



Catherine Creek. Photo by David Jensen.

Hells Bells - November 2022

Happy Thanksgiving and Native American Heritage Day from all of us at Greater Hells Canyon Council! We are grateful for the engagement and support so many of you have provided this year toward a thriving Greater Hells Canyon Region.

In November we welcomed Jamie Dawson to our team. As GHCC's conservation director, she heads up our work advocating for public lands and intact forests across the northern Blue Mountains. We introduce her in more detail below, along with other announcements, updates, and upcoming events you won't want to miss.

Elemental Virtual Screening - Dec. 14



With fire seasons growing more destructive and more deadly, we see that the current approach to reducing wildfire risk is failing. The way we respond to this risk will have long-term effects on our communities and our forests.

Join GHCC and the Rural Cinema Project for a private screening of the critically-acclaimed Oregon-made documentary **ELEMENTAL**, a film that invites you to reimagine your relationship with wildfire ([watch the trailer](#)). The documentary features extensive footage and interviews, and provides solutions to keep our homes and communities safe. Learn about fire through the eyes of top scientists and indigenous fire managers who are leading the way toward living with this essential element.

After watching the film, we will host a Q&A with the filmmaker, Ralph Bloemers, hosted by Meadow Wheaton from Rural Cinema Project.

Join the virtual screening on Wednesday, December 14 at 6:00pm PT

[Register Now](#)

The virtual viewing is free. A link to join the viewing through Vimeo will be provided once you have registered. Attendance is limited to 100 registrations.

Welcome Jamie Dawson!



We are excited to welcome [Jamie Dawson](#) to GHCC as our newest team member. As Conservation Director, she will lead our [protections program](#), forwarding our goals for lasting protection of interconnected wildlands and free-flowing waters within the Greater Hells Canyon Region.

Before landing in Wallowa County, Jamie lived and worked in some of the West's most beautiful and remote landscapes, including Northwest Montana and Alaska's Copper River Basin. She loves to spend time exploring wild places, running rivers, and chasing turkeys and elk on our public lands.

Learn More About: [Forbs in the Blues](#)

Pacific Northwest Bunchgrass grasslands are one of the most endangered ecosystems in the world. In the Greater Hells Canyon Region, large tracts of intact native prairie and canyon grasslands remain, but they face impacts ranging from poor grazing practices to invasive species and climate change.

Bunchgrass traditionally gets the spotlight in these ecosystems, but forb species (wildflowers!, etc.) comprise a stunning ~80% of these grasslands' vascular plant diversity, and support a multitude of wildlife. Forbs have not been well studied or monitored—in part because most surveying and monitoring happens in midsummer, when the majority of forbs have already senesced. Our failure to pay attention to forbs biases our understanding of these ecosystems' characteristics and dynamics, hampers their balanced management, and underrepresents species important to the Tribes of the Columbia Plateau, who traditionally use more than 30 grassland forb species for ceremony, sustenance and medicine.



Zumwalt, May 2022. Photo by Christina deVillier.

[This recent paper](#)—a collaboration between the Natural Resources Department at the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, the Umatilla National Forest, and researchers at Oregon State University—highlights forb species that are important to Plateau Tribes and demonstrates the need for monitoring in spring to better reflect forbs' actual abundance and diversity on the landscape.

This work is a strong, recent, local example of how scientific inquiries stemming from traditional ecological relationships can broaden the foundations, metrics, and methodologies for responsible management of ecosystems in our region and around the world. Our Nez Perce collaborators in the [Camas to Condors Partnership](#) are working to expand the data collection that made this work possible into the Wallowa Whitman National Forest next year.

Other News We're Following...

Klamath dam removals get final approval to proceed

This month the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission unanimously approved the plan to remove four dams on the Klamath River. Removing all four dams will reconnect salmon to hundreds of river miles of spawning habitat in Oregon and Washington. The first of the four dams will be removed as early as summer 2023, and in early 2024, the other three dams will be drained down to return the river to its free flowing state. While it is the biggest dam removal project to be approved, we hope to see an even larger project to remove the four lower Snake River dams happen in the coming years. [Read more on OPB.](#)

Fish biologists in support of the River Democracy Act

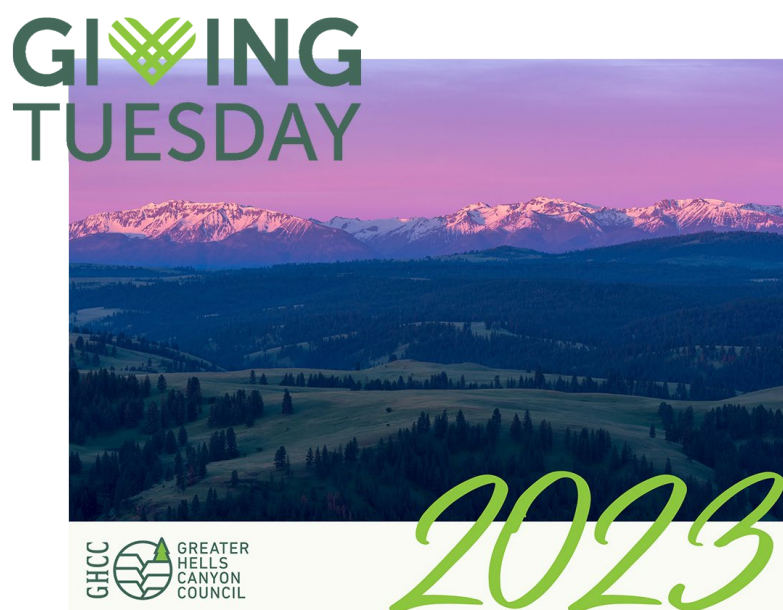
26 fish biologists working in the Pacific Northwest penned a letter to Oregon's senators in support of the River Democracy Act. The letter highlights why protecting more of Oregon's waterways with Wild and Scenic River designation is an important step to safeguarding spawning streams and cold water habitat, and notes that over 40% of fish species are

threatened due to human impacts to watersheds. [You can read the full letter here.](#)

Reintroducing grizzlies to the North Cascades is again being considered

Grizzly bears once roamed all of Washington before they were hunted to extinction in the state. Now, as some bears return on their own from Canada, the National Park Service is considering deliberately reintroducing the bears to North Cascades National Park. NPS scientists began looking into the plan during the Obama administration, but efforts were put to a halt under Donald Trump. [This Seattle Times article](#) has more details on the effort. You can also [provide public comment](#) and [sign a statement supporting the effort](#) through Friends of the North Cascades Grizzly Bear organized by Conservation Northwest.

Support the BMT this Giving Tuesday!



Are you planning to support your favorite non-profit's this Giving Tuesday? **This year, we're directing all donations made through Giving Tuesday to support the Blue Mountains Trail.** Our goal is to raise \$10,000 — all proceeds directly support our Blue Mountains Trail Coordinator and the work that can be accomplished through this role.

And there's more great news! A generous donor has offered us [\\$5,000 with a matching gift challenge](#). Help us match this amount dollar-for-dollar to reach our goal.

You don't have to wait until November 29 to give! If you donate at least \$35 between now and December 6, you will also receive a copy of GHCC's 2023 Calendar.

[Donate for the Blue Mountains Trail](#)



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! We have a big vision for the future of the Greater Hells Canyon Region, and your support is critical to making it happen.

Emily Cain, 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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