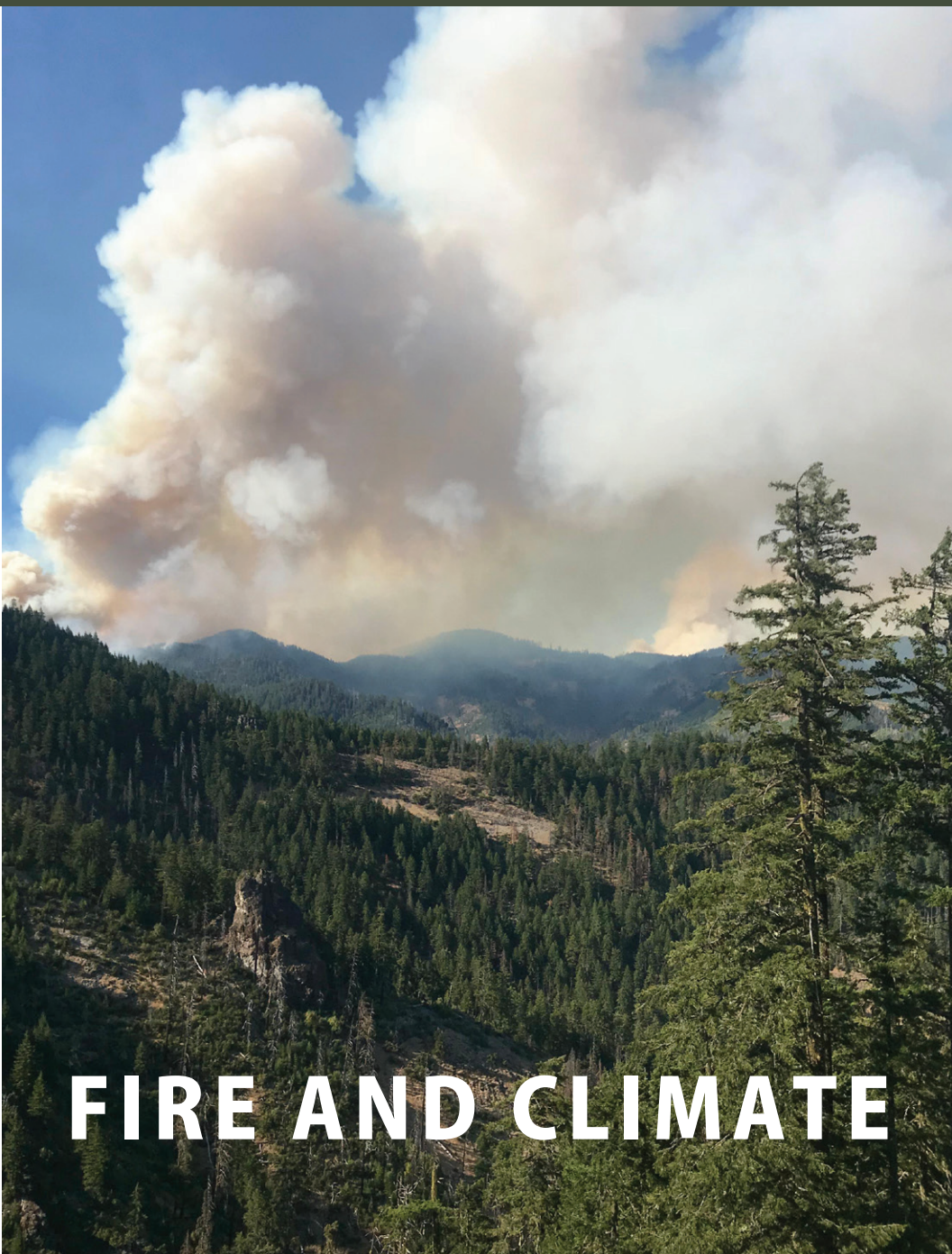


KS WILD NEWS

The Journal of the Klamath-Siskiyou Wildlands Center

Fall 2018



FIRE AND CLIMATE

GET OUTSIDE

KS WILD

STAFF

Tommy Brown
Digital Campaigner

Holly Christiansen
Membership and
Engagement Coordinator

Michael Dotson
Development Director

Allee Gustafson
Community Organizer

Brodia Minter
Public Lands Advocate

Rich Nawa
Staff Ecologist

Gary Powell
Canvass Director

George Sexton
Conservation Director

Joseph Vaile
Executive Director

Myra Villella
Bookkeeper

ROGUE RIVERKEEPER

Stacey Detwiler
Conservation Director

Robyn Janssen
Rogue Riverkeeper

Sara Mosser
Outreach Coordinator

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OUTDOOR DINNER AND A MOVIE

September 20, 7pm - 9:30 pm @ NW Nature Shop

Join KS Wild and the Northwest Nature shop for an outdoor screening of family friendly, inspiring environmental films. Come out, bring your loved ones, enjoy dinner from a local food truck, then snuggle up and watch a projector display of stunning images within local SW Oregon films.

THE CONUNDRUM OF MEGAFIRES

October 24: Presentation @ NW Nature Shop, 6pm

October 26: Grizzly Peak Hike @ 9am

"Megafires" are increasingly damaging to people and their assets, and "active management" of forests has been proposed as a solution. This talk and follow-up field trip to Grizzly Peak will explore the ecological effects of severe fire in our forests and the role that active management plays.



SALMON WALKS ARE BACK!

Join us for our annual pilgrimage to learn about the astounding life cycle of Pacific Salmon and look for Fall Chinook salmon swimming upstream to spawn. The walks are easy, leisurely strolls and family friendly.

October 12, 10am: Bear Creek Parkway, Talent

October 27, 10am: Fish Hatchery Park, Grants Pass

November 4, 1pm: Illinois River Forks State Park, CJ

www.kswild.org/events

Once you sign-up online you will receive more details, including carpooling locations and what to bring.

NOTES FROM THE TRAILHEAD

This issue of *KS Wild News* is dedicated to forest conservation and management in the era of climate change. The Klamath-Siskiyou (KS) region is home to some of the most spectacular forests and public lands in the lower 48. In these pages you will find information about what we can do to prepare our forests and communities for climate change.

Climate is everything. Climate change is real. Our world is warming, and the forests of the West are drying out. Research shows us that record-breaking temperatures dry out vegetation that can fuel today's wildfires.

Historically, most forests in the West burned frequently and required fire to maintain healthy forest conditions. In addition to lightning-caused fires, Native Americans intentionally set fires to favor desirable plants. Fires left scars on tree trunks, and the evidence of fire on tree rings helps researchers recreate the history of fire.

Fires burned on average about every 10 years in the dry forests in the KS. Now, since so many fires have been put out for over 100 years, trees and brush which would have been cleared through fire have grown dense. This is especially true near communities where we have been more focused on suppressing fires. Add in climate change, which promises longer fire seasons and hotter summers, and we have conditions for more fires and smokier skies.

There are steps we can take to prepare our communities and our forests for the warming climate. We just don't do nearly enough. By intentionally setting controlled fires during wetter months when smoke won't get trapped in valleys, we can reduce the threat of more severe fires in the hot, dry summers. This won't stop all wildfires, but it will create safer conditions and help rebalance our ecosystems.

Thinning small trees and burning will not stop fire, but they will help protect communities by making it safer and easier for firefighters to control fires. This is part of climate adaptation and building a better relationship with fire in our region.

It is tragic that special interests use fire to move a political agenda to open up old-growth forests to logging. This is particularly true in the height of fire season. What timber interests don't tell you is that logging big, fire-resilient trees only increases extreme fire behavior.

A big part of the problem we see today is that we have replaced most of our thick-barked trees that are hundreds of years old with densely planted small trees. These tree plantations spread fire quickly. Big trees will burn in extreme weather, but studies show that second-growth forests burn at much higher severity.

KS Wild is at the cutting edge of finding solutions that protect our ancient forests, restore forests that need help, and get fire back on the ground under controlled conditions. We work with land managers and decision-makers at all levels of government, and partner with scientists, agencies, and restoration practitioners.

Now that we can expect a hotter, drier climate, we need to do a lot more work to protect communities, thin overly-dense forests, and save what remains of our original, ancient forests. As we see fires burning, not only in our region but across the globe, it is an all too clear reminder that climate change is here.

We need to build a stronger coalition to tackle climate change and protect our beautiful corner of the world. Our elected leaders have done little to nothing to tackle climate change, while many are taking us backwards by seeking to open up our forests to more old-growth logging. It is time we demand action to save our forests, our communities, and our planet.



I urge you to join our efforts.

Joseph Vaile is KS Wild's Executive Director



CLIMATE CHANGE AND THE KLAMATH-SISKIYOU

There's no denying it, climate change is here. As the Klamath-Siskiyou region gets hotter and drier, the length of fire season is increasing, plants and wildlife are changing their range and distribution, and summer stream levels are decreasing. It's a sobering picture of nature under stress.

Not all the news is bad. Here in the KS we are uniquely positioned to mitigate the accelerating challenges to wildlife and climate. In particular, we are lucky to have old-growth forests that provide crucial wildlife habitat, contribute to clean, cold watersheds, and store carbon in the ecosystem of trees and soils. Large blocks of intact forest habitat are the lungs of the Earth and provide a crucial mechanism for species struggling with climate change to migrate, adapt and survive.

Unfortunately, **forests throughout the region on both public and private lands have been heavily logged and roaded.**

Following clearcut logging, timber interests usually plant a simplified cash crop of Douglas-fir trees. These dense monoculture timber plantations provide little wildlife habitat, tend to burn at stand-replacing intensity, and accelerate watershed sedimentation and stream warming. The replacement of fire-resilient old-growth forests with dense young tree plantations exacerbates the effects of climate change on wildlife, fire behavior and watershed health.

As temperatures continue to rise we can expect to see a variety of changes to our forests. We anticipate an increase in the frequency and severity of wildfires. It is foreseeable that mountain snowpacks will continue to decrease. Increases in stream temperatures are likely.

We can help our forests, watersheds and wildlife adapt to these changing conditions by retaining old-growth and roadless forests. Unfortunately, many public land managers are under political pressure to accelerate logging without regard to the changing climate. In particular, timber planners in the BLM have been instructed to conduct "regeneration" logging that replaces native forests with dense tree plantations. Additionally, the Oregon Board of Forestry has created a "Siskiyou Exemption" that encourages streamside logging on private forestlands. We can and should do better than this. Please stand with KS Wild and advocate for forest policies that store carbon while protecting cold streams and providing wildlife habitat.



Intact forests store carbon and mitigate climate change.

GETTIN' HOT



In 1859, John Tyndall found that gases trap heat in the atmosphere. In 1938, G.S. Callendar argued that CO₂ greenhouse warming was already underway. The science is legitimate, repeatable, and verifiable: burning fossil fuels caused the warming of our climate to outpace any previous warming trend in the historical climate record. People have talked about climate change for the past 30 years. First, they called it global warming, because the average global temperature is increasing. But simply warmer temperatures didn't quite capture the complexity of impacts that would be experienced from increasing atmospheric gases.


These atmospheric gases turn up the heat by trapping radiation that otherwise could escape the first layer of our atmosphere. A planet that was once at a controlled simmer is now covered by a lid and it is not-so-slowly approaching a rolling boil. Our biggest problem as humans? We live inside the pot. The entire population is subject to what happens in our atmosphere.

What does that mean for us? What used to be extreme are now the expected conditions. Warmer temperatures and lower snowpack will change runoff volume and timing, and impact the length and severity of the fire season. Changes in Pacific Ocean surface temperatures could impact the weather with even greater strength. The atmospheric ridge of high pressure set up over our region during summer that deprives the region of moisture could show up earlier and stick around longer. Thunderstorms could bring more lightning strikes and stand replacing fires to forests.

If we lived on a planet that was neatly organized into discrete compartments, we might not have to worry about such interconnected events, but we don't. The atmosphere is like a river, moving air and moisture around the globe and we are the little fish that live on the bottom.

It's time to restore the fire-shaped forests and watersheds of our region to mitigate the most extreme impacts of this new climate normal. Since we're not doing enough to slow global emissions, we better start adapting to a more extreme world.



A group of four people are in a white inflatable raft on a river. One person is holding a sign that says "NO PIPELINE LNG". The background shows a lush green forest and a blue sky with white clouds.

CLEAN WATER AND GAS PIPELINES DON'T MIX

On May 22, the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers opened a 60-day public comment period on crucial Clean Water Act Permits needed for the proposed Jordan Cove LNG export project. Rogue Riverkeeper has been involved in this campaign for over a decade because of the impacts this proposal would have on local waterways including the Rogue River. Needless to say, we've been busy!

Rogue Riverkeeper's Stacey Detwiler spent the better part of this summer deciphering the roughly 5,000 application pages in order to highlight the project's many issues as it relates to our waterways. Along with our partners at Rogue Climate, we have helped host comment writing workshops so that folks can voice their concerns to DEQ and the Army Corps with the hope of giving them ground to deny these permits and stop the project in its tracks.

Thankfully, we saw an extension to the public comment period offering 30 more days to submit comments with a final deadline on August 20th. Together with partners from across the state, Rogue Riverkeeper submitted over 200 pages of substantive comments on the permit applications to both DEQ and the US Army Corps asking them to deny the permits for the Jordan Cove LNG project.

We would like to thank the hundreds of supporters who wrote letters, sent emails, made phone calls, and those who have raised your voice for healthy waterways in southern Oregon! We are not out of the woods yet, but we made a big impression on the agencies who received more than 42,000 comments! THANK YOU!

Stay tuned for more updates and info about the Jordan Cove LNG Campaign by going to our website at www.rogueriverkeeper.org and follow us on Facebook.

WELCOME TO THE ROGUE, SARA!

Rogue Riverkeeper is excited to welcome our newest staff member Sara Mosser, who will lead our outreach, volunteer and event programs.

Sara grew up in San Diego, and earned a B.S. in Biology from Humboldt State University. In Bellingham, Sara worked for the Washington Conservation Corps restoring riparian zones for salmon habitat enhancement, collected spawner survey data, and assisted in water quality sampling and analysis. She then earned a M.S. degree in Urban and Regional Planning at University of Wisconsin-Madison. Sara and her family recently relocated to southern Oregon. Welcome aboard Sara!



— 50 YEARS OF WILD & SCENIC RIVERS — 6TH ANNUAL WILD & SCENIC FILM FESTIVAL

Join Rogue Riverkeeper and friends as we celebrate 50 years of Wild & Scenic Rivers at this year's Wild & Scenic Film Festival!

Our signature event will focus on the 50th Anniversary of the Wild & Scenic Rivers Act and our beloved Rogue and Illinois Rivers. There will be a happy hour with food and drinks, info tables, a silent auction, music and more!

Help protect and expand Wild & Scenic Rivers in Southern Oregon by joining us for our 6th annual Wild & Scenic Film Fest.

Rogue Riverkeeper Presents



MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER WITH FIRE

Natural disturbances trigger emotional reactions that can feel tragic. When we suffer a common disturbance or threat of loss, like nearby fires, it reminds us that despite our different values and beliefs, we are all human beings who deal with challenges that can seem overwhelming. We love our families, we want to be safe, and we want to live in a healthy natural setting.



Inciweb

Can we use wildfire to band together for land stewardship?

Yes, it's possible! Together we can develop projects that enhance community values by improving watershed and forest conditions, protecting homes from wildfire, while allowing the landscape to become more resilient to natural disturbances.

Science Says: The 2018 summer fires are being fueled by hot, dry conditions, winds and abnormally low "fuel moisture" content. Historically, fire has always been a part of our landscape. Native tribes used low severity fire as a tool to under-burn oak woodlands to bring forth species used for gathering, weaving, and ceremonial practices. Many endemic plant species of the Klamath Siskiyou need fire to reproduce. Fire often rejuvenates the forests of our region.

We are experiencing an increasingly hotter and drier climate. Klamath Siskiyou forests are now less resilient to natural disturbances as a result of past management practices that emphasized zealous fire suppression, road construction, and widespread clearcutting of public and private forests.

From the Ashes Comes Life: Moving forward together to protect homes and communities requires a strong community voice. We need to prioritize leaving large fire resilient trees, reduce the threat of fire to communities, and stop creating dense tree plantations.

What Can You Do?

- ▶ **Take action** regarding land management proposals that regenerate dense tree plantations in the place of fire resilient old growth forests.
- ▶ **Advocate for** projects to focus on lands around homes and communities in the Wildland Urban Interface.
- ▶ **Call the BLM and Forest Service** Supervisors and talk to them about how you value a safe community surrounded by **fire resilient forests**.
- ▶ **Be your own land steward!** Create 50 feet of defensible space around your property and clean your gutters from brush and debris.
- ▶ **Respect** and abide by all fire bans.

EXPLORATION & STEWARDSHIP

SUMMER 2018 RECAP



Alex Hole

KS Wild volunteers and staff join with the Forest Service to protect high elevation wet meadows from illegal grazing.



Boundary Springs

Rogue Riverkeeper and KS Wild members hike to see the pristine headwaters at the source of the Rogue River.



\$8 Mountain Botanical Area

Land Stewards and federal agencies work to restore damage from illegal OHV trails to protect some of the rare botanical wonders of the Illinois Valley.



Illinois Valley

A hike and comment writing workshop through old-growth forest near Selma slated for harvesting. Some trees in this unit are almost 200 years old.

Featured Hike

MUIR CREEK: MEADOWS AND MOUNTAINS

If you dislike wildflower meadows, mountain streams, and old-growth forests, then by all means avoid the headwaters of Muir Creek in the Rogue-Umpqua Divide Wilderness Area! But if you happen to love forests and flowers, then the section of Muir Creek in Buck Canyon is paradise.

Located in the Upper Rogue River Watershed, Muir Creek must have been phenomenal before the Lost Creek Dam blocked off the steelhead runs and the Forest Service unleashed rapacious cattle grazing throughout the meadows. Fortunately, the establishment of the Rogue-Umpqua Divide Wilderness prevented the liquidation of old-growth forests as has occurred throughout much of the area.

The geology of this portion of the “Old Cascades” (going back 16-25 million years) pre-dates the larger volcanic and more iconic peaks along the Cascade Crest. The older geological landscape supports wildflower communities that benefit from the long-ago glacial scraping and slow erosion of the mountains. Indeed, the broad Buck Canyon valley feels like a lost world.



“I only went out for a walk, and finally concluded to stay out till sundown, for going out, I found was really going in.” - John Muir

Muir Creek is a largely undiscovered gem. The trails don’t get a lot of use and the wilderness has a very wild feel to it. The discovery of waterfalls, pools, meadows and giant trees feels new and fresh- there is room to roam and adventure without crowds, fees, parking lots and interpretive brochures. You may find you’ve lost the trail. You may even choose to lose the trail. One could stumble into an aspen grove, or come upon a 500 year old incense cedar after following elk tracks through the mountain meadows. It is a landscape in which exploration is richly rewarded.

The largest meadows can be found from the “Hummingbird Meadow” trailhead off of Forest Service road 400 while Muir Falls and riparian old-growth can be seen by hiking downstream. More meadows and mountains await the upstream hiker. A High Cascades (Prospect) Ranger District Map will get you there. Be sure to filter any drinking water as the area is heavily grazed by both cattle and elk. There can be a lot of mosquitoes during the summer months.

Happy trails!

KS WILD FAMILY UPDATE

THANK YOU KAITLIN LOOMIS!

A big thank you goes out to KS Wild's Summer Law Clerk Kaitlin Loomis (pictured right in the Dolomites in Italy). Kaitlin is a graduate of the University of Oregon and is currently working on her Juris Doctor at Gonzaga University School of Law. She is president of the Environmental Law Caucus and will begin working in Gonzaga's Environmental Law and Land Use Clinic this fall.



While working with KS Wild, Kaitlin conducted research and prepared legal memos on conservation issues that included analysis for the Endangered Species Act and the Clean Water Act. She also commented on timber sales along with proposed road construction that could harm wildlife and streams. She supported Rogue Riverkeeper with research on the proposed LNG Pipeline.

IN LOVING TRIBUTE TO JOHN BERMEL

Our dedicated volunteers mean the world to us, which is why KS Wild was devastated by the loss of one of our own KS Wild family members.

John Bermel was a long-time supporter and volunteer, helping out on clean-ups and stewardship projects.

A gentle and kind person, John helped last year with a meadow restoration project at Alex Hole on the Siskiyou Crest. He was dedicated to a number of causes and an engaged community member.

John had a personal dream to restore a once-popular hot spring along the Klamath River. His family and friends have all talked about how much he loved the wild. We will miss him dearly.

John lost his life when the Klamathon Fire engulfed his home in the initial hours of the fire in Hornbrook, California. We hope to carry on the way he would want...with love, passion, and care for the wild and each other.



KS WILD WISH LIST

Do you love KS Wild and want to help us protect the Klamath-Siskiyou's rivers and forests? If you can provide (or help us locate) something we need on our WISH LIST, please reach out to Michael at 541-488-5789. At this time, we are looking for:

1) **A slightly-used vehicle:** If you have a working 2007 or newer-used vehicle (with modest mileage), consider a tax-deductible donation to KS Wild. We are looking for a vehicle to attend meetings, conduct field investigations, and engage in other events.

2) **Office space:** KS Wild continues to grow! If you are a property owner, manager, or know someone who is, we need help finding new office space. We are looking for an office rental that could accommodate 10-12 desks, with a majority being individual office spaces. Since KS Wild is a charitable organization, property owners are eligible for tax deductions when donating space or offering at discounted rates.

14th Annual Dinner for the Wild (and Scenic)

Saturday, October 6, 2018: 5-9 pm @ Ashland Hills Hotel



We are excited to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Wild & Scenic Rivers Act at this year's Annual Dinner for the Wild. We are pleased to welcome keynote speaker Zach Collier, owner of Northwest Rafting Company, who has over the past two years explored all of Oregon's 58 Wild & Scenic Rivers.

Music by Eight Dollar Mountain during happy hour. Your ticket includes appetizers, a three-course meal, and local brews and wine from Ninkasi, Apple Outlaw, Cuckoo's Nest Cellars, Paschal Winery and Eagle Mill Farm. Tickets are \$85/adult and \$40/youth (13 and under). All proceeds support KS Wild and Rogue Riverkeeper's forest and river conservation efforts in southwest Oregon and northwest California.

www.kswild.org/annualdinner2018



Tim Palmer

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KS WILD MISSION

KS Wild's mission is to protect and restore wild nature in the Klamath-Siskiyou region of southwest Oregon and northwest California. We promote science-based land and water conservation through policy and community action.



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Cover: Miles fire in the upper Rogue burns in a mix of industry and public forests. Photo courtesy of Inciweb.