

WOOD RIVER LAND TRUST

WRILT

The Dirt

Protecting the
Places You Love

SUMMER 2018

Species Profile
Rainbow Trout
Expanding
Colorado Gulch
Community
Conservation

WOOD RIVER LAND TRUST



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www.WoodRiverLandTrust.org

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Contributions to WRLT are tax deductible as allowed by law. Public financial information is available on our website or by contacting our office.

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ON THE COVER

Photo by John Finnell

DESIGNED AND PRINTED BY

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Scott with his children, Emily and Gunner.

A letter from Scott Boettger

It's easy to talk about what the Land Trust does.

- We save land and advocate for healthy rivers.
- We protect wildlife habitat and create recreation options that will be open to the public forever.

It's an extremely important job in a world where open lands and treasured space are disappearing everyday—especially here in Idaho, the fastest growing state in the Union.

But it is your choice to support the Land Trust that puts it all into action

This issue of “the Dirt” highlights many of these individual actions, actions that are adding up to something bigger.

- Local kindergartners help us fight invasive weeds.
- Middle school students join forces to educate the public about how to keep our preserves healthy.
- Members of our Student Conservation Council, made up of students and teachers from high schools throughout the Valley, lead projects and learn to be conservation leaders each school year.
- Interns from colleges across the country monitor easements and restore local lands every summer.
- And volunteers of all ages do everything from sending out letters to taking photographs to working on the land.

Our community was at its finest during this year's RiverFest, helping us make sure the event was once again successful. The way our community reacted to the challenge that day, from trying to put out the fire to making donations to help assure RiverFest will return, left us in awe and it has inspired us to keep working hard for these places we all love so much.

Everyone has an important part to play. Every time you choose to support the Land Trust you are ensuring that our beautiful part of Idaho remains not just for today, but for our children and their children to enjoy! Thank you for being a part of the Land Trust team.

Colorado Gulch Preserve

Starts to take shape.



Progress continues on our newest preserve at Colorado Gulch and local high school students are a big reason why.

Seniors from Wood River High and underclassmen from The Sage School spent time this spring helping restore the area around the pedestrian bridge we were recently able to add, thanks in large part to the Wood River Women's Foundation.

Our Student Conservation Council (SCC) is also proud to have completed their project for the year: an Informational Kiosk and Audio Tour for the Colorado Gulch Preserve Bench Property.

Comprised of students from all the local high schools, this year's SCC project was a bit different than those from previous years. Instead of being completely handled by the 12 SCC students, nearly 50 students from both the Wood River High's Architectural Design Academy and Construction Academy helped out, too. We were especially excited that students pursuing trades which aren't often connected to conservation could be involved and get to see that their time and talents can make a positive environmental impact for generations to come.

The Informational Kiosk will become the gateway to our



very popular preserve. While the Audio Tour will share the natural wonders, wildlife habitat and history of the former ranch with students of all ages, from classroom visits to family excursions.

This impressive project was successful thanks to a lot of help and support from the SCC Advisory Board and local businesses like Robert and Leslie Delsignore of Archive Finishing, Bill Amaya of Beyond Wood, Matt Morell of Morell Construction, and Sam Keeter of Sawtooth Wood Products.

Much of the funding to make this goal of the SCC possible came from generous grants from the Idaho Fish and Wildlife Foundation, The Papoose Club and WOW-students.

On behalf of the SCC and everyone who helped with the Kiosk and Audio Tour, thanks for helping foster future conservation leaders and for helping to make positive impact now and forever.



Land Trust wishes Happy Trails to

Patti Lousen



Patti Lousen and Scott Boettger

It was the opportunity to make a difference, to make a positive impact for the place she loves, that first attracted Patti Lousen to the Wood River Land Trust. After more than a half dozen years as a project coordinator for the Land Trust, and many more teaching and working in education in the Valley, Patti retired at the end of May.

“We have accomplished a lot of important and impactful projects thanks to Patti’s efforts and dedication,” said Scott Boettger, the executive director of the Land Trust. “She has meant a lot to the Land Trust and to our community.”

While with the Land Trust, Patti led the Student Conservation Council (SCC), helped found the Wood River Water Collaborative, teamed up with the City to create the recently completed Hailey Greenway Master Plan and revived the now booming Trout Friendly Program. Before

joining the team at the Land Trust in 2012, Patti taught science at Wood River Middle School and helped found the Waldorf education-based Mountain School.

Patti’s favorite part of her job at the Land Trust has been working with local high school students. In the last couple of years alone, the SCC has done important restoration work along the river, put on a film festival and completed an informational kiosk and audio tour for the newly acquired bench section of the Colorado Gulch Preserve.

“It’s amazing what the SCC has accomplished,” Patti said. “Over 70 kids have come through the program during my time. They made positive impacts and showed that they love the land, and when you love something you’ll take care of it. I’m excited about the future.”

Patti is also feeling hopeful and proud of her latest accomplishment—the Water Conservation Landscape Guidelines that were recently adopted by all local municipalities. For years, Patti and Scott had the goal of creating a set of Water Wise guidelines to help on a policy level for Blaine County governmental agencies. It’s what inspired the Land Trust to help create the Wood River Water Collaborative.

“The water guidelines initiative was a huge endeavor and having it passed is important and fulfilling,” Patti said, explaining that it’s a good example of the breadth of work the Land Trust accomplishes.

“We go from hiking boots and work gloves to getting dressed up for presentations at city council and commissioners meetings,” Patti said, flashing her well-known smile. “I really appreciate the opportunity to be involved in making a difference—be it working on policy, on the land or with our limited resource of water. It has been very rewarding.”

As for what’s next, Patti is happy to say she doesn’t know. After years of working hard while raising her two successful daughters, Patti said she and her husband, Tom, are excited about not having a plan.

Thanks to Patti’s time, efforts and talents, the plans the Land Trust has for making positive impacts on our community and environment continue to look very hopeful.

Our Community

Rising Up at RiverFest

The Land Trust's 4th Annual RiverFest was meant to be a celebration of community conservation and our beloved Big Wood River. This year, however, it turned out to not only be a celebration, but also an example of the strength of our community and the passion we have for the places we love.

Festivities were interrupted for a while when a fire broke out along the path through Draper Wood River Preserve. We are happy to report that thanks to dedicated community members, firefighters and police officers, the blaze was quickly extinguished and the preserve suffered no serious damage.

While we were disappointed that RiverFest had to be evacuated for a while, we were inspired by the way our community sprang into action to protect what is theirs. **The Draper Wood River and all our preserves are part of the core of our community and it was nothing shy of awesome to see so many people pitch in to try to help when one of these places was in a moment of need.**

We are thankful and honored by all the assistance, from those who literally jumped in to try to put the fire out, to those who made room for the fire engines as they roared by and those folks who quickly reached out to make a donation to help support RiverFest and all the Land Trust does.

The way our community reacted to this small, but scary challenge is really something to celebrate. That's why we vow to have RiverFest return again next year!



Community Conservation

is happening in Hailey!

By Mike McKenna
Photography By John Finnell



Something Special is happening at Quigley Canyon and we're happy that you've helped us be a part of it.

The Land Trust and our partners have begun work on a project that is an ideal example of community conservation. It includes a mix of residential housing, non-profit and educational facilities, playing fields, working farmlands and recreational access of all kinds.

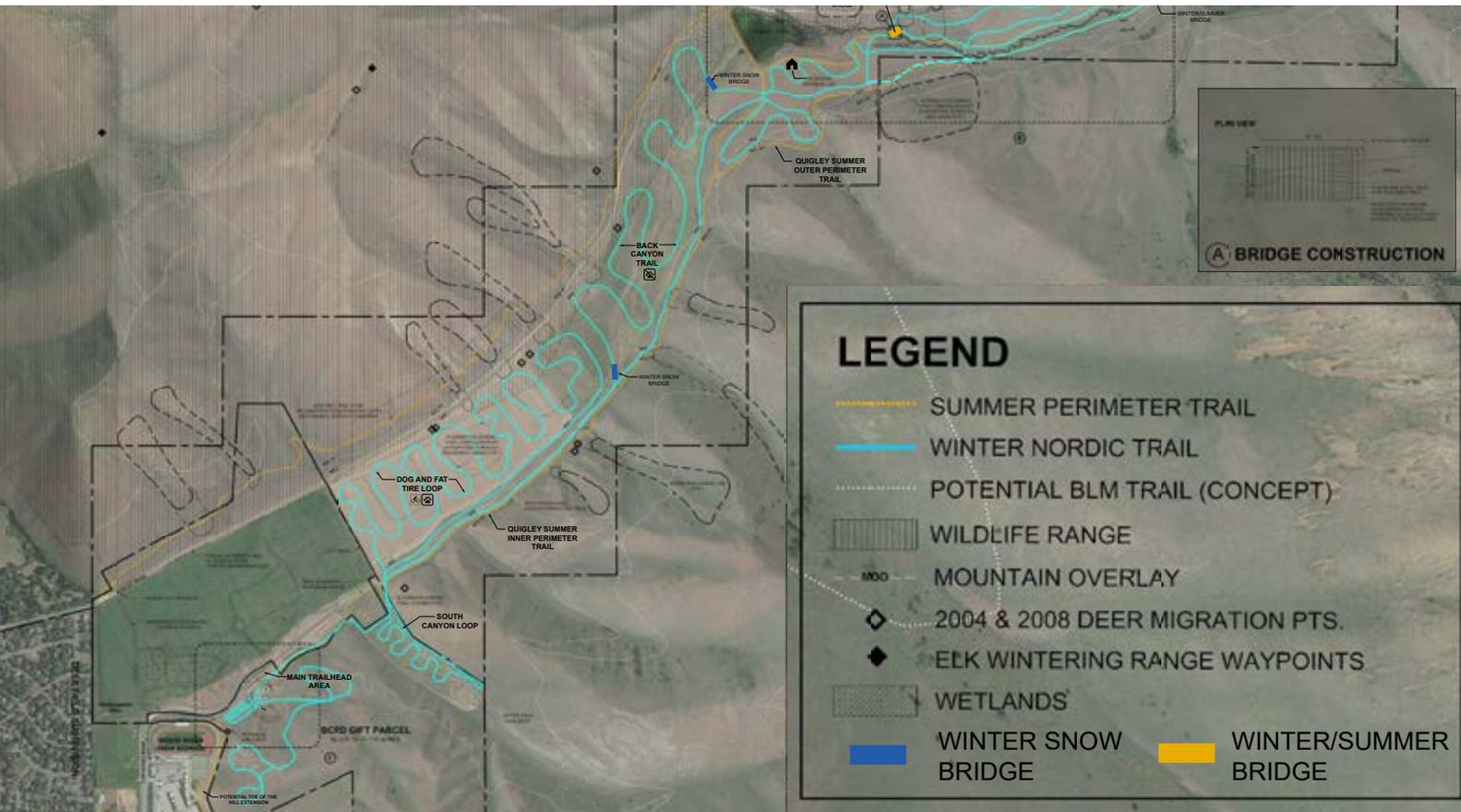
“To me, this is huge,” said Jim Keating, the executive director of the Blaine County Recreation District (BCRD) during a tour of Quigley Canyon this spring. “There’s some magic happening here. This whole area could have looked much different.”

At one point, Quigley Canyon, which carves its way east from Hailey, was slated for a massive development complex. The farmlands, which have been harvested for more than a century, were going to be turned into a sea of driveways. Access to the foothills and miles of trails and backcountry-skiing terrain surrounding Quigley Canyon would become inaccessible. The wintering grounds of elk and other game would vanish.

But then the property’s developer, Hennessey and Company, came up with a new idea. Instead of 400 homes spread across the entire property, a variety of 51 homes—from large parcels to small—will now be consolidated in an area closer to the former city border. Land surrounding the development was donated to the school district and to BCRD, and 1,278 acres were placed under a conservation easement the Land Trust now holds.

“We worked to secure this easement primarily because it provides open space for wildlife, for agriculture and for a variety of recreation options,” said Chad Stoesz, who manages easements for the Land Trust. “We’ve really conserved this property for the benefit of the community.”

“All of the land included in the easement had been privately owned. This had made access to the surrounding public lands (primarily Bureau of Land Management property) uncertain in the future. This easement



Thanks to your support, we're able to work with partners to create win-win conservation projects like Quigley Canyon.

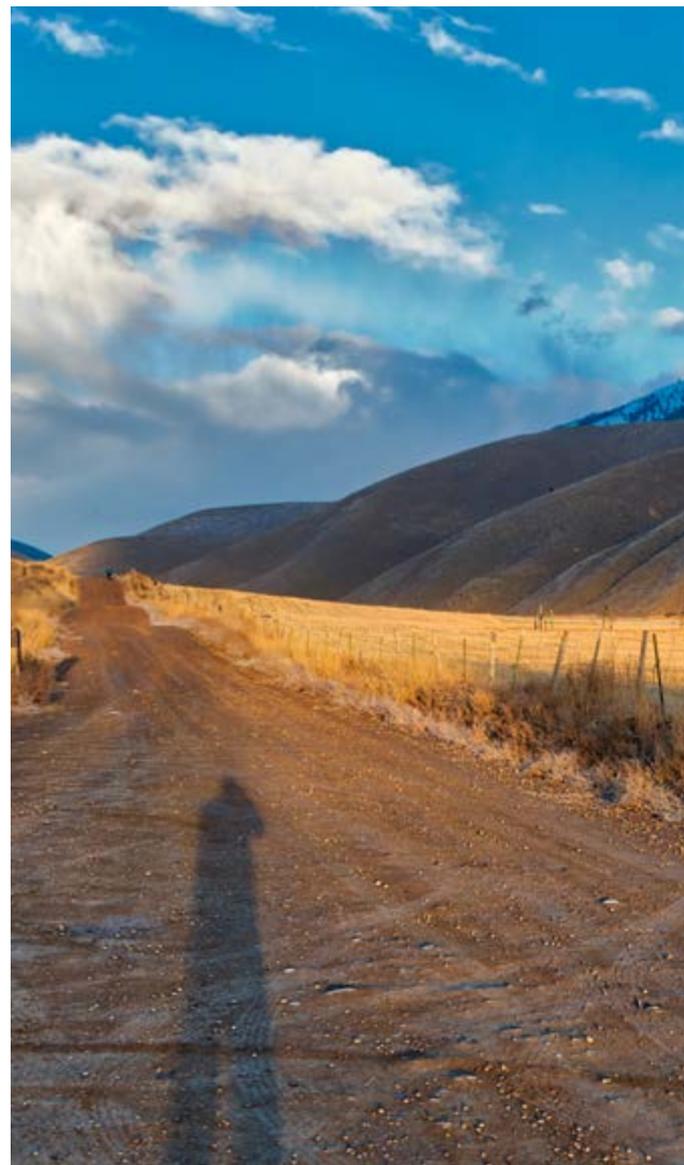
“...There aren’t a lot of places you can find over a thousand acres of open space right next to the city,” Stoesz said.

guarantees access through Quigley Canyon forever.” Now that the Land Trust has an easement for public access, it will be much easier to reach places like Patterson Mountain for summer hikes or winter skiing. It also means that new trails for hikers, bikers and Nordic skiers are going to be added—around 70 miles of non-motorized trails, to be exact, some of which are slated to open next winter.

“This is going to be like Adam’s Gulch south or like Camel’s Back Park in Boise, something really special right in Hailey’s backyard,” Keating said.

“Proximity is what makes this really special. It is literally walking distance from downtown Hailey. There aren’t a lot of places you can find a thousand acres of open space right next to the city,” Stoesz said.

Besides all its quantifiable benefits, we’re happy that some of the prettiest views around won’t be changing much. Thanks for supporting the Land Trust’s effort to help protect the places we love and for making sure the sunsets will always stay spectacular at Quigley Canyon.





Water Guidelines Go Valley Wide

They say that nothing worthwhile is ever easy. That’s why we don’t often burden you with the details about the struggles to make positive and lasting impacts for Idaho. Sometimes it can take a while and lots of behind the scenes work to make conservation happen.

But the Land Trust is always up for a challenge, especially when we know the results will be worth the effort. That’s exactly what has happened with the new Water Conservation Guidelines that have recently been adopted by all the local municipalities.

We are proud to be part of the team that created guidelines for landscape practices that have now officially been adopted by the cities of Sun Valley, Ketchum, Hailey, Bellevue and Blaine County. Some new housing developments in our community are already adopting the guidelines and we hope both current properties and those to come will as well.

The best part about the guidelines is that they are fairly easy to follow and will make a big difference.

In a valley that averages just 18 inches of rain per year, it’s important for us to be smart when it comes to water and soil.

The best part about these guidelines is that any homeowner can follow them and not only make a positive impact for the environment, but ultimately also save some money while you’re at it.

Conserving water in our landscapes means more water in our streams for fish and wildlife. To help you make an impact, you can find Guidelines and Drought Tolerant Plants lists on the Trout Friendly section of our website: **WoodRiverLandTrust.org**.

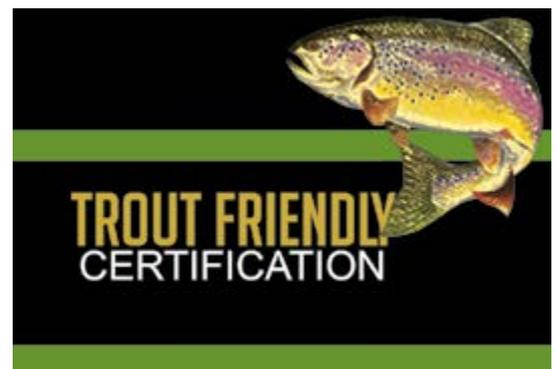
HERE’S A RUNDOWN OF THE GUIDELINES:

SOIL AND COMPOST: A minimum of 25% compost must be added to all soils. This really helps our primarily clay-based soils hold water and organic materials.

MULCH: All shrubs, tree rings, exposed soil and beds should have 4-6” of mulch to minimize evaporation.

VEGETATION: Select native or drought-tolerant plants that require 1 inch or less of water per week. Thankfully, many local nurseries are now starting to expand their options for such plants.

IRRIGATION: Follow best practices for water efficiency, which can include everything from using updated backflow devices to making sure proper sprinkler heads are being used to changing over from spearhead sprinklers to drip irrigation.





By Mike McKenna
Photography By John Finnell

Rainbow Trout

Helping trout one lawn at a time.

“Amid such surroundings, no true fisherman can fail to receive impressions which so elevate the soul and soften the heart as to make him a better man.”

Grover Cleveland wasn't talking about the Big Wood River when he made that statement, but he might as well have been. The Big Wood has long been famous for its beauty and its trout fishing.

Unfortunately, the Big Wood isn't as healthy as it was when Cleveland served as our 22nd and 24th Presidents. But it's not as bad as it could be either and—thanks to your support—there's a lot to be hopeful about for the Big Wood River, especially for fans of rainbow trout.

Rainbows are the only native trout species in the Big Wood watershed and besides being fun to catch, they are considered a good indicator species. There's no doubt the population of rainbows in the Big Wood

“There are a handful of key aspects you need to look at when you’re talking about maintaining a healthy fishery,” Ryan said. “The first is clean, cold water and the Trout Friendly program is definitely helping with that.”

isn’t what it once was. That’s why the Land Trust is always working on ways to improve the river and the fishery any way we can.

The Trout Friendly program is one of the ways you are helping us make a positive impact.

Ryan Santo is the new program director for the Trout Friendly program. He comes to the Land Trust with a degree in Fisheries Biology and years of experience in the field. He’s excited about the impact that the Trout Friendly program and the other goals of the Land Trust are having on the health of local rainbow trout population.

“There are a handful of key aspects you need to look at when you’re talking about maintaining a healthy fishery,” Ryan said. “The first is clean, cold water and the Trout Friendly program is definitely helping with that.”

Requirements of the program like only watering landscapes after 10 pm or before 6 am and mowing lawns at longer lengths both help decrease water usage. These are critical moves in a valley where approximately 70% of our annual water usage goes to landscaping.

“The more water in the river and the aquifer the better it is for the fish and for all the animals that rely on the river,” Ryan said. “Reducing chemicals like phosphorous from the watershed is also an important part of Trout Friendly as well because it helps reduce algae growth. The more algae you have the more it decreases oxygen from the water and makes it harder for the fish to thrive.”

Proper habitat is also crucial for rainbow trout as they need a variety of aquatic terrain for various stages of their lifecycle.

“Trout are always moving, especially seasonally,” Ryan explained. “They need access to places with small gravel to spawn, then they need slow moving water for juveniles to grow. That’s one of the big reasons why having healthy floodplains are so important. They not only provide some of this invaluable habitat for both trout and their food sources, but they also help replenish the aquifer.”

Thanks to your support, the Land Trust has been able

to make some big and helpful impacts for rainbow trout over the last few years: from preserving sections of the floodplain at places like Colorado Gulch in Hailey and the Howard Preserve in Bellevue, to recently completed habitat and passage restoration projects at two of the Big Wood’s most important tributaries—Elkhorn Creek and Rock Creek.

While those projects can take a lot of time and money, you can make a difference for rainbow trout and the health of the Big Wood River right in your own yard.

“The Big Wood River and its trout still needs a lot of help, but there’s plenty of reason to be hopeful, too,” Ryan said. “A lot of people want to do good work for the river, and thanks to the Trout Friendly Program they can make a positive impact right in their own backyards.”

As President Cleveland so eloquently put it, “The real worth and genuineness of the human heart are measured by its readiness to submit to the influences of Nature.”

Rainbow Trout: *Oncorhynchus Mykiss*

AVERAGE SIZE: 9-18”

SPAWNS: Primarily in spring with eggs hatching in summer

APPEARANCE: Green to dark colored backs with silver bodies and red to pink stripes along its sides, which gives the species its common name

OF NOTE: Known for their beauty and aggressive natures, “bows” are one of the most popular species of gamefish on the planet.

Where to Fish:

BOXCAR BEND PRESERVE: One of our most popular fishing preserves is easy to find. Located just off Highway 75 in mid-valley, Boxcar Bend offers a trail down to the river where anglers can find success throughout the season.

DRAPER WOOD RIVER PRESERVE: Our most popular preserve for dog walkers, Draper is in the heart of Hailey and offers access to fast-moving but wade-able water that is a favorite with local fishing guides.

VALLEY CREEK PRESERVE: One of our newest and only preserves in the Sawtooth Valley, Valley Creek includes a fisherman’s access trail not far from downtown Stanley.

Making Impacts Across



6th Grade Poop Patrol

We owe a big THANK YOU to Weylin Kettleband and the rest of Mrs. McGonigal's 6th Grade Class from the Syringa School. Weylin was inspired to help tackle the issues of unattended dog waste, so he made up a handful of posters about the importance of picking up after our pets.

Weylin and his fellow Poop Patrol classmates then went to our Draper Wood River Preserve in Hailey to put the posters up and to pick up any dog waste and trash they could find. It's inspiring to see the next generation stepping up to make a difference.

Staff Efforts Honored

The Land Trust was grateful to have last Summer's issue of our seasonal newsletter take 2nd Place in the annual Idaho Press Club awards. Our staff and the team at Centerlyne Design set a goal of producing one of best newsletters in the nation and are happy to be rewarded for our efforts. On a similar note, we're also proud of our staff member, Mike McKenna, for receiving a John Reginato Conservation Award from the Outdoor Writers Association of California for a story about becoming a sustainable fisherman.



Bringing the Business Community Together

Amidst the verdant backdrop of blossoming lilacs and our lush Trout Friendly lawn, the Land Trust offices in Hailey were the backdrop for the Wood River Valley Chamber of Commerce's first outdoor Business After Hours (BAH) event of the season. The first ever "Conservation BAH" was official hosted by the Land Trust and our partners, Trout Unlimited and The Nature Conservancy of Idaho, and was very well attended with business leaders coming to find out more about local conservation efforts.

"It's great to see the community come together to support these organizations," said Keri York of Trout Unlimited, who was proud to also say she has now worked for all three local conservancy non-profits. "These organizations all work well together and have done a lot of great things for our Valley."

Our Community



Students up the WOW factor

Wow did we have a great spring teaming up with WOW-students.org! Thanks to the hard work of our program staff and the financial support from you and from the local, education-based non-profit WOW-students organization, we had future conservations helping out on our lands all season.

Graduating seniors from Wood River High School spent a day cleaning up weeds and barbed wire at Colorado Gulch Bench Property. Sixth and seventh grade students from The Sage School helped plant grass seeds and spread mulch by the new pedestrian bridge the Wood River Women's Foundation provided for the Colorado Gulch Preserve. Students from Hailey, Bellevue and Alturas Elementary schools cleaned up various preserves, and kindergarteners from The Community School in Sun Valley spent a morning releasing bugs that help eradicate noxious weeds around the Howard Preserve.

All-in all, it was another banner year for local students making positive impacts on our lands, water and wildlife habitat. And none of it would happen without your support!



Wood River Insurance Gives back!

The Land Trust was honored to receive the "Referral Rewards" donation from the team at Wood River Insurance. It was the first time we were blessed to win this seasonal, vote-based donation. Thanks for voting for us!



Thank you!

We are the Land Trust

Get to Know Cooper Dart, Summer Intern



HOMETOWN: Hailey, Idaho

COLLEGE: Bowdoin College

STUDIES: Environmental Studies and Anthropology

FAMILY: Parents, Hank Dart and Kari Bohlke, and younger brother Cash

REASONS YOU WANTED TO INTERN AT THE LAND TRUST: I grew up in the outdoors of the Wood River Valley (skiing on Baldy, backpacking in the Pioneers, fishing the Big Wood, among other things), and the past 12 years of intimately interacting with the Idaho environment has filled me with a deep love of open spaces in the valley. I knew about the good work the Land Trust does acquiring and maintaining local open spaces, and I really wanted to spend a summer both giving back to the Idaho's nature and helping the Land Trust. So I applied, and here I am!

WHAT'S YOUR SUN VALLEY STORY: My family moved to Hailey when I was six years old and the rest is history. My

parents were quick to get me out hiking and camping in the mountains around town, and my grandfather taught me the basics of fly fishing around Boxcar Bend. I joined the Sun Valley Ski Education Foundation (SVSEF) as an alpine ski racer in 5th grade, and remained racing with SVSEF until I graduated high school. A sandal tan would develop in the summer, and a goggle tan grew in the winter. I began to pursue my love for the environment in high school with environmental science and literature classes, viewing the topics in relation to our local environment.

FAVORITE PART OF THE INTERNSHIP: Any part that gets me outside and onto our preserves! It's been a blast spending days on the land and getting to know preserves I'd never visited before. You can't go wrong with Idaho summers.

WHAT DO YOU LIKE TO DO OUTSIDE OF WORK: I basically do what I do when I'm in work: run around outside! I hike, backpack, and fish, and then in the evenings I spend time with friends, play banjo and write.

FAVORITE PROJECT YOU'VE HELPED THE LAND TRUST WITH: Working with Project WOW and 20 kindergarten students to release invasive-weed-eating weevils at Howard Preserve was a riot. The kids were beyond excited to spend a morning outside with bugs.

FAVORITE LOCAL FOOD: Snow Bunny Drive-in in Hailey is my go-to—amazing milkshakes, burgers and a fry sauce to die for.

WOULD YOU RECOMMEND AN INTERNSHIP WITH THE LAND TRUST: Absolutely! It's hard to imagine a better way to spend a summer.

WHAT'S NEXT: After this summer I'm heading back out to Maine to start my sophomore year at Bowdoin College.

WRLT Founder's Award



Richard Carr is presented with the Land Trust's Founder's Award by executive director Scott Boettger and board Chair, Kathie Levison, earlier this summer. The Founders Award is given to individuals who have advanced the mission of the Land Trust and demonstrated long-term commitment to preserving and protecting open spaces. Richard joined our board in 2012 and served as co-chair for the past year. Richard's passion for protecting land, his valued council and warm and welcoming personality made him an easy choice for this year's award.

Sagebrush Saturday

Nothin' fishy about Stream Restoration.

At Rinker Rock Creek Ranch

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 8TH FROM 9-11AM

Free and Family Friendly

All are welcome to come and enjoy this FREE educational event. Guest speakers from U of I will be on hand to discuss how cattle, fish populations and restoration all work together on the ranch. Live fish will be available for observing!

Rock Creek Ranch is a 10,400 acre working ranch and education facility owned and managed by the University of Idaho's Rangeland Center, The Nature Conservancy and the Wood River Land Trust. It is located just east of Hailey and Bellevue. Meet at the historic barn on Rock Creek Road.



Choose to Protect the Places You Love!

Your support is vital to the mission of the Land trust.

Every dollar you donate stays local and goes directly to make a difference for Idaho and the environment.

Send your gift using the enclosed envelop or use our on-line feature.

To learn more, please contact our Development Director, Courtney Jelaco at 208-788-3947, or check out the **Ways to Give** page on our website at **WoodRiverLandTrust.org**.



Wood River Land Trust protects and restores land, water, and wildlife habitat in the Wood River Valley and its surrounding areas. We work cooperatively with private landowners and local communities to ensure these areas are protected now and for future generations.



The accreditation seal is awarded to land trusts meeting the highest national standards for excellence and conservation permanence.

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