



Winter on the Elkhorn Crest Trail. Photo by Renee Patrick.

Blue Mountains Trail News - Winter 2022

The Blue Mountains Trail is currently under a thick layer of snow, so while our hiking boots and ultralight packs are tucked away awaiting warmer weather, it's a great time to share what's to come this spring on the Blue Mountains Trail.

Community Engagement Workshops

With financial support from Eastern Oregon Visitors Association, we will be conducting a series of community engagement workshops in 2022 and 2023 to ensure that individuals, businesses, and organizations in each town and community on the Blue Mountains Trail are aware of the effort and have a chance engage with our team on what the trail means for their community. First up will be in La Grande and Sumpter in late spring. While the planning is now underway, dates are yet to be determined. We are grateful to be working with students from Eastern Oregon University's Sustainable Rural Systems program on additional fundraising for these workshops, as well as implementation assistance. If you would like to attend or learn more about how to be a part of these workshops, send me an email using [this email link](#).

Updated Hiker Maps and Databook

This past year, we made some small but meaningful route improvements, cleared brush and downed trees and marked the route through bushwhacks and spots with tricky wayfinding. These changes will be captured in updated CalTopo hiking maps and a 2022 databook to be released this spring. We'll notify you here when they are available. If you are planning a hike and want to be on the list to receive these maps first, email me using [this email link](#).

Volunteer Trail Stewardship Opportunities

In the coming months, we will begin our seasonal emails with scheduled volunteer trail maintenance work parties on the Blue Mountains Trail and elsewhere in the Blue Mountains. We are looking forward to working with the [Blues Crew](#) and [Wallowa Mountains Hells Canyon Trail Association](#) again this year on projects on the Wallowa Whitman, Umatilla, and Malheur National Forests. We'll supply the tools, and promise to throw in some fun extras as well. If you would like to be on our volunteer list, please email me using [this email link](#).

Welcome new sponsors and supporters!

We are so grateful to have the support of so many businesses and organizations as we develop Oregon's newest long distance hiking route. Join us in welcoming the support of these great partners who are making a sustaining contribution. Their support is key to our ability to hire a Trail Coordinator to support hikers, continue our trail maintenance work, and conduct community engagement workshops in the towns on the Blue Mountains Trail in 2022.



Eastern Oregon Visitors Association will provide GHCC with critical funding to support the Blue Mountains Trail community engagement workshops starting this spring. The team at [EOVA](#) has been supporting the Blue Mountains Trail since its launch last year. In addition to funding, they have provided numerous connections to organizations and businesses who are working to build the region's recreation infrastructure and market Eastern Oregon as a destination for visitors to enhance regional economic vitality and the quality of life for all residents.



CNOC Outdoors makes some of the best ultralight gear that you'll find in the packs of many

long distance hikers. We're huge personal fans of the [Vecto](#) water container, field tested on many miles of the Blue Mountains Trail. CNOC takes its [commitment to the environment and giving back](#) seriously, which is beyond impressive given they do it all with just three employees. CNOC will also be joining GHCC as a business partner for [Earth Day Oregon](#) this year.

TERMINAL GRAVITY

— BREWING —



Terminal Gravity has been making great beer in Wallowa County for 25 years. A thru-hike on the Blue Mountains Trail invariably starts (or ends) with a few pints of their [award-winning beer](#) and great food at Terminal Gravity's [Enterprise Brew Pub](#). Terminal Gravity has supported local causes in Wallowa County since its founding in 1997. We're honored and grateful for their support of GHCC and the Blue Mountains Trail.



A backyard gathering in La Grande presenting the vision and plan for the Blue Mountains Trail. Photo by Charles Jones.

Help us develop the Blue Mountains Trail

Launching the Blue Mountains Trail has been a largely volunteer effort to date, from setting the route, creating the hikers maps and databook, and the especially the work on the trail to groundtruth the route and start our trail maintenance efforts. We are so grateful to have received grant support from [Travel Oregon](#), [Eastern Oregon Visitors Association](#), and financial support from our [business sponsors](#).

We were able to hire Pip Redding as our part-time summer trail coordinator last year, and while we plan to hire a part-time coordinator again this summer, by 2023 we want to bring on a full-time Blue Mountains Trail coordinator. A full-time coordinator will allow us to better support hikers, work with individuals and businesses in the communities on the trail, ramp up our volunteers stewardship network, and better partner with affiliated trail organizations in the Blues. It's a key piece of our effort to ramp up our capacity and make the Blue Mountains Trail a world class hiking destination and experience.

A gift of any size means so much. Consider becoming a GHCC River Runner with a monthly sustaining gift, or give over \$35, and we'll include a 2022 GHCC calendar featuring the Blue Mountains Trail or another gift of your choice. All funds will be reserved for and applied to our trail development efforts.

[Donate now to support the Blue Mountains Trail](#)



Joseph Branch Trail

Do you know of the other big trail project in Northeast Oregon? The **Joseph Branch Trail Consortium (JBTC)** is a nonprofit organization working to establish a 63-mile trail-with-rail alongside existing railroad tracks that run between the towns of Elgin and Joseph. The group is currently developing the trail's western-most trailhead in downtown Elgin, where it will also serve as a city pocket park with more great amenities. The full trail will run out of Elgin along the Grande Ronde and Wallowa rivers, connecting the towns of Elgin, Minam, Wallowa, Lostine, Enterprise, and Joseph. Learn more about this exciting trail project at the [JBTC website](#), follow them on [Facebook](#), and sign up to receive the latest updates via their [monthly e-Newsletter](#).



Hiking along the Western Rim Trail. Photo by Naomi Hudetz

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!

Darilyn Parry Brown, GHCC Executive Director

Want a Blue Mountains Trail sticker? [Click here to request one today.](#)

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