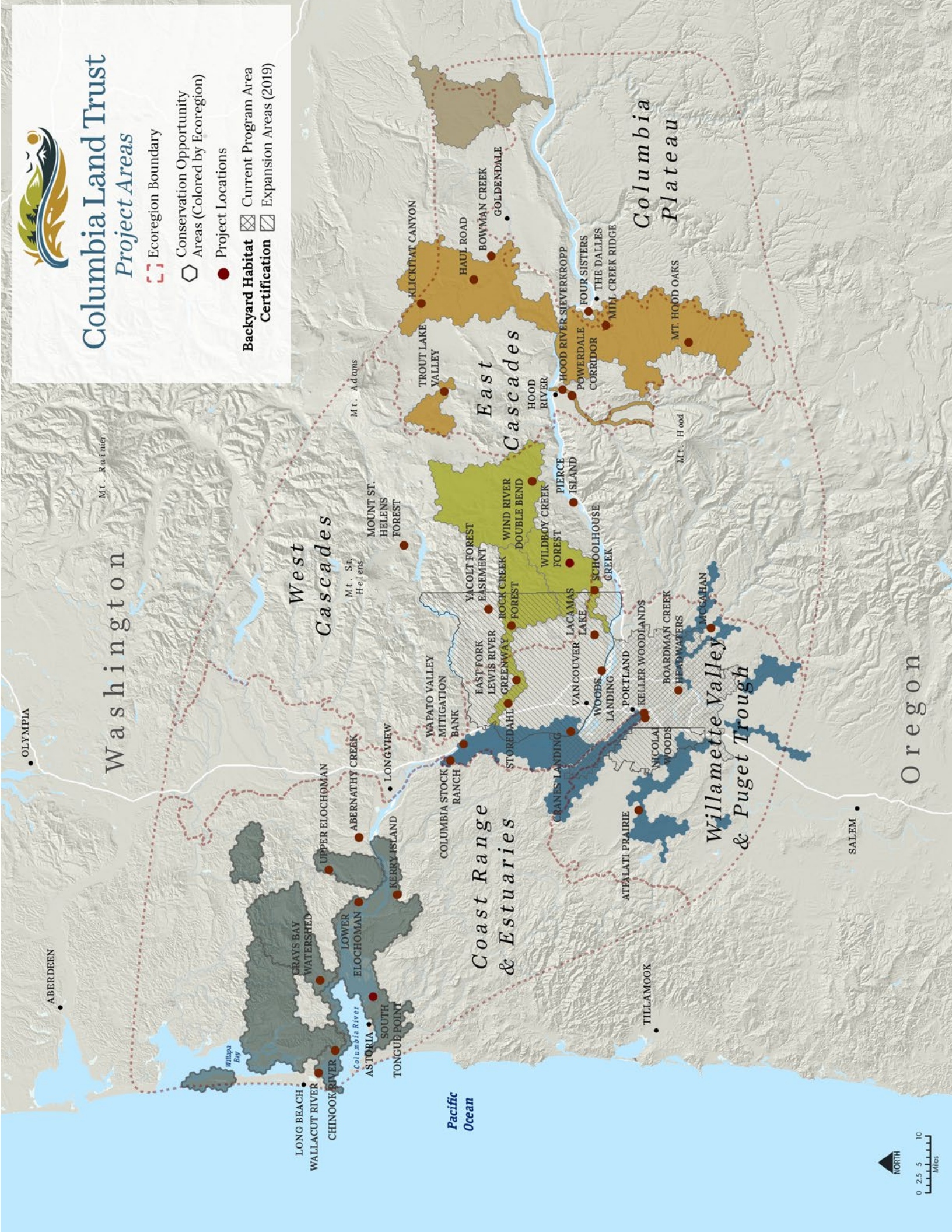




# Columbia Land Trust

## Project Areas

- Ecoregion Boundary
- Conservation Opportunity Areas (Colored by Ecoregion)
- Project Locations
- Backyard Habitat Certification
- Current Program Area
- Expansion Areas (2019)





A photograph of a man wearing a green baseball cap, glasses, and a bright blue t-shirt with a graphic on it. He is wearing black gloves and is focused on a task in a field of dry, brown grass. The text 'OUR AGENDA AT WORK' is overlaid in large, white, bold, sans-serif capital letters across the middle of the image.

# OUR AGENDA AT WORK

*Volunteers during a planting day at Cranes' Landing, Clark County, WA (© Paul Peloquin)*

## Fearless Conservation

---

In 2017, we at Columbia Land Trust made a commitment to practice fearless conservation. This meant evolving and expanding beyond traditional approaches to conservation as well as having earnest conversations in search of common ground. Over the past two years, to get a better sense of how best to serve nature and the communities of the Columbia River region, we connected with more people in more ways than ever before with the goal of reaching enduring, equitable conservation solutions. We continue to make strides at the outset of this long journey.

Our 25-year conservation agenda describes ambitious goals to conserve the broad landscapes of the Northwest. While essential, traditional land trust tools, such as acquiring, restoring, and stewarding land, are insufficient to achieve these goals. In addition, we face significant social impediments to fundamentally changing the pace and scale of conservation.





Our long-term objectives are:

**REMOVE** social, political, and economic barriers to land conservation.

**ENGAGE** thousands of people in the Land Trust's work to build long-term support for conservation and foster a culture of stewardship.

**INCLUDE** partners and communities in decision-making to improve ecological conditions through collaborative restoration and enhancement.

**ENSURE** that the agenda represents a shared, inclusive vision for the region, and that it is implemented by a culturally diverse set of partners and individuals.





*Volunteers installing plants at an event with community partner APANO in SE Portland, OR (Land Trust Staff)*

## Equity

Columbia Land Trust recognizes that communities of color and underserved communities are disproportionately burdened by the adverse impacts of land use and environmental policy decisions. By failing to acknowledge these inequities in the past, we played a role in perpetuating them.

We also recognize that our organization does not represent the current diversity of the Columbia River region. If we wish to remain relevant, grow more effective, and garner broader support for conservation, we must become more culturally responsive. Solving the daunting challenges facing our environment will require new ideas, collaboration,

and unique perspectives. A diverse, inclusive conservation movement is a stronger, more innovative movement.

We are at the beginning of a long journey, but we are committed to becoming a more culturally responsive organization. We will join and, where appropriate, lead fearless conversations to seek equitable and inclusive conservation outcomes. In 2018, we focused largely on educating ourselves about the historic inequities of the conservation movement and our own implicit biases. We held trainings for our staff, board, and emerging leaders, and we conducted a comprehensive internal equity audit in order to set a baseline for our progress.



In 2019 we continue to:

- foster a more inclusive environment,
- refine and use our equity lens to inform our programs and update policies and procedures,
- engage local communities of color in decision-making,
- train our staff on inclusive communication and interrupting oppression,
- work to actively support policy priorities benefitting multicultural communities and communities of color,
- shift our staff and board to be more representative of the growing diversity of people in the Columbia River region, and
- serve as a resource for and engage with other conservation groups, knowing that we are also learning as we go.

## Building a Stronger Movement

.....

### Our Challenge

People are increasingly disconnected from nature. Support for new public funding and incentives is weak. We need to ensure that the next generation knows, loves, and cares for nature.

### Our Solution

Dramatically increase the number of people supporting nature conservation.

### Adding Capacity

In 2017, the Land Trust secured funding to hire an engagement program manager, a new position charged with formalizing and strengthening our efforts toward building stronger community relationships. In 2018,

our engagement program manager began evaluating our current programs, partnerships, and stakeholder groups, and is developing a road map for meeting more people while building broader support for conservation in 2019 and beyond.

### Road Map for Engagement

Last year was for listening, learning, and developing relationships; 2019 will be a year of action. Our engagement program will support, explore, and create programming around three priority pillars: advocacy, education, and experience.

Our board-led advocacy platform will be our first step in entering an arena where we have been historically limited in scope. We know that advocacy can be complicated, but we are committed to a comprehensive approach in which our positions and actions reflect not just those of the conservation community but issues that are important to our friends and partners who've long been excluded from the benefits of conservation.

Supporting new and existing education programs is a key way to ensure that a robust culture of stewardship endures and grows for generations to come. By advancing thought leadership across our region and focusing on hands-on learning opportunities, we can help define what stewardship will mean in the future.

Finally, we'll expand opportunities for our community to experience the values, benefits, and truly awe-inspiring possibilities of conservation. By focusing on stewardship and volunteerism, enhancing diversity in outdoor recreation, and embracing new avenues in art and culture, we are committed to bringing conservation to a more expansive population—and we adapt our own understanding of conservation (and its barriers of entry) in the process.

### Engage One Million People in Conservation

In a project led by the Coalition of Oregon Land Trusts, Columbia Land Trust is playing a key role in a statewide communications strategy to expand public knowledge about nature and





Nearly 30 volunteers came out to Cranes Landing for a planting event (© Paul Peloquin)

conservation. The Coalition envisions Oregon land trusts as beloved and essential institutions representative of their communities, listening to and addressing their citizens' needs, moving hearts and minds, and creating a rising tide of lasting public support that will make conservation an imperative issue for all communities in Oregon. This work is also informing a national campaign led by the Land Trust Alliance.

The first three years of the Coalition campaign will be focused understanding land trusts' current collective capacity, developing statewide messaging to build greater awareness, building capacity to engage with more people and new audiences to support land conservation, and initiating a statewide communications and engagement initiative to build a strong foundation of support.

## Expand the Backyard Habitat Certification Program

Columbia Land Trust has partnered with the Audubon Society of Portland to manage the Backyard Habitat Certification Program (BHCP) since 2009. The program is widely recognized as an integral component of conservation education and habitat enhancement across the region, and the added value of community building makes it an important asset. BHCP is an educational and conservation initiative that encourages habitat stewardship at homes, apartments, businesses, schools, community organizations, and other institutions throughout the Portland metro area. Participants act as partners in conservation by practicing stewardship principles on their urban and



suburban properties to improve the health of local watersheds and support wildlife by planting native plants, removing invasive weeds, eliminating pesticide use, managing stormwater on-site, and stewarding wildlife. We provide each participant with technical assistance, incentives (coupons and certification signs), and encouragement. Then they create and implement a plan to enhance habitat on their property.

BHCP works throughout the urbanized areas of Multnomah and Clackamas counties and enrolls more than 800 new properties each year. Currently, more than 5,200 participants are active in the program, spanning about 1,400 acres. Together, these actions make a significant impact on the quality of air and water throughout our region, improve habitat for urban wildlife, and provide physical and mental health benefits not only to the program participants but for our local communities as well. Annually, more than 100 volunteers contribute 1,900+ hours to support program operations and work with local native plant nurseries to supply tens of thousands of native plants to participants.

The Backyard Habitat Certification Program continues to be seen by local natural resource managers as important to supporting municipal conservation efforts. In 2018, we completed our expansion into Clackamas County. We also undertook extensive planning efforts with new program partners to launch the program into both Washington County, Oregon, and Clark County, Washington, in spring 2019.

## Tours, Volunteering, and Events

Inspired conservation action starts with a connection to nature. In 2019, we will lead a variety of tours and volunteer events to connect people to the land. Tours explore Columbia River Gorge pika habitat, coastal wetlands and plants, backyard habitats, and sandhill-crane-filled croplands. Meanwhile, our volunteers help us in the office, take amazing photographs, plant trees, clean up litter stranded along the Columbia River, and wrangle invasive blackberry, holly, and English ivy.

Engaging people in the work and the benefits of conservation is integral to our mission. To this end, we recruit volunteers to assist with monitoring and site work. We are hiring seasonal staff and interns to help train the next generation of conservationists, and we provide and manage lands for public access. Developing strong partnerships is key to broadening the base of support for nature.

We convene supporters to celebrate our strides toward our conservation agenda goals and raise crucial funds at our Wild Splendor fall gala. In addition, nearly 200 supporters turn out for our annual picnic and member appreciation event, and we hold our Habitap happy hour every year as a way to introduce our work to more people in the Portland-Vancouver metro area.

## Sharing Stories

Through three issues of our *Fieldbook* magazine, monthly issues of our Moss e-newsletter, lively social media communities, and web content, the Land Trust delved deeper into complex conservation issues in 2018. We also produced a short film tied to the release of our “letters to the future” campaign in which friend and tribal leader Chuck Sams highlighted the need for collaboration and conservation. In the fall, we shared additional letters from people across our region underscoring the need for more people to act on behalf of future generations. The Land Trust will continue to highlight a diversity of perspectives on conservation through its various media channels.

## Next-Generation Conservation

The Emerging Leaders Council (ELC), a group of volunteers dedicated to building support of conservation among their peers, continued their inspired work in 2018. They added new members organized a successful Habitap outreach event along with a handful of hands-on volunteer opportunities. In 2019, the group is committed to growing its capacity through active recruitment.





A cattle drive through the west Simcoe Mountains, WA (© Gabriel Olson)

## Working Lands

### Our Challenge

Conservationists and landowners who manage natural resources such as agriculture and forestry are frequently at odds, fighting rather than collaborating. We miss out on increased funding and incentives that could come from strong relationships between all those invested in caring for the land.

### Our Solution

Build trust and strategies based on our shared goals and our vast common ground of caring for the natural resources of the Northwest.

## Oregon Agricultural Outreach Program

Columbia Land Trust is playing a lead role in an Oregon statewide strategy to increase the capacity for conserving farms and ranches. Building on our previous work to foster positive relationships between land trusts and agricultural landowners, we are partnering with the Coalition of Oregon Land Trusts to study the feasibility of a new statewide entity dedicated to serving the conservation needs of Oregon farmers and ranchers. We are relying heavily on the experience and insight of partners in the conservation and agriculture communities to inform our analysis. Through this project, we will develop a broadly supported solution for protecting farms and ranches, and ensuring they continue to provide a myriad of ecological and economic services into the future.



## Klickitat Simcoe Mountains Community Forest

Across the Northwest, there is a movement where culturally diverse communities—rural and urban, west and east of the Cascade Mountains—are seeing the benefits of bringing forestland ownership closer to home. Columbia Land Trust has been a leading voice in this movement. We helped create the Northwest Community Forest Coalition, and now we are helping develop funding and support programs for community forestry.

The Simcoe Mountains in Klickitat County offer a case in point for a potential community forest that could provide benefits of forest revenue, public access, clean water, habitat, and grazing. Spanning nearly 70,000 acres in the foothills of Mount Adams, this forest is cherished as a viewshed and resource for Klickitat County. Columbia Land Trust, with Klickitat County commissioners, and community leaders are sharing this story in the state's capital to help advance understanding, support, and funding for community forestry with the goal of helping Washington State develop a grant program for community forests.

## Sustainable Forests

.....

### Our Challenge

Forests in the Northwest are among our most important natural resources. They are essential to a healthy economy and for vibrant wildlife habitat. Columbia Land Trust supports both of these goals. The challenge is supporting sustainable forest management practices on some of our publicly owned forests while ensuring protection of our remaining old-growth stands.

### Our Solution

Columbia Land Trust spearheaded a concept that became a Washington State steering committee, which includes diverse representation of county commissioners from three forest-reliant counties, Department of Natural

Resources leadership, the Office of the State Superintendent, members of the American Forest Resource Council, and state legislators. The team is proposing legislation for state forest land trades that would release working forests for harvest and ensure conservation of old forests for endangered species, such as the marbled murrelet.

## Willapa Hills and Skamania Forest Strategy

Forested communities in the Northwest are bound to their surrounding forests, relying on them for county revenue, jobs, and recreation. We are actively engaged in conversations with key state, federal, and private company leaders to help strike a balance in public forest management.

Willapa Hills in Pacific and Wahkiakum counties, where forestry is core to the local culture and economy, serves as an area of focus for this strategy.

Another area is Skamania County, Washington, where the national forest, state forest, and Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area have been at the core of conflict over how to manage the forest. With Skamania County leaders, Washington's lands commissioner, and congressional representatives, the Land Trust is seeking creative solutions that may be a model for the nation. Our goals are to ensure forestry revenue to the county while protecting critical old forests for habitat and recreation.





## Conserving Habitat Corridors

.....

### Our Challenge

In certain areas, critical habitat corridors are so vast that traditional conservation strategies are ineffective.

### Our Solution

Create collaborative partnerships that provide education, incentives, and support for better land management of critical habitats.

### Tualatin River Partnership

The Tualatin River is the Portland-Vancouver region's largest watershed, comprising one quarter of the region. It also contributes a high amount of essential habitat and ecological functions relied upon by both urban residents and wildlife. The watershed is experiencing significant pressure as the urban growth boundary and population of Portland continues to expand west. Recognizing the unique pressures and opportunities within the Tualatin River watershed, Columbia Land Trust has prioritized it as a geography in which we will focus significant effort over the next several years. We will deploy land acquisition, restoration, partnership, and engagement strategies in this area.





Oaks at Four Sisters, Wasco County, OR.  
(© Brian Chambers Photography)

## East Cascades Oak Partnership

In its second year, the East Cascades Oak Partnership coordinated the engagement of more than 130 individual members in four full-day formal partnership meetings and several committee meetings to advance strategic planning and build a shared base of understanding among partners. Each meeting included presentations on a wide variety of topics, including oak ecology and biology, species utilization, climate impacts, planning tools, and human interactions, like grazing, forest management, restoration, prescribed fires, fire suppression, fuels reduction, first foods, and cultural resources. We placed a heavy emphasis on understanding the human dimensions of oak systems, convening on a local wildlife area with ranchers to discuss

grazing, learning about prescribed fires and fuels reduction from the USFS and others, and finding out about reciprocity and cultural utilization of oak from a Yakama elder. We also interviewed more than 30 stakeholders about their needs and interests in oak landscapes, across the two-state, five-county partnership service area.

As the partnership completes its learning phase in 2019, it hopes to deliver a plan in which any person or entity living, working, and/or playing in the eastern Columbia River Gorge can see itself as a productive, educated, and sustainable part of a thriving and resilient ecosystem.





*A drone collects aerial data at a site along the Tualatin River, Washington County, OR.*

## Land Management Systems

As the Land Trust succeeds in conserving land, its responsibility to monitor, manage, restore, and steward habitat grows. To stay ahead of the curve, our stewardship team is investing in leading-edge systems and technologies.

### Ouzel

In 2018, staff continued to work with a contractor to build a new and improved iteration of our lands database called Ouzel. This application is tailored for land trusts and promises to be much more useful and flexible, as well as more

affordable, than any other application available. Our staff has continued to test the application throughout 2018 and presented Ouzel on a webinar for land trusts.

In 2019, staff will be working to develop the Ouzel partnership and subscription agreements, which will help other land trusts and groups develop tailored versions of the database. This vision would bolster land conservation by creating a common and shared understanding for land management tracking. Currently two land trusts have subscribed and are being “on-boarded” with several dozen more with high interest in this partnership.



## Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Monitoring Program

The Land Trust has begun to take greater advantage of this technology by investing in its own equipment and training staff to fly and process data. With this equipment, the Land Trust can quickly and efficiently collect aerial data to assess large and complex sites, plan restoration and management activities, map weeds, characterize forest stands, document projects, and even develop a three-dimensional land surface model. The power of this technology to aid in land conservation is significant and growing every year.

## Habitat Classification Assessment Program

The stewardship program has implemented a new habitat classification system that provides a rapid approach to better understand the condition and status of our conserved lands. This system is based on the professional judgment of land managers and gives us the ability to understand and plan for the future needs of the program. It informs us what type of property the program is responsible for (i.e., sensitive habitat lands vs. more recreation-oriented green spaces), the condition of the natural land (i.e., degraded vs. functional), and its trend (i.e., is it declining, at risk, or improving). All of this information, on an acre-by-acre basis, is critical in determining how the resources of the program should be deployed and what the overall effort for responsible stewardship looks like.

In 2018, through the habitat classification assessment protocol, we identified 24 stewardship units as having intervention needs in terms of losing ground on a functional resource condition, or having a declining trend. Throughout 2019 and into 2020, this priority site work will be implemented in order to reverse trends. This typically involves weed control and planting efforts but also may include monitoring efforts, tree thinning, fuels reduction, mulching, and other restoration and property management strategies. The stewardship work will take place throughout the Land Trust's service area.

## Ecological Integrity Assessments

Supporting the Habitat Classification Assessment Program is a science-based, structured method of assessing the ecological integrity of our habitat lands. An ecological integrity assessment (EIA) gives the Land Trust a more detailed assessment the condition of conserved habitats and a means to measure the progress of the stewardship program in fulfilling its responsibilities. This effort is a collaboration with the Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Natural Heritage Program to refine and adapt the EIA method for Land Trust use. During 2018, the Land Trust contracted with the Natural Heritage Program to implement the methodology on nine stewardship units covering more than 4,900 acres. Staff will continue to implement EIA work on conserved properties in 2019. In partnership with DNR staff, we trained other land trusts in the region on the method with the hope that more conservation partners will adopt the approach. If successful, we will have developed a consistent and broader understanding of the condition of conserved lands in both Oregon and Washington.





# THE COAST

## Ecoregional Objectives

---

**GIVE** rivers room to move and flood naturally, enabling them to support healthy salmon runs and riverside habitat without threatening communities and infrastructure.

**PROTECT** older forests, ensuring that large expanses are managed in ways that connect critical habitat areas, set the stage for more old forests, and support the survival of endangered species.

**INCREASE** the prevalence of tidal wetlands in the Columbia River Estuary and continue managing invasive species.

**CONSERVE** and restore the last remaining large, undeveloped properties containing coastal intertidal wetlands and lakes, associated forests, and beaches.

**STRENGTHEN** local economies and expand public awareness of conservation benefits by providing healthy and functional natural areas.





Columbia River Estuary  
(© Pat Sacks, National Park Service)

## Conservation

.....

### Grays Bay Watershed

**Wahkiakum County, WA**

**COAs: Columbia River Estuary, Grays River**

The Land Trust is in the process of purchasing multiple properties at the confluences of Grays River, Deep River, and Crooked Creek and the Columbia River at Grays Bay. In 2018, The Land Trust acquired a small property on Deep River, which is the fourth of five planned acquisitions to allow a tidal restoration project to move forward. The Land Trust is in the process of acquiring two more properties along Crooked Creek and Grays River, adding another 68 acres of conserved land in Grays Bay in 2019. With the acquisition of additional properties, the

Land Trust will be able to complete three large scale intertidal wetland restoration projects benefitting salmon, steelhead, eulachon, and numerous migratory waterfowl and shorebirds. These projects are funded by Bonneville Power Administration.

The Grays River watershed is a critical resource for fish, wildlife, forestry economy, and clean water. Collaborating with the Cowlitz Indian Tribe, the Land Trust is beginning conversations with communities who are invested in this watershed with the goal of developing watershed-scale, community-based conservation strategies. In 2019, the Land Trust and Cowlitz Tribe will engage in a broader partnership across the region and state toward this vision.





*Black bear on Long Beach Peninsula, Pacific County, WA (© Rollin Bannow)*

**34**  
ACRES

## Lower Elochoman River

**Wahkiakum County, WA**  
**COA: Elochoman River**

In September 2018, the Land Trust purchased one 34-acre property and is in the process of purchasing two more properties on the lower Elochoman River just off the Columbia River near Cathlamet, Washington. Totaling 122 acres, the three properties were historically wetlands and floodplain of the Elochoman, supporting salmonids. These lands were cleared and hydrologically altered for grazing 50 to 100 years ago. With the acquisition of the properties, the Land Trust will be able to complete a restoration project benefitting listed Columbian white-tailed deer, salmon, steelhead, eulachon, and numerous migratory

waterfowl and shorebirds. The project is funded by Bonneville Power Administration.

**20**  
ACRES

## Chinook River

**Pacific County, WA**  
**COA: Columbia River Estuary**

The Land Trust is in the process of acquiring three more properties (20 acres) on Chinook River, adjacent to the 285 acres acquired in 2017 in Pacific County, Washington. The acquisitions will add 20 acres of wetlands and additional Chinook River frontage, benefiting listed salmonids, bear, elk, and migratory birds. The project is funded by the National Coastal Wetlands Grant Program and will be completed by May of 2019.





## South Tongue Point

Clatsop County, OR  
COA: Columbia River Estuary

The Land Trust is in the process of acquiring a 90-acre property on Columbia River in Astoria, Oregon. The land will be owned by Clatsop Community College, which owns a marine education facility next door and will use the property for a living laboratory for its students. The project is being funded by the National Coastal Wetlands Grant Program and the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB). With the acquisition of the property in 2019, the college will be able to work with partners to complete a large-scale intertidal wetland restoration project benefitting salmon, steelhead, eulachon, and numerous migratory waterfowl and shorebirds.

## Stewardship & Restoration

### Upper Elochoman Forest: In-Stream Enhancement

Wahkiakum County, WA  
COA: Elochoman River

As a last piece of follow-up work for the in-stream restoration, all disturbed areas were planted with 4,000 trees and shrubs in early 2018 to approximate reference conditions. This will help restore native vegetation as well as prevent a flush of invasive species common after ground-disturbing activities. Weed control throughout the property will take place during summer 2019 along with repopulation of channel cross-sections meant to track channel change over time as a result of installed in-stream structures.

## Kerry Island: Planting and Weed Control

Columbia County, OR  
COA: Columbia River Estuary

In 2018, the second year since a large tidal floodplain restoration effort, the Land Trust undertook an additional round of planting and weed control. Crews installed 14,000 trees and shrubs early in the year to account for mortality and refine the species composition based on planting success thus far. We have continued weed control efforts, targeting priority weed species throughout the property. In 2019, the Land Trust is planning an additional planting of 3,400 native trees and shrubs by both Land Trust contractors as well as local school groups through a partnership with Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership. We are planning further weed control efforts through the summer and fall of 2019.

## Wallacut River: Planting and Weed Control

Pacific County, WA  
COA: Columbia River Estuary

In our second year since a hydrologic restoration effort, we conducted an additional round of planting and weed control in 2018. More than 7,000 trees and shrubs were planted in the early months of 2018 by local contractors and volunteers, to help supplement areas that were treated for weeds during the previous summer months and help refine the species composition throughout the property. The Land Trust also continued weed control work, targeting priority weed species throughout the property. We will plant an additional 3,000 trees, shrubs, and emergent wetland species in 2019. Weed control, particularly for gorse, and maintenance around planting areas will be ongoing in the years to come.



## Abernathy Creek: Riparian Forest Enhancement

Cowlitz County, WA

Columbia Land Trust holds seven conservation easements on private properties along lower Abernathy Creek. These easements protect a corridor of riverside forest along the creek, helping to improve watershed function and habitat for coho salmon and steelhead. For the last four years, Columbia Land Trust has partnered with Cowlitz County Noxious Weed Control Board to manage invasive weeds in this riparian corridor. In 2019, the Land Trust will continue to partner with the property owners and the weed board to manage invasive species and restore native forest vegetation.

## Lower Elochoman River: Follow-Up Planting at Indian Jack Slough

Wahkiakum County, WA

COA: Columbia River Estuary

Early in 2018, 4,000 Sitka spruce trees were planted in a 5-acre, previously failed planting area within the property. This work is part of years of intensive restoration, including weed control, planting, elk fence construction, swale excavation, large wood installation, hybrid poplar removal, snag creation, and a variety of wildlife monitoring. Last year also marked our fifth season with artificial gourds erected to provide cavity nesting to state-candidate purple martins, resulting in the birth of 81 nestlings, 79 of which were banded to help track population dynamics. Work in 2019 will include additional wildlife monitoring in partnership with the local high school, additional hybrid poplar removal, fence removal, and coordination and permitting for wetland swale creation and planting slated for 2020.

## Lower Elochoman River: Wetland Restoration

Wahkiakum County, WA

COA: Columbia River Estuary

In 2018, the Land Trust prepared the site in the Lower Elochoman Forest unit for the planting of approximately 40,000 native trees and shrubs in 2019. In 2019, we are also planning wetland restoration work, including levee removal and ditch filling to help restore the natural hydrology of the site, in addition to follow-up weed control.

## Columbia River Estuary: Intertidal Marsh Invasive Species Control

Multiple counties in OR and WA

COA: Columbia River Estuary

Invasive species represent a constant threat to ecological function on natural lands throughout the estuary. Invasive plants such as purple loosestrife, gorse, yellow flag iris, and reed canarygrass are typical targets for annual control on conserved estuary habitats. The Land Trust will continue these efforts in 2019 with a concerted focus on controlling purple loosestrife on multiple properties from Grays Bay to Cathlamet. The Land Trust is also in its third year of a six-year reed canarygrass control experiment on the Kandoll Farm and Kerry Island properties. This experiment is being conducted in partnership with Pacific Northwest National Laboratory with the results will inform restoration practitioners working in freshwater habitats throughout the Pacific Northwest.





*Volunteers of all ages plant trees and shrubs along the Wallacut River, Pacific County, WA (© Paul Peloquin).*





# THE VALLEYS

## Ecoregional Objectives

---

**RESTORE** the health and function of the floodplains, riverside forests, and wetlands associated with our rivers.

**PROTECT**, maintain, and restore oak and prairie habitats.

**MAKE** urban areas more conducive to wildlife through thousands of nature-scaped properties that allow pollinators, resident and migrating birds, and other wildlife to move across the landscape.

**BUILD** strong partnerships between agriculture and conservation communities to benefit wildlife habitat, movement, and migration.

**PROVIDE** meaningful opportunities for people to connect to nature throughout cities and natural areas.





Lacamas Lake North Shore,  
Clark County, WA (Jay Kosa)

## Conservation

### Backyard Habitat Certification Program

Multnomah and Clackamas Counties, OR

See pages 10–11 for details on how the Land Trust's innovative Backyard Habitat Certification Program fits into our region-wide efforts to engage more people in conserving and caring for the nature of the Northwest. The Land Trust co-manages this program with the Audubon Society of Portland.

40  
ACRES

### East Fork Lewis River: Greenway Expansion

Clark County, WA

COA: East Fork Lewis River

The Land Trust is acquiring a conservation easement on roughly 40 acres of recreation and forest land on the East Fork Lewis River. This planned acquisition is adjacent to Lewisville Park and will extend the Clark County East Fork Lewis River Greenway. It will prevent subdivision and residential development and ensure access to the East Fork Lewis River.





Backyard Habitat program participants celebrate Silver certification in Portland, OR

160  
ACRES

## Lewis River Ranch Greenway

Clark County, WA

COA: East Fork Lewis River (Lower)

The Land Trust is providing transactional and due diligence support for Clark County's acquisition of the 160-acre Lewis River Ranch Greenway. This project will build on the 90-acre shoreline property adjacent to the greenway acquisition. The long-term vision for this property is to expand the county's neighboring Lewisville Park, the most heavily used park in the county's ownership.

132  
ACRES

## Lacamas Lake North Shore

Clark County, WA

COA: Lacamas Prairie

Lacamas Lake North Shore is a collaborative conservation and park project underway with the City of Camas, Clark County Conservation Futures, and Columbia Land Trust. The City of Camas acquired 32 acres of this project in 2018 and will acquire the remaining 100 acres in 2019. This project supports the City of Camas's vision of a multiuse loop trail around Lacamas Lake and a forested backdrop protecting the viewshed of the north shore. It will also protect the historic Pittock-Leadbetter House.



## Atfalati Prairie

Washington County, OR  
COA: Tualatin River

Atfalati Prairie is a nearly 300-acre floodplain, riparian forest, wet prairie, and oak woodland conservation and restoration project. In partnership with Metro Regional Government, we are working to acquire the final 9 acres necessary to begin large-scale restoration. Once restored, the Atfalati Prairie will serve as an anchor site for priority species of the Tualatin River. It is an important stepping stone between other conservation lands, adding to the overall connectivity and functionality of these wildlife habitats as they face increasing pressure from urban expansion and residential development.



## Wapato Valley Mitigation Bank Easement

Clark County, WA  
COA: Columbia River Lowlands

The Land Trust is in the process of acquiring an 876-acre conservation easement at the confluence of the Lewis River and the Columbia River. The conservation easement will be donated as part a conservation and wetland mitigation bank under development by a longtime family landowner. The property is adjacent Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge and across the Columbia River from Oregon's Sauvie Island Wildlife Area, making it an important and heavily used property for migratory waterfowl and other wildlife. Through the mitigation bank, the property will be restored to increase riverine wetlands and tidally influenced freshwater rearing areas for Endangered Species Act-listed juvenile salmon and other native species.

# Stewardship & Restoration

## Columbia Stock Ranch: Columbian White-Tailed Deer Habitat Restoration

Columbia County, OR  
COA: Columbia River Lowlands

Restoring the hydrologic connectivity of the Columbia Stock Ranch lowlands, located near Deer Island in Columbia County, has proven to be a very complicated effort that will take a number of years to adequately resolve. The Land Trust has an opportunity to restore the floodplain habitat for a myriad of other wildlife species, including the federally threatened Columbian white-tailed deer. Beginning in early 2019, the Land Trust will initiate efforts to restore the historic floodplain habitat and pasturelands to a diverse mixture of woodland and scrub-shrub communities preferred by deer as well as a suite of neotropical migratory bird species. The proposed restoration will occur in four distinct phases beginning in early 2019 and then finishing in 2023. These efforts will involve coordinating with the current rancher in order to effectively provide deer habitat while also allowing for active cattle ranching. Phase I will focus on removing several miles of old, dilapidated fences as well as installing nearly 11,000 feet of new, deer-friendly fencing in the spring of 2019. Nearly 50 acres of the historic floodplain and current pasturelands will be reforested with nearly 60,000 native trees and shrubs in late 2019 or early 2020.

## Cranes' Landing: Berm Construction & Planting

Clark County, WA  
COA: Columbia River Lowlands

In late fall 2018, the Land Trust completed the construction of nearly two miles of berms (earthen mounds) to create visual barriers along high-traffic areas (walking path and roadways) of the Cranes' Landing site located within the city limits of Vancouver, Washington. These berms are essential in order for sandhill cranes to feel secure while foraging within the





Sandhill cranes at Cranes' Landing in Clark County, WA (© Scry Eye Photography)

property, and recent monitoring has shown that these berms are effectively providing much-needed sanctuary conditions for the cranes. These berms will be monitored and controlled for noxious weeds throughout 2019 and then planted with more than 20,000 native trees and shrubs in late 2019 or early 2020 to create elevated native hedgerows. We will begin farming efforts in late spring 2019 by planting nearly 450 acres with either corn, alfalfa, peas, oats, spring wheat, grasses, or other crops that will provide critical forage for cranes in the upcoming fall and winter months.

## Storedahl Property: Riparian Forest Enhancement

**Clark County, WA**

**COA: East Fork Lewis River**

In 2018, the Land Trust installed and maintained 1,500 plants within a disturbed area. In 2019, we will add another 1,000 plants within a 2.8-acre area currently dominated by blackberry and pasture grasses to infill the previous planting. Weed control and maintenance of tree plantings will continue through the summer.



## Schoolhouse Creek: Habitat Restoration

**Skamania County, WA**  
**COA: Washougal River**

Following two years of initial weed control and planting efforts, the Land Trust planted an additional 1,250 native trees to account for past planting mortality. Follow-up weed control is planned for 2019 as a final effort to ensure the trees are free to grow.

## Keller Woodlands: Urban Forest Restoration

**Multnomah County, OR**  
**COA: Forest Park**

In 2018, the Land Trust wrapped up its first significant phase of habitat restoration work at the Keller Woodlands site in Southwest Portland. This three-year effort was part of a larger restoration and outreach project implemented by the West Willamette Restoration Partnership, which focuses on forested watersheds in the Southwest hills. Work on Keller Woodlands included invasive weed control (particularly ivy) in addition to trees and shrubs. Volunteer work events and the installation of interpretive signs were important public outreach elements. In 2019, the Land Trust will continue habitat restoration work on the ground and will also





Volunteers at Woods Landing, Clark County, WA (Land Trust Staff)

work with Portland Parks and Recreation to develop a new pedestrian trail project that will enhance public access to Keller Woodlands and the surrounding trail networks.

## **Boardman Creek Headwaters Easement: Urban Restoration**

**Clackamas County, OR**

Columbia Land Trust is partnering with a private landowner and Clackamas County Soil and Water Conservation District to restore one acre of habitat along a natural spring in the upper Boardman Creek watershed, which drains to the Willamette River in the Oak Lodge area between Gladstone and Milwaukie, Oregon. The Land Trust holds a conservation easement on

the property and has been working to restore the existing habitat to benefit wildlife as well as watershed health. Weed control efforts since 2016 have significantly reduced the amount of invasive species. In 2019, the Land Trust will plant 900 trees and shrubs and 350 wetland plants to enhance the existing riparian and oak habitats at the site.

## **McGahan Property: Habitat Enhancement**

**Clackamas County, OR**

**COA: Clackamas River and Tributaries**

The Land Trust has been partnering with Clackamas County Soil and Water Conservation District to control invasive species at the forested McGahan site along the Clackamas



River near Estacada, Oregon. Beginning in 2017, the Land Trust joined the Clackamas River Invasive Species Partnership, a group of local and regional partners working to strategically monitor and manage invasive species throughout the Clackamas River basin. Weed control will continue at the McGahan site in 2019 through this partnership. In future years, the Land Trust plans to further enhance forest habitat by planting a diverse mix of tree species that will ensure a healthy, thriving forest in the coming decades.

## **Woods Landing: Habitat Restoration**

**Clark County, WA**

For the last several years, the Land Trust has been partnering with Hewlett-Packard (HP), which has adopted Woods Landing, located along the Columbia River just east of the I-205 bridge, as part of its sustainability department's volunteer program. Three or four times a year, employees from HP volunteer time at Woods Landing pulling weeds, building a trail, and maintaining plantings. In addition to the great work of these volunteers and our steadfast volunteer site steward, contractors conducted weedy tree control, removing a huge amount of invasive English laurel, English holly, and English hawthorn that was too large for volunteers. Weed control and planting will continue in 2019 to enhance this riparian forest habitat.

## **Nicolai Woods: Habitat Restoration**

**Multnomah County, WA**

**COA: Forest Park**

In 2018, the Land Trust continued a full-site weed control effort that was started in 2017. This involved controlling any blackberry, ivy, English holly, English hawthorn, and other invasive species present throughout the 1.5-acre property. In 2019, this work will continue in order to eliminate as many weedy species as possible from the property prior to a future revegetation effort.

## **Atfalati Prairie: Riparian Enhancement**

**Washington County, OR**

**COA: Tualatin River**

In 2018, the Land Trust continued riparian enhancement work on the remnant riparian forest at Atfalati Prairie, a 200-acre floodplain property located along the Tualatin River. The majority of the property is currently being farmed by a tenant farmer while the Land Trust develops a restoration and funding plan. In the interim, we have continued 2017 work on 25 acres of the property to control blackberry, English holly, clematis, English hawthorn, and other weeds. Additionally, we removed the pressure of encroaching trees from several heritage oaks.

Work will continue in 2019 with the planting of native shrubs and trees and with weed control in additional areas to prepare for future planting along the edges of the riparian forest, where reed canarygrass and other pasture grasses have invaded.





# WEST CASCADES

Mount St. Helens forest, Skamania County, WA  
(Land Trust staff)

## Ecoregional Objectives

---

**ENSURE** large swaths of both public and privately owned forestlands are intact and functional, connecting habitats for migratory species.

**HALT** the net loss of older forests and increase the number of forested acres managed toward old-growth forest habitat.

**PROTECT** important rivers for salmon and steelhead habitat by removing barriers to migration, improving river conditions, and restoring floodplains.

**CULTIVATE** local and regional public support for conserving working forestlands by demonstrating their economic and recreational value.





## Conservation

8,000  
ACRES

### Mount St. Helens Forest Conserva- tion Area

Skamania County, WA  
COA: Mount St. Helens

Ten years after setting out to conserve and protect forestry on 20,000 acres of forestland on the southern flanks of Mount St. Helens, the completion of the fourth and final phase of 8,000 acres in 2018 achieved that goal. In the final phase, the Land Trust purchased a conservation easement on working forestland north and south of Swift Reservoir for the purpose of extinguishing development rights

and supporting ongoing forestry practices. The final phase was achieved with a \$4 million Forest Legacy grant in partnership with the Washington DNR.

6,300  
ACRES

### Yacolt Forest Easement

Clark County, WA  
COA: East Fork Lewis River (Upper)

The Land Trust is working to negotiate the acquisition of a roughly 6,300-acre conservation easement on forestland located along the East Fork Lewis River and adjacent to Gifford Pinchot National Forest. This property is the largest privately owned forestland in Clark County, and its continued use as timberland is essential to support the local forestry-based





The dam at Wildboy Creek,  
Skamania County, WA (© Jay Kosa)

economy. By linking public and private forestlands, this project will maintain a continuous forest landscape and provide important habitat for elk, bear, and cougar.

100  
ACRES

## Wind River, Double Bend Phase III

**Skamania County, WA**  
**COA: Wind River**

This 100-acre, mature, mixed-forest property includes 35 acres of old-growth forest habitat. It also protects over a mile of west bank riverside habitat for wild steelhead along Wind River. The property lies entirely within a northern spotted owl nest circle and is surrounded on two sides by Washington DNR owl habitat lands. The Land Trust's Double Bend project

area lies just to the north and this phase would expand the entire project area to 236 acres. The US Fish and Wildlife Service considers this a high-priority northern spotted owl habitat conservation project and awarded it full funding in June. Project work is underway, and pending negotiations with the seller, the project is anticipated to close in early 2019.

1,288  
ACRES

## Wildboy Creek Forest

**Skamania County, WA**  
**COA: Washougal River**

This forested property is owned by a timber company and has been managed for industrial timber. The area is a vital link in the Washougal River watershed, with key tributaries including the West Fork Washougal and Wildboy and

Texas creeks. A dam on Wildboy Creek creates a 10-acre lake and blocks about 6 miles of tributaries to migrating salmon and steelhead. The Land Trust is partnering with the Cowlitz Indian Tribe to acquire the property and remove the dam. We are negotiating with the timberland owner and raising funds to purchase the property in 2019, while the tribe is creating a dam-removal strategy as well as fundraising for it. The goal is to achieve purchase by December, 2019 and conduct dam removal and restoration within the next three to five years. The Land Trust has raised \$1 million toward the \$3 million purchase price.

## Stewardship & Restoration

### Wind River: Riparian Enhancement

**Skamania County, WA**  
**COA: Wind River**

Columbia Land Trust's forested property along Wind River includes approximately half a mile of river frontage. The riparian zone includes diverse native species as well as a band of thick Scotch broom and other nonnative invaders. In 2019, we will work to systematically reduce the riparian weed populations to allow native species to recolonize this critical zone, improving wildlife habitat and increasing future shading and large wood recruitment for Wind River, an important salmon and steelhead stream.

### Mount St. Helens: Pine Creek East Forest Enhancement

**Skamania County, WA**  
**COA: Mount St. Helens**

In 2019, the Land Trust will continue forest thinning on an additional 95 acres of overstocked stands of forest at Pine Creek, northeast of Cougar on the southeastern flanks of Mount St. Helens. We will enhance stand diversity through reforestation efforts (60 acres), and creating over 300 snags (standing dead trees that offer

wildlife habitat) in the spring and summer of 2019. More than 100 acres of timberland were thinned in July 2018 to help improve habitat for spotted owls and other forest-dependent species. We will conduct thinning on nearly 150 acres in the early summer of 2019 to help expedite these healthy, young stands towards older growth characteristics.

### Pierce Island: Shoreline Habitat Enhancement

**Skamania County, WA**  
**COA: Columbia Gorge**

In 2018, the Land Trust secured a two-year grant from the Washington State Department of Agriculture to eliminate invasive false indigo bush from the Pierce Island shoreline. This work is particularly important to maintain habitat for the rare Columbia yellowcress (*Rorippa columbiana*) that grows on the island's shore. We treated indigo bush with herbicide in fall 2018 and will do a second round of treatment in fall 2019.

### Rock Creek: Forest Enhancement

**Clark County, WA**  
**COA: East Fork Lewis River**

In 2018, the Land Trust continued weed control, planting, and plant maintenance activities at the Rock Creek site to ensure that riparian and upland forest stands continue to develop into healthy forest habitat after the existing logging roads were decommissioned in 2016. A total of 125 trees were planted by a volunteer work crew in 2018. Weed control and plant maintenance will continue in 2019.





# EAST CASCADES

East Cascade oak at sunset  
(© Brian Chambers Photography)

## Ecoregional Objectives

---

**PROTECT** and restore major east-side rivers and key tributaries.

**PRESERVE** oak woodland habitat systems and opportunities for wildlife migration and movement.

**MAINTAIN** the integrity of unique transition zones between riverside and upland habitats, high and low elevations, and wet and dry climates.

**COLLABORATE** with local stakeholders and increase public awareness about the benefits of oak woodlands, sustainable forestry, river conservation, and ecological processes.

**SUPPORT** community leaders in championing conservation strategies and leading implementation.





## Conservation

### East Cascades Oak Partnership

**COAs: All in East Cascades Ecoregion**

In 2018, the East Cascades Oak Partnership (ECOP) focused its energy on advancing its strategic planning process, particularly on understanding the impacts of different human interactions with oak systems and strategies the partnership could engage to make those interactions more compatible with intact, functional systems. Partners conducted stakeholder interviews and attended full-day presentations and tours, the content of which will inform the strategies we put through a conservation planning tool called results chains. The partnership

will conclude its planning process in 2019 by prioritizing strategies and geographic priorities, identifying roles for individual partners, determining the role the partnership will play during implementation of the strategic plan in 2020 and beyond, and creating a long-term funding plan.

Concurrent with the planning process, ECOP hired a consultant to gather stakeholder input through separate interviews and an online survey to help inform messaging and outreach approaches. ECOP will strive to choose language and deliver information using mechanisms that are inclusive and respectful of the diverse human experience in oak systems. A historian is providing a literature review and report on human interactions with and impacts on oak systems in the late 1800s and early 1900s to help inform our understanding of the ecological complexity of east-side oak systems.





Klickitat Canyon, Klickitat County, WA  
(© Brian Chambers Photography)

ECOP has also engaged a GIS consultant to assist with building a data library and produce maps that illustrate the geospatial context of human behaviors. These maps will help identify opportunities for improving the condition and extent of oak systems east of the Cascades.

3,200  
ACRES

## Klickitat Canyon Phase II

**Klickitat County, WA**  
**COA: Klickitat River**

Building on the success of the 2,400-acre Klickitat Canyon Phase I in 2016, the 3,200-acre second phase of the Klickitat Canyon project was completed in June 2018. The project permanently conserved vibrant ponderosa pine forests, threatened oak habitat, talus and canyon habitats, 1.1 miles of the mainstem

Klickitat River, and 1.5 miles of anadromous fish-bearing tributary streams. These riverside corridors complete protection of more than 40 percent of observed wild steelhead spawning ground in the Klickitat watershed. As the fee title owner, Columbia Land Trust will be able to manage for old-growth forest characteristics, fire resilience, and improved wildlife habitat on this property. Management planning will be completed in 2019.

360  
ACRES

## Klickitat Canyon Phase II: Wings

**Klickitat County, WA**  
**COA: Klickitat River**

In December 2018, the Land Trust added an additional 360 acres to the Klickitat Canyon

forest conservation area in two separate parcels, dubbed “wings”. The first parcel physically connects Phases I and II and protects adjacent tribal lands. The second parcel conserves an additional one mile of the mainstem Klickitat River. This project removed the threat of 15 houses being built along the Klickitat Canyon rim, including the introduction of infrastructure that would have enabled additional development, and it tied together years of work by the Land Trust and state and federal agencies, creating a single 30-mile-long corridor of conserved lands along the middle reach of the Klickitat River.

**3,900**  
ACRES

## **Klickitat Canyon Phase III**

**Klickitat County, WA**  
**COA: Klickitat River**

The Land Trust successfully raised more than \$5 million in grant awards for the third and final phase of the Klickitat Canyon forest this year. This phase will conserve 3,900 acres of open pine forest, high-elevation oak woodlands, volcanic flows, and 9.5 miles of riverside habitat including 2 miles of the mainstem Klickitat River. The property hosts habitat for 3 federally threatened or endangered species and 21 additional state or federally protected species. Its remote location, adjacent to the Yakama Indian Reservation and protected by the Klickitat River, provides a very high degree of long-term wildlife habitat potential. Despite the year’s success, progress has been slowed by delays in funding opportunities at the federal level, and the Land Trust is considering alternative funding sources to complete the project while the acquisition opportunity is available.

**37**  
ACRES

## **Hood River: Sieverkropp**

**Hood River County, OR**  
**COA: Hood River**

This project will add 37 acres to the Hood River Powerdale conservation area and ensure that the entire pipeline trail along the river is within Land Trust management. It also protects intact oak uplands, and through a partnership with the Hood River Parks and Recreation District will

enable extension of the District’s Indian Creek trail. The project fulfills the Trust’s commitment to pursuing projects that benefit species and communities by facilitating accessible public access and a connection to Columbia Gorge Community College.

**280**  
ACRES

## **Mt. Laurel Jerseys and Gladstone Easements**

**Klickitat County, WA**  
**COA: Trout Lake Valley**

This project will acquire conservation easements on an additional 280 acres in the Trout Lake Valley. This will be the fifth agricultural easement the Land Trust has completed in the valley, bringing the total to 700 acres. It protects a family farm for future generations and ensures the scenic gateway to the community of Trout Lake will forever retain its iconic character. The project was awarded full funding in 2018, and project development is underway. Pending sale negotiations, closing is anticipated in late 2019.

**1,950**  
ACRES

## **Mount Hood Oaks**

**Wasco County, OR**  
**COA: Klickitat River**

In 2018, the Land Trust began its first large-scale oak habitat conservation effort in Wasco County, Oregon. The Mount Hood Oaks project will conserve high quality old-growth oak habitat and intact understory grasslands located at the nexus of Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife and US Forest Service ownerships. The project implements the Land Trust’s strategy of leveraging existing conservation and working at scales sufficient for target habitats to function. Through relationships developed via the East Cascades Oak Partnership, conservation will be followed by a landscape-level, cross-boundary management plan for restoring oak habitat function. Pending funding awards, project development will begin in 2019 and is likely to be completed in early 2020.





Harlequin duck on the lower Hood River,  
Hood River County, OR (© Steider Studios)

## Stewardship & Restoration

### Powerdale Corridor: Wetland Restoration

Hood River County, OR  
COA: Hood River

In 2018, we began habitat restoration work at an off-channel wetland complex in the Powerdale Corridor on the lower Hood River. In winter, we mowed invasive brush that had choked the wetland shoreline and followed up with herbicide treatment in fall. We monitored wildlife use with trail cameras and completed several

rounds of bird counts through the spring migration and summer breeding seasons. In 2019, we will continue with invasive plant removal and begin collecting seeds to propagate native species for replanting the site in future years. We will also continue bird and wildlife monitoring to build on the data collected last year to document habitat uses and values.

### Mill Creek Ridge: Weed Control

Wasco County, OR  
COA: Wasco Oaks

In 2018, we continued the multiyear rush skeletonweed monitoring project that we developed in 2017. We surveyed skeletonweed presence and abundance across approximately 300 acres

and monitored efficacy of trial herbicide treatments in test plots. In 2019, we will continue to collect and analyze data on skeletonweed distribution and response to different herbicide treatments in order to develop more effective weed management strategies.

## Bowman Creek: Acorn Planting

**Klickitat County, WA**  
**COA: Klickitat River**

Following years of site preparation and experimentation with establishing native Oregon white oak in a former agriculture field, the Land Trust installed more than 5,000 acorns collected on-site, treated with mycorrhizal fungi and planted under weed mats. This was a collaborative effort with Natural Resources Conservation Service that involved difficult site conditions and creative problem-solving but that we hope will prove successful next spring. In 2019, we will monitor for acorn germination and survival.

## Klickitat Haul Road: Planting, Floodplain Restoration

**Klickitat County, WA**  
**COA: Klickitat River**

In 2018, we continued our effort to revegetate a 3-mile recently restored corridor along the Klickitat River. This involves installation of native plants in areas that experienced higher mortality over the summer as well as aggressive weed control to prevent establishment of nonnative, invasive species. These efforts will continue in 2019 with a major planting effort and further weed control on the entire 8-mile restored corridor. In addition to site work, consultant and project designer Will Conley will help Columbia Land Trust prepare a report documenting the results of the 10-year, multimillion-dollar restoration effort removing 8 miles of paved road from the active floodplain of the Klickitat River.

## Klickitat Oak Enhancement

**Klickitat County, WA**  
**COA: Klickitat River**

Portland State University graduate student Kara Caselas and Land Trust staff produced an effectiveness monitoring report for an oak restoration effort undertaken fifteen years ago along the Klickitat River. The work involved revisiting more than 170 permanent vegetation monitoring plots in treatment and control areas and analyzing resulting data for trends. This is the first objective report of its kind for thinning efforts east of the Cascades and provided important insight on assumptions made by the restoration community.

Utilizing data from Kara, we learned that trends in stand structure and stem density are in some ways opposite to what we had hoped for due to prolific stump sprouting from Oregon white oaks that had been thinned previously. In 2019, with funding from Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, we will work with the East Cascades Oak Partnership to design a 1 to 5-acre site to set up treatment trials to better understand how the sprouts impact stand structure over time, how they are affected by cattle and deer, and how they respond to herbicide and mechanical treatment. Not only will this project help us move the stand towards our desired future condition, but it will hopefully help answer important management questions and provide information to our local, state, and federal partners grappling with decision-making processes.





# THE PLATEAU

John Day River  
(© Brian Chambers Photography)

## Ecoregional Objectives

---

**PROTECT** intact and functional prairie and shrub-steppe habitat from land-use conversion and degradation.

**RESTORE** native plant species, habitat functions, and ecological processes on affected lands.

**RAISE** awareness of the benefits of conservation in prairie and shrub-steppe landscapes.

**INVEST** time in the area to learn more and build relationships to determine how we can be most helpful in local conservation efforts.



## Conservation

As planned in the Conservation Agenda, in 2018 the Land Trust continued to be a presence on the ground in the Columbia Plateau ecoregion. This involved meeting with conservation partners and learning about threats to habitat. That work will continue in 2019. Due to limited funding for habitat conservation in the ecoregion, future efforts are likely to continue on the course of helping partners through relationship building with elected leaders and large landowners and sharing knowledge about habitat priorities and management needs.

### Four Sisters: Invasive Plant Management

Wasco County, OR

COA: Wasco Oaks

In 2018, we completed a fourth year of vegetation surveys at test plots where in 2015 we had applied a variety of burning and herbicide treatments to reduce cover of invasive annual grasses. In 2019, we will begin testing the feasibility of using drone imagery to monitor the extent of invasive annual grasses at Four Sisters, to determine whether and where these grass species are spreading. In 2018, we also treated rush skeletonweed with herbicide on approximately 3 acres. In 2019, we will monitor impacts of this treatment and compare findings with data from skeletonweed monitoring at our Mill Creek Ridge property.





# Local Action, Global Impact

---

It is hard to overstate the collective impact of our conservation and stewardship successes. Consider how the Land Trust's recent acquisitions at Klickitat Canyon helped fully conserve the entire middle stretch of the Klickitat River, a vital corridor for salmon and steelhead facing an uncertain future. Or consider how more than 5,000 properties across the Portland metro area now support pollinators and other urban wildlife while developing an ethic of stewardship.

As vast as our service area is, the results of this work extend much farther. Bird species from as far away as Patagonia stop over while migrating along the Pacific Flyway and salmon continue charging up the Columbia River basin as they have for millennia (though in smaller numbers). Natural resources support economies ranging from timber to tech, and places like the Columbia River Gorge, our iconic Cascade peaks, and the Northwest coast attract tourists and outdoor recreationists from around the globe.

By supporting Columbia Land Trust, you help drive conservation outcomes that are far-reaching and everlasting. Thank you for helping to cultivate a nature-rich future for the Northwest.





Penstemon in bloom above Klickitat River  
(© Brian Chambers Photography)



We all want a  
healthy, vibrant,  
nature-rich Northwest.

Join us.

Ensure that all life  
thrives here today and for  
generations to come.



Columbia Land Trust

[COLUMBIALANDTRUST.ORG](http://COLUMBIALANDTRUST.ORG)

850 Officers' Row | Vancouver, WA 98661 | 360.696.0131

ALSO IN ASTORIA | PORTLAND | HOOD RIVER

[connect@columbialandtrust.org](mailto:connect@columbialandtrust.org)

