



A river rally in Oregon to remove the Lower Snake River Dams. Photo by Pam Clough.

Hells Bells - June 2022

June was another busy month at GHCC. We brought litigation against the U.S. Forest Service to restore protections for large and old trees across over 7 million acres of Eastern Oregon and Washington. GHCC, alongside our co-litigants, was featured in many articles announcing the lawsuit, including [this one in The Washington Post](#).

Washington Governor Jay Inslee and Senator Patty Murray's draft outline for the lower Snake River basin came out this month. The report outlining the logistics, costs, and economic impacts of the effort to save the river's salmon runs and remove the four Lower Snake River Dams is open for public comment through July 11.

June was also a transition month for GHCC. We said goodbye to Conservation Director Veronica Warnock at the start of the month, and at the end of June, Executive Director Darilyn Parry Brown steps away. Together they encompass nearly 30 years of service to GHCC and our mission. We wouldn't be the organization we are today if it wasn't for their dedication and hard work toward a thriving future for the Greater Hells Canyon Region. With tremendous gratitude, we wish both Darilyn and Veronica success in their next chapters.

And, as if a switch flipped, the summer solstice brought long awaited sunshine and warm days to the Greater Hells Canyon Region. The cold and wet spring delayed a few of our outings, and we are now ready to start our field season. We hope you can [join the search for bumblebee nests](#) near La Grande (July 9-10), and we will have more outings to share as the summer progresses.

Continue reading for a full update from the past month.



Take Action to Protect Oregon's Forests

Why we sued the Forest Service over the Eastside Screens

On June 14, GHCC, along with Oregon Wild, Central Oregon LandWatch, Great Old Broads for Wilderness, WildEarth Guardians, and the Sierra Club, [filed a lawsuit over the Forest Service's decision to eliminate a provision of the Eastside Screens](#) that prohibited the logging of trees larger than 21" in diameter impacting 7 million acres of national forests across Eastern Oregon and Washington. The Screens amendment replaced an enforceable standard protecting large trees with a loosely worded guideline. Following the amendment, large tree logging is already being proposed in multiple timber sales on multiple forests.

We did not want to engage in litigation, and we hope the agency can find a solution that doesn't require a lengthy legal battle. You can [support this effort by urging the Biden Administration to withdraw the decision](#) amending the Eastside Screens, restore protections for the large and old trees of Eastern Oregon and Southeast Washington, and work in good faith with all stakeholders to craft a solution, as promised over two decades ago.

Upcoming Events and Outings

- **Bumblebee Surveys - July 9-10 at Union County Fairgrounds:** This year, we're teaming up with our partners at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) to train detection dogs to find bumblebee nests by scent. These outings will aim to find nests that

we can use for the training. Please join us for this critical effort to protect high quality habitat for threatened pollinators at all stages of their life cycle. [More information, including how to sign up, is available on our website.](#)

- **WMHCTA Trail Work on the Blue Mountains Trail - July 6-10 Twin Lakes Trail:** Join the crew with Wallowa Mountains Hells Canyon Trail Association to clear the 2.5-mile trail between Twin Lakes and Blue Hole on the Imnaha River. The group will be car camping at the Twin Lakes Campground and day hiking each day down the trail to Blue Hole to clear logs and brush. They can use several more people for this project, located on a potential alternate route for the Blue Mountains Trail. [Sign up on the WMHCTA website.](#)

Please [email Jared Kennedy](#) if you'd like to take part in any of the volunteer opportunities above, or to be included on our volunteer list for future opportunities.

Learn more about: **Energy Development Siting and Impacts on Protected Areas**

In Oregon, when developers propose an energy project such as the Boardman to Hemingway (B2H) Transmission Line, their application must be reviewed by Oregon's Energy Facility Siting Council (EFSC). Oregon's EFSC is required to follow specific rules when reviewing an application for an energy development for a project such as B2H.



Powerlines through the forest. Photo by Brian Kelly.

Oregon is currently updating these rules for Protected Areas, Scenic Resources, and Recreation Standards. This is important because these new rules will determine the future levels of

protection (or lack of protection) for these important values. Brian Kelly, GHCC's Restoration Director, [shares more about how this process works](#) and why it's important that groups like GHCC advocate for protections in EFSC's rulemaking.

Other news we're following...

Gov. Inslee and Sen. Murray's Draft Lower Snake River Dams Report

On June 9, Washington Governor Jay Inslee and Senator Patty Murray released their draft report on replacing the benefits provided by the Lower Snake River Dams to save the river's salmon runs. It takes a detailed look at the role the dams play in the region's transportation, agriculture, energy, recreation and communities, as well as the impact on salmon recovery and habitat restoration. [The draft report is available online](#) and [the opportunity to submit public comments is open through July 11, 2022](#). While the draft report does not make a recommendation on whether or not the dams should be breached, the Governor and Senator plan to release a final report in summer 2022 with "recommendations on a path forward for the region." GHCC will provide more information on the report and public comment process in a forthcoming email announcement.

Why We Need a Naturalist Renaissance

"To be a naturalist, you need not go far. You need not be a scientist or a full-time observer. You need only to be curious and open-minded. Naturalists are never bored and often delighted. They have a purpose that does not require an assignment or justification. Their 'work' is to head into the field ready to notice all that unfurls "from ferns to the spiraling notes of a Swainson's Thrush." In a world where biodiversity is in critical decline, naturalists are needed now more than ever. Spending time observing wildlife and the natural world will surely make you love it and join the effort to protect what we can. [Read author and GHCC Board Member Marina Richie's full treatise in July/August 2022 issue of BirdWatching magazine.](#)

Job Openings at GHCC and in the Region

Help our region thrive by sharing these job openings.

- **Idaho Conservation League** is hiring a Marketing Manager and more positions. [See the full list of job openings here](#). (Boise, open until filled).
- **Oregon Rural Action** has open positions for a [Director of Community Organizing](#) (Eastern Oregon, open until filled), a [Rural Energy Organizer](#) (La Grande, open until filled), and a [Director of Finance and Administration](#) (Eastern Oregon, open until filled).
- **Wallowa Avalanche Center** is hiring a part-time seasonal [Development Director](#) (NE

Oregon, applications due by June 30, 2022).

- **Wallowa Land Trust** is hiring a [Conservation Program Manager](#) (Enterprise, open until filled).



GHCC works to protect, connect, and restore the lands, waters, native species, and climate resiliency of the ecologically magnificent Greater Hells Canyon Region.

[Join us](#) in protecting the Greater Hells Canyon Region today and for future generations! A monthly contribution, large or small, adds so much stability to our financial planning and lets us focus our energies on conservation instead of fundraising.

Darilyn Parry Brown, GHCC Executive Director

By joining GHCC's River Runner program for \$10/month or more, we'll include a special gift celebrating GHCC and the Greater Hells Canyon Region.

[Find out more here, and sign up today!](#)

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