

CASCADIA REVIEW

Cascadia Wildlands Condemns Trump Admin's Roadless Rule Rollback

by Grace Brahler, *Wildlands Director*

As part of a broader strategy to pillage public lands for private gain, the Trump administration is taking steps to eliminate the Roadless Area Conservation Rule.



Sign along the Pacific Crest Trail – one of the many areas to be affected by the Roadless Rule rollback. Photo by Cascadia Wildlands.

Known as the Roadless Rule, this bedrock conservation policy protects nearly two-million acres of Oregon's most intact public forests and 45-million acres nationwide from road building, logging, and other destructive extractive practices. It was adopted in 2001 following an unprecedented public rulemaking process that included more than 600 hearings and 1.6-million public comments, the vast majority of which supported protecting roadless areas from logging and road building. The rule has since proven to be one of America's most important conservation safeguards by protecting some of the last remaining intact

public lands as a home for wildlife, a haven for retreat and recreation, and a legacy for current and future generations. The Trump administration intends to complete the rushed process to rescind the rule by the end of 2026.

Rolling back the Roadless Rule means putting some of Oregon's most iconic places at risk: Larch Mountain in the Columbia River Gorge, Tumalo Mountain outside of Bend, Lookout Mountain in the heart of Oregon, the forests around Lost Lake on Mount Hood, Hardesty Mountain east of Eugene, **continued on page 10**



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Lessons from the Grand Canyon

I had been contemplating how and when to take my overdue sabbatical when I got the call from an old friend this spring. "I scored a cancellation permit. Do you want to captain a raft on a 16-day Grand Canyon float this summer?"

The answer was easy, but there were a number of loose ends — family logistics, work commitments, kids out of school, and the fleeting anxiety over the direction of our country.

But the stars aligned, and there we were, launching at Lee's Ferry in 115 degree heat and soon floating by the Vermillion Cliffs into this 277-mile-long canyon that had been beckoning for decades.

On day two, in a section aptly named the "Roaring Twenties" (miles 20-30), I hit a pour over that was supposed to be avoided, ended up in a particularly rowdy hole, and nearly flipped the loaded raft. In the maelstrom, I popped an oar, and it knocked me violently onto the opposing oarlock with the back of my ribcage taking the entirety of the impact. It became immediately clear that I was going to become a "bow prince" for the next 14 days.

Assessed by an ER doc in our crew, my broken ribs hadn't punctured any vital organs, and I went on a steady dose of painkillers and herbal salves. The group camaraderie, thundering rapids, oases deep up the side canyons, relics of ancient cultures, and the milky-turquoise waters of the Colorado's tributaries helped ease the pain.

As we floated by mesmerizing rock formations, some almost 2-billion years old, and pushed deeper into the canyon, time became an afterthought. Beating the afternoon winds and finding shade from the godforsaken sun became our primary motivators.

On day four, we floated by the Marble Canyon Dam site, first proposed in the 1950s, which was marked by test drill holes in the canyon's walls and debris piles below them. If constructed, a concrete behemoth would have inundated the Grand Canyon with still water and tamed its wildness, just like the Glen Canyon Dam above and the Hoover Dam below had done earlier.

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Ledges camp deep in the Grand Canyon. Photo by Josh Laughlin.

It was our country's early conservation advocates, affected Tribal Nations, steadfast voices of Americans, and action from Congress that ultimately helped thwart the Bureau of Reclamation's plan to build the dam and protect this iconic canyon decades ago.

Since returning from this trip of a lifetime, I'm reminded that it is this kind of widespread and infectious passion that is required today to save our last wild places. Some of our favorite hotspots here in Cascadia, like Hardesty Mountain, the greater Waldo Lake area, and the South Kalmiopsis, are now in the crosshairs with the administration's evisceration of the landmark 2001 Roadless Rule. Two-million acres in Oregon alone, and over 45 million across the country are at risk (see cover story).

Together, let's embrace the unrelenting fervor that stopped the damming of the Grand Canyon and dig deep inside to protect what's left. We owe it to the next generation.

Josh Laughlin
Executive Director



CRITTER CORNER



PACIFIC FISHER

(*Pekania pennanti*)

by Noah Angell
Communications Fellow

Fishers are small mammals with quick reflexes and strong claws, making them excellent climbers and hunters. They are especially known for being one of the few animals able to hunt porcupines.

Once widespread across much of the western United States, only about 4,000 remain, confined to three small populations in California and Oregon. Habitat loss, logging, historic fur-trapping, hunting, and rodenticides have sharply reduced their numbers and range.

Their survival depends on continuous old-growth forests with large, old, hollow, and downed trees, making them especially vulnerable to aggressive logging practices. Although the Southern Sierra Nevada population, made up of approximately 250 individuals, has been listed as endangered since 2020, the US Fish and Wildlife Service announced in late August that the Northern California-Southern Oregon population is not warranted for listing under the Endangered Species Act.

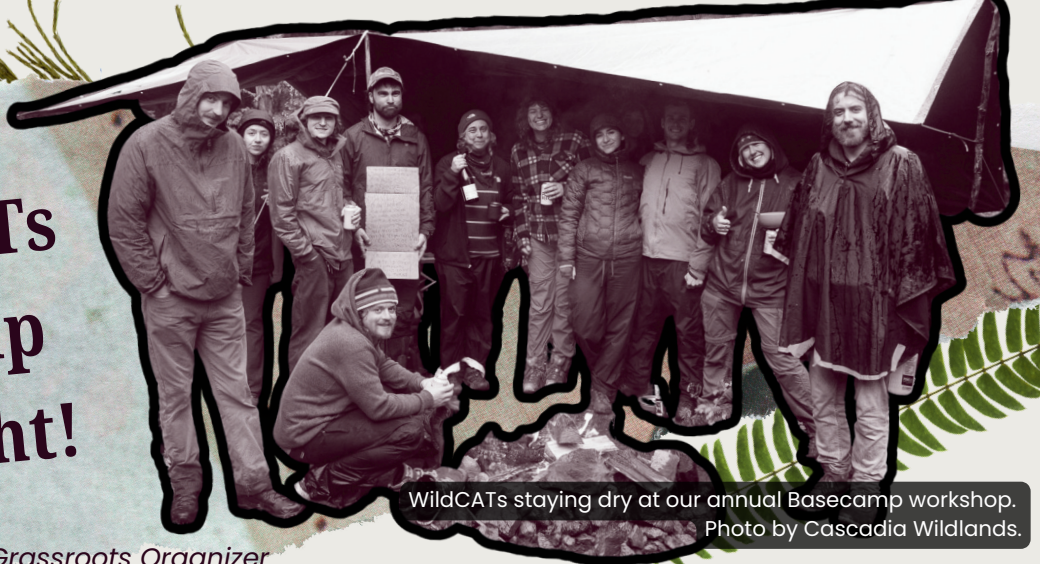
A close-up photograph of a brown beaver in a pond, gnawing on a piece of wood. The beaver's fur is thick and brown, and its small black eyes and ears are visible. The background shows blue water and some green foliage.

Dam Good News: Beaver Bill Passes in Oregon!

Cascadia Wildlands staff and colleagues in the Oregon Wildlife Coalition worked successfully in the spring-summer 2025 Oregon legislative session to pass the **“Beaver Protection” bill (HB 3932)**, which prohibits trapping or removing the American beaver (*Castor canadensis*) from public lands located on waterways designated as “impaired” by the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality. The new policy affects over **100,000 miles of waterways** in Oregon, and recognizes the role of beavers as **“ecosystem engineers,”** who create wetlands that improve water quality, benefit salmon and enhance fire resiliency.

The legislation builds on the “Beaver Believer” bill (HB 3464) that was signed into law in Salem in 2023 that reclassified beavers as “wildlife” instead of “predators” and transferred authority for managing beavers on private lands from the Oregon Department of Agriculture to the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. Additionally, HB 3464 created a permitting system for the lethal removal of beavers, with permits granted only when non-lethal solutions are not feasible, and a reporting system established to help monitor the state’s beaver population, among other gains.

WildCATs Keep up the Fight!



WildCATs staying dry at our annual Basecamp workshop.
Photo by Cascadia Wildlands.

by Madeline Cowen, *Grassroots Organizer*

At a staff meeting in late spring, the Cascadia crew was sharing one of those everything-is-so-bad-all-you-can-do-is-laugh moments. We were discussing the attacks on public lands, feeling the weight of it all, and pondering how we could most effectively push back and engage our base of supporters. We've seen attempts to strip bedrock environmental laws, executive orders demanding an increase in timber production from our already stressed public lands, and on top of it all, a ramp up in proposed mature and old-growth timber sales.

How could we communicate this moment to our supporters and dedicated volunteers? What would be the headline of our campaigning efforts? As we concluded our meeting, one staffer remarked: "*Forests Over Fascists!*"

This summer, the WildCATs (Cascadia Action Team) carried the torch for the Forests Over Fascists campaign — field checking timber sales, hosting rallies, connecting with people about our priority issues, and taking action. **At the tail end of spring, we mobilized, putting boots on the ground and field checking the particularly egregious 42 Divide timber sale. This Bureau of Land Management**

(BLM) plan proposes to log over 5,000 acres of forests southwest of Roseburg in the Camas Valley area, much of it up to 200 years old. Another 3,500 acres, in areas set aside as wildlife reserves, would be commercially logged — purportedly for "restoration" purposes. We visited these stands supposedly in "need" of logging and found forests with rich species diversity, massive legacy trees, and clear headwaters that flow to the Coquille River downstream.

In June, WildCATs held our biggest volunteer event of the year: the Field Checking Basecamp. Around 40 volunteers gathered near Glide, Oregon, at the Little River timber sale, another nasty BLM project. We braved rainstorms, car troubles, and locked gates, successfully checking all priority timber sale units and strengthening our community.

We didn't stop there. At the Oregon Country Fair, we gathered almost 2,000 signatures on our Forests Over Fascists petition opposing the administration's proposal to shut the public out of public land management.

Want to get involved? Check out our website or social media to learn more about becoming a WildCAT!

Fresh Look, Same Commitment to the Wild

by Spencer McIntyre, *Development & Events Manager*

If you've been a part of the Cascadia Wildlands community for a while, you may have noticed our recent new look. While our logo and branding have evolved, our mission remains the same — *defending and restoring Cascadia's wild ecosystems in the forests, in the courts, and in the streets!*

This rebrand reflects both where we've been and where we're going. Our colors reflect parts of our region that we love — deep, rich, dark purple hues of fertile soils; cute, beloved, orange newt bellies; the unmistakable blue of cornflowers; the

humble, grassroots beginnings and channeled that into becoming a strategic and powerful force for the forests, rivers, and wildlife of Cascadia. Our new identity captures that forward momentum, while staying true to our roots and unending love for this unique bioregion.

What won't ever change is our deep commitment to protecting the ecosystems and communities of Cascadia we adore. **Together — with you — we'll continue building a future that we want to see for generations to come.**



still
we like it wild.

essence of fog that blankets the valleys and hugs mountain tops; magical lichen green draping over tree branches; and of course, the dark, lush coastal green that is drawn out of our old-growth forests.

The northern spotted owl, the centerpiece of our new logo and an indicator of old-growth forest health, evokes passion, endurance, fight, and hope, as it continues to be pushed closer to extinction.

Over the years we have grown from our

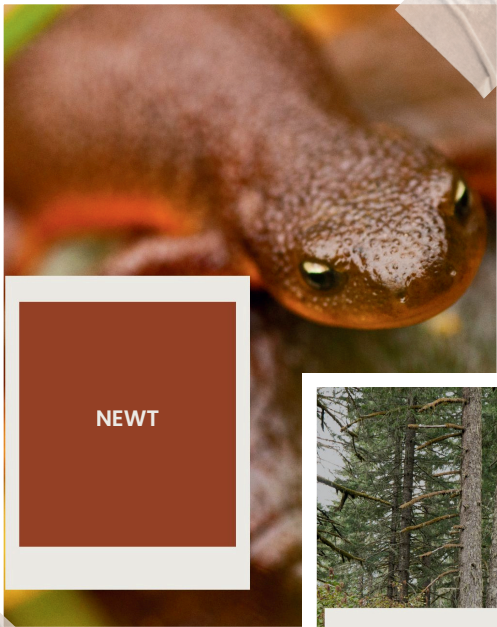




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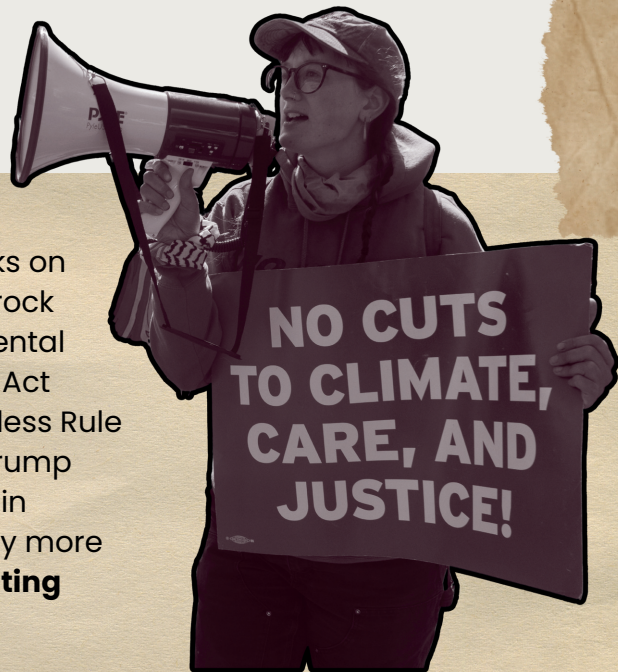


COASTAL

FORESTS OVER FASCISTS!

by Madeline Cowen, Grassroots Organizer

This year has brought some of the worst attacks on public forests that we've seen in decades. Bedrock environmental laws like the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the Endangered Species Act (ESA) are being gutted. The foundational Roadless Rule is being rescinded (see cover story), and the Trump administration has demanded a 25% increase in logging across public lands already stressed by more than a century of mismanagement. **We're fighting back. Forests Over Fascists!**



The administration rescinds 78 Biden-era orders and memoranda on climate change, the environment, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI), health, + more.

Jan 20th, 2025

Thousands of jobs lost in 90-day hiring freeze as job offers are rescinded.

Jan 20-23rd, 2025

Department of Interior ordered to maximize Alaska's natural resource development and production.

Jan-Feb, 2025

Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ) NEPA regulations, which provide guidance on implementing the bedrock statute, are rescinded.

Feb 25th, 2025

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announces it's rolling back clean air protections.

Mar 12th, 2025

Jan 20th, 2025

The administration orders all federal DEI and environmental justice offices, programs, grants, and requirements to be terminated.

Jan 30th, 2025

Ending of DEI programs and gender programs, replaced "gender" with "sex," and National Park Service LGBTQ+ history pages removed.

Feb 14th, 2025

Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) lays off 3,400 Forest Service employees.

Mar 1st, 2025

"Immediate Expansion of American Timber Production" Executive Order issued, which proposes to ramp up the cut across the country by 25% under the guise of wildfire protection and national economic security.

READ MORE: This change would essentially gut the ESA, limiting protections to actions that directly harm or kill the animal, while excluding habitat damage that would threaten the species' ability to feed, breed, or find shelter.



READ MORE: This Rule, finalized during the Biden admin, put conservation on equal footing with other values the agency must consider, including logging, mining and grazing.

Black bear climbing in the forests of the Oregon Coast Range. Photo by David Herasimtschuk.

Administration proposes rescinding the definition of "harm" under the Endangered Species Act (ESA).

Apr 17th, 2025

Multiple Congressional attempts to sell off large swaths of federal public lands in the West are introduced and ultimately defeated in the Senate.

May-June, 2025

USDA releases NEPA regulations minimizing public input on proposed federal land management projects; Congress passes budget bill requiring an increase of 250-million board feet of timber every year on U.S. Forest Service land.

July 3rd, 2025

The Department of Interior proposes rescinding the Bureau of Land Management's Public Lands Use Rule.

Sept 10th, 2025

Apr 11th, 2025

The administration directs agencies to repeal regulations while bypassing the notice-and-comment process, removing public input from government actions.

May 29th, 2025

The US Supreme Court limits scope of NEPA reviews, gives substantial deference to agencies in environmental analyses.

June 23rd, 2025

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) announces intention to rescind the 2001 Roadless Rule that protects 45-million acres of remaining roadless areas in the US from road building and logging.

July 24th, 2025

USDA Secretary dissolves Forest Service regional offices and most research stations.

Sept 19th, 2025

Over 600,000 comments were submitted to the Forest Service urging them to defend the Roadless Rule.



Public Lands in Public Hands

continued from cover

sections of the Pacific Crest Trail near Waldo Lake, the Oregon Dunes, and many more special places. **When roads are carved into these areas, they fragment habitat, spread invasive species, hinder backcountry recreation opportunities, introduce noise, and put our last remaining mature and old-growth forests at risk of being clearcut.** This effort will literally pave the way for industrial logging and mining activities to degrade the landscape and add to an already massive road network and backlog of maintenance costs. And while the rule rollback is presented as a wildfire prevention effort, studies consistently show that road building and logging in backcountry forests do little to reduce fire risk near communities and actually increase fire risk instead. The Trump administration's move to gut the Roadless Rule is nothing more than a handout to logging interests at the expense of clean water, wildlife, and local communities.

Cascadia Wildlands has joined advocates across the country to fight back against the Trump administration's anti-conservation agenda, including the reckless rollback of the Roadless Rule. During an egregiously brief public comment period this summer, we submitted a

petition to the Department of Agriculture with over 1,000 signatures opposing its proposal to repeal the rule, joining a chorus of hundreds of thousands of voices across the country decrying this attack on public lands. Hosted by our friends at EcoFlight, we partnered with Firefighters United for Safety, Ethics & Ecology in September to fly over roadless public forests in the Cascades, showing congressional staffers and local reporters what's at stake from above.

While we can expect the Trump administration to ignore science, disregard public input, and attempt to sell off public lands to the highest bidder, we cannot back down. We must continue the fight to keep our nation's remaining roadless forests intact.



With Seasons, Come Changes

by Martha Brinson, *Membership & Operations Director* & Noah Angell, *Communications Fellow*

The spring/summer season is always exciting around the Cascadia Wildlands office as we welcome the fresh energy and perspectives brought by our summer staff.

Big thanks to our hardworking summer legal intern team of **Dara Evans**, **Danny Billick** and **Nicole Morshead**. This summer's highlights included drafting motions for the Blue and Gold timber sale case, preparing a National Environmental Policy Act analysis memorandum, attending an oral argument in the Carmen-Smith Hydroelectric Project case, and meeting with legislators in Salem, Oregon, to discuss the "1% for Wildlife" bill (HB 2977). All three are staying on as legal externs to help this winter.

Our events this summer were enhanced with the help of our Summer Field and Events Coordinator, **Flora Booker**. Flora worked tirelessly to make our events run seamlessly and with gusto. She helped organize Field Checking Basecamp, a 4-day volunteer field checking event, tabled at the Oregon Country Fair, led additional field check outings, and helped coordinate monthly WildCAT meetings. You haven't seen the last of her as she will be joining our Wonderland Auction planning team this fall.

This August we also welcomed our new full-time, two-year Communications Fellow, **Noah Angell**. Noah grew up catching turtles and fish in his local Texas river. This love for critters led him to move to Colorado to study fish and wildlife conservation. He then moved to Humboldt County to pursue his Master of Science in

Natural Resources while working as a program assistant with the National Park Service. He is passionate about conservation and using science communication to engage communities. In his free time, he enjoys traveling, surfing, playing soccer, backpacking, gardening, thrifting, hiking, and exploring wildlands.

As excited as we are to welcome Noah, we are sad to say goodbye to our first Communications Fellow, **Claire Barber**. Claire finished her two-year fellowship this summer and moved on to pursue her master's degree at Stanford University. We wish Claire all the best and are grateful for her many contributions to Cascadia Wildlands, including taking our social media to the next level, helping launch our new website, among other accomplishments.



Incoming Communications Fellow Noah Angell with our outgoing Communications Fellow Claire Barber.

Legal Updates

by Nick Cady, *Legal Director* &
Peter Jensen, *Staff Attorney*

The legal team at Cascadia Wildlands has had its hands full this year. There has been a tremendous push to generate timber volume from public forests and a steady flow of legal and legislative setbacks from DC, which have made our work harder, but not slowed us down!



A group of WildCATs field checking in the proposed Blue and Gold timber sale outside of Roseburg, OR. Photo by Cascadia Wildlands.



A recently logged "variable retention harvest" unit located in a younger stand as part of the Blue & Gold timber sale. Photo by Cascadia Wildlands.



A WildCAT fieldchecks a proposed logging unit in the Siuslaw HLB timber sale located west of Eugene. Photo by Will Watson.

Siuslaw Harvest Land Base Timber Sale (Northwest District, Bureau of Land Management)

Cascadia Wildlands, along with partners at Crag Law Center and Oregon Wild, notched a resounding win over the Siuslaw Harvest Land Base timber sale, located in the Coast Range west of Eugene, in late April. The project targets over 13,000 acres of older forest with clearcutting logging, which would impact

imperiled species habitat, recreation, and other values. The District Court ruled in our favor on all five legal claims. Emboldened by new caselaw out of the Supreme Court, the BLM has appealed the decision to the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals. We will be briefing the case this winter and argument will be held in the spring.

Big Weekly Elk Timber Sale (Coos Bay District, Bureau of Land Management)

In late August, the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals affirmed a District Court's earlier decision by ruling in BLM's favor, rejecting Cascadia Wildlands and Oregon Wild's legal challenge to the Big Weekly Elk timber sale, located southwest of Roseburg. The logging project targets

3,500 acres of public forest and within a critical marbled murrelet breeding area. The BLM successfully argued that it could proceed without murrelet surveys or protections in place, which runs counter to endangered species management standards.

IVM Timber Sale (Medford District, Bureau of Land Management)

Cascadia Wildlands, along with co-plaintiffs KS Wild, Oregon Wild, and Soda Mountain Wilderness Council, prevailed in District Court this spring over the IVM timber sale, located west of Medford. This massive logging proposal targeted over 300,000 acres of public forest and was located exclusively within areas set aside

to help recover imperiled wildlife. BLM maintained in the lawsuit that the protections for these reserves under the agency's own forest plan did not apply, and this argument was rejected by the Court. Oral argument over next steps will occur this fall. Our organizations are represented by attorneys at Cascadia Wildlands and Crag Law Center.

Blue and Gold Timber Sale (Roseburg District, Bureau of Land Management)

This spring, Cascadia Wildlands and Oregon Wild filed our opening brief against the Blue and Gold timber sale, located southwest of Cottage Grove. BLM's proposed logging targets some of the nicest, oldest forests remaining in western Oregon, with some parcels aging well over 300-years old — habitat critical to the survival of the marbled murrelet,

northern spotted owl, and Oregon Coast coho salmon. However, BLM is prohibited by its own forest plan from logging trees established before 1850. Oral argument is scheduled in front of the District Court this November. Plaintiffs are being represented by in-house counsel and attorneys with the Crag Law Center.

Carmen-Smith Hydroelectric Project Case on the McKenzie River Hits a Snag

In the late 2000s, the Eugene Water & Electric Board (EWEB) agreed to build a fish ladder to aid Endangered Species Act-listed Upper Willamette River Chinook salmon and bull trout at the Carmen-Smith Hydroelectric Project. Citing cost, EWEB later shifted to a less effective "trap and haul" system, with a 2022 deadline that passed with little progress.

partners sued EWEB for Endangered Species Act violations. On August 8, the District Court ruled that hydropower license issues must be brought before the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission or the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, and therefore did not rule on our claims. Plaintiffs and attorneys are now exploring next steps to improve salmon and bull trout recovery on the upper McKenzie.

On March 17, Cascadia Wildlands and

North Oregon Coast Red Tree Vole

This July, Cascadia Wildlands, along with our partners Center for Biological Diversity, Oregon Wild, and Bird Alliance of Oregon, filed suit against the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for its failure to protect the North Oregon Coast population of the red tree vole under the Endangered Species Act.

This arboreal mammal inhabits mature and old-growth forests of northwest Oregon, is an important prey species for the threatened northern spotted owl, and warrants Endangered Species Act protection for its recovery due to its decline from habitat loss.

BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT



by Madeline Cowen, *Grassroots Organizer*

Whether it's mid-morning, mid-day or midnight, there's nothing that satisfies quite like a warm, toasty bowl of fried rice. If you're vegan, gluten free, or somewhere in between, heading over to **Get Fried Rice** at the Oregon Country Fair is always a solid choice. This OCF staple was founded in 1972 and has since been a champion of bringing sustainability to festivals far and wide by composting all food waste, providing free access to filtered drinking

water, and using reusable dishes with a deposit system. On top of all that, each year at the Fair they choose a non-profit or community organization to donate half of their proceeds to. **We are honored to be the 2025 recipient and are so grateful for the \$5,500 donation to help us continue our work protecting wildlands.** Thanks, Get Fried Rice and to all of you for getting fried (rice) at the Oregon Country Fair!

BUSINESS & COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Together, we are able to work toward a more sustainable and equitable future with vast old-growth forests, rivers full of wild salmon, wolves howling in the backcountry, a stable climate, and vibrant community sustained by the unique landscapes of the Cascadia bioregion.

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While we cannot name them all, we are indebted to many businesses for their reliable partnership:

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DONATE MONTHLY: Set up a direct account transfer (ACH) and become part of our Keystone Circle monthly donor program. This method is the most efficient way to give your support and ensures your entire gift goes to us.

GIVE THROUGH YOUR IRA: If you are at least 70.5 years old, consider making a Qualified Charitable Distribution directly from your IRA to Cascadia Wildlands. This avoids the tax consequences of the Required Minimum Distribution while supporting your favorite non-profit!

DONATE STOCK: Cascadia Wildlands works with Fidelity (DTC #: 0226) to facilitate stock donations. Our account number is: Z40191931.

MAKE A BEQUEST: Naming Cascadia Wildlands in your will as the beneficiary of a qualified retirement plan or life insurance plan will accomplish a charitable goal while realizing significant tax savings.

DONATE CRYPTOCURRENCY: You can help Cascadia Wildlands' mission by donating crypto. The process on our website is fast, secure, and donating crypto allows you to enjoy tax savings on the gains.

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Charitable Gift Annuities and Charitable Remainder Trusts are two options to facilitate income for the remainder of a donor's life or a specified number of years, while obtaining an income or estate tax benefit. At passing, remaining funds are gifted to Cascadia Wildlands.

TO LEARN MORE OR GET STARTED, PLEASE CONTACT:
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Business Spotlight

FALL/WINTER

what's
inside?

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for being a part of the movement for a wild Cascadia

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