



Winter Pines by Charles Jones.

Hells Bells - February 2023

This past month was as busy as ever, as we completed annual work plans and rolled up our sleeves on project work in the region. We visited the open house for and submitted comments on the Tiger Mill project slated for Walla Walla's Mill Creek municipal watershed, approved the next 2-year strategic plan for the Blue Mountains Trail, and we provided supporting commentary for some of the bills under debate in Oregon's legislative session (see more on this below). And as we began to welcome signs of spring with longer days and the return of redwing blackbirds to Wallowa County, winter reminded us it wasn't yet ready to say goodbye.

Oregon Legislative Round-up



Wild buckwheat growing on the Zumwalt Prairie.

Oregon's legislative session is underway. Here at GHCC, we are supporting two important efforts - HB 3159 (Recovering Oregon's Wildlife Fund) and SB 530 (Natural Climate Solutions).

HB 3159 supports long-term, dedicated funding to prevent the decline of Oregon's most imperiled fish, wildlife, and the plants and habitats they rely upon. In addition to meeting Oregon's established carbon emission reduction goals, we must scale up Oregon's carbon sequestration. SB 530 will help Oregon achieve the 2035 and 2050 goals recommended by the Oregon Global Warming Commission.

Please join GHCC and many groups and citizens around the state in supporting tangible, meaningful, and common-sense solutions to protecting our incredible natural systems. Read more about the issue and how to show your support in this [blog post by Emily Cain](#).

Camas to Condors



Tiyana Casey at a recent C2C outing. Photo by Meadow Wheaton.

For the past several months, Nez Perce descendant Meadow Wheaton has been working with GHCC on film screenings and other communications for the Camas to Condors (C2C) Partnership. Meadow is a media student at the University of Idaho, and previously worked as an Americorps volunteer with the Nez Perce Tribe's climate team. We're grateful to Meadow for helping to host a virtual screening of *Elemental*, and for digging through her archive of Partnership photos to help us set up a [C2C landing page](#) on our website. You'll be hearing more from Meadow in the months and years to come, we're sure!

How to Volunteer this Year with GHCC



Clearing trail in the Strawberry Mountain Wilderness. Photo by Jared Kennedy.

There are many ways to get involved with GHCC and the Blue Mountains Trail. We are always thrilled to work with our members, supporters, and conservation advocates. In 2023, we are creating some new and exciting opportunities for you to join us to connect, protect, and restore the Greater Hells Canyon Region.

If you are interested in volunteering with us this year, be it at a trail stewardship event, doing wildlife and wilderness surveys, monitoring and community science projects, or joining us on a GHCC-led outing, we've created a survey that will help us know where to direct you and which opportunities to send your way. Completing this survey should take 5 minutes or less of your time. Thank you — we're excited to hang out with you!

[GHCC Volunteer Survey](#)

Learn More About: Strategic Forest Reserves in Oregon

The latest research from prominent ecologists in Oregon, Dr. Beverly Law, Dr. Logan Berner, Dr. David Mildrexler, Ralph Bloemers, and Dr. William Ripple, illustrates how and which forests across Oregon can contribute most to climate change mitigation and adaptation. The study includes key criteria for protecting biodiversity, water and carbon storage, with a goal of achieving preservation targets of 30% of lands and waters protected by 2030, and 50% by 2050. The study includes in depth analysis of forests in Oregon's Blue

Mountains Ecoregion; of Oregon's 10 ecoregions, the Blue Mountains has the most forested acreage. [Read the full study in the Frontiers in Forests and Global Change.](#)

Other News We're Following...

Restoring Wallowa River

We enjoyed reading this recent OPB article focused on landowner Ian Wilson's work restoring the Wallowa River. A sizable grant allowed Wilson to focus on how the river can better support fish, beavers, and other wildlife, and it quickly led to the desired outcomes of the project. [Read the full article on OPB.](#)

Toxoplasma is Killing the Regions Bighorn Lambs

Toxoplasma gondii, a small parasite that commonly impacts domestic sheep, as well as cats and humans, is having a devastating impact on the region's wild bighorn sheep. A high percentage of newborn lambs are dying, and many have been infected with the toxoplasma parasite. At this point, scientists and wildlife biologists are still dealing with a number of unknowns, and they are calling for more targeted study and increased monitoring of wild sheep populations. [Read the full article on OPB.](#)



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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