

## **Northwest Passage Volume 4, Issue 1 – Spring 2013**

Cover

Northwest Passage

[blm.gov/or](http://blm.gov/or)

BLM Oregon/Washington

The Bureau of Land Management Magazine for Oregon and Washington

Spring 2013

Six months ago, Oregon experienced its largest fire since the Civil War. How is the BLM helping its neighbors restore the land?

Let Me Stand Next To Your Fire?

[Illustration of the State of a Flame]

BLM Recycles

[Image of Recycling Symbol]

[Image of BLM Logo]

Also inside

Seeding the Land

Oregon's Secret Waterfalls

Renewable Forestry

## Northwest Passage Volume 4, Issue 1 – Spring 2013

Page 2 – 3

Trailhead

[Photo of Jerome E. Perez, State Director, Oregon/Washington Bureau of Land Management]

Letter from Jerome E. Perez, State Director, Oregon/Washington, Bureau of Land Management

THE SUMMER OF 2012 was a historic one for Oregonians. During one of the most challenging fire seasons in recorded history, we witnessed a blaze unlike any since the days of the Civil War.

Thankfully, the BLM's highly-skilled firefighter crews – recently staffed with a number of returning military veterans – were ready to respond. Quickly and decisively, they put to use their vast experience and leadership to battle a new kind of adversary.

But with a fire that size, there were also costs. Many of our neighbors experienced damage to their lands and their livestock. They continue to rebuild and recover.

This recovery is also the story of the BLM. In addition to fighting the fires and protecting the people and property, the BLM is also dedicated to the rehabilitation of this land. Inside this issue of Northwest Passage, you'll read how last summer's fires have initiated one of the most significant BLM efforts to seed scorched soil and bring Oregon back to life.

These endeavors are just a fraction of the BLM's commitment to public service. In fact, this entire issue is dedicated to our mission of serving the public. You'll read stories about BLM firefighters, our unique drill shop that helps replant our nation's lands, and our commitment to sustainable forests that provide both ecological and economic benefits for future generations.

And by the way, if we haven't already met, allow me to close by briefly introducing myself. This is my first issue of Northwest Passage.

Though I'm a recent arrival to the BLM, I bring over 21 years of public service that include the Peace Corps and the U.S. Forest Service. Everywhere I've been, I have worked closely with communities at local, state, and national levels.

There's a great quote by President John F. Kennedy that applies to our work: "Our most basic common link is that we all inhabit this planet. We all breathe the same air. We all cherish our children's future."

Here at the BLM, we live that quote every day. We are committed to serving and supporting your public lands for this generation – and for all future generations.

[Photo of an airplane flying above the Lava Fire near Lakeview, Oregon.]

photo by Kevin Abel

<http://bit.ly/Xa2nNg>

[youtube.com/blmoregon](https://www.youtube.com/blmoregon)

[facebook.com/blmoregon](https://www.facebook.com/blmoregon)

[twitter.com/blmoregon](https://twitter.com/blmoregon)

[flickr.com/photos/blmoregon](https://www.flickr.com/photos/blmoregon)

Departments:

2 Trailhead

4 First Step

5 Best in the West

6 Day Hike

8 District Round-Up

24 Back Country

Features:

6 Let Me Stand Next to Your Fire: Six months after Oregon's largest fire since the Civil War, we look at the BLM's rapid response to heal the land.

10 Seeding the Land: In the aftermath of Oregon's fires, the BLM's Drill Repair Shop plays a key role in restoring our scorched public lands.

18 Into the Woods: The BLM meets with our neighbors to create a forestry plan that benefits both our ecology and our economy.

22 Chasing Waterfalls: Wanna shake off the cabin fever? Join our underground tour of some of Oregon's secret waterfalls.

## **Northwest Passage Volume 4, Issue 1 – Spring 2013**

Page 4

Take it Outside!

Volume 4, Issue 1

WWW.BLM.GOV/OR

Jerome E. Perez / publisher

Jody Weil / editorial director

Matt Christenson / editor & art director

Teddi Duling / copy editor

Shelly York / production designer

Contributors:

Kevin Abel, Michael Campbell, Matt Christenson, Jeff Clark, Lisa Clark, Kirstin Grace-Simons, Megan Harper, Derrick Henry, Trish Hogervorst, Tony Kerwin, Tara Martinak, Michael Mascari, Cheyne Rossbach, Robert St. Clair, Maria Thi Mai, Jim Whittington, Mark Wilkening

Photographers:

Kevin Abel, Michael Campbell, Matt Christenson, Jeff Clark, Kirstin Grace-Simons, Derrick Henry, Tony Kerwin, Maria Thi Mai, BLM Staff

Contact:

Northwest Passage is a publication of Bureau of Land Management, Oregon State Office, 333 SW 1st Ave, 6th Floor, Portland, OR 97204 / 503.808.6035 / [or\\_northwest\\_passage@blm.gov](mailto:or_northwest_passage@blm.gov)

Mission:

The BLM's mission is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations. In Oregon and Washington, the BLM provides innovative leadership in managing natural resources of the Pacific Northwest.

First Step

[Polaroid-type photo of a hunter at dusk]

At an outdoor expo in February, a hunting enthusiast stopped by our booth to ask me a few questions about the BLM. Specifically, he was interested in the best places to get outdoors. As all good

conversations go, one thing led to another, and we were soon chatting about the BLM's recent town hall meetings, our veteran firefighting crews, and how much the BLM contributes to the Oregon economy.

Once we'd covered just about every aspect of the BLM's mission, he scratched his head and asked, "Is there anything the BLM doesn't do?" Which got me thinking. The BLM provides a complete range of end-to-end management for the public lands. And in these days of cost cutting (and cutting corners), we're pretty unique in this way.

For example, last summer Oregon experienced its worst fires since 1865. And the BLM was right there with our firefighters. Then after the fires were put out? The BLM stuck around. We got busy replanting and reseeding to help bring the land back to life. And through everything, we continually supported the land's long-term values like recreation, wildlife, grazing, cultural, and more.

And we don't do this work in a vacuum. Like Michael Mascari's article in this issue reports, the BLM constantly checks in with our neighbors in local communities to ask how we're doing and what folks expect to see. We're public servants who never forget about the public we're so fortunate to serve.

Back at the outdoor expo, my new hunter friend thanked me for the info and said he had a few more booths to check out. We shook hands, and he said he'd see me out there. "Out where?" I asked, thinking he meant the expo. "Out hunting," he replied. Oh, I'm not a hunter. I'm more into hiking and biking. He just laughed and shook his head as he walked away saying it takes all kinds.

Which is true.

The BLM serves one of the most diverse populations with a wide range of interests who come together through their love of some of the finest public lands in the United States. And no matter what happens, we'll be there.

Thanks for reading. See you out there.

– Matt Christenson

## Northwest Passage Volume 4, Issue 1 – Spring 2013

Page 5

Best in the West

Our contributors to the Pacific Northwest

[Five Photos of Contributors – Derrick Henry, Tony Kerwin, Michael Mascari, Kevin Abel, Jeff Clark]

“Spring is the time of plans and projects.” (Leo Tolstoy)

It's spring! Time to surgically remove the remote control (Smartphone? Tablet? Well, you know what we mean...) and head for America's Great Outdoors. After growing up in the dusty deserts of New Mexico, Derrick Henry found his fortune in New York City where he worked as a journalist for The New York Times, The Associated Press, and Newsday. Derrick also spent time as a fishing instructor and teacher at Columbia University – presumably not at the same time. In *Let Me Stand Next to Your Fire* and *Seeding the Land*, Derrick came to Oregon to witness both the aftermath of the Long Draw Fire and the BLM's progressive projects to rehabilitate the land. Tony Kerwin designed museum exhibits before working on environmental projects for the BLM. And when he's not busy hiking famous summits like Manaslu, the eighth highest mountain in the world, Tony enjoys working with bats. He relished the opportunity to keep us from Going Batty with vampiric misinformation. Regular contributor Michael Mascari took a field trip *Into the Woods* to better understand our neighbors' ideas and opinions on how the BLM can best manage Oregon's forests for future generations. Kirstin Grace-Simons is *Chasing Waterfalls* to find some of Oregon's best secret sites. And photographers Kevin Abel and Jeff Clark provided us with breathtaking photos for just about everything.

## Northwest Passage Volume 4, Issue 1 – Spring 2013

Pages 6 – 7

Day Hike

What better place to put a wind project than public lands?

Inherit the Wind: An Oregonian is looking to contribute to the energy – and economy – of the Pacific Northwest

Photo by Jeff Clark

[Photo of a Group of Wind Turbines and Sunflowers in Oregon]

With that single question, a local Oregonian has developed the first wind project to be built on BLM-administered land in the Pacific Northwest. Known as the Lime Wind Energy Project, this three-megawatt development is located in the abandoned community of Lime near Baker City, Oregon.

“Randy Joseph is a member of the public. Not a big company, corporation, or anything. He was just interested in green energy,” says Courtney James of the BLM. “He made it a family project. He has two sons that he’s trained. One of them does the actual maintenance on the tower.”

The BLM continues to work with the Joseph family to analyze local bird and bat populations and keep a close eye over regional wildlife. The BLM has also ensured that the wind turbines do not impact the area’s archaeological values. Further, the turbines are locally-owned and contribute to the community.

“Most of the money is kept here. It’s a good addition to the economy around Baker County,” said James who also explains how the wind project contributes to the BLM’s multiple-use mission. “Anybody can come up here any time of day. There’s still grazing. Hunters can come up here. There are no fences. It’s not an exclusive use of the area.”

To see a video interview with Courtney James from the Lime Wind Energy Project, visit <http://bit.ly/RifxVr> or point your smartphone at our QR code. From the video, you’ll also find a link to additional photos from Lime Wind.

## Northwest Passage Volume 4, Issue 1 – Spring 2013

Pages 8 – 11

District Round-Up

Welcome to News from the BLM in Oregon & Washington!

[Illustrated Map of Oregon & Washington with all Ten Districts Identified]

Your BLM Districts are “All Over the Map!”

Burns, Oregon: [blm.gov/or/districts/burns](http://blm.gov/or/districts/burns)

- Yee-haw! The Mustang Million Wild Horse Adoption is coming up April 26 to 27 at the BLM’s Wild Horse Corral Facility in Hines, Oregon. Hosted by the Burns District, this is one of eight national events aimed to adopt 1,000 of America’s wild mustangs. As part of the adoptions, the horses and their new trainers will be eligible to take part in a \$1,000,000 Million Mustang performance competition. Organized by the Mustang Heritage Foundation which is well-known for its Extreme Mustang Makeover, the Mustang Million will feature youth and adult divisions as well as a number of specialty classes. For more information, check out [mustangmillion.com](http://mustangmillion.com). (And see lots of great photos from an Extreme Mustang Makeover at [bit.ly/M4xHHx](http://bit.ly/M4xHHx).)

- In the aftermath of last summer’s Miller Homestead Fire, the Burns District got very busy drill seeding at a rate of 750 acres per day. Thousands of acres were rehabilitated to both recover the land and welcome back wildlife.

[Photo of a mom and her child riding on a horse]

In addition to providing the opportunity to adopt 1,000 wild mustangs, the Mustang Million invites trainers of all ages to compete for up to \$1,000,000.

Coos Bay, Oregon: [blm.gov/or/districts/coosbay](http://blm.gov/or/districts/coosbay)

- Good news for snowy plovers! Their recovery is trending upwards per findings from the most recent field research. Boasting the greatest number of snowy plovers since 1990, some 315 nests were counted, the largest number in a given year. The western snowy plover at the Pacific Coast was listed as threatened by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in 1993.

- Keep on truckin’ – safely! In a partnership with the Coos County Road Department, the Coos Bay District installed guardrails along the road at the Bastendorff Beach recreation site. These guardrails are positioned to help keep off-road vehicles on designated travel routes as well as reduce long-term camping and littering at the site.

[Photo of a Snowy Plover]

With over 300 nests counted, the snowy plover is well on its way back to making a full recovery.

Eugene, Oregon: [blm.gov/or/districts/eugene](http://blm.gov/or/districts/eugene)

- In January, the Eugene District welcomed local residents to a town hall to chat about how the BLM can best support the future of local recreation and treasured Wild & Scenic Rivers on BLM lands. The event was a great opportunity for folks who love getting outside in Oregon to speak with the BLM face to face about their favorite destinations.
- And speaking of recreation... The Eugene District then partnered with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the U.S. Forest Service at the Eugene Sportsmen's Expo and Boat Show. Over 20,000 outdoor enthusiasts from the community and the surrounding area came together to learn about the myriad of recreation options that annually draw some eight million visitors to the BLM's public lands in Oregon.

Lakeview, Oregon: [blm.gov/or/districts/lakeview](http://blm.gov/or/districts/lakeview)

- The Lakeview District kicked off 2013 with a great day at the Promote Lifetime Activities in Youth (P.L.A.Y.) event hosted by the Klamath Falls Chapter of the Oregon Hunters Association. BLM employees educated over 3,000 youths on the tenets of safe recreation on public lands. Classes also included how to identify trees, wildlife, and plants.
- Wildland firefighters in Lakeview conducted a 73-acre prescribed burn in the South Warner Mountains to improve wildlife habitats for sage-grouse, mule deer, pronghorn, and bighorn sheep. The animals are aided by the removal of young juniper that is encroaching into sagebrush steppe habitats. The project will provide necessary treatments to over 24,000 acres of western juniper during the next few years.

[Photo of Attendees at the Promote Lifetime Activities in Youth event]

A lifetime of recreation awaits! Visitors to the Lakeview District booth at January's Promote Lifetime Activities in Youth learn about safely exploring their local public lands.

[Photo of BLM Firefighters Helping Local Wildlife by Treating Young Juniper on the Sagebrush Steppe]

BLM firefighters help local wildlife by treating young juniper on the sagebrush steppe.

Medford, Oregon: [blm.gov/or/districts/medford](http://blm.gov/or/districts/medford)

- Cross-country skiers! The Medford District has been conducting extensive Nordic trail grooming this winter around Hyatt Lake and the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument. Working with local volunteers, nearly 35 miles of trail will be regularly groomed throughout the season to welcome the growing population of winter recreation visitors. Wanna join the fun? More info online: <http://on.doi.gov/WUzEhJ>

- Like Eugene, the Medford District hosted a recreation public meeting. Over 150 people attended the event to share their ideas on the future of recreational and rivers throughout the district.

[Photo of cross-country skiers]

Continues on next page

More great news from the BLM in Oregon & Washington!

Prineville, Oregon: [blm.gov/or/districts/Prineville](http://blm.gov/or/districts/Prineville)

- Picture yourself hiking along a creek. The sun warms your face. Your stomach growls as you look for the perfect place for lunch. And then you hear it...the enchanting call of a small waterfall. Just the right ambiance. The perfect place for a picnic. But this is no babbling waterfall – it's a headcut, the termite of the hydrological world. Recently in the Prineville District, a two-foot high headcut developed on Big Wall Creek, a tributary to Wall Creek northwest of the town of Monument, Oregon. The BLM quickly came to its aid because this is a priority watershed encompassing over 128,000 acres of mostly forested land within the North Fork John Day Basin. This region provides critical spawning and rearing habitat for Mid-Columbia Summer Steelhead – a threatened species currently listed under the Endangered Species Act. Thanks to the BLM's fast action and rehabilitation, Big Wall Creek is on the road to recovery where it will remain a beautiful spot for lunch – as well as a home for the endangered Steelhead – for a long time to come.

[Photo of the BLM Helping Restore Big Wall Creek]

The BLM's Prineville District came to the aid of Big Wall Creek – a critical habitat for Oregon fish listed under the Endangered Species Act.

Roseburg, Oregon: [blm.gov/or/districts/roseburg](http://blm.gov/or/districts/roseburg)

- The Roseburg District welcomes new District Manager Abbie Jossie who arrives in March. Abbie has been with the BLM for 25 years and is currently on detail with the BLM in Alaska. No stranger to Oregon, she previously worked in the Medford District. Welcome, Abbie! And big thanks to Don Holmstrom who is serving as Acting District Manager until Abbie's report date.
- During its annual philanthropic campaign, the Roseburg District raised over \$25,000 for local, national, and international non-profits. Acting District Manager Don Holmstrom said, "It's really something to see the generosity of the Roseburg District, that with continued economic difficulty for many, BLM employees step up to give back even more to the great community here in Douglas County, and I know BLM is proud to be a part of it." Since 1977, employees of the Roseburg District have raised over half a million dollars.

Salem, Oregon: [blm.gov/or/districts/salem](http://blm.gov/or/districts/salem)

- Regulars to Salem's Fishermen's Bend recreation site can count on two things: a rich program of outdoor activities and the friendly smile of volunteer Khrystyl Best. Khrystyl volunteers more than 30 hours each week during the busiest months and works as an office assistant, volunteer coordinator, and environmental educator for youths. Now she's also a regional recipient of the 2012 Governor's Volunteer Award. Each year, this award recognizes some of Oregon's finest volunteers. Nominations are open to every type of volunteer who serves everything from high schools to hospices. For 2012, Khrystyl Best is the only award-winning Oregon volunteer to represent a Federal Agency. (Psst...Khrystyl also received the BLM's "Making a Difference" National Volunteer Award, but who's counting!)

- Ye olden fun on the Oregon coast! At the Yaquina Head Lighthouse, the Salem District held a Victorian holiday celebration in December. The event encouraged visitors to travel back in time to relive holiday traditions from the 1800s as celebrated by the families of Yaquina Head lighthouse keepers. More info about Yaquina at their homepage: <http://on.doi.gov/8msPQ>

[Photo of Khrystyl Best Teaching Youths]

Khrystyl Best, 2012 Governor's Volunteer Award winner, educates Oregon youths in Salem.

Spokane, Washington: [blm.gov/or/districts/spokane](http://blm.gov/or/districts/spokane)

- Choose your own adventure! Get ready for warmer weather at the Spokane District's booth at the Bighorn Outdoor Adventure Show. From March 21 to March 24, chat with your local BLM recreation experts on the best places to hunt, camp, fish, hike, and relax. We'll see you there!

- An energetic group of volunteers from Washington joined forces with the BLM to plant 250 shrubs at the Spokane District's popular Fishtrap Recreation Area. Everyone came together for National Public Lands Day to plant rose, serviceberry, snowberry, hawthorn, choke cherry, and golden currant. A particularly wet fall season provided ample ground moisture for all the shrubs. Come visit Fishtrap when it blooms! And check out this rad stop-motion video made from more than 300 still photos from Fishtrap Lake: <http://bit.ly/LCE2up>

[Photo of a Volunteer Planting at the Fishtrap Recreation Site]

Check out these plants in a few months when they start blooming at the Fishtrap Recreation Area!

Vale, Oregon: [blm.gov/or/districts/vale](http://blm.gov/or/districts/vale)

- Solitude awaits! And we've got the perfect map to help get you there. The Vale District is proud to announce an updated Owyhee Canyon Country map for southeastern Oregon. This is an all-weather map so no need to worry about wet weather. It's also part of the Pacific Northwest Recreation Map Series if you're a collector. And you can get your map at your local BLM office as well as selected U.S. Forest Service offices in Oregon and Washington. Or just give us a ring! Make a call to our public room at (503) 808-6008. We accept all major credit cards at our offices.

[Photo of the Owyhee Canyon County]

The Owyhee Canyon County's brand new map serves as your guide to its natural beauty.

Plus daily updates at Facebook and Twitter!

## Northwest Passage Volume 4, Issue 1 – Spring 2013

Page 12 – 17

Let Me Stand Next To Your Fire

The Long Draw Fire was Oregon's largest since the American Civil War. Now six months later, DERRICK HENRY looks back at the damage – as well as the BLM's rapid response to heal the land.

[Photo of a BLM Firefighter with a Fire Burning Behind Him]

Photos by Kevin Abel & Derrick Henry

It's Not the Heat: BLM firefighters – many of whom are military veterans – are no strangers to standing in the line of fire.

Ring of Fire: The Long Draw Fire burned more acres than all fires from the previous five years combined.

“A great flame follows a tiny spark.” (Dante Alighieri)

It's 2013. A brand new year. And it seems certain Mayan prognostications may have been overstated.

The world did not actually end in 2012. Here in eastern Oregon, a field of white reflects sunny blue skies.

Unlike the state's famous forests (and Portlandia TV show) to the west, Oregon's high plains to the east could almost be Arizona if it weren't for the freezing temperatures. After a recent storm, boots crunch and slide and catch again on slippery patches of ice.

And underneath those boots, the aftermath of the Long Draw Fire lies beneath a beautiful blanket of snow. To the uninitiated, it may be shocking to learn this scene marks Oregon's most devastating fire since the Civil War.

### FROM A SPARK

Such is our past. A moment in Oregon history. But scorched earth and scarred rangelands will not be our future.

It was just after 6 p.m. on July 8 when lightning on the high desert kindled grass and sagebrush in the Long Draw Canyon on the north side of Blue Mountain, about 20 miles south of Burns Junction. That evening the fire measured over six thousand acres. But the fire, energized by dusty scrub brush and other fuels drying since the previous year, soon burst out of the canyon and reached the mountaintop. Firefighters could not keep up.

By 10 a.m. the next day, the Long Draw Fire had pushed north several miles to Whitehorse Road and measured 26,000 acres. Later that day, the fire jumped U.S. Route 95 and spread in all directions by an

additional 296,000 acres. On July 10, the fire grew to nearly 453,000 acres and began pushing east into Owyhee Canyon.

## GREAT FLAMES ARISE

Large fires create their own weather, giving them the energy to jump fire lines and roads. In fact, fire crews reported that the Long Draw jumped U.S. 95 and ran up a ridge across from the Oregon Department of Transportation's Basque Station facility within seconds.

"It was frustrating to say the least," said Al Crouch, a fire operations specialist in the BLM's Vale District who was an incident commander on the fire. Crouch said firefighters immediately recognized that the supply of unsheltered fuels and wind created the potential for a historic fire. More than 500 firefighters fought the blaze that burned as strongly at night as it did during the day. Within days, Long Draw, at 515,000 acres and counting, became the largest fire in Oregon history since 1865.

The fire destroyed some buildings and power lines. If small animals didn't die from being trapped in the fire's path, they died from smoke inhalation or suffocated as flames robbed their burrows of oxygen. Intense flames reduced sagebrush to their roots and destroyed their tiny seeds, lessening the chances that they would grow back to provide food and shelter for animals.

Ranchers already challenged by intense weather had to collect dead cattle and put down those suffering from burns or smoke inhalation. The Long Draw Fire affected 16 grazing allotments according to fire records. In some cases, the fire burned about three percent of allotment acres – in others, nearly 100 percent. Allotments in the area range from about 3,800 acres to nearly 320,000 acres.

"Those families are going to find it very hard to make a living," Crouch said. "They're a multiple user of the land just like anyone else is."

## CONTAINMENT

On July 16, the Long Draw Fire was finally contained at 558,198 acres, or about 872 square miles of Federal, state, and private land. As the fire died down, land managers knew that several challenges to rangeland health would linger.

Nearly half of the total area burned was core habitat for the greater sage-grouse, the bird that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) has said warrants listing under the Endangered Species Act. While the FWS did not list the species due to a need to address other higher-priority species first, the BLM has been working with its partners to provide for long-term sage-grouse conservation, habitat protection, and species improvement that would make listing the bird unnecessary in the coming years. The Long Draw Fire may serve as a setback to those efforts.

The fire also destroyed parts of Herd Management Areas where wild horses roam, plus parts of various Wilderness Study Areas and Areas of Critical Environmental Concern. Additionally, the fire increased the chances of invasion from 700 acres of noxious weeds thriving to the north.

The BLM's Vale District took initial steps to stabilize and rehabilitate the burn zone which measures six times the size of Portland. But they knew this project will require many partnerships.

Drivers on U.S. 95 can see for themselves the workload land managers and their partners face in resolving land issues like sage-grouse, grazing, wild horses, recreation, big game and wildlife.

"Southeast Oregon now is in the spotlight," said Crouch. "This fire is a long time from being over. We've got a lot of work left to do."

## RECOVERY

Directly following the Long Draw Fire, the BLM launched an emergency plan to rehabilitate the thousands of distressed acres. The agency connected with many of the local landowners and stakeholders affected by the fire as well as state and Federal agencies. The goal was to bring together all hands to heal this land.

In only the first two months of rehab, the BLM and its partners seeded nearly 40,000 acres while rebuilding 30 miles of fencing. Before this year is up, more vegetation will be planted. More fences will be mended. Grazing and wildlife will return. Due to the critical nature of this work, the BLM set its own time frame of 12 months to complete all restoration.

But today the winter weather has slowed work. Albeit temporarily. Beneath all that snow, the rangelands receive a well-deserved rest as they await further rehabilitation to resume after the thaw.

Still, though it causes a break and makes one's boots cold and wet, the snow also serves as a bright reminder. It is a hopeful sight. One we observe every year, reminding us that from the barren cold of winter we shall soon witness a rebirth of life in the spring.

The land will come back.

To follow the BLM's efforts, please visit the fire rehabilitation homepage at <http://on.doi.gov/VNEDjP> – or scan the QR code which takes you to <http://bit.ly/UAlxj> to watch a video about the Long Draw Fire.

[Photo of a BLM Firefighter Battling a Fire in Oregon]

[Photo of a Close-Up on a BLM Firefighter's Boots]

[Photo of Seeds to Regrow Vegetation Following the Oregon Fires]

Seeds from the BLM's Warehouse.

From a Small Seed: The BLM has planted tens of thousands of burned acres – with many more coming on the road to recovery.

## Northwest Passage Volume 4, Issue 1 – Spring 2013

Page 18 – 19

### Seeding the Land

In the aftermath of Oregon's Fires, the BLM's Drill Repair Shop plays a key role in restoring our scorched public lands

"Don't judge each day by the harvest you reap but by the seeds that you plant." (Robert Louis Stevenson)

[Photo of a Drill Planting Seeds]

[Photo of Mark Manezes in the BLM's Seed Repair Garage]

Head Mechanic Mark Manezes stands in his seed drill repair garage

Drill, Daily, Drill: Seed drills have been used by civilizations since at least 1,500 B.C. to more efficiently place seeds into the ground.

Story by Derrick Henry

Photos by Derrick Henry & Drill Shop Staff

FOLLOWING SUCH ENVIRONMENTALLY CATASTROPHIC EVENTS as Oregon's Long Draw Fire, local land managers use rangeland seed drills to restore vegetation and help prevent soil erosion. Thanks to this heavy machinery, seeds are being mechanically planted en masse without having to resort to the slower work of planting by hand. But after many hours of scuffing terrain, creating furrows, and dropping and covering seeds, these drills must be sent by the BLM to its Vale District's International Rangeland Drill Repair Center.

At this shop, seed drills are refurbished in a large garage that can handle up to three seed drills at a time. Two workers receive and evaluate each machine, much like your neighborhood mechanic might inspect your car. Then the resulting work orders will vary depending on the repair.

A drill used on smooth terrain like burned-out sagebrush habitat will show little to no wear. Workers can quickly replace warped discs and perform a safety inspection before getting the machine back to work. However, a drill used on harder rock and in steep gullies may crack a frame or break a spindle. That type of job may take a couple weeks. In some cases, the shop must obtain custom-made parts.

"There isn't another district or another shop in BLM that does this," said Mark Manezes, the shop's head drill repair mechanic.

The shop is open year-round and is part of the BLM's mission to provide for rangeland equipment that helps to reclaim lands after wildfires. The center has roughly 230 drills that can be sent to various locations. The center also maintains carts that can unfold to accommodate three drills. Plows are also available.

Custom-made parts are another unique aspect of the drill shop. The drills that the BLM uses are 40 to 50 years old and parts are no longer available. As a result, the shop works with various foundries in the United States to cast parts. The BLM also hires local shops to make specialized steel pieces.

“The repair shop is a key part of reclamation efforts because it helps ensure a supply of equipment for fire rehabilitation,” Manezes said, pointing to a fleet of more than 55 drills that had been repaired this season.

As he spoke, a truck hauled two damaged seed drills into the back lot.

“It all comes back to Vale,” he said. “We have the experience. We have the parts. That’s why it’s done here.”

## Northwest Passage Volume 4, Issue 1 – Spring 2013

Page 20 – 21

Into the Woods

Story by Michael Mascari

Photo by Maria Thi Mai

Nature Walk: The BLM has long worked with communities to create a modern forestry plan that benefits both our ecology and our economy. These days, this partnership has been taking field trips to talk under the very trees at the heart of the matter.

A STEADY PROCESSION OF VEHICLES TRAVELED over old logging roads in the Coburg Hills past patches of mature trees near Eugene, Oregon, en route to a proposed future regeneration harvest.

BLM employees from the Eugene District are no stranger to these roads and so they made sure they didn't lose anybody in the convoy. Also, they didn't bring their normal field-going tools for the trip. This time, they brought members of the public instead.

### SOCIAL ECOLOGY

"My hope is that this field trip will begin a good flow of information between the public, the BLM, and other agencies and will help our collective understanding," said Upper Willamette Resource Area Manager Bill O'Sullivan.

Working directly with communities – as well as incorporating a number of their principles – is nothing new to the BLM. But increasing public involvement to this unique level of hands-on interaction in the local forests is. O'Sullivan thought it would be more effective than just a letter or even a town meeting.

And so the BLM's Eugene District hosted a field trip for a diverse group of nearly 50 people who shared a unified interest in the future of forestry in the region. Ecologists, enthusiasts, loggers, Congressional staff, and a Lane County Commissioner all made the trek to see firsthand what the BLM hopes to do for this and future timber sales.

Setting itself apart from private enterprises, the BLM has long managed forests to meet a widely diverse set of national goals that range from timber production and wildlife to water quality, recreation, and more. O'Sullivan stated that ecological principles are the norm at the BLM as is innovation in forestry methods.

### BUILDING BRIDGES

The field trip covered three stops, including one which showcased one of the Eugene District's most recent regeneration harvests from 1997. Visitors had the opportunity to hear from Professors Norm Johnson of Oregon State University and Jerry Franklin from the University of Washington about the tenets of ecological forestry. Then several BLM employees from different disciplines outlined the BLM's

goals and long-term vision. Attendees also had the chance to ask questions and share their own thoughts and ideas for the future.

One such attendee was Gordon Culbertson, a logger who previously worked in the area going back to the 1970s. Mr. Culbertson was pleased to see the progress of forest growth in the Eugene District's most recent regeneration harvest area. "This was a real eye-opener for me. Having been involved in logging the area for as many years as I have, the growth even stunned me. There are 30-inch-plus (diameter) trees," Mr. Culbertson said. "I don't think anybody could come away without an understanding of how the BLM would plan to move forward in managing the lands."

Kevin Matthews, another attendee on the trip, appreciated the chance to share his views and to learn from others. "In addition to the valuable information provided by BLM participants, it was very meaningful to me personally to be able to exchange views with such a broad spectrum of interested parties."

[Photo of an Oregon Forest]

## Northwest Passage Volume 4, Issue 1 – Spring 2013

Page 22 – 23

### Chasing Waterfalls

Hey Oregon urbanites! Wanna shake off your Cabin Fever? Kirstin Grace-Simons takes us on an underground tour of a few of Oregon's secret waterfalls near Salem & Portland...

[Photo of the Quartzville Wild & Scenic River]

Falls at the Quartzville Wild & Scenic River are about 100 miles to Portland – and even closer to Salem.

[Photo of Alsea Falls]

A day trip from virtually anywhere in western Oregon, Alsea Falls offer camping, mountain biking, and more.

I DON'T KNOW IF IT'S BECAUSE THE HUMAN BODY IS MOSTLY WATER or if it's something more primal. Heck, maybe it's just the allure of chaos and danger. No matter the reason, there's something about the powerful crash of a waterfall that makes my heart rush.

I recently took a day trip to visit some waterfalls near my home in Salem, Oregon. And part of their appeal is that they aren't the obvious choices. Sure, I could have gone to Multnomah Falls. (And if you haven't been there, go. Go right now.) But if you've already hit the obvious, you might just be ready for my underground tour of waterfalls.

All of these waterfalls can be found along Back Country Byways, the BLM's designation for a scenic route. A Back Country Byway is a place to get lost. (Well, not literally.) But you'll lose your cares of the urban and routine to enjoy a unique beauty and solace that you can't find amongst the tourists and camera phones. And you'll also find waterfalls.

ALSEA FALLS: <http://on.doi.gov/15gqmR0>

If you want to slink right up and stand within the spray, Alsea Falls is your destination. The South Fork Alsea Back Country Byway is an easy day trip from metropolitan areas near Portland and Salem. Just make sure to keep your wits about you and watch the young ones because even a river as welcoming as the Alsea can sweep you away pretty quickly. Enjoy the recreation site and the short hike to the river and falls. The lower rocks are slippery, and the path is only accessible for the sure-footed. For more information and directions, visit <http://on.doi.gov/15gqmR0>.

QUARTZVILLE: <http://on.doi.gov/pAK7FQ>

Each creek that sneaks into the Quartzville offers an opportunity for a waterfall. You can catch a glimpse of trickles to tall cascades along the roadside or through the trees across the width of the creek. The Quartzville Corridor is managed by a collection of agencies, both county and Federal. Directions and info at <http://on.doi.gov/pAK7FQ>.

NESTUCCA: <http://on.doi.gov/14VtO2j>

You are pretty well lost in the woods when you visit the Nestucca Back Country Byway. Falls can be found all along the winding river. The river itself has many steps and rapids, diminutive yet powerful. With small campsites on the river's edge, you can stay a while and explore the falls that reach into the wooded hills as well as the tiny one-foot wonders.

## Northwest Passage Volume 4, Issue 1 – Spring 2013

Page 24

Backcountry

Going Batty

Story & Photo by Tony Kerwin

[Photo of Bats Rising at Dusk]

IN A POST-“TWILIGHT” CULTURE, how do you talk about bats when the popular opinion is they’re scary, blood-sucking creatures (with rabies!) who get caught in your hair?

Well, we can start by dispelling the myths. But first, let’s look at some truths. As with many wild mammals, bats can carry rabies, but only in about the same proportion as any other animal in the wild – approximately one-tenth of one percent. Pretty low.

So if you see a bat flying during the day? It’s probably sick and may have rabies. If this occurs, you should avoid this bat and keep other people and your pets away from it.

Now, about those blood-sucking bats... There are in fact three species of vampire bats. All are found south of the U.S. border though they can occasionally show up in Texas. These bats don’t suck blood *per se*, but they do drink it. Their saliva contains a powerful trio of chemicals – a natural anesthetic, a vasodilator to relax and open blood vessels, and an anticoagulant to prevent clotting. These naturally-occurring substances allow the bat to comfortably lap up freely-flowing blood for their nightly meal. And for us humans, they’re currently being studied by scientists in hopes to treat stroke and heart attack victims.

But getting tangled in your hair? Not a chance. Bats are amazing animals that use their echolocation to detect substances as fine as the human hair.

Wait, how about that saying, “blind as a bat?” Another myth. Bats are not blind. They can see – and hear – very well. Bats’ excellent echolocation calls are almost always in a range that humans cannot hear. The human range of hearing stretches as high as about 20 kHz while some bat echolocation calls reach upwards of 140 kHz.

Let’s end with a few more facts.

Bats are the only flying mammals. Flying squirrels merely glide. Also, there are about 1,100 species of bats with 15 here in Oregon. Bats make up a whopping 25 percent of all mammal species, outnumbered only by rodents who belong in a different family. And no, bats are not rodents but are more closely related to lemurs – which are primates just like us.