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KS WILD NEWS

The Journal of the Klamath-Siskiyou Wildlands Center
Winter 2016

www.kswild.org

www.rogueriverkeeper.org

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Cover photo: Tangle Blue Lake in the Trinity Alps Wilderness, Matt Witt Photography.



ANNUAL REPORT



Dear KS Wild supporters,

Thanks to the support of over 300 active volunteers, 3,000 dues paying members and 15,000 online supporters, KS Wild is leading the charge to protect the world-class Klamath-Siskiyou Bioregion of southwest Oregon and northwest California. In this special **ANNUAL REPORT** edition of the *KS Wild News*, you will learn about KS Wild's 2015 conservation success.

Founded in 1997, KS Wild initially worked out of a small canvas yurt in Oregon's rural Applegate Valley and we focused on preventing the logging of some of the last ancient forests by enforcing environmental regulations.

As KS Wild grew, we began to look at all the issues related to the conservation of the world-class Klamath-Siskiyou region and we adapted new strategies such as community organizing and collaboration. We helped secure administrative protections for roadless areas in 2000, fought against attempts to remove safeguards for streams and wildlife in 2003, and stopped proposals to log ancient forests near the Wild Rogue River in 2008. In 2011 our merger with the Siskiyou Project, which was founded in 1983, strengthened conservation advocacy in the region and helped re-ignite a focus on protecting the greater Kalmiopsis wildlands.



Holly Christiansen

In 2009, we established Rogue Riverkeeper to focus on water quality and fish in the Rogue Basin. As a member of the international Waterkeeper Alliance, Rogue Riverkeeper is a primary advocate and steward for the Rogue Basin.

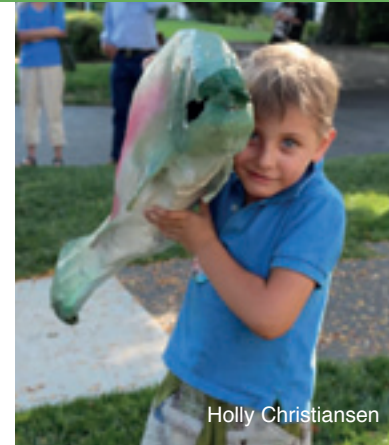
Over the years we have grown our support base to protect the most prized natural treasures and most at-risk habitats in our region. We have protected places like the Wild Rogue River, the Oregon Caves, the Smith River watershed, old-growth dependent species, rare flowers, and clean water important for fish and human communities. Thank you for being a part of the movement. We can't do it without you.

Joseph Vaile, Executive Director

MISSION STATEMENT

The Klamath-Siskiyou Wildlands Center is an advocate for the forests, wildlife and waters of the Klamath and Rogue River Basins of southwest Oregon and northwest California.

We use environmental law, science, collaboration, education and grassroots organizing to defend healthy ecosystems and help build sustainable communities.



Holly Christiansen

KS WILD BY THE NUMBERS

Staff: 10

Members of the Board: 10

Active Volunteers: 300

Online Supporters: 15,000

Business Members: 300

Budget: \$590,000

24: KS Wild staff-led public hikes this year

120: Water samples pulled this year

4,000: Acres protected by Congress this year

25,000: Letters/emails sent to decision-makers this year

8 million: Acres of public land monitored by KS Wild



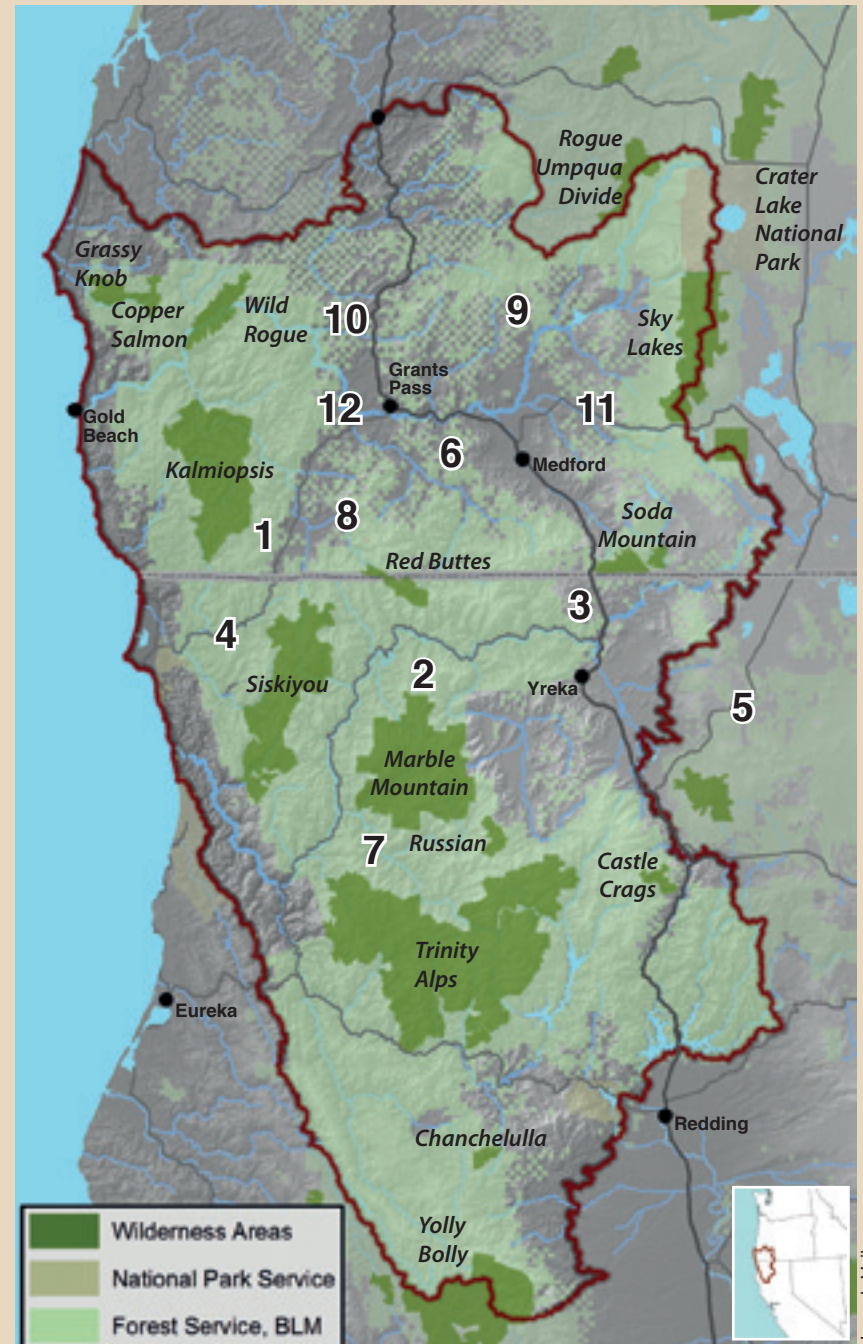
Holly Christiansen



WHAT WE LOVE

The map at the right depicts just a sample of the highlights of KS Wild and Rogue Riverkeeper conservation work in the past year. We achieved permanent protection for some of the most spectacular natural areas in the region while preventing proposals that would harm wild rivers and wildlife. Forest conservation continues to be a priority for KS Wild, and we also have increasingly advanced forest restoration on public lands through fuels reduction, prescribed fire and appropriate forest thinning. We invite you to read more about each of the twelve issues listed below in the following pages.

1. **Protecting the Illinois, Smith and Pistol rivers from industrial nickel mining**
2. **Working with locals and tribes to save the Marble Mountain wildlands**
3. **Protecting clean water and wildlife by reforming industrial timber practices**
4. **Encouraging a realistic and sustainable public lands trail and road system**
5. **Helping recover threatened plants and wildlife, like the gray wolf**
6. **Keeping an eagle eye on the public lands of the Klamath Siskiyou**
7. **Building support for our Backyard BLM Forests**
8. **Oregon Caves National Monument and Preserve expansion**
9. **Stopping the Liquified Natural Gas export pipeline planned across Southern Oregon**
10. **Protecting salmon and rivers in the Rogue Basin from harmful mining**
11. **Monitoring water quality in local streams and rivers**
12. **Ensuring that our waters are clean in the Rogue Basin**





Ken Morrish

1. THE WILDEST RIVERS

Some of the most pristine, wild rivers in the world carve their way through southwest Oregon. Inland from the Wild Rivers Coast, the headwaters of the Chetco, Smith, Illinois, Winchuck, and Pistol Rivers originate in a region known as the Kalmiopsis. KS Wild is working with allies to protect more than 100,000 acres of public land from the imminent threat of three proposed nickel strip mines. Earlier this year Senators Wyden and Merkley and Congressmen DeFazio and Huffman (CA) introduced the Southwest Oregon Watershed and Salmon Protection Act, which would permanently protect rivers in the region from strip mining. In association with the Smith River Alliance, Friends of the Kalmiopsis, and Kalmiopsis Audubon, we submitted more than 30,000 pro-conservation comments to protect this special landscape.

2. WILDLAND DEFENSE

Some of our most awe-inspiring forests are located in and around designated Wilderness Areas in the Klamath-Siskiyou. In 2014, summer lightning storms started wildfires around the Marble Mountain Wilderness Area. The Klamath National Forest is now proposing to clearcut log thousands of acres of ancient forests. KS Wild worked with scientists, attorneys, locals, and the Karuk Tribe to develop a plan to scale back the push to clearcut as much of the Grider Creek watershed as fast as possible. Our coalition also generated more than 10,000 public comments supporting the protection of these wild areas. To date these efforts have prevented the clearcut logging.

3. INDUSTRIAL TIMBER LANDS

Throughout the Pacific Northwest, vast tracts of land are owned and managed by large timber companies. Many of these forests are in sensitive watersheds and contain important wildlife habitat. This past year, KS Wild prevailed in a legal challenge to a timber harvest plan that would have enabled industrial logging by the Fruit Growers Supply Company across 150,000 acres in far northern California's Siskiyou Mountains. The plan would have destroyed over 80 northern spotted owl nest areas and degraded critical Coho salmon spawning habitat. In Oregon, KS Wild is working at the state level to reform the woefully inadequate Oregon Forest Practices Act, with a focus on increasing streamside forest buffers and protecting communities and waterways from aerial spraying of toxic herbicides.

4. ROADS AND TRAILS

KS Wild has been working to ensure that roads and trails in the Klamath-Siskiyou protect the treasures we hold dear: wild salmon, clean water, and rare botanical gems. This past year, we secured improvements for botanical areas, watersheds, wildlife, roadless areas, and non-motorized recreation in the Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest Travel Management Plan. We worked with the Siskiyou Mountain Ranger District to prevent, monitor and mitigate off-road vehicle damage to meadows and botanical areas. We are simultaneously working to protect the Smith River National Recreation Area Travel Management Plan from 4-wheel-drive off-road recreation in roadless areas and the at-risk Port Orford Cedar watersheds. Lastly, we facilitated and secured implementation of the Parks-Eddy meadow, watershed, and road restoration project around Darlingtonia fens on the Shasta-Trinity National Forest.



Holly Christiansen



5. WILDLIFE CONSERVATION

KS Wild helped ensure that rare plants, wild salmon and wildlife of this region are protected through species-based advocacy. The Klamath-Siskiyou region is one of the most biologically rich regions in North America. From rare salamanders (like our logo, the forest dwelling Siskiyou Mountains Salamander), to old-growth dependent owls, and plants and trees that only occur in our region, we have ensured protection for the biological diversity of this region. This past year, KS Wild focused on efforts to ensure the recovery of the wolf. After years of absence, grey wolves are moving back into their historic range of southern Oregon and northern California. The famous wolf OR-7 was the first of several wolves to make their way to the Oregon and California Cascades, with more likely on the way. KS Wild is a founding member of the Pacific Wolf Coalition and we are working with conservation groups throughout the west coast to ensure that wolf recovery stays on track. This requires working at both the state and federal levels to ensure that policies are in place to protect wolves.

6. PROTECTING PUBLIC LANDS IN THE KLAMATH SISKIYOU

One of our hallmark conservation programs is known simply as Forest Watch. KS Wild keeps a sharp eye on over 8 million acres of your public lands in the Rogue River and Klamath Watersheds, ensuring that every land management action on BLM and Forest Service lands in the region is reviewed. If a timber sale, grazing allotment, mining operation or road construction project is going to harm wildlife and watersheds, KS Wild is there to change or challenge that action. If the Forest Service or BLM is looking for conservation partners to promote restoration we step up and deliver.



National Park Service

7. BACKYARD BLM FORESTS

There are a unique set of forests in western Oregon managed by the Bureau of Land Management. KS Wild has special focus on protection of these forests. Some of the most accessible public lands are right in the backyard of western Oregon residents. After working with local stakeholders and community leaders on the 2015 BLM Forest plan revisions, KS Wild continues to encourage land management agencies to prioritize restoration and recreation on our public lands. We also work with local Forest Service agencies to develop responsible and sustainable travel management plans, in hopes of keeping extreme off-road vehicles from destroying botanical hotspots and aquatic resources.

8. OREGON CAVES

Also referred to as the “Marble Halls of Oregon,” the Oregon Caves National Monument is one of very few areas managed by the National Park Service in the Klamath-Siskiyou Region. KS Wild worked for nearly 10 years to secure expansion for the National Park site. In its first season as the newly expanded Oregon Caves National Monument and Preserve, the site now protects the headwaters of Cave Creek, the botanically rich Bigelow Lakes Basin and several wonderful hiking trails. The expansion also created the nation’s first underground Wild & Scenic River—the River Styx—and requires over 7 additional river miles to be considered for future Wild & Scenic river designation. KS Wild is currently working to permanently retire 31,000 acres of grazing allotments within and adjacent to the new park’s borders.



Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife

9. WORKING TO STOP GAS EXPORTS

A Canadian company wants to build a pipeline across southern Oregon and the Rogue Basin to ship natural gas to foreign markets. The pipeline and related infrastructure would become one of the largest greenhouse gas emitters in Oregon. KS Wild has been a leader in fighting the pipeline for over 10 years. This year, Rogue Riverkeeper engaged in both legal work and grassroots organizing around the release of a final plan by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, as well as permit comment periods with the Army Corps of Engineers and state agencies. We have worked closely with Rogue Climate and other regional groups to build the coalition against this project and now the grassroots movement is larger than ever. We've filled public hearings with hundreds of people, helped organize a 700-person rally at the capitol in Salem, and created constant press coverage and over 120 letters to the editor. This campaign becomes more critical as federal approval of the project advances and the state of Oregon reviews various permits that are required for the project. Significant work remains to keep this polluting gas in the ground.

10. REINING IN SUCTION DREDGE MINING

Suction dredge mining uses a floating, motorized vacuum to suck up sediment from the bottom of the river to sift for gold, discharging the rest of the sediment back into the river or stream. This activity can negatively impact sensitive fish habitat and the quality of our rivers and streams. Rogue Riverkeeper has made huge progress to help salmon and clean water through the issuance of an improved permit while seeking a long-term legislative solution. The new permit is the result of years of work and engagement, which brought in several missing components (such as monitoring) up to standards required by the Clean Water Act. We also worked extensively in Salem to craft a long term solution, negotiating with the mining community and state agencies. The bill was put on hold, but we are hopeful that this issue will be addressed in the 2016 legislative session.



Robyn Janssen

11. ENSURING OUR WATER IS CLEAN

Rogue Riverkeeper's water quality monitoring program focuses on water safety at popular recreation spots across the Rogue basin. Our program tests local waterways for bacteria, sedimentation, and temperature. Interns collect samples at 8 sites across the watershed, and we publish the results on www.rogueriverkeeper.org and on the Waterkeeper Alliance Swim Guide app. Local and state government agencies now direct water quality questions from the general public to our website.

12. PROVIDING CLEAN WATER ACT OVERSIGHT

Clean Water Act permits are required for any discharge of pollutants into waters. State and government agencies are required to issue, deny, and review these permits but are oftentimes understaffed. This puts our public waters at risk for pollution. Rogue Riverkeeper is a watchdog for the Rogue Basin by ensuring that the Clean Water Act, a law put into place for our own protection, is upheld. We continue to review all pollution permits and step in when they are not followed. We are working with local municipalities on a stormwater advisory committee to protect our streams from toxic stormwater. This past year we also engaged on a rule that would allow polluters leeway if they mitigated their actions. We also are working to ensure that Oregon Board of Forestry implements bigger logging buffers around streams to protect water quality and salmon.



Amy Schlotterback

KLAMATH-SISKIYOU WILDLANDS CENTER

Love Where You Live, Defend What You Love

Where Funds Come From



- Foundations (54%)
- Membership (40%)
- Events (6%)

Where We Spend Funds

\$590,000 Budget



- Wildlands Conservation (52%)
- Rogue Riverkeeper (30%)
- Operating Expenses (18%)

Non-profits with operating expenses under 25% receive an A grade from CharityWatch.org

YOU Make the Difference!

KS Wild is supported by 2,995 donors that span across Oregon, California, and 30 other states!



Small business owners are a vital part of our local economy. We encourage you to support our 214 business members.

VOLUNTEER IN 2016, BECOME A ...



Event Supporter

Assist film festivals or Annual Dinner



River Steward

Travel locally to sample water quality



Office Champion

Assist phone drives, mailings, data entry



Public Ambassador

Help engage your local community



Botanical Area Adopter

Be a steward of sensitive ecosystems on public lands

VOLUNTEERS IN 2015:



Holly Christiansen

UPCOMING EVENTS

Dec 12: Little Applegate Forest Stewardship Hike

Hike the Yale Creek headwaters with KS Wild and Speak for the Trees Director Lydia Doleman to learn more about local conservation efforts. This 100+ acre site, previously owned by a logging company, offers participants a contrasting view of both logged areas and old trees. Uneven and steep terrain. Carpool leaves from NW Nature Shop, Ashland 9am. Meet at 3000 Yale Creek Road at 10:30am.

January 23: Little Falls Hike

Explore a short 3-4 mile loop that showcases a diversity of scenic wonderment including rare Port Orford Cedar stands, stellar mountainous views, and the spectacular Wild and Scenic Illinois River. Carpool meets at the NW Nature Shop in Ashland at 9am, at Gooseberries in Grants Pass at 9:45am, and at the Ray's Market in Selma at 10:15am.

Call Jeanine at (541) 488-5789 or www.kswild.org/hikes for more information, directions, and to sign up for a hike.

KS WILD STAFF

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- Holly Christiansen
Membership Associate
- Michael Dotson
Development Director
- Jeanine Moy
Conservation Associate
- Rich Nawa
Staff Ecologist
- Gary Powell
Canvass Director
- George Sexton
Conservation Director
- Joseph Vaile
Executive Director
- Myra Vilella
Bookkeeper

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- Robyn Janssen
Clean Water Campaigner
- Sarah Westover
LNG Organizer

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- Laurel Samson
- Laurel Sutherlin

Save the Date



Siskiyou FilmFest

A KS Wild Production

Friday - February 12

ANNUAL DINNER A HUGE SUCCESS

THANKS TO EVERYONE WHO MADE IT HAPPEN!



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Indigo Creek Outfitters
Momentum River Expeditions
Northwest Rafting Company
Plant Oregon
Rise Up! Artisan Bread
Ron Roth Wines
Sunday Afternoons
Whole Systems Foundation

All photos courtesy of Shane Stiles Photography



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Ashland Independent Film Festival
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