



WALLOWA
RESOURCES

*Promoting
Healthy lands
and
Communities*

Wallowa Resources creates opportunities in Wallowa County for natural resource stewardship, prosperous families, and promotes a broader understanding of the links between community well-being and ecosystem health

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WALLOWA RESOURCES

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Bugs Kick Knapweed Out!

*Mark Potter
Range Stewardship Coordinator*

What is the worst weed in Wallowa County? Or North Eastern Oregon for that matter? “Knapweed” or “Scotch thistle” are the two answers I hear over and over as a Weed Board member and as Coordinator of the Lower Grande Ronde Noxious Weed Program at Wallowa Resources. Both weeds have been here for a long time and infest thousands of acres of land. They have been the main targets of Wallowa County’s war on weeds for at least forty years. It is a part of our culture to despise them with significant bloodlust (saplust just didn’t sound as good).



Today though, there is good news on the knapweed front. Great news in fact! Diffuse knapweed is on the decline! Managers have been working for over ten years to distribute and monitor biological controls (bugs and critters that attack noxious weeds) for diffuse knapweed. And now we have a hard-hitting group of bugs that are knocking the seeds right out of commission.

The biocontrol bad boy for diffuse knapweed is *Larinus minutus* (AKA the lesser knapweed weevil - PHOTO). This little guy is only a quarter inch long but has a lot of babies and they all love to eat Diffuse knapweed. They chew the skin right off of the plant. When enough skin is gone the plant dies of dehydration. Then as the next plant goes to flower they lay eggs in the seed heads and the larvae eats all the seeds in the bud. Then the weevil emerges and eats the rosettes that would be next year’s knapweed. Often in the Lower Grande Ronde, and more and more often in the Wallowa Valley, a patch of knapweed will just up and disappear. But, if that isn’t enough the lesser weevil has some help. Several tiny flies also lay eggs in the seed head and are known to reduce seed production by 50% on their own. In addition, there’s a small beetle that lays its eggs in the root where the termite like larvae mines out the core of the root rendering the plant much less competitive.

These bugs and the concerted efforts of many citizens over time have relegated Diffuse knapweed to a much less potent weed. Sadly, the lesser knapweed weevil is just not big enough to control Spotted knapweed. Spotted knapweed is to Diffuse knapweed what a wolf is to a coyote. I

am not advocating that we shouldn’t watch Diffuse knapweed closely or forget about it. We should spray Diffuse knapweed where it is controllable and where it is easily spread (roadsides, gravel pits, etc). We should also spray isolated patches that are a long ways from other patches.

But we should also be looking for bugs. Pull off a bud on a plant that has “gone to seed” and open it up. Count the seeds (dark and shiny with a ruffle of little whitish hairs at the top) – if you can find them. Most places I find at least 9 out of 10 seed heads empty. The hard knots in the seed head are fly larvae. The empty seed head or the one filled with plant junk have been hit by one of the weevils. The ones with a very round hole in the top have been visited by the lesser knapweed weevil.

If you don’t have the bugs at your place – call your weed managers and we will get them for you.

Biological controls are not new. Bugs have controlled Goatweed since the early 1950’s. At the time, ranches were in trouble due to Goatweed and its impact on forage production and on livestock. Goatweed has a toxin in it that predisposes an animal to sunburn – any cow with white teats and no sunscreen got very cantankerous when a calf would go to suckle after she had been in the Goatweed. Calves went hungry as a result. We still have Goatweed – it is still found in almost every corner of the county – it disappears after a few years of colonizing a new site and will not dominate the landscape over time. We can live with it now. That’s the goal of biological control. Counter the landscape scale weed infestations that would otherwise overrun us so we can maintain our economy and ecology. Knapweed is on the same path, but weed managers are thinking that the 5 agents attacking diffuse knapweed will be even more effective than the one beetle attacking Goatweed. By the way, biological control agents appear to be gaining ground on Dalmatian toadflax and leafy spurge!

Area Weed Control Managers (County, USFS, BLM, Wallowa Resources, TNC, Tri County Cooperative Weed Management Area, etc) work together to get these bugs out in the right places. Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) guides weed control across the state and leads the biological control efforts. Wallowa

“Promoting Healthy Lands and Communities”

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County representatives lead the charge locally. This is one tax-paid service that pays huge dividends. Successful biological control has a benefit to cost ratio of as high as 13 to 1. Not using effective biological controls (just suffering the losses that the weeds cause and accounting for the cost of spraying and seeding) would COST us 13 times as much as when the bugs are out attacking these plants. ODA, Wallowa County, and Wallowa Resources provide biocontrols and advice on how to use them for no charge (in many western states you have to buy your bugs). The ODA weed crew is a small, efficient, and knowledgeable group that spends most of their time hunting for new weeds that threaten our economy and environment statewide. They come out and get their hands dirty when it is time to treat the most important weeds; again, at no extra charge to you. Wallowa County weed managers are doing the same here at home. Preventing new weeds from getting started (find them, identify them and eradicate them) can raise our benefit to cost ratio up to as much as 35 to 1. That saves us massive amounts of money over time and prevents serious damage to agriculture, forestry and biodiversity. This is our tax dollars at work.

Remember: biological control takes time and patience. These weeds do not

disappear overnight. Nor will they ever disappear altogether. But their cost to our land and community should decline significantly over the long term. The down side to all this is that there are many nasty weeds (i.e. Sulfur Cinquefoil, Whitetop, and Scotch thistle) that do not have biological controls available. Some plants may never have them.

That brings us back to my original question: What is the worst weed in Wallowa County? Several come to my mind. The ones with no effective biological control agents, the ones that are just getting here, the aggressive perennial weeds that reproduce by the roots, stems and seeds. These are the ones to focus our limited dollars on. These are the ones to target with bloodlust. These are the ones that your weed managers are putting concerted efforts to extirpate. If you haven’t heard of rush skeletonweed, whitetop, common bugloss, meadow and orange hawkweed, sulfur cinquefoil, Medusahead rye, spotted knapweed or at least got a picture in your glove box of these then you are flirting with disaster. Call your weed managers. Learn these plants. Go on a weed tour. Get online and type in the names. It’s well worth it. These plants may make diffuse knapweed and Scotch thistle look like delicate garden plants that need a pampering green thumb to grow.



Nils' Desk

Nils Christoffersen,
Executive Director

Aldo Leopold reminded us long ago that conservation must make sense for the land and the landowner. Specifically he said, “When land does well for its owner, and the owner does well by his land, when both end up better by the partnership, we have conservation. When one or the other grows poorer, we do not.”

This statement captures the interconnectedness of people and our natural world. It recognizes the importance of incentives to motivate landowners in the face of competing land uses and production practices. These incentives need to go beyond money – they need to recognize and applaud the skill and insight of land stewards, and be supportive of progressive adaptation in the field. Leopold was clear that conservation would not succeed if it was merely “a negative exercise of abstinence and caution...prudence never kindled a fire in the human mind; I have no hope for conservation born of fear.”

Leopold’s insights hold true for a community as well. If the combined conservation efforts on private and public land end up impoverishing a community, we need to find new strategies. The inherent truth in Leopold’s ideas is obvious as we are affected by the pendulum swings of federal land

management. It’s time we grabbed hold of this pendulum and anchor it firmly in the center with good science, local skills and knowledge, and tangible benefits to the soil, waters, plants, and animals as well as people.

Across America – in fact across the world, communities are grappling with the need to find new strategies for conservation. Smart strategies for the long-term stewardship of our working landscapes – those landscapes providing food and fiber for our nation – will not only safeguard the environment and resource itself; they will call upon the stewardship skills and knowledge of those who live on and work the land. Smart stewardship strategies will, by necessity and shared responsibility, be a partnership with the larger public. Such a partnership is needed to agree on the goals and strategies, as well as the costs and benefits. Together they must insure a fair value for the products - a value sufficient to cover the costs of stewardship, and reward the benefits generated by good land and water management.

Wallowa County is clearly in the face of such a challenge. Despite great leadership, and the investment of time and energy by vast numbers of its residents, we are still struggling to find the keys to success in a rapidly changing community.

All of us at Wallowa Resources are passionate about and motivated by this challenge. We know we can manage our lands and watersheds so that both our community and the land end up better from the partnership. Wallowa Resources wants to work with public and private landowners to demonstrate and document this to

the broader public. Further we want to help the County build relationships that facilitate innovation and adaptation in our regulatory environment and our markets. And we want to support new enterprises and marketing methods that help us capture the value of conservation here at home.

Wallowa Resources values and honors its founding designation by the Wallowa County Commission as a partner working to maintain and enhance the natural resource sector of Wallowa County. We believe the County’s natural resources, and the skills, experience and tools of our people, are our greatest assets. Our success depends on the continued engagement in our programs by the people living here, as well as partners sharing our vision who operate at the state and national level. As I take over the reins of Wallowa Resources from Diane Snyder, I look forward to working with each one of you.

“Smart strategies for the long-term stewardship of our working landscapes – those landscapes providing food and fiber for our nation – will not only safeguard the environment and resource itself; they will call upon the stewardship skills and knowledge of those who live on and work the land.”

Outdoor Wallowa Learning

Penny Arentsen
Youth Education Coordinator

This fall Wallowa Resources facilitated a program called Outdoor Wallowa Learning (OWL) with both the Enterprise and Joseph schools. OWL took approximately 90 students ranging from 4th -6th grade to the Wallowa State Park for one week, where they were immersed in hands-on-learning. “Roots and Shoots” was taught by David Mildrexler. He introduced students to forest ecology including disturbance, light infiltration, snag, overstory, photosynthesis, canopy, and succession. The students spent the rest of the day in the forest building on their tree, shrub, and herb identification knowledge. They discovered the thick bark of the Ponderosa Pine, searched for charcoal in the forest soil and discussed the role and effects of fire in our forests. They gazed at our big Douglas-firs, listened to Native American stories of the cones, and measured and described the needles in tree id charts. They also learned about key structures in forest ecosystems, like snags, and downed old growth logs, and their importance to wildlife species.

“Survival” was taught by Peter Avriett. This section explored the different strategies and traits that carnivores, herbivores and omnivores use to survive the winter in Wallowa County. Students played a game called Life and Death in the Forest where they had to use the very animal traits they had learned about in order to survive. In the game, students located sources of food and water hidden throughout the forest while chasing those who were lower on the food chain, and avoiding those who were higher. Following

this game, Students were taught basic skills and strategies to survive in the woods themselves. Starting with body heat conservation, students were also exposed to hypothermia, the ten essentials to survival, giardia, what to do if lost, and leave no trace camping.

The “Wild Side of Wallowa County” was taught by Dave Duncan. Dave focused on the interrelations between animals and their environment. Students learned how to note the presence of animals through signs they leave such as feathers, fur, bones, scat, tracks, and chew marks. Students learned what an animal’s niche is by searching for stuffed orangutans in different parts of a tree. As students

Students played a game called Life and Death in the Forest where they had to use the very animal traits they had learned about in order to survive.

located the orangutans they had to figure out what environmental conditions were unique to each location, as well as what type of plant they ate. This allowed students to figure out what their niche was within the environment.

In the “Rocks, Rivers, & Ridges” section taught by Penny Arentsen, students learned the parts of a watershed, how rivers function during different seasons, and how we quantify water in a watershed. Students first explored a regional relief map of our area, as well as a large-scale United States watershed map, and outlined watersheds on both. Students then played a watershed game. They stood next to each other in lines to form headwater streams, tributaries, and a mainstem, which all “flowed” into one outlet- the Grande Ronde River. Beads were passed four times at four different speeds to simulate the four seasons. After the game,

students created a hydrograph of their “flow” and discussed the importance of knowing how much water was in a watershed over time.

At the end of the day, students reviewed the notes they had taken in their field journals and were given a short assessment test before they piled back on the yellow school bus to head back home. At the end of the week students returned to class with their field notebooks so that the teachers could incorporate and elaborate upon the topics covered in OWL in their own classrooms.

Education Programming: Dual-Credit Courses

This school year, Wallowa Resources offered dual-credit college courses in partnership with the Education Service District (ESD), the Wallowa County Public School Districts, and Blue Mountain Community College (BMCC). Two courses were offered this last fall, Natural History of Wallowa County (Biology 161) and Introduction to Geology (Geology 101), and one this spring (Geology 162). These courses provided advanced science to compliment the suite of science classes taught at each of the local high schools. Nils Christoffersen is the lead instructor for the Natural History course with an enrollment of 17 local juniors and seniors, while Penny Arentsen is the lead instructor for Introduction to Geology (G101) with 7 local seniors. The “dual-credit” description indicates grades count towards both students’ respective high school transcripts and BMCC. Students will earn 4 credits for each course through BMCC.



The Natural History of Wallowa County (B161) was an introductory level course focusing on the study of living things, natural processes and human history. The course covered the geology, biology, ecology, and paleontology of Wallowa County for context, while also drawing on examples, illustrations and stories from other parts of the world. The course required students to develop some knowledge of specific fields of natural sciences, and to develop their own observational, recording and thinking skills with respect to the natural world and their place in it. Ultimately, the course sought to provide a real-world learning experience, which provided ideas and ways of approaching learning that may be life-long and are transferable from place to place. With ecosystems ranging from alpine to desert (with a 9,000 foot gradient!), Wallowa County is proved to be an excellent classroom for a Natural History course.

The Introduction to Geology (G101) course was an introduction to the physics and chemistry of Earth, including plate tectonics, seismology, magnetism, rock and mineral formation and identification, structural geology, and volcanology. Students gained a general understanding of the

internal processes which shape our planet, learned how to recognize some common rocks and minerals, and to read basic geologic maps and recognize geologic structures.

Following Geology 101 was Geology 103—Historical geology. This course gave students a general understanding of the processes that shaped our planet, and then allowed them to begin to interpret the past using geologic structures coupled with common fossils, rocks and minerals. Both of these geology courses relied heavily on field trips and explorations of local geologic formations. What better place to teach a geology course than in this natural classroom called Wallowa County, with an exotic terrane, world-class flood basalts, ancient Pacific Ocean fossils atop mountains, and textbook remnants of massive 2,500 feet thick glaciers – all evidence powerful geologic processes and millions of years of geologic history.

Looking ahead, based on the success of this year and funding for this program, we plan to offer more courses in the years to come and continue supporting and supplementing the education and lives of our future- our local youth.

Watershed Festival 2007

This summer marked our third annual Watershed Festival celebration at the Wallowa County Fairgrounds in Enterprise. A record number of participants, locals and visitors alike, joined us on the afternoon of Friday, June 29th to pay tribute to our local natural resources and their importance to our community. Everyone enjoyed the hands-on educational opportunities, as well as free locally grown grass-fed beef hamburgers and live music by local musicians. Wallowa Resources’ coordinates the festival in partnership with the Wallowa County Music Alliance and the Wallowa County Fair Board.

Many of our partner organizations, like Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife, Nez Perce Tribe Fisheries, and the US Forest Service provided excellent hands-on activities for participants. Visitors had the opportunity to participate in a variety of activities, from building a birdhouse to watching both sheep dogs and search and rescue dogs work. This year, to support our education programs, we raffled off prizes donated by local businesses and individuals.

Grass-fed beef was donated by Doug McDaniel and Gail Hammack, Cory Carman and Dave Flynn, Scott and Vicki McClaran, and the Mallory Family. Live music, sponsored by the Wallowa Valley Music Alliance and organized by Janis Carper, included the Weed Band, Madison Ribich, Brady Goss, Janis Carper, and the headliner, Recycleman.

Thank you again to everyone who volunteered and participated! We’re already looking forward to next year!

Wallowa Resources Welcomes New Board Members

Ken Wick has been a Wallowa County resident for over 40 years. He is the Principal Broker at Real Estate Associates in Joseph, OR. Ken has served on the Wallowa County Planning Commission for over 10 years with 4 terms as chairperson. The Wick family resides on and operates a 1,150-acre cattle/horse ranch, and has gained knowledge of the county and acreages in the County by direct experience. Ken started Outback Outfitters (a wilderness horse packing business) in the late 60’s, and operated it until 1992 when his oldest son took over. Ken then attended and graduated from the Metro School of Real Estate and became licensed in 1993. He is an Accredited Buyers Representative and is also a Graduate of the Realtors Institute. Ken’s wealth of knowledge is freely shared with persons seeking information regarding property and trends in Wallowa County.



Dr. James B. (Jim) Henson was appointed to the Board in October 2006, and was elected co-chair of the Board in February 2007. He received undergraduate (BS), professional (DVM) and graduate degrees (PhD) from Texas A & M University and Washington State University. He was a faculty

member at both universities, where he held faculty and administrative positions. He is retired from Washington State University where he last served as Director of International Programs, Professor of International Research and Development and Professor of Veterinary Pathology.

Prior to retirement, Jim conducted activities and planned and conducted projects and programs for human resource, economic and institutional/organizational development. He has served as a consultant and advisor for private sector/for profit, governmental, not for profit and international organizations in the US and in other countries. He has planned, implemented and evaluated projects and programs related to the natural environment, agriculture, business, agroforestry, animal health, and others.

He resides and has ranched in the northeastern part of Wallowa County for the last 8 years. Before that, he operated a ranch in Wheeler County.



“Learning from the land and caring for it are my passion.” **Liza Jane Nichols** is deeply invested in Wallowa County and believes that she has a responsibility in contributing to the long-term health of our community and its landscape. “We have a family ranching operation that has been in my family for nearly 120 years. My husband, Craig and I broke tradition 16 years ago when we purchased our first Corriente cows. Corriente cattle are a very special breed; hardy, tough, and great fun to be around.

“We have 4 children; James is attending University of Montana-Western and Adele is finishing her first year at Blue Mountain Community College. Our daughter, Laurie, lives in Washington with our two grandchildren, Dylan and Lily, and our son Mark was killed in an accident in 1996.

“For the past 14 years, in addition to working on our cattle ranch I have also held a job “off” the ranch. I was the Executive Director for Safe Harbors for 11 years, the East Region Manager for SMART reading program for 3 years, and I am currently employed as the Zumwalt Project Steward for The Nature Conservancy. Whenever possible, I treat myself to time spent fly-fishing or team roping.

“I’m excited to support Wallowa Resources as a Board member and look forward to contributing to its continued success.”

Hands on Lands: Watershed Stewardship Work Program

Jennifer Wing (OSU Intern)

High seasonal unemployment has burdened Wallowa County for a long time. The unemployment rate rises in the late fall, only to fall dramatically in June or July. For five to eight months out of the year many workers go without work, or with part-time work. Wallowa County is also host to 1.3 million acres of public land – land subject to 15 years of declining public investment in its management and care.

Hands on Lands is a pilot project in Wallowa County involving a partnership between diverse state agencies, the USFS, county government, local non-profits, and private contractors and businesses to improve the health of our public lands and larger landscapes, and provide family wage jobs to people in the community who are underemployed. Broader benefits include reducing the threat of wildfire and supporting secondary industries such as tourism, wood products companies, and others.

Wallowa Resources is part of the project steering committee and will work with the local contractors and the USFS to design and implement work sites and programs. Project fieldwork will include trail restoration, fuel reduction, and other forms of public land maintenance. Work will be done in the all three Ranger Districts, with crews moving to different sites depending on seasonal conditions. During favorable summer conditions, crews might work on trails and fuels priorities in the Eagle Cap Ranger District. In the late fall, winter and early spring, crews might work on trails in Hells Canyon. Federal, state and county job and family service organizations will provide additional job and organizational training to participants throughout the program to assist individuals in moving to full-time, year-round work. The most important outcome would be the development of individual job and life skills.

The U.S. has a long history of successful work programs that have committed public funds to the training and employment of adults rather than continued welfare support. These programs target public service projects on public land and in disadvantaged communities. The Hands to Lands project work program considers the development of people as an essential element of environmental conservation.

Wallowa Resources – 2006 Rise to the Future Partnership Award Winner

Alan Miller, Wallowa Mountains Zone Fisheries Biologist, Wallowa-Whitman National Forest

Wallowa Resources was recently recognized as an outstanding partner by the US Forest Service’s Rise to the Future Awards. Thank you to Alan Miller for submitting the nomination! Following are excerpts from Alan’s nomination letter:

Wallowa Resources, working as a member of the County’s Natural Resources Advisory Committee, has been the major partner with the Forest Service in the Upper Joseph Creek Collaborative Watershed Restoration Project. The goal of this project is to restore habitat for federally threatened Snake River steelhead.

Congratulations to Wallowa Resources for being awarded the National Rise to the Future Partnership Award! Thanks for all the help and hard work in making the Upper Joseph Creek Watershed Restoration Project a success and a nationally recognized project.

In addition to partnering on aquatic restoration projects, Wallowa Resources is a partner with the Forest Service in aquatic education in Wallowa



County. Wallowa Resources assists the Forest Service Wallowa Mountains Office (WMO) with the annual Free Fishing Day event in Enterprise, Oregon. Over 120 parents and kids participate annually in this event. Wallowa Resources also hosts the Watershed Festival, an annual event that mixes natural resource education and entertainment. Over 240 people participated in this event in 2006. The WMO participates in this event using a stream simulator, jointly constructed by the Forest Service and Wallowa Resources, to demonstrate natural stream processes. Wallowa Resources also uses the stream simulator for classroom projects in the local schools. For FY07, Wallowa Resources will assist in restoring nearly 17 miles of stream habitat in the Joseph Creek Watershed by: 1) removing/modifying instream structures along 8 miles of stream, 2) replacing two culverts that impede passage to 1.7 miles of spawning and rearing habitat, 3) planting native riparian shrubs along 6 miles of stream, 4) and decommissioning 4.6 miles of a draw bottom road that will result in the restoration of 1 mile of stream habitat. In FY08, Wallowa Resources and the Forest Service will decommission 3.3 miles of draw bottom road restoring 1.5 miles of steelhead habitat and plant native riparian shrubs along 4 miles of stream.

New Chapters and Fresh Horses

Diane Snyder

Often the chapters of a book are referenced with relation to how the lives of people unfold. Chapters, indeed! Some chapters are longer than others, some are sadder...happier... more prosperous...more pleasurable... more educational...more exciting.

Every once in a while, I wondered if there would be a chapter for my career after Wallowa Resources...and, if there were one what would it be? Over the past few months a mighty gust of wind has flipped the pages of my life suddenly and I now know the begin-



ning of my new chapter. On February 27th, I accepted the position of Vice President–Community Development of the US Endowment for Forests and Communities.

It’s exciting to know that I will be using the knowledge gained while working with Wallowa Resources in my new position as well as continuing the wonderful partnerships formed throughout the Northwest and the Nation. My participation will just be a bit different, that’s all.

The US Endowment was created just last September to promote sustainable forestry and provide aid to timber-reliant communities in the United States. The US Endowment is endowed with funds resulting from the

Softwood Lumber Agreement between the United States and Canada (for more information please visit www.usendowment.org).

And, so the new chapter begins. The same is true for Wallowa Resources. As I leave, the organization, staff and board also begin a new chapter. The good news is the great value produced by “fresh horses.”

It’s no secret why the Pony Express, Stage Coach Services and Wagon Masters frequently changed horses. Even though, they may have really liked the old horse, the new horse brought fresh eyes, ears and momentum to the journey that kept the pace from lagging behind. Well, I think Wallowa Resources will also benefit from “changing horses” and what a leader they’ve found. I’m thrilled that the Board of Directors has chosen to appoint Nils Christoffersen to the helm of Wallowa Resources. With great excitement, I await the continued blossoming and growth of the organization, board and staff with his leadership.

Wallowa Resources in the Future

*Joe McCormack and Jim Henson
Co-Chairs, Board of Directors*

Wallowa Resources recently celebrated its first decade with a diverse group of friends and partners – a decade of hard work, development and emerging successes. Successes in promoting and supporting stewardship; protecting and sustaining the natural environment; supporting business activities and jobs; assisting in the education of youth; and establishing and nurturing close relationships with the county, its communities and citizens. WR’s success and impacts were achieved because of

the support and assistance of county citizens and numerous partners across Oregon. Financial support totaling over \$1 million annually since 2003 has been provided by a number of individuals and organizations inside and outside Wallowa County. Over 75% of this funding has been passed onto contractors, businesses and students through contracts, equipment purchases and seasonal employment in the course of implementing our program of work. The balance supports the staff and operational overhead of Wallowa Resources.

As Wallowa Resources begins our second decade, it will build on its successes of the past and remain focussed on supporting the health and sustainability of lands and communities and their interdependencies in Wallowa County and the Intermountain West. However, it is a time of transition for Wallowa Resources as well as for the county. The organization has new leadership with the departure of Diane Snyder and the assumption of the Executive Directorship by Nils Christoffersen, the unanimous selection by the Board, in April 2007. It’s a time of transition in its programs exemplified by additional focus on private forest lands and their management, public land policy with place based participation, the assessment and improvement of watersheds, control of the invasion of noxious plants, the establishment of an education and research arm called Wallowa Mountain Institute, and diverse support to the natural resource based economy.

On behalf of the Board, we would like to take this opportunity to recognize the hard work, vision, dedication and leadership of Diane Snyder. Her new appointment to the US Endowment for Forestry and Communities Inc is further recognition of her capabilities and successes at Wallowa Resources and in service to the State of Oregon. Diane, we wish you well in your new job and we are glad that you will remain in

Wallowa County as you embark on your new endeavors.

The Board and staff of WR are dedicated to continuing to work in service to Wallowa County citizens, and in partnership with local organizations and communities. We will continue to seek your support and input in the coming year and beyond.

Training Wildland Firefighters

For the third year, Wallowa Resources provided training for local wildland firefighters. In April 60 local firefighters representing 14 local companies, participated in the training course.

Wallowa Resources offered the Basic Training that is required for all beginning firefighters to get their certification. Eighteen new firefighters participated in the full four-day training and were taught the basics of firefighting, such as fire behavior, survival skills and how to use basic firefighting equipment. In addition, Wallowa Resources offered the



Standard Training, which is required every year for firefighters to keep their certification. Thirty three fire fighters participated in this one day refresher training.

The training session concluded with the Work Capacity Fitness Test (Walk, Pack Test) monitored by IMST, Inc. Sixty local firefighters walked laps around the Joseph High School track, most packing 45 pounds of weight on their backs. Each company provides their own timer, who also serves as the coach and cheerleader to help them keep the pace as this physical endurance test has a time limit.

Wallowa Resources appreciates and supports our local firefighters, and their contribution to our personal safety and the health of our communities and forests.

Backyard Gardens: Meeting the Challenges of Local Food

By Brian Wood, Summer Intern

Eating in the U.S. is a perilous endeavor involving a lot more thought and effort than finding a meal at your local McDonalds. What we eat and who we buy it from directly affects what is grown and how it's produced, shipped, stored, and priced. Across the US, there's a new push toward eating and producing locally. This is evident with new diets like the "100-mile diet" where consumers are daring to eat dangerously and confine themselves (gasp!) to ONLY eating locally grown food. Backyard Gardens is meeting this new market of progressive consumers with amazing local food for Wallowa County.

I had the pleasure of apprenticing with Beth Gibans, creator of Backyard Gardens, for the 2006 growing season. The apprenticeship was a joint program of Backyard Gardens

and Wallowa Resources. Together we were on the front lines of the push for local and sustainable food systems in Wallowa County. These lines are being tilled and planted from sun up until sun down all summer long. Bringing local food to market is no easy task and involves a dedication on the part of the farmer that is surely unmatched in other professions. Many a morning, Beth and I were up before the sun racing to get the greens washed before the heat of the day came up and tried wilting our efforts.

Despite the sun's best attempts to thwart our efforts, we were generally successful in bringing the freshest veggies to market twice a week and filling a bountiful amount of weekly orders. At the peak of the season, Backyard Gardens can rival any supermarket produce department in variety and accessibility.

During my stay in Wallowa County, with Beth as my mentor, I was schooled in all aspects of small-scale locally based organic gardening. Together we explored the realities of being in the field all day, transplanting at inopportune times, and braving the cold because the demands of the field just can't wait. Beth surely was aware of these demands that the field and weather could exert upon a farmer, but for me it was a real experience to be treasured. There's nothing better than realizing your dreams and still being amazed on a daily if not hourly basis of the impact of your efforts on the world around you. Farming, with the beautiful backdrop of the Wallowa Mountains, brought my dreams of being a farmer to a beautiful reality. "The link between good health and eating a healthy diet, including more locally grown fruits and vegetables, is undeniable," said New Jersey's Secretary of Agriculture Charles Kuperus. Beth, and Backyard Gardens, is a link to good personal health, as well as the health of the county and the world at large.

Headin’ Downriver: Lower Joseph Creek

Erin Melville

Under the leadership of the Wallowa County Natural Resources Advisory Committee, the Lower Joseph Creek Watershed Assessment is underway and the clock is ticking!

Wallowa Resources is again serving as the facilitator and coordinator. We are utilizing the Community Planning Process to conduct the assessment, like we did in her sister watershed, Upper Joseph Creek. This approach unites interest groups in a collaborative process of field inventories and an evaluation of resource conditions. Together, all participants develop recommendations that benefit the watershed and, ultimately, the surrounding community tied to that landscape.

It is too soon to call the Upper Joseph Creek Watershed initiative a full-blown success, but several high priority projects resulting from that process have been implemented. Wallowa Resources and the USFS, with funding from BPA, OWEB and others, have removed 132 barriers to open over 36 miles of good upstream habitat for juvenile steelhead, and installed 41 off-channel water sources to improve the availability of upland water for livestock and wildlife. Local contractors have completed all of this in the last two field seasons.

Much important work remains. The collaborative identified strong need for restoration and stewardship of the forest stands. Forest treatments were initiated this winter within the Arroz Stewardship Contract. We will continue to push for implementation of projects of that type. The considerable

investments by the community and diverse partners should be rewarded by accomplishments on the ground. The ecological needs are too great to let the assessment gather dust.

So, why are we moving to assess Lower Joseph Creek already? It may take more time to get those larger scale projects moving; but once we do, we want to build more continuity in the work on public land. To that effect we need to have good projects lined up and ready to go in the next basin. Those projects will be designed to maintain or improve all resource conditions, generating benefits for both people and the land.

Ultimately, work in both sub-watersheds projects should be integrated. That is, the projects should complement each other and their implementation should benefit as many resources as possible. As trust and relationships build in the collaborative, our priorities can move from what is easy and focus on what is needed, based on the breadth of resource conditions affected and the tools and strategies we have to get the job done right.

Stay tuned for further developments on this exciting collaborative process.

News from Elsewhere

Oregon Small Woodlands Association

Government subsidy programs, corporate influences on the marketplace, competition with imports, conflict about natural resource management and the cost of doing business with high levels of environmental regulation are factors that influence small producers in America today. These influences also impact small communities who once relied economically on the public lands that surround them.

Americans are not buying their food and fiber primarily from American producers any more. In fact, American’s aren’t even paying the “real” price of production. The resultant impacts are being seen across the west as rural producers and generational landowners are only able to “live the American dream” economically by developing their land...rather than continuing to nurture the landscape in natural resource production.

In 2000, Karl Stauber wrote an abstract titled, “Why Invest in Rural America – And How?” in which he introduces the notion that a social contract between urban and rural America has disappeared.

We need community-based solutions that can inform rural development programs and the American public, assist small producers and public lands communities, and build strong market relationships that add value to non-commodity products. We need to re-establish the social contract. One opportunity may be emerging in Community Based Forestry.

Community Based Forestry is a nascent movement in isolated areas of the United States. It has emerged from the gridlock of special interest conflict over natural resource management, and in response to the damage inflicted on watersheds, wildlife and public land communities alike. Over the past 10-15 years, pockets of leadership have slowly and methodically been established and the cumulative social, economic and environmental impacts are beginning to attract attention.

Wallowa Resources is one example. It is an actively growing non-profit, community based organization in Northeast Oregon with a mission to promote natural resource stewardship, prosperous families, and a broader understanding of the links between community well-being and ecosystem health. Throughout the last ten years,

Wallowa Resources has collaborated with growing numbers of state, federal and tribal agencies, local businesses, land owners, environmental organizations, educational institutions, special interest groups, local, as well as state and regional representatives to bring stewardship projects, the associated business opportunities, and natural resource education to Wallowa County.

Recognizing the need to understand the economic and social dynamics of the community as well as biophysical conditions of the landscape, Wallowa Resources’ work has focused on creating a more diversified economy. Such an economy provides opportunities for local people and businesses, maintains the skilled workforce as well as traditional land uses, and creates new working relationships with the land. Wallowa Resources has worked with wood products manufacturers and forest contractors to take advantage of new job and market opportunities in resource stewardship, bio-energy production, and value-added processing of the by-products of management. Wallowa Resources’ has also worked hard to broaden people’s awareness about the issues facing natural resource producers and to build capacity in this community to capture new types of benefits and opportunities. The work of Community Based Forestry groups like Wallowa Resources can serve to inform decision-makers as well as the American marketplace about the critical role of small producers in our communities and on the landscape. Our political system and our national marketplace need to make influential changes.

Collectively, we need to address the inequity that exists for natural resource producers. We must recognize the valuable role a working landscape offers in supplying food, fiber, habitat for fish and wildlife, clean air and fresh water...to our nation and our world...by paying for it.



Land Board Awards 2005

Stream Project Award

**Wallowa River - McDaniel Habitat Restoration Project
Lostine, Oregon**

Property owners Doug McDaniel and Gail Hammack worked with a variety of public agencies and organizations to undertake the project in 1998 to restore a half-mile, channelized reach of the Wallowa River, and reestablish native vegetation in the area. The project was completed in August 2005.

The primary purpose of the project was to improve instream habitat diversity and water quality for adult and juvenile summer steelhead and spring Chinook salmon. Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife biologists observed steelhead spawning in the restored channel in spring 2005, which will result in several thousand juvenile fish.

Project partners included the landowners, Wallowa Resources (project sponsors), Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (lead technical agency), USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service, Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation and the Grand Ronde Model Watershed Program. Funding for the project was provided by the Bonneville Power Administration and the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board.



Restored channel of the Wallowa River on the McDaniel/Hammack property near Lostine

Whitman College students plant native vegetation along Wallowa River



"Promoting Healthy Lands and Communities"

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Did you know, in addition to the articles presented here, Wallowa Resources is working on a broad variety of educational, range stewardship, natural resource, policy and watershed restoration projects throughout Wallowa County? To find out more about what is happening at Wallowa Resources, just go to www.WallowaResources.org or call us at 541-426-8053 Today!



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