

PROTECTING WILD SPACES & HAPPY PLACES

WOOD RIVER LAND TRUST

WINTER 2020



Photo by Roland Wolfram

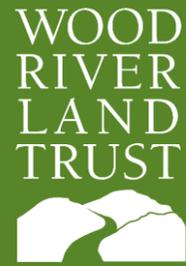
WOOD
RIVER
LAND
TRUST



**THE POWER OF
PARTNERSHIPS**
Howard Preserve brings
people together

**A GROWING LOVE, A
LASTING LEGACY**
A heartfelt addition to
Colorado Gulch Preserve

**RESTORING THE
BIG WOOD RIVER**
Bringing back natural river
processes



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Our mission is to protect and sustain the treasured landscapes and life-giving waters of the Wood River Valley and inspire love for this special place for generations to come.



A LETTER FROM

SCOTT BOETTGER



Scott Boettger with his daughter, Emily

This year, perhaps more than ever, we are sensing the “now or never” reality for open space and the health of our river. The current all-time record real estate sales in the Wood River Valley bring an urgency to do everything possible to protect our remaining iconic open spaces before it's too late.

We committed significant effort this year to the long-held dream of protecting Warm Springs Ranch; however, there were twists and turns and it is still not protected. While we still hold on to the possibility of preserving Warm Springs Ranch, we need a bigger vision for the future of open space and river restoration throughout our Valley.

To do this we will need to continue to work with partners throughout the Valley to protect the places that help define our small-town charm and character, assure places where we recreate and make memories with loved ones remain available to people of all ages and abilities, and restore places once neglected so they can provide refuge for fish and wildlife once more.

As you consider your year-end giving, please think of your gift to the Land Trust as an investment in our Valley for today, the coming year, and future generations. Join hundreds of others throughout the Valley and beyond who continue to make a difference every day. Together we can leave a lasting legacy for those that will come after us.

Thank you for being a part of this journey,

Scott Boettger, Executive Director

The CARES Act of 2020 temporarily increases the individual adjusted gross income limits for cash contributions made to qualified public charities, making this a wonderful opportunity to increase your support of the Land Trust to protect the beauty of this Valley. Please consult your tax advisor for more details.

THE POWER OF PARTNERSHIPS



Photo by John Finnell



Florence Blanchard is shown here greeting visitors at the Howard Preserve and encouraging them to write a story about their favorite memories of the Howard Preserve. Some of them can be found throughout the article.

Florence Blanchard is the kind of person who needs to budget twice as much time to walk through the Howard Preserve as the rest of us. Between stopping to chat with other walkers about their day or bending down to pull a few noxious weeds, Florence clearly has a special relationship with the Howard Preserve in Bellevue.

Florence is a member of the Friends of the Howard Preserve, a volunteer group of community members who help maintain the Howard Preserve.

"Presently, during the COVID 19 restrictions, open space like the Howard Preserve is critical to the community. People love the Preserve and are grateful for it." - Florence Blanchard

We caught up with Florence to chat more about the special partnership between the Wood River Land Trust and the Friends of the Howard Preserve.

Florence starts with how it all began, in October of 2009, when "the city council adopted the Howard Preserve Management Plan, creating a partnership with the Land Trust and the Friends of the Howard Preserve to 'maintain the preserve in perpetuity.'"

Since that day, the Friends of the Howard Preserve have worked to facilitate ongoing maintenance of the preserve and initiate projects and improvements, working closely with the Land Trust and the City of Bellevue on all projects.

"The City, the Land Trust, and Friends are equal partners. We don't initiate any projects without approval by the others," she explains, "when we needed funding for the facility shed, we asked the City to share the cost. We report to the City council from time to time so that they are aware of the positive things that our volunteers do. The Friends also worked closely with the City, the Land Trust, and the Irrigation District on the recent river restoration."

(Continued on next page)

*My favorite memory is spending many, many hours at Howard Preserve, getting to know the love of my life.
~ Abby*

When my grandsons were little, I used to take them down to the river where we would skip rocks. Now that they are young adults, we still go to the river and skip rocks. They are "Olympic Champion" rock skippers now!

AMPLIFYING OUR INDIVIDUAL ACTION

Partnerships like the one with the Friends of the Howard Preserve are what make it possible to create, maintain, and enhance public preserves throughout our Valley. We can achieve more together than we could ever do alone.

Your gifts to the Land Trust are combined with other generous contributions to create the large and growing network of preserved land here in the Wood River Valley. In fact, it is because of the strength of community partnerships like the Friends of the Howard Preserve, and the financial support of our community that we have been able to expand the Howard Preserve throughout the years from 7.5 acres to 35 acres; providing a beautiful area to meander through the cottonwoods and access the Big Wood River for fishing or swimming.

The Howard Preserve has proven to be a beloved place for families, friends, and pets to get out and enjoy the beauty of the river and nature throughout the seasons. Your support now, during our end of year campaign helps keep partnerships thriving and your favorite spaces open, making a tangible difference in our quality of life right here in the heart of Central Idaho.

I'm grateful to all those who had the foresight and worked on making the Howard preserve a reality. Then you. This is such a peaceful wonderful multi-faceted place. I love walking here. The Phil Dickhard bench is a piece of art. Love the various seasons here. I have a fall picture as a screen saver on my cell phone.
ASG



Photo by John Finnell





A GROWING LOVE, A LASTING LEGACY

“Thank you so much Scott! I am so honored and delighted to have received your call about the additional land for the Colorado Gulch, true preserve! You’ve made my life better and better.”

The note above was received two years ago from Jill Bryson, a long-time Hailey resident and Land Trust member.

She was writing to our Executive Director, Scott Boettger, who had notified her that we had just secured a piece of property that would expand our Colorado Gulch Preserve. Scott knew Jill would be interested in the news, since her own property and the house she and her husband built in the 1970s sat along the Preserve’s eastern boundary.

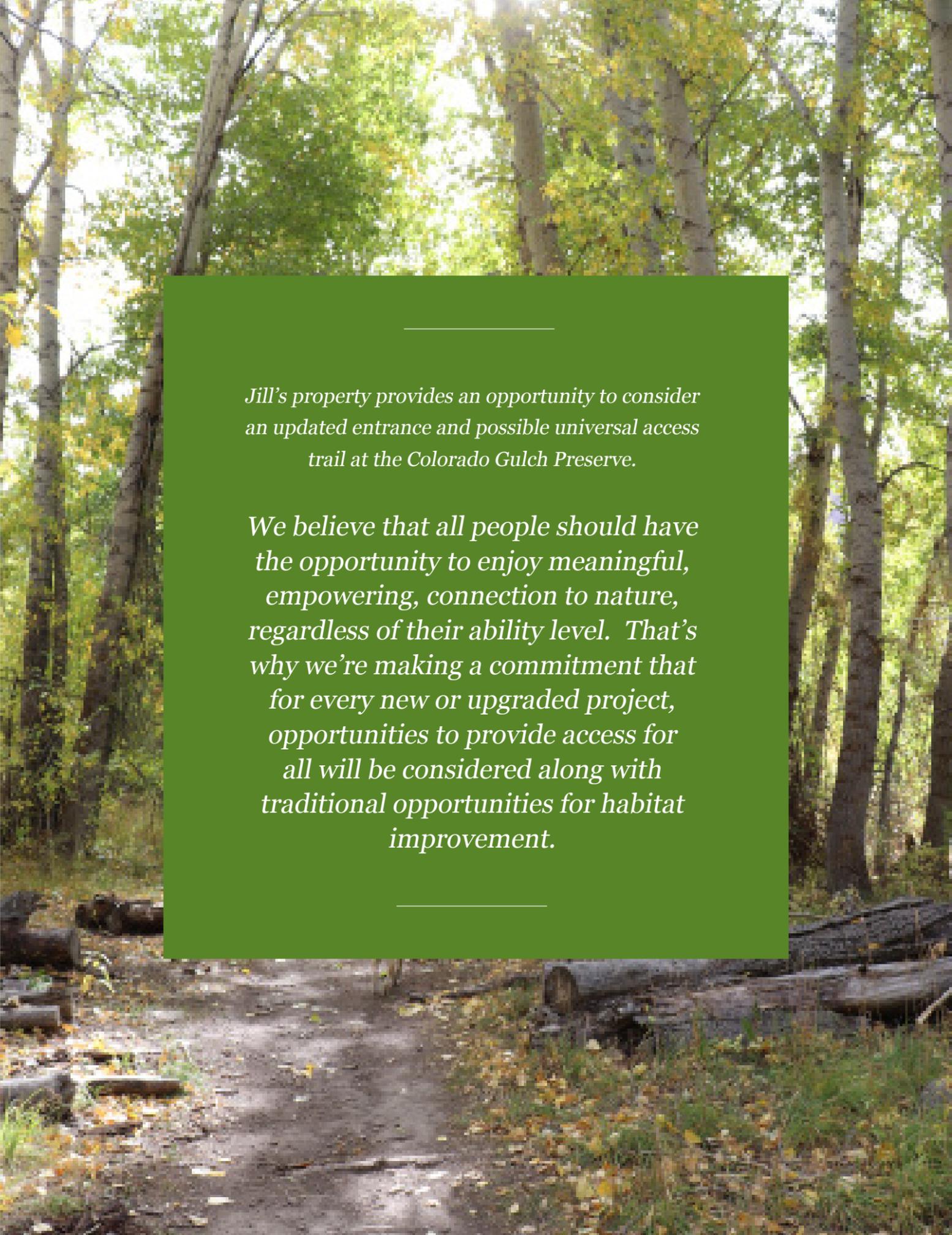
When the Land Trust began acquiring Colorado Gulch properties, Jill was more than a little apprehensive about having a public nature preserve as a neighbor. However, over the years, as the Land Trust gathered and protected more and more adjoining properties, Jill watched the Preserve expand and thrive.

At the same time, we at the Land Trust saw Jill’s love and affection for the Preserve also flourish. We knew that the gratitude she expressed in her letter was sincere and that her trust in the Land Trust had grown, too.

Before Jill passed away last year, she let Scott know that she was leaving her property and home in the hands of the Land Trust, being sure that it would become a meaningful part of the Preserve, forever.

The faith Jill, and many other landowners in and around the Valley, put in the Land Trust means so much to us. It says a lot about who we are and what we can accomplish together as a community.

To learn more about how gifts from your estate can make a difference, please contact our office.



Jill’s property provides an opportunity to consider an updated entrance and possible universal access trail at the Colorado Gulch Preserve.

We believe that all people should have the opportunity to enjoy meaningful, empowering, connection to nature, regardless of their ability level. That’s why we’re making a commitment that for every new or upgraded project, opportunities to provide access for all will be considered along with traditional opportunities for habitat improvement.



MAKING A DIFFERENCE

"Supporting non-profits here in the Valley has really enriched my life, and I've wondered how I can inspire the next generation to get involved." Kathie Levison, former board chair of the Land Trust brings up a question that we hear often.

Monthly sustaining members are important to the day to day operations of any organization. The Land Trust relies on sustaining members for things like trail maintenance, keeping the preserves clean, making sure our staff has a seat at the table during regional planning meetings, and so much more.

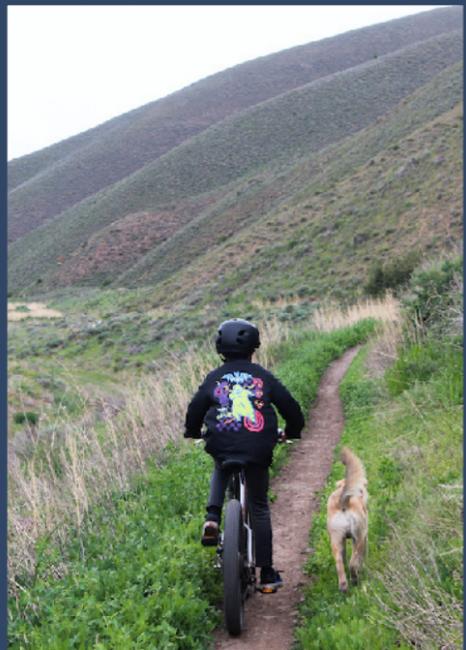
For a lot of people, diving into charitable giving can be a daunting proposition. With all the good causes in the Wood River Valley and nation-wide, and limited financial resources, where do you begin?

Pedersen continues: "I think a lot of people feel overwhelmed with the options out there, but donations of any size really add up. People can feel proud of doing their part by becoming a member of their favorite organization and have faith that other people are also supporting the groups they love too."

As a millennial who has just hit her stride with her own charitable giving, our own Liz Pedersen has put together some tips for new givers - especially young givers who are just embarking on this journey:

This has been a tumultuous year for many. Not everyone may have the ability to start investing in nonprofits, but there are easy ways for people to participate if they can.

"Thinking about how to have the most impact with my charitable giving, I start with becoming a monthly sustaining member somewhere."



Do you know someone who is starting to set up their charitable giving? Tear out this page, and share it with them. The simple steps on the back of this page can help anyone - no matter their household budget - feel like they can make a difference!

BECOME A MEMBER TODAY!

Giving back to the community in any amount can be a rewarding way to look around you and say, "I helped make this possible." Here are some simple steps you can use to help someone get started with giving today!

1

Set a Budget

One rule of thumb is to start by calculating 1% of your annual income and adjust up or down from there depending on your household budget.

2

Set a Up a Membership

Set up a monthly giving membership with the Wood River Land Trust. Like many organizations, recurring donations provide a stable base of funding for every day needs. Just like being a regular at a coffee shop: It doesn't mean you don't love visiting other coffee shops now and again, but your favorite shop can always rely on your repeat business.

3

Divide Up the Rest

Whatever you have left, you can give at your discretion. Pick up a Wood River Valley Giving Guide and read about the other amazing nonprofits that make this place so special.

4

Grow Your Giving

As you're able to increase your annual donations to support the causes you love, consider your options in this structure: Do you have enough to increase your monthly gifts? Do you feel like you want to add more one-time donations?

5

Get Started Today!

Calculate your charitable giving budget and head over to woodriverlandtrust.org/membership to set up your monthly membership. Feel good about making a difference now and for the future of this Valley we all call home.



Thank you for protecting the wild spaces and happy places that make this Valley our home

RESTORING THE BIG WOOD RIVER

The Big Wood River is a beloved presence for all of us here in the Valley - and beyond. Whether you seek solace along the banks of the river, enjoy photographing its ever changing personality, or love to fish its clear waters, the Big Wood River is an important part of our lives.

Part of the Land Trust's mission is to protect and sustain the Big Wood River now and for generations to come.

This fall, we moved two major river restoration projects closer to breaking ground.

Both of these projects strive to restore **natural fluvial processes** to create healthier habitat and better flood mitigation on the Big Wood River.

COLORADO GULCH RESTORATION

At the Colorado Gulch Preserve in Hailey, the project will remove the old levees, infrastructure, and **rip rap** that is constricting the river and not allowing it to access its floodplain.

We will be removing around 800 cubic yards of rip rap before grading the river bank back to allow floodplain connectivity to slow floodwaters during high flows. We will add **woody structures** to the channel to create more complex instream habitat, and replant willows to help stabilize the banks.

While restoring this section of river, we will also remove over 1,100 cubic yards of fill – in addition to the 800 yards of **rip rap**! This will open up an old side channel and connect that critical habitat to the main river.

"We are close to finalizing grants from Blaine County's Land Water and Wildlife Program and FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Program," says our Restoration Specialist, Ryan Santo.

"Using local and federal grant funding sources will allow us to use generous contributions from members on other stream restoration projects within the Hailey Greenway and beyond. We're looking forward to breaking ground on the Colorado Gulch project in summer 2021."

HOWARD PRESERVE RESTORATION

Down at the lower end of Howard Preserve in Bellevue, the main focus of the project will be connecting the river to its floodplain and to an historic side channel.

This will improve fish and wildlife habitat in the Howard Preserve, providing additional rearing habitat for fish and reinvigorating the cottonwood stands.

We'll also be installing a large **woody debris structure** and boulder cluster formations to maintain channel configuration and help with flood mitigation for homes downstream.

Ryan highlights that working with terrific partners has made this project possible.

"This has been a collective effort between the Land Trust, the City of Bellevue, Flood Control District #9, Blaine County, Trout Unlimited, Idaho Department of Fish and Game, the Idaho Water Resources Control Board, and Friends of the Howard Preserve. We are currently working on permitting and final design and anticipate breaking ground early spring or summer 2021."

We will be hosting tours of our work on the Big Wood River as conditions and COVID-19 restrictions allow. If you would be interested in taking a tour, please email info@woodriverlandtrust.org.



RIVER RESTORATION TERMINOLOGY: DEFINED



Natural Fluvial Processes

Restoring natural fluvial processes means allowing the river to act like a wild river does; connecting to its floodplain, allowing sediment to be deposited and gravel bars to form, allowing wood to accumulate, and allowing new side channels to distribute flood flows.



Woody Debris Structure

Large woody debris structures are naturally occurring features in rivers and provide habitat complexity and cover for juvenile and adult trout. Idaho Department of Fish and Game found that 71% of rainbow trout were observed in habitats associated with woody cover, where as only 4% of rainbow trout were observed near riprap.



Rip Rap

Rip rap is human-placed rock or other material used to armor shorelines, streambeds, or bridge abutments to prevent scour or erosion. Rip rap doesn't provide habitat and can increase erosion at either end of the rip rap. Rip rap inhibits floodplain connectivity and natural fluvial processes.

PROTECTING PUBLIC ACCESS

The Wood River Land Trust preserves land for a wide variety of purposes – for community connections, to preserve critical habitat for wildlife, and as key access points to public lands.

Oftentimes, small parcels of private land can unlock access to vast public lands that are especially important for hunting or fishing. Ford Van Fossan, Conservation Manager at local hunting company First Lite, calls these small parcels “keystone properties.”

“Keystone properties ... are small private parcels that hold the key to access on much larger chunks of public land, be it BLM or Forest Service ... oftentimes access through those properties can open up a lot more ground to recreation.”

Acquiring these keystone properties has been a priority for the Wood River Land Trust since our earliest days in 1994.

For instance, by acquiring Porcupine Creek Preserve, the last 100 acres of private land at the end of Quigley Canyon Road, the Land Trust assures continued access to thousands of acres of the Sawtooth National Forest and prevents access for hunting and recreating from being blocked by private interests.

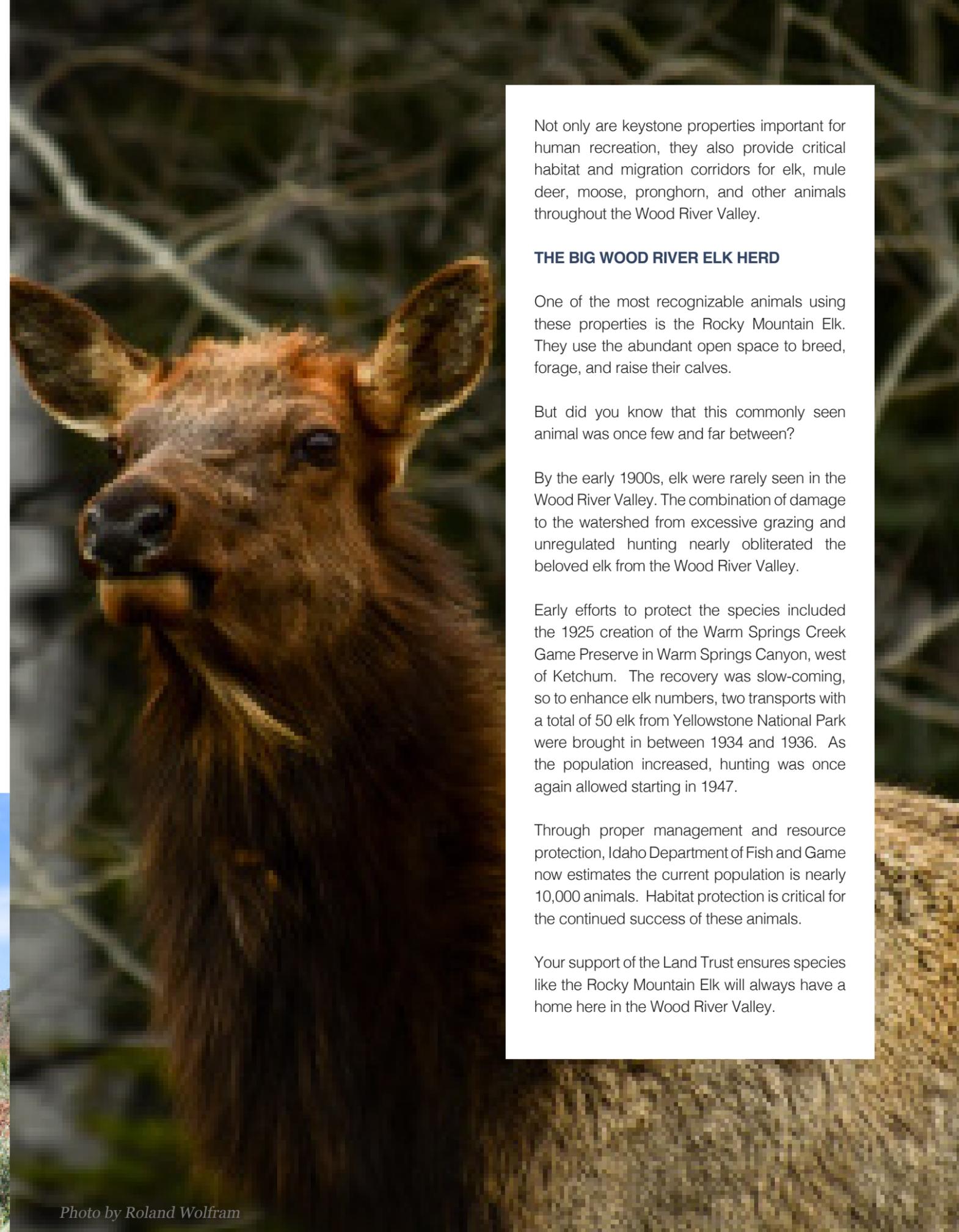
CONTINUING THE CONSERVATION CONVERSATION

Just like these ‘keystone properties’ provide a jumping off point to larger public land acreage, outdoor pursuits also lead into conversations about conservation.

Whether you hike, bike, hunt, fish, ski, or practice photography, being out in nature and having intimate interactions with our natural world can inspire people to want to save it.

Van Fossan agrees, explaining that First Lite sees “conservation as a critical part of our business model... We appreciate all the Land Trust is working on in regards to land preservation.”

“Keystone properties ... are small private parcels that hold the key to access on much larger chunks of public lands.”



Not only are keystone properties important for human recreation, they also provide critical habitat and migration corridors for elk, mule deer, moose, pronghorn, and other animals throughout the Wood River Valley.

THE BIG WOOD RIVER ELK HERD

One of the most recognizable animals using these properties is the Rocky Mountain Elk. They use the abundant open space to breed, forage, and raise their calves.

But did you know that this commonly seen animal was once few and far between?

By the early 1900s, elk were rarely seen in the Wood River Valley. The combination of damage to the watershed from excessive grazing and unregulated hunting nearly obliterated the beloved elk from the Wood River Valley.

Early efforts to protect the species included the 1925 creation of the Warm Springs Creek Game Preserve in Warm Springs Canyon, west of Ketchum. The recovery was slow-coming, so to enhance elk numbers, two transports with a total of 50 elk from Yellowstone National Park were brought in between 1934 and 1936. As the population increased, hunting was once again allowed starting in 1947.

Through proper management and resource protection, Idaho Department of Fish and Game now estimates the current population is nearly 10,000 animals. Habitat protection is critical for the continued success of these animals.

Your support of the Land Trust ensures species like the Rocky Mountain Elk will always have a home here in the Wood River Valley.

Photo by Roland Wolfram



HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM THE WOOD RIVER LAND TRUST

Just like you, our team here at the Land Trust learned new ways of working through these challenging times. Zoom became our new best friend, and getting outdoors helped maintain a sense of normalcy and connection. We hope you were able to find the same. We've missed seeing you and hope to see you in the new year.

We asked our staff to share their favorite memories from the summer. We hope our reflections remind you of the special moments you had this past year and give you something to look forward to.

From our family to yours, we wish you a safe and happy holiday.



I spent a lot of time out at our new Simons/Bauer Preserve this summer thinking about its history as an old lumber mill site and how this once primitive industrial site is now a wildlife sanctuary. It reminds me of why the work we do is so important.

Scott Boettger
Executive Director



This summer it was all about taking the kids swimming at Howard Preserve, Colorado Gulch, and near the hospital bridge in Ketchum. I'm looking forward to Nordic skiing at Quigley this winter!

Amy Trujillo
Deputy Director



As the fall colors brought a glow to the cottonwoods, I took a late afternoon walk with friends through the Draper Preserve. The sunlight was perfect to enjoy the last warm days of fall and the boardwalk overlooking the wetlands was glorious!

Courtney Jelaco
Development Director



My son Charlie and I took advantage of the low spring flows and walked the banks of the Big Wood River observing Rainbow trout spawning within the Colorado Gulch Preserve. Charlie was amazed how big these fish were!

Ryan Santo
Restoration Specialist



Observing the diversity of wildlife in our preserves puts a smile on my face! It's a reminder that we all benefit from these protected habitats.

Justin Hellmann
Operations Manager



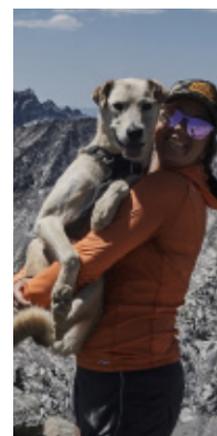
This past summer, Winston and I enjoyed introducing volunteers to our new pollinator meadow and finding creative ways to engage folks during COVID. This winter, I am looking forward to watching the ducks and beaver at Croy Creek wetlands at sunset.

Keri York
Lands Program Manager



This fall, as a new resident of Hailey, I discovered the Draper Preserve and Colorado Gulch. Whether it is reading by the river, bird watching or walking my dog, the Hailey Greenway is an awesome place to spend some outside time. This winter, I'm excited to try Nordic skiing at Quigley Canyon.

Gaston Zuain
Pollinator Initiative Coordinator



I loved watching the seasons change at the Draper Preserve. My dog, Dexter, and I visit the Bow Bridge every day, and there is something so special about knowing a place that well. I can't pick a favorite season, they're all amazing!

Liz Pedersen
Annual Fund Manager



Colorado Gulch was my dog Hank's favorite spot to go to catch a break from the summer heat. The expansive cottonwoods and lovely stretch of water was our favorite escape! It was also the perfect leaf-peeping spot this fall.

Sarah Mullins
Development Assistant

WOOD RIVER LAND TRUST



119 E. Bullion Street
Hailey, Idaho 83333

www.woodriverlandtrust.org

Wood River Land Trust is a 501(c)(3) organization (Tax ID: 82-0474191).

Contributions are tax deductible as allowed by law. Public financial information is available by contacting our office.



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THINKING GLOBALLY ACTING LOCALLY SPEAKER SERIES



Join the Wood River Land Trust and The Community Library this winter as we discuss how we can take local action in the face of global and regional challenges.

WEDNESDAY
JANUARY 20



"PREVENTING THE DEVASTATING IMPACTS OF GROWTH"

WITH SHAWN HILL
Executive Director,
Valley Advocates
for Responsible
Development

WEDNESDAY
FEBRUARY 24



"POLLINATORS HELP RESTORE ECOSYSTEM FUNCTIONALITY AND BIODIVERSITY"

WITH HEATHER HOLM
Award winning
author of "Bees" and
"Pollinators of Native
Plants"

TUESDAY
MARCH 16



"WILDFIRES, PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE"

WITH JEN PIERCE
Associate Professor
in the Department
of Geosciences
at Boise State
University

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON TIMES AND HOW TO REGISTER VISIT
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