



One month in — it has already been a year

Before we dive into our usual news and updates, we need to acknowledge the weight of what is happening right now. Like many of you, we are watching the unfolding of US and world events with growing concern. In challenging times, we lean into our core values to bolster our spirits: love, connection, integrity, and justice, especially when what we are experiencing around us and in our communities is contrary to these values. To all of you, near and far, that are working alongside us in the spirit of these values: we see you, we appreciate you, and we stand in solidarity with you here in our little corner of the West.

We expect 2026 to be another busy and highly consequential year for the conservation of the public lands we all love. Your participation will be essential! So many of you submitted comments and showed up to town halls and public meetings in 2025, and it legitimately made a difference! This year, we expect multiple public engagement opportunities on the Roadless Rule, the new forest plans, and more. We hope you'll continue to show up alongside us! If you missed it, you can get a short briefing on where things stand in Jamie's [2025 in Review and What's Ahead in 2026](#) blog.

And while you're at it, **let us know how we can best connect with you this year!** Our one-question survey helps us make sure you're hearing about the events, outings, and engagement opportunities that matter most to you in 2026.

[Take the Survey](#)



Part of the crew from last year's trip down the Snake River through Hells Canyon

Only 9 spots left on our Hells Canyon trip with Ellen Morris Bishop!

Last year, in celebration of the 50-year anniversary of the official designation of the Hells Canyon National Recreation Area, we offered a guided 4-day Snake River Rafting Trip in partnership with our friends at [Winding Waters River Expeditions](#). We're doing so again this year, but with the addition of a very special guest of honor - Geologist and award-winning author of "[In Search of Ancient Oregon](#)", Ellen Morris Bishop!

Not only a wealth of knowledge but exceptional company, Ellen will be guiding us through the geological history of Hells Canyon. For a little preview, check out [this video by OPB's Oregon Field Guide crew on Ellen's work](#). If you wanted to join last year but didn't get the chance to - this is a very special offering, and we hope you can join us! We'll, of course, also be talking about the conservation history of the region and our current and future work to protect the greater Hells Canyon Region. [For more details and to sign up for the trip, visit the Winding Waters River Expeditions site.](#)

[Reserve your seat](#)

Hells Canyon through the eyes of the Nez Perce at OMSI



[A very important piece of Hells Canyon's story is currently featured at OMSI!](#)

The exhibit invites visitors to experience the landscape of the Pacific Northwest through Nimípuu (Nez Perce) knowledge and stories alongside modern science, offering powerful insights into Ice Age floods, ancient earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, and thousands of years of Indigenous traditions. Presented in partnership with the [Josephy Center for Arts and Culture](#) and the [Oregon Origins Project](#), the exhibit runs **January 10 through February 16, 2026**, and is included with regular museum admission.

Rooted in Place: Indigenous and Local Artists on the Blue Mountains

[Oregon Wild's Wild Wednesday webcast with Caretakers of the Land](#)
[Wednesday, February 18 at 6pm](#)

Catch our friends and [last year's Wild Blues artists-in-residence, Caretakers of the Land](#), on Oregon Wild's "Wild Wednesday". If you aren't familiar with Bobby and Brosnan, they are the duo behind Caretakers of the Land, an Indigenous-led organization focused on revitalizing the culturally significant arts, crafts, and lifeways of the Mid-Columbia River Basin and the Blue Mountain Bioregion.

Bobby Fossek, Brosnan Spencer, and their daughter Meadow are affiliated with the Cayuse, Walla Walla, Yakama, and Klickitat peoples. They will share how their work revitalizes culturally significant art and lifeways, including natural basketry, hide tanning, and traditional foodways. Together, these artists will reflect on their experiences in the Wild Blues AiR program, their art, broader work, and unique perspectives about the incredible landscapes and living communities of what is now called Northeast Oregon.

Oregon Wild staff will give a very brief update about the challenges and opportunities facing the region.

Register for the webinar

A note on tax receipts

Thank you to all of you who donated in support of our work in 2025 - we truly could not do what we do without your support. On Monday, January 26, we sent out your tax receipts via email. If you did not receive a tax receipt but would like one, please email Nash Wadhams at nash@hellscanyon.org.

Other news we're following...

[Oregon ecologist on state's efforts to create safe wildlife corridors over busy roadways](#)

Oregon is planning more wildlife crossings to reduce animal deaths on busy roads and improve habitat connectivity.

[Would you pay 1% more for wildlife?](#)

Conservation Director, Jamie Dawson is featured in this piece by High Country News. A small tax increase could fund wildlife projects like habitat corridors - would you pay it?

[The wealthy profit from public lands, and taxpayers pick up the tab](#)

Wealthy ranchers benefit from subsidized grazing on public lands while taxpayers cover the costs.

[An Idaho fish bio's parting thoughts on Hells Canyon sturgeon](#)

White sturgeon in Hells Canyon are declining due to low recruitment and habitat changes since dam construction.

[Oregon lawmakers seek to clarify right to 'corner cross' where public land borders private](#)

A new bill would clarify that people can legally cross small private corners to access public lands.

[Archaeologists and community historians on the trail of Chinese cowboys in Eastern Oregon](#)

Historians and archaeologists are uncovering the overlooked history of Chinese cattle herders in Eastern Oregon.

Volunteer Opportunities

There are many ways to volunteer with GHCC and the Blue Mountains Trail. We are always thrilled to work with our members, supporters, and fellow conservation advocates.

If you are interested in volunteering with us, 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 2 minutes or less of your time. Thank you — we look forward to spending time with you!

Volunteer with GHCC

Let's Protect the Greater Hells Canyon Region Together



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