

COLUMBIA LAND TRUST

Fieldbook

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Conserving and caring for vital lands, waters, and wildlife of the Columbia River region through sound science and strong relationships.

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abounds at Mill
Creek Ridge*



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Columbia Land Trust conserves and cares for vital lands, waters, and wildlife of the Columbia River region through sound science and strong relationships.

Cover photo: Purple Lupine at Mill Creek Ridge outside The Dalles, Oregon.
Inside cover: Poet's Shooting Star
Both photos by Doug Gorsline

Columbia Land Trust has earned accreditation from the Land Trust Alliance, which recognizes land trusts that adhere to national standards for excellence, uphold the public trust with rigorous ethical standards, and take steps to ensure that conservation efforts are permanent.



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Oh, the Places We Go

Two months ago, I moved into a tiny home—a 1976 Airstream trailer, to be exact. Throughout all pockets of the city of Portland, where I've lived for the past seven years, one often hears stories of people being displaced from their homes for a number of reasons (escalating rents, a competitive real estate market, seemingly endless urban development, to name a few). This past February, my house-mates and I became one of those stories. Our run-down but comfortable three-bedroom in the core of SE Portland was sold by its owner, and we, like so many other renters these days, were given the boot.

Displacement echoes throughout our region, and our country. Pacific North-westerners are concerned about health, food, and clean water, but if you ask them what they want to see elected officials do something about, poverty, affordable housing, and homelessness rank highest. Environmentalist John Francis said, "If we are the environment, then all we need to do is look around and see how we treat ourselves, and how we treat each other."

Having a sense of place or a home shouldn't be negotiable, yet factors like systemic oppression, climate change, and environmental injustice keep both humans and wildlife scrambling. This prompts the question: *Where is your place?* Whether it's on the side of a mountain, in an underground nest, amidst a grove of storied trees, or on the front lines of an environmental advocacy movement, we all have a place. A place we feel we belong, a place where we can be ourselves.

For now, my drafty Airstream Land Yacht is my place, where each day I wake up feeling thankful for things like running water, electricity, and a place to call home each night.

Enjoy this first *Fieldbook* of 2019. We are excited to bring you another year of news, stories, and work that you help make possible.

Dez Ramirez
Content Manager

"Having a sense of place or a home shouldn't be negotiable..."

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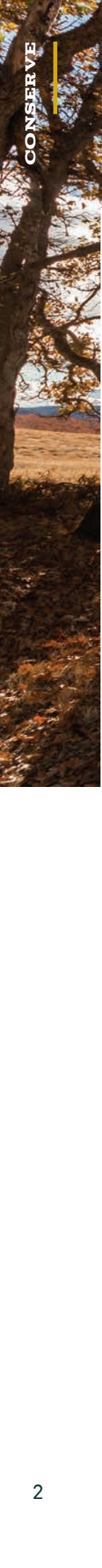
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Saving the White Oaks of the East Cascades

Our Partnership Seeks to Conserve a Blend of Unique Habitats Before They Disappear

BY JAY KOSA



b |

For Lindsay Cornelius, the oak woodlands on the east slopes of Mount Hood and Mount Adams provide a place of deep connection—a multisensory experience: “Dry, crumbling soil underfoot; insects bumbling and fluttering; songbirds trilling and lizards skittering; raptors gliding overhead; balsamroot flowers smiling on the forest floor; the breeze carrying the sharp aroma of desert parsley and the vanilla scent of warm ponderosa pine—the experience is so complete, I can spend hours in idle observation.”

Cornelius, a land steward with Columbia Land Trust based in the White Salmon–Hood River area, describes a landscape that is tenacious and generous. Oak trees drop limbs, become completely hollow, and provide shelter for wildlife at the same time they unfurl a full canopy of leaves in the spring. In the fall, they produce an acorn crop that’s like a gold rush for wildlife. Oaks host

lichen and fungi, persist for centuries, and depending on slope, elevation, and moisture, they can be found in a range of ecosystems—near conifers, in shallow, rocky, windswept soils, and in meadows full of wildflowers, to name a few. Along with supporting more than 200 wildlife species, these valuable woodlands offer people important food resources, like deer and desert parsley, fuel for woodstoves, forage for livestock, and shade from the hot sun.

Despite their generosity, the Oregon white oaks of the East Cascades are at risk. As in many places across the Pacific Northwest, population growth in the East Cascades is steady, and a blend of human uses is fragmenting the landscape. In this transition area between the verdant forests of the West Cascades

and the shrub-steppe of the Columbia Plateau, commercially valuable conifer trees, orchards, and vineyards will grow if coaxed, and proximity to urban centers makes picturesque oak woodlands a desirable place to build a home.

In 2015, Columbia Land Trust convened a “think tank” of area stakeholders to evaluate the greatest conservation priorities in the East Cascades. The group expressed a hunger for an organized, collaborative effort to conserve critically important oak habitats. In response, the Land Trust worked with Pacific Birds to secure funding and establish a collective of partners, landowners, and residents dubbed the East Cascades Oak Partnership (ECOP).

“Our charge is to build a shared base of understanding about oak systems, and the people who work, live, and play here,” says Cornelius, who leads the partnership. “We spent months interviewing people whose lives are deeply integrated with the landscape—loggers, lumber companies, vintners, ranchers, planners, real estate agents, first responders, contractors, and others—to understand why people make the decisions they are making on the land.”

At convenings, ECOP has focused on sharing information about the ecological, historical, and cultural significance of oaks and oak landscapes, including indigenous perspectives.

“Oak habitats have provided home for valued foods, medicines, and other natural resources that tribal people have used for millennia, and they form an integral part of the mosaic of the homelands of tribal people today,” says Jeanette Burkhardt, a biologist with Yakama Nation Fisheries and a partnership participant. “I hope traditional ways of connecting to, knowing about, and managing those oak landscapes can be learned by our generation and incorporated into our thinking and land management.”

Currently, more than 150 people are actively engaged in ECOP, including

“I fell in love with this landscape. As someone trying to grow grapes ... my job is to make decisions that treat the land as respectfully and responsibly as possible.”

Alan Busacca, an owner of Windhorse Vineyard

representatives from 15 different agencies, tribes, and organizations. Alan Busacca, an owner of Windhorse Vineyard near The Dalles, brings to ECOP his perspective as a resident, soil scientist, and viticulturist. “I fell in love with this landscape. As someone trying to grow grapes and hopefully make a bit of money while I’m at it, my job is to make decisions that treat the land as respectfully and responsibly as possible.”

In 2018, the partnership identified six primary interactions with oak systems: ranching and farming, fruit and grape growing, rural residential use, outdoor recreation, suppression of fire, and conversion to conifer tree species for timber. By the end of 2019, ECOP aims to draft a strategic plan to inform the efforts of the various stakeholders, including technical support for landowners who want to better manage their lands for oaks and maps of areas with the greatest ecological value for oak-associated wildlife. “A lot of people have had a strong interest in oaks but just never had a vehicle to help them work together,” says Bruce Taylor, conservation specialist with Pacific Birds. “It’s been pretty remarkable to see such a large and passionate group of people come together around this so quickly.”

The East Cascades Oak Partnership is indicative of Columbia Land Trust’s evolving approach to conservation. The Land Trust has conserved thousands of acres of East Cascades oak systems, and it continues to conserve and manage these landscapes. Yet to effect change at the scale necessary to save dwindling habitats and natural systems, this sort of broader collaboration is required. People in the East Cascades want to help nature thrive and we want to support them with tools and information to do so.

Looking forward, Cornelius envisions a broad diversity of stakeholders on the landscape who are actively engaged in conservation. This could mean altering land and business practices, raising funds critical to oak conservation, conducting outreach, offering technical resources to landowners, and informing municipal and county planning efforts.

By learning to appreciate oak woodlands, to steward them carefully, and to strategically protect what remains, we may yet guarantee the passage of these remarkable places into the future. 🌱

➤ Visit this story online for a full roster of East Cascades Oaks Partnership members and funders.

- a | Oregon white oak fall foliage. Photo by Doug Gorsline
- b | Lewis’s woodpecker checking its acorn cache. Photo by John Davis
- c | Oak bark texture. Photo by Brian Chambers Photography



A Constant State of GRATITUDE

Anne Marie Santos
Uplifts Her Community
By Meeting People
Where They're At

BY DEZ RAMIREZ



d |

On any given Saturday you can find Friends of Trees' Anne Marie Santos outside—rain or shine—planting trees, educating, and bringing people together with a shared love of nature. Santos learned at a young age that nature can be found in many places, from her childhood home of urban Chicago, to running a farm in rural Vermont. This has shaped a successful career in environmental work and led her to Portland, Oregon, where she now teaches people of all ages how to take care of the earth, and each other.

As a senior greenspace specialist, Santos's work isn't centralized in Portland neighborhoods but reaches into larger natural areas, like the Sandy River Delta, Columbia Slough, Forest Grove, and Salem, where she educates larger groups and local schools on tree planting, ecological restoration, and environmental leadership development. An avid rock climber, Santos devotes her remaining free time to PDX Climbers of Color, an inclusive climbing group that focuses on breaking down social and economic barriers to climbing for people of color.

It's easy to see Santos is a powerhouse and a true embodiment of what the outdoor industry would call a #forceofnature.

What do you love about your work?

I love that we are expanding access to healthier environments for people as well as creating healthier habitats for fish and wildlife. It's incredible to have a job that allows me to get to know the environment that I get to exist in! FOT is focused on helping create

connections between people as they plant trees, so I get to witness a lot of people with different backgrounds coming together. During these events, we spend a lot of time thanking people for coming out to volunteer, and it's amazing to be in this constant state of gratitude.

How did you get involved with Friends of Trees?

I started as a canvasser for the Neighborhood Trees program, which allowed me to get to know Portland in a really intimate way and walk through neighborhoods that I wouldn't normally be called to walk in. It was a really cool introduction to Portland upon moving here three years ago. Prior to that, I studied environmental science, sustainable agriculture, and farm-based education. I'm originally from Chicago, lived in Burlington, Vermont, and used to run a farm there, had a brief stint in Berkeley, California, and then came up to Portland. My experience around agriculture has lent itself well to my work with FOT.

How did growing up in an urban city like Chicago influence your desire to do environmental work?

My first recollection of nature was being in the garden with my mom. One of my favorite memories is of her putting cantaloupe seeds and rind directly into the garden bed, and months later, cantaloupes were in the garden. Nature for us was this small patch of backyard in the city. As I got older, my friends and I used to play at a creek by my house and started doing creek cleanups. We'd wear dishwashing gloves, bring garbage bags, and clean up the trash. There was a strong sense of taking care of the places that we played in. At 16, I went to the Philippines, was exposed to extreme poverty, pollution, and I saw people living amongst all that. It was the first time I really started to think about environmental justice. I became aware of how the environment was an extension of how we treat people, and where people are allowed to live.

What do you love about climbing? Any favorite spots?

Climbing allows me to be in places I would never otherwise be in. Grasping onto this rock face, sometimes your face is right up against it, and you get to know this place in nature very intimately. I have a lot of energy and love to move around a lot and dance. Climbing has a lot of these elements, it's a different type of self-expression. As intimate as it can be, there's opportunity to build community. There's a lot of encouragement you need in certain moments because you're scared, and it's hard. I have a love-hate relationship with Smith Rock, but it's a classic. The rock is painful, but the area is just so beautiful. A dream of mine is to check out what climbing is like in the Philippines, where my family is from.

d | Anne Marie Santos basking in a post-climb moment. Photo courtesy of Anne Marie Santos

e | Members of PDX Climbers of Color spot one another on the wall at a POC Climb Night. Photo courtesy of PDX Climbers of Color



What does PDX Climbers of Color hope to achieve or provide for people?

We create an environment that welcomes POC climbers that are already in the climbing community, but we also create a space for people of color who want to try this sport out. As an organizer, I've been working with people in our community to establish and run POC-focused climb nights at Portland Rock Gym, Planet Granite, and The Circuit. There's a lot of emphasis on being welcoming, meeting people where they're at, and giving people opportunities to help mentor each other. We are taking up space in gyms where people of color have not felt as welcome. When I first started climbing, I received off handed comments and stares that made me feel really uncomfortable. It's a sport in which a lot of eyes are on you when you're on the wall. To add the kind of visibility that makes you feel more

othered, it can make it that much more uncomfortable. We're working to change that.

What do you think is next for people of color in the conservation and outdoor-recreation movements?

Our role shouldn't end at representation. Representation is important, but if POC aren't in decision-making roles in these industries, the quest for diversity and equity falls flat. The successes we see with groups like Melanin Base Camp, NativesOutdoors, Brothers of Climbing, are due to a lot of hard work that POC have done organizing within their own communities. They're creating more access for each other. This work is not only keeping POC and marginalized folks inspired but instilling more confidence to keep creating a space that wasn't there for them before. That's really powerful. 🌱

➤ Follow @pdxclimbersofcolor for climb-night dates, times, and locations.

SPECIES SPOTLIGHT

Pollinators of the Pacific Northwest

BY DEZ RAMIREZ

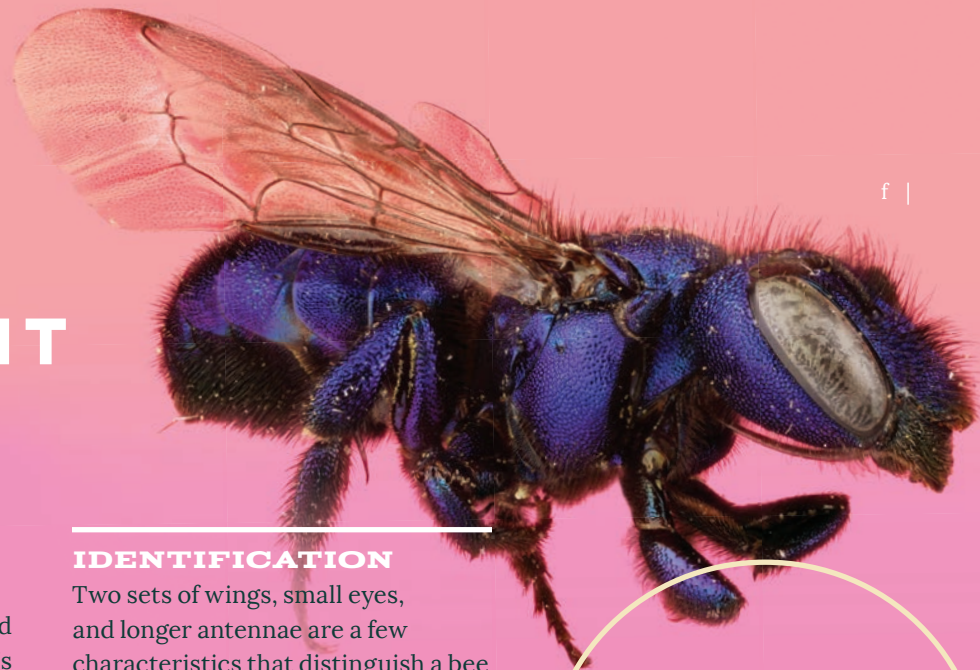
If you've been feeling restless and tired of the Pacific Northwest's finicky and cold Spring weather, you're not alone. Bees, this region's primary pollinators, are tired of it too. Below 55 degrees Fahrenheit, bee wing muscles are too cold to operate properly; however, bees don't thrive in extreme heat either. Our temperate Pacific Northwest climate makes a most desirable home for them.

There are thousands of different bee species, and Oregon alone could have as many as 500 species, but this number remains unconfirmed and populations have been threatened during the past several years. Bees have been dying off at an alarming rate due to a myriad of issues, including widespread insecticide and herbicide use, declines in habitat, and an unstable, unpredictable climate.

Oregon's \$6 billion agriculture industry needs them, and nearly 85% of all plants on earth require pollinators to reproduce. Yes, the future could be dismal if we don't protect our bees. A good place to start is to understand and identify the most common species in our region.

- f | Mason Bee in metallic hues. Photo by Alejandro Santillana
- g | Sweat Bee covered in pollen. Photo by Alejandro Santillana

Although this piece spotlights Pacific Northwest species, these fantastic photos were part of the "Insects Unlocked" project at The University of Texas at Austin, featuring species across the U.S.



f |

IDENTIFICATION

Two sets of wings, small eyes, and longer antennae are a few characteristics that distinguish a bee from a fly. Males tend to have longer antennae and additional short, fuzzy hair or markings. Both honey and bumble bees are large, with round, hairy bodies and yellow, black, and orange markings. Sweat bees have distinctively striped abdomens, while mason and carpenter bees share similar colorings in metallic shades of green, blue, purple, and black.



g |

STATUS

Oregon declared a pollinator emergency in 2014, and following that the statewide Oregon Bee Project put together a strategic plan for pollinators, which seems to have increased knowledge and understanding of local bees; expanded habitat, thanks to efforts by farmers and gardeners; and improved protection from pesticide and herbicide exposure.

- Apis – honey bee
- Bombus – bumble bee
- Halictus – sweat bee
- Osmia – mason bee
- Ceratina – carpenter bee

LIFE

While life cycles vary among bee groups, pollination remains their common shared duty. Honey and bumble bees carry pollen in a pollen basket called a corbicula, located on their hind legs; sweat bees carry it on their hind legs and on the underside of their bodies; and masons carry it in the specialized hairs on their abdomens. A unique pollen-carrying technique is used by carpenter bees, which transport pollen by swallowing it and then regurgitating it back at their nests. Most of these groups prefer to pollinate various fruit and vegetable crops, but they also gravitate toward clover, flowers, and herbs. "Bee season" is generally from spring through fall. With the exception of honey and bumble bees, most Oregon-native bee species are solitary, meaning single females build nests underground or in places like hollowed plant stems or crevices in wood or rocks.

COASTAL CONSERVATION ROUNDUP

We Kicked Off 2019 With Conservation Successes Along the Columbia River Estuary

BY JAY KOSA

Since the 1880s, more than half the floodplain of the lower Columbia River has been converted to agricultural, residential, or other human uses. Today, habitat loss threatens a number of fish and wildlife species. Columbia Land

Trust, in response, is conserving key remaining strongholds of forest and wetland habitat, and restoring the land where possible.

Chinook River

In early February, the Land Trust acquired 23 acres of dense upland forest and scrub-shrub wetland in the Chinook River floodplain, directly adjacent to 285 acres we conserved in 2017. In this area along Baker Bay in Pacific County, Washington, vegetation is so dense and the wetland is so soggy that it is nearly impossible to navigate on foot. What the area lacks in hike-ability, it makes up for in habitat value for a host of wildlife species. Waterfowl, deer, elk, river otter, and beaver call the floodplain's tidal wetland and upland forest home. The wetland supports federally threatened lower Columbia River salmon



h |

WASHINGTON

Chinook River

Columbia River

Astoria

OREGON

Lower Elochoman River

and steelhead runs, while Sitka spruce on the forested upland offers habitat for nesting marbled murrelet, bald eagle, and many other species, including cavity-dwelling birds.

Combined with the nearby Chinook unit of Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife's Johns River Wildlife Area and the 600-acre Fort Columbia State Park, more than 1,700 acres of critical habitat in the area are now conserved for the benefit of local fish and wildlife. The Land Trust is grateful for the support of its funding partners, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service in collaboration with the Washington State Department of Ecology.



Lower Elochoman River

Between September 2018 and March 2019, the Land Trust, with funding help from Bonneville Power Administration, purchased three properties on the lower Elochoman River just off the Columbia River near Cathlamet, Washington, in Wahkiakum County. Totalling 122 acres, the properties were historically wetlands and floodplain of the Elochoman River, which supported an array of salmon and steelhead species. Over the last 100 years, these lands were cleared, and the floodplain was diked and diverted to support grazing. Now that these acres have been conserved, the Land Trust will be able to complete a floodplain restoration project benefiting salmon, steelhead, eulachon, numerous migratory waterfowl, shorebirds, and federally listed Columbian white-tailed deer. The area is in close proximity to the Land Trust's existing conserved lands along the lower Elochoman and Indian Jack Slough, as well as the Lewis and Clark National Wildlife Refuge and the Julia Butler Hansen Refuge for the Columbian White-Tailed Deer. Together, these lands offer a rich base of wetland and forest habitat.

- i | Forested wetland near the Chinook River. Photo by staff
- j | Pasture awaiting restoration along the Lower Elochoman River. Photo by staff

TREES OF LIFE

When it Comes to
Wildlife, Trees Can Be
Worth More Dead
Than Alive

BY BRIAN FRENCH



SNAG

a standing dead
or dying tree

As a community, we have the ability to support wildlife throughout our region. Landowners in particular hold a unique opportunity to steward local flora and fauna. By changing how we manage trees in our landscape, we can help tend to the needs of an array of wildlife known as cavity dwellers.

Pileated woodpecker, great horned owl, kestrel, chickadee, clouded salamander, flying squirrel, and many other species depend on cavities found only in dead trees. For many of these animals, life begins during a tree's dying cycle. With this in mind, we should consider the value of deadwood and dead trees as habitat.

The presence of dead or dying trees correlates with the populations of wildlife that depend on them. In fact, species that rely on deadwood act as bioindicators of a forest's health. One example, the acorn woodpecker, thrives in oak savannas by storing acorns in a mosaic of caches within the surface of deadwood. And little brown bats roost in small spaces behind the peeling bark of trees that have recently died. Far more wildlife live in dead trees than in living trees since hollows and cavities offer a place for thermal regulation, protection, foraging, food caching, and raising young.

"...we should
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habitat."

As an arborist, I make many decisions with wildlife habitat in mind. I have unique access to climb, study, and manage tree habitat throughout our region, and I find it important to remind landowners that there is no published research at this time that supports the notion that removing deadwood improves the health of trees. Additionally, landowners can mitigate risks associated with all parts of a tree without removing it entirely, especially in low-risk areas.

Retaining deadwood can lead to healthier urban forests—but we can take it a step further. When opportunities arise, we can also enhance habitat value by creating

"snags," or wildlife trees, on residential properties. Not all snags are tall or dangerous, and I have safely created and monitored more than 400 wildlife trees used successfully each year as reproduction sites.

It is good practice as a landowner to be aware of wildlife protection laws, to leave habitat opportunities when possible, and to consider the best season for carrying out tree work. Remember that when it comes to trees, your decisions impact wildlife.

The author's company, Arboriculture International LLC, started the Willamette Cavity Dweller Initiative to enhance local urban forests with tree material for cavity-dwelling species. Rather than remove trees to the ground, they safely retain and enhance valuable tree structure in which wildlife can live and reproduce. 🌿

Learn more at www.arboriculture.international.



j | A snag serving as a nesting tree. Illustration by Brian French

LET'S GO

SIGN UP

ColumbiaLandTrust.org

Save the Date

HERITAGE CIRCLE LUNCHEON

Friday, May 10

M.J. MURDOCK
CHARITABLE TRUST
VANCOUVER, WA

Honoring donors who have
made a gift to Columbia
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Save the Date

WILD SPLENDOR

Thursday,
October 3

THE LOFT AT 8TH
PORTLAND, OR

Signature event
& annual gala

Tour

FARMS & STARS

Saturday, August 17

TROUT LAKE, WA

Spend a magical evening under the stars at the base of Mount Adams in Trout Lake. We'll tour Mountain Meadows Dairy, one of Washington's first organic dairies, before we sit down for a farm-style dinner with a stunning view of the mountain. When the sun goes down, we'll view the rural skies with local astronomer Jim White.



THANKS FOR
JOINING US!

Cheers to everyone who came out to show some love for nature at our 5th annual Habitap! A special thank you to our friends at Migration Brewing for donating 10% of proceeds from the evening, and to our Emerging Leaders Council for organizing yet another fun-filled gathering.

Share photos of
the people, places, and
wildlife that inspire you.

#fearlessnature

@ColumbiaNature
@ColumbiaLandTrust
Columbia Land Trust

Balsamroot in bloom at Mill Creek Ridge. Photo by staff

IN MEMORIAM

Ed & Eddie McAninch

Edward "Ed" McAninch, passed away on December 27, 2018, joining his late wife of 66 years, Edwyna "Eddie" McAninch. Ed and Eddie were donors and friends of Columbia Land Trust for more than 22 years. Ed and Eddie loved the world and traveled it extensively. Their passions took them to all seven continents, and Ed, to many political demonstrations, where he staunchly defended the environment.

Ed volunteered for the Land Trust and got to know many of our staff. A true force of life, he shared our passion for nature and love of science. For all their generous support and appreciation of our work during their long lives, Ed and Eddie also made a gift to Co-

lumbia Land Trust through their will as members of our **Heritage Circle** legacy giving program. A lasting legacy of lives well lived. Their gift will ensure clean water, wildlife habitat, and conserved lands for generations to come.



We Celebrate Ed & Eddie.

They will not be soon forgotten.

