

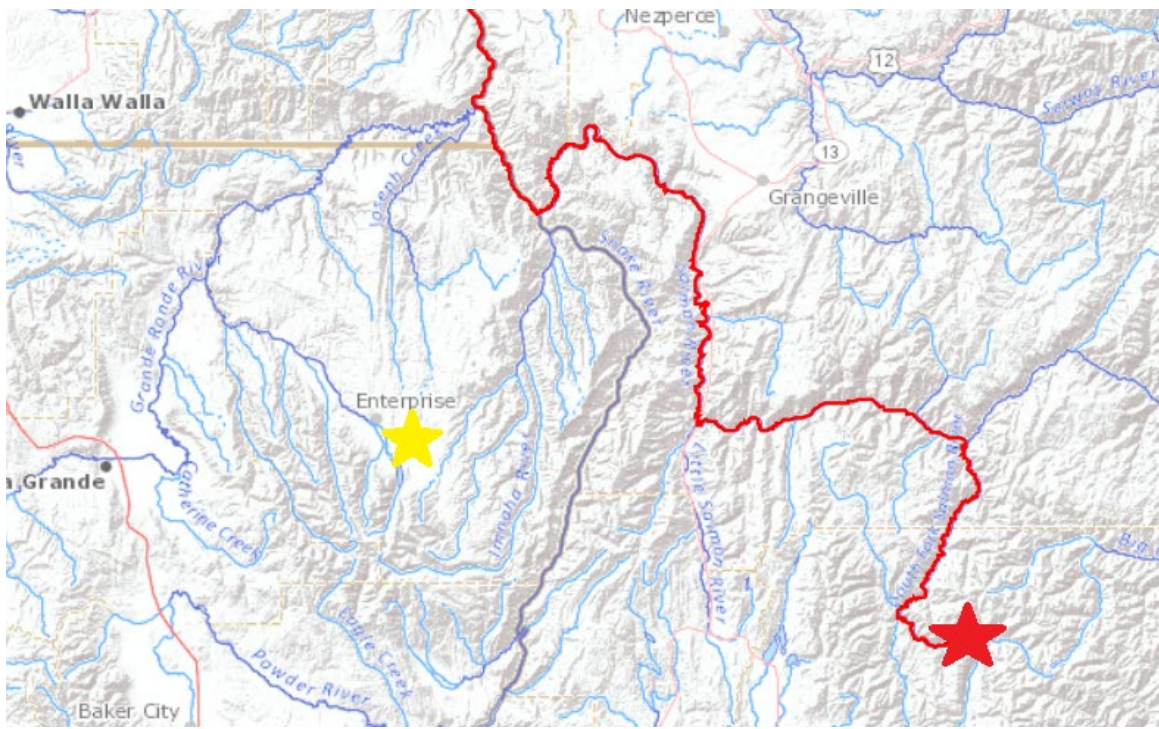


Photo by Leon Werdinger.

Hells Bells - January 2023

Happy New Year! We are kicking off 2023 with a commitment to engaging more with you, our members and supporters across the Pacific Northwest. In the coming months, we'll be sharing opportunities with you to join us on outings, hikes and summer campouts, information nights and presentations about our work, citizen science projects, and other fun ways to get involved with our work. In the meantime, read on for recent updates from our staff and collaborators.

Stopping Idaho's Stibnite Mine



The rough location of the Stibnite Gold Project and everything downstream of it. Map from USGS Streamer.

The Stibnite Gold Project is seeking a permit to mine gold and antimony on public lands in Idaho near the headwaters of the South Fork Salmon River. The project would utilize open pit mines and cyanide leaching to extract gold and antimony at the headwaters of the river. Consider for a moment the path cyanide (lethal to humans and other species even in small doses) would take through the watershed if the mine leaked. It would enter the East Fork South Fork Salmon River, and continue into the mainstem Salmon River, impacting the recreation hub of Riggins and its fish guides and raft companies, before reaching the Snake River.

We joined numerous groups, including Save the South Fork Salmon and the Nez Perce Tribe, to push back against this proposal. Read more about the issue and our efforts in this [blog post by Jamie Dawson](#).

From the Vault: A Musical Float in Hells Canyon

In 1972, the effort to keep the High Mountain Sheep Dam from being built in Hells Canyon was in full swing. Attorneys from the Sierra Club, along with budding environmental activists at the newly-formed Hells Canyon Preservation Council (the former name of Greater Hells Canyon Council), were organizing to the Snake River flowing freely through America's deepest gorge.

Pete Seeger, joined by musicians, renowned mountaineers, activists, and local river runners, took a special float trip down the Snake. Along the way, he wrote "*Hell's Canyon / Don't Ask What a River Is For*." [This video](#) includes the original recording of the song, along with other classic folks songs sung by Seeger and others on their float trip.



We hope you enjoy this snapshot of Greater Hells Canyon Council's history. A huge thanks is due to Larry Williams for sharing this with us, and an even bigger thanks is due to Larry, Brock Evans, Doug Scott, and many others for their incredible conservation legacy.

Stop B2H Makes its Case at the Oregon Supreme Court



StopB2H attorney Karl Anuta presents oral arguments at the Oregon Supreme Court.

A challenge brought by Stop B2H and other concerned parties to the Oregon Supreme Court were heard on January 18, 2023. Attorneys Karl Anuta and Hailey McAllister presented their case against the Energy Facility Siting Council (EFSC) permit approval for Idaho Power's Boardman-to-Hemingway transmission line through Union County, Oregon.

A ruling by the court will be issued around June. A recorded video of the oral arguments, along with more updates on the Stop B2H effort, are available on the [group's website](#).

The Blue Mountains Trail Turns 2!



This month marks the second anniversary of the Blue Mountains Trail. In just two years, we've had multiple hikers complete the full route. Even more trail users have hiked sections of the trail using our maps and materials. We've maintained and improved over 40 miles of trails in the region in partnership with the Wallowa Mountain Hells Canyon Trails Association, the Blues Crew, Malheur National Forest, and with the support of a growing number of volunteers. We have also hosted or presented informational sessions, including Oregon Wild's webinar series, at PCT Days, with Advocates for the West, to the Mazamas Mountaineering Club, and to the Oregon Outdoors Alliance.

As we enter our third year on the Blue Mountains Trail, we are excited to bring on Trail Coordinator Pip Redding year-round to lead the next stage of trail development. [Sign up for our Blue Mountains Trail newsletter](#) to receive regular updates and ways to get involved, [follow the trail on Instagram](#), and [click here if you'd like to receive a free Blue Mountains Trail sticker](#) (pictured above).

Other News We're Following...

90% of the Western U.S. relies on water from national forests and grasslands

A recent study by the U.S. Forest Service found that federal lands in the national forest

system play a critical role in providing clean drinking water. In fact, 90% of people living in the West rely on water flowing from federal forests and grasslands. As climate change and land management practices on federal lands impact the abundance and quality of surface water, the report highlights another reason why protecting large parts of our national forests is so important. [Read more about this research in an article from the Oregon Capital Chronicle.](#)

North America's Oldest Known Stone Points Found in Idaho Along the Salmon River

According to archaeologists at Oregon State University, stone points discovered between 2012 and 2017 at a site alongside the Salmon River in Idaho are approximately 15,700 years old. The find is notable since it predates the Clovis points, which were formerly the oldest known stone points in North America, by 3,000 years. The Nipéhe-Cooper's Ferry site in Idaho where the points were found has also provided many other proofs of early human settlement on the continent. The site is on ancestral lands of the Nez Perce Tribe, and it is currently managed by the Bureau of Land Management. [An article in the Willamette Week has more information about the find.](#)



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

We have a big vision for the future of the Greater Hells Canyon Region, and your support is critical to making it happen. [Join us!](#)
- 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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