

Northwest Passage

The Bureau of Land Management Magazine for Oregon and Washington

Summer 2013

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Oregon / Washington

BLM



SAN JUAN RISING

With no bridge to the mainland, America's new national monument of secluded islands promises unparalleled peace, beauty & adventure.



Also Inside... Oregon's Air Crash Museum • Snowy Plovers Rebound • The Magic of Big Horn Sheep



TRAIL-HEAD



IN MARK TWAIN'S CLASSIC NOVEL, *THE ADVENTURES OF TOM SAWYER*, he wrote, "Saturday morning was come, and all the summer world was bright and fresh, and brimming with life."

I don't know about you, but I couldn't put our enthusiasm for summer any better than Mr. Twain. Here at the BLM in oft-rainy Oregon and Washington, our excitement for the return of the summer sun is overflowing. We can't wait to meet up with all the folks who get out and enjoy their public lands.

But that's not all we're excited about. For one, the spectacular San Juan Islands in Washington state are now officially designated a national monument. This extraordinary archipelago is completely separated from the mainland without a bridge to connect it. It's one of the few true remaining Shangri-Las.

That said, the San Juans are just a ferry ride away to this uniquely peaceful and beautiful destination. I sure hope you have the opportunity to experience them for yourself this summer.

And the San Juan Islands are but one of a multitude of amazing destinations in Oregon and Washington. From Steens Mountain to the Rogue River to the Fishtrap Recreation Area and beyond, you'll find virtually every type of activity and setting on your public lands. Find your perfect vacation using our easy online search engine at <http://on.doi.gov/spqdti>. Or just point your smartphone at the QR code below.

Another area of special attention this season is the BLM's fire program. Last summer's fires were some of the largest in recorded history. This year our firefighter crews – to include those staffed with returning military veterans – are prepared to defend the Northwest. They've already completed several successful missions. Inside this issue, you'll read about a unique firefighter called an Air Attack Group Supervisor who spends entire days flying above the flames to direct fire operations below him.

In other news, I'm very happy to report excellent progress for Oregon's snowy plovers. The numbers of these tiny beach dwellers have improved by more than 400 percent since being listed as a threatened species. Thanks to significant efforts by the BLM and our partners, these incredible birds are well on their way to making a comeback.

From all of us at the BLM in Oregon and Washington to you and your families, we hope you have a wonderful and safe summer season.

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



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The ghosts of airplanes down during the WWII and Vietnam eras has inspired the BLM to honor the memory of pilots who made this land their final descent.

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A perfect view
from Patos Island.
photo by Jeff Clark
<http://bit.ly/16PHH6U>

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Take it Outside!

Volume 4 Issue 2

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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.



ACCESS YOUR PUBLIC LANDS – FROM WHEREVER YOU ARE

Are you reading *Northwest Passage* on your phone or tablet? If not, would you like to? We're happy to report that *Northwest Passage* has a brand new homepage featuring downloadable e-book versions of every single issue.

Just head over to blm.gov/or/nwpassage (or scan the QR code above) to grab any or all of our free electronic issues. They'll work on virtually every platform. Or you can read and share individual articles online. Plus we have links to videos, photos, and more.

You can also email me to submit your own photos and stories for future issues. Just give me a holler with your ideas.

And our online presence doesn't stop here. In addition to our official home at blm.gov/or, we also welcome thousands of visitors weekly to our Flickr and YouTube pages. We regularly post new content that has already ended up at places like USA Today, the Associated Press, and your local newspaper.

Heading outside Oregon and Washington, the BLM has a national Tumblr blog at mypubliclands.tumblr.com. Every day you'll find fascinating stories and photos from some of the most interesting corners of your public lands.

But what if you – like me – prefer a more tangible experience? You want these stories and photos in the palm of your hand? No worries. We'll always produce a hard copy. But in staying current with the continuing growth of electronic books and magazines, the BLM is expanding the number of platforms that carry *Northwest Passage* to ensure your public lands are easily available to everyone – wherever you are and in whatever format you prefer.

So we'll continue to expand the myriad of ways you can explore your public lands – both in person and on the web. And if you can't get to your favorite spot? Visit us online. We'll bring it directly to you.

Thanks for reading, and see you out there.

— MATT CHRISTENSON
m1christ@blm.gov

our contributors to
the pacific northwest

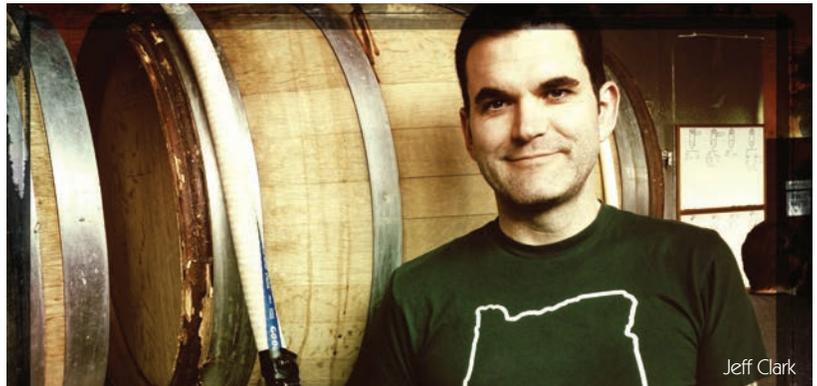
BEST IN THE WEST

“Summertime
is always
the best
of what
might be.”
- Charles Bowden

With his article on our new national monument, the San Juan Islands, **Randall Rische** makes his inaugural appearance in *Northwest Passage*. Randall came to the BLM in Washington state from the National Park Service where he worked at dream destinations like Sequoia National Park and the Carlsbad Caverns. An avid hiker, Randall has already trekked Mt. Rainier, North Cascades National Park, and the Olympic Mountains – and he’s got his eye on the Pacific Crest Trail next. Joining Randall is **Jeff Clark** who assisted with the story and provided amazing photos from the San Juan Islands. Speaking of photos, *Northwest Passage* readers will surely recognize the byline of **Kevin Abel**. Now our photographer is proving to be a double threat by writing a feature about two historic air crashes on public lands. Thanks to the BLM, these sites are now protected to honor the memory of our fallen heroes. On a very different air travel note, **Jim Whittington** spotlights Jerry Serbia, a BLM firefighter who spends eight hours a day flying in an airplane where he watches and directs fire operations from above. **Michael Mascari** is back with ten amazing facts about the Row River Trail near Eugene, Oregon. The trail’s illustrious past includes gold mining, an underwater town, and a Hollywood legend. Finally, **Stephen Baker** brings us great news regarding the return of snowy plovers at Oregon’s beaches. Thanks to the BLM and our partners, these adorable birds are making a very welcome comeback.



Randall Rische



Jeff Clark



Jim Whittington



Michael Mascari



Kevin Abel



Stephen Baker

BIG HORN BONANZA

Many visitors come to Lake Abert and Abert Rim for excellent bird watching, but they'll also encounter majestic big horn sheep who have called this home since the 1970s.

Come for the birds. Stay for the big horn sheep.

We've got a tip for your summer. Along the Oregon Outback Scenic Byway, there's a desolate little stop at Lake Abert near the California border that might just be one of our best-kept secrets.

The first thing you'll notice when you pull up is the beautiful water. But leave your fishing pole in the car. Why, you ask? Because no fish can live in Oregon's only salt water lake. However, brine shrimp can. Lots and lots of brine shrimp.

Not that the birds are complaining. Brine shrimp are like drive-thru take-out to the migratory birds who fly this skyway highway each spring and fall making it a bird watcher's paradise.

Then you'll want to turn around as even more wildlife awaits. High atop the nearby Abert Rim, you may see the big horn sheep that were transplanted here in the late 1970s to replace those which had disappeared some 60 years prior.

Hang gliding is also popular with experienced pilots launching off Abert Rim.

With so much to see and do, you'd think Lake Abert wouldn't be such a guarded secret. But now that we've let the cat out of the bag, are you ready to see what the various skyfliers and sheep have known for years?

Ready to see it for yourself?
Plan your visit online at
<http://on.doi.gov/YIimD0>
Or just point your smartphone
at our QR code to the right.



Wildlife

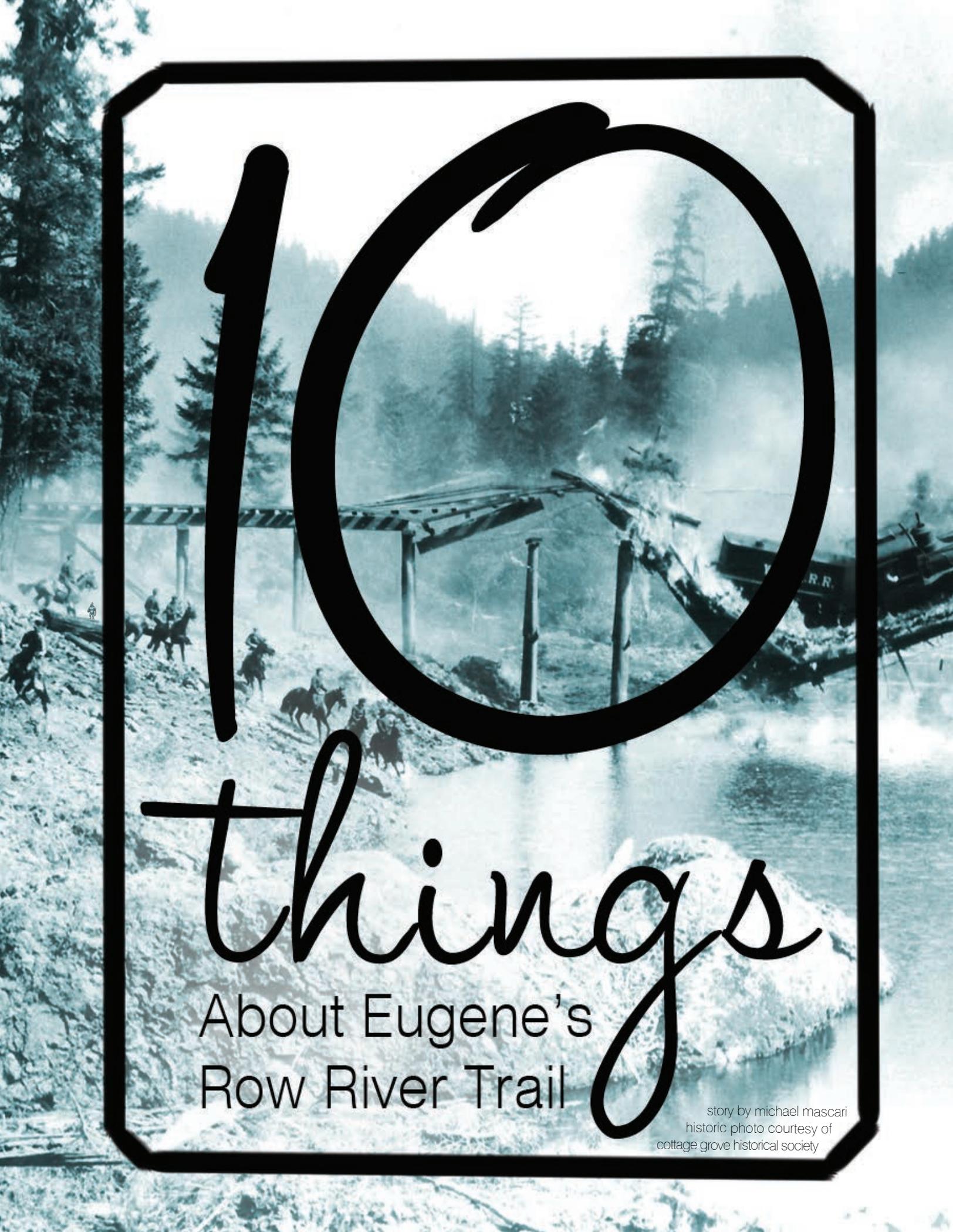
DAYHIKE

photographed by kevin abel

written by matt christenson



Paradise



10

things

About Eugene's
Row River Trail

story by michael mascari
historic photo courtesy of
cottage grove historical society



o visit to Oregon's Willamette Valley would be complete without a leisurely trip by bike, horse, or foot down the Row River Trail.

Each year more than 150,000 visitors enjoy this scenic 18-mile trek near Eugene, Oregon, which feels like a postcard come to life. The beautiful valley is surrounded by acres of farmland dotted with quaint country homes and historic sights.

But the Row River Trail isn't just a scenic recreation destination. It also has a fascinating story that makes it a unique Oregon treasure.



1 A PUGNACIOUS PAST: Row – which rhymes with “cow” – is named after the Row River. By definition, a “row” is synonymous with a noisy quarrel. And in this particular case, the row in Row River refers to a dispute between two early homesteaders who battled over land rights (resulting in the demise of one of them).

2 THE GOLDEN RAILROAD: Prospectors flocked to this area in the mid-1800s after hunters discovered the glitter of gold in a quartz rock. Soon the Bohemia Mining District was born. And by the late 19th century, P.J. “Pat” Jennings had generated support for a railroad along today's Row River Trail to carry gold from the mines. Oregon Governor T.T. Geer signified the railroad with the ceremonial spike. While the gold mines soon dried up, the railroad quickly found a new use: to serve the timber boom.

3 COVERING OUR TRAIL: In 1949, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers built several dams in this area to prevent flooding. Additionally, residents and the town of Dorena were moved a few miles east of their former location. As local water levels rose to the dams, the valley was flooded giving today's Row River Trail visitors a stunning view of Dorena Lake. But the waters also covered the former site of the town of Dorena. And during winter months, the remains of the old railroad and town may be visible at the bottom of the lake.

4 FROM GOLD TO BLUE: In 1971, the Blue Goose was launched. This tourist train took passengers on day trips through the scenic valley. But after the rail line was sold to local timber company, Willamette Industries, the Blue Goose's picturesque passages were retired.

5 SWAPPING RAILS FOR TRAILS: By the 1980s, Willamette Industries uprooted the old train tracks after switching their shipping operations from trains to trucks. Later they deeded the right-of-way on the land to the BLM in lieu of payment for a timber sale. And thanks to the Railroad and Revitalization Regulatory Reform Act of 1976 – a grant program that created trails where railroads previously operated – one of Eugene's most popular recreation spots was born.

6 BRIDGING THE GAP: You can start your trip on the Row River Trail from Trailhead Park or the Centennial Bridge, built from the reclaimed timber of historic covered bridges. If you take the full trip, you'll experience the Mosby Creek Bridge (1920), the Currin Bridge (1925), and the Dorena Bridge (1949). Six of the 20 covered bridges in this area – which is the covered bridge capital of the West – are found here.

7 HOORAY FOR HOLLYWOOD: Three major motion pictures were filmed on the trail. Ever seen the movie *Stand by Me* based on the novel by author Stephen King? Columbia Pictures filmed the train scenes on the present day Row River Trail. And that wasn't even the first movie to be filmed here. Back in 1926, Buster Keaton shot his classic, *The General*. [see photo to left] And Lee Marvin and Ernest Borgnine starred in the 1973 *Emperor of the North Pole*. Today, riders can use the trestle bridge immortalized in those movies.

8 POWERING THE COMMUNITY: In addition to supporting the Dorena Lake, the Dorena Dam also provides hydroelectric power for the community. And Row River Trail ties it all together by connecting the power station with the community through a series of transmission lines from a new power station. Dorena Dam will provide 8.1 megawatts to the community – enough juice to power more than 3,600 homes once workers complete the project this summer.

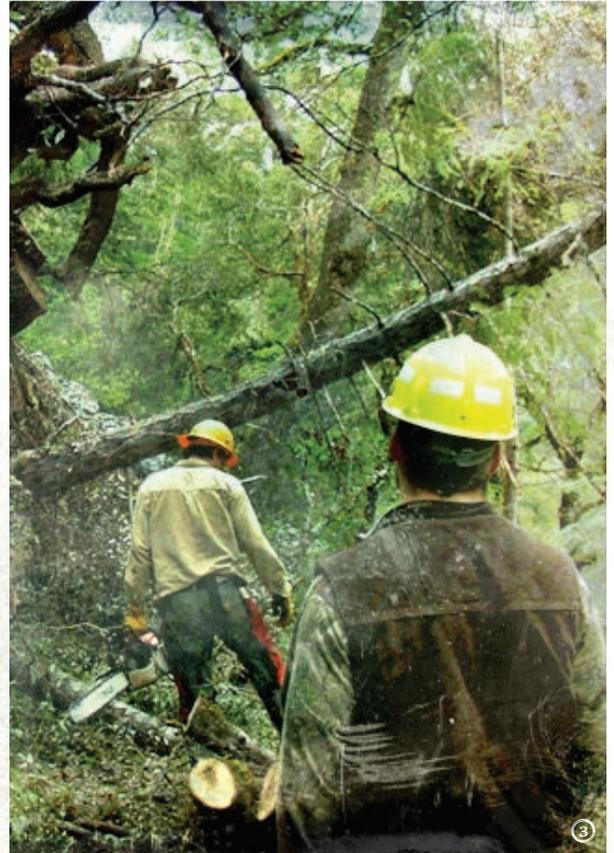
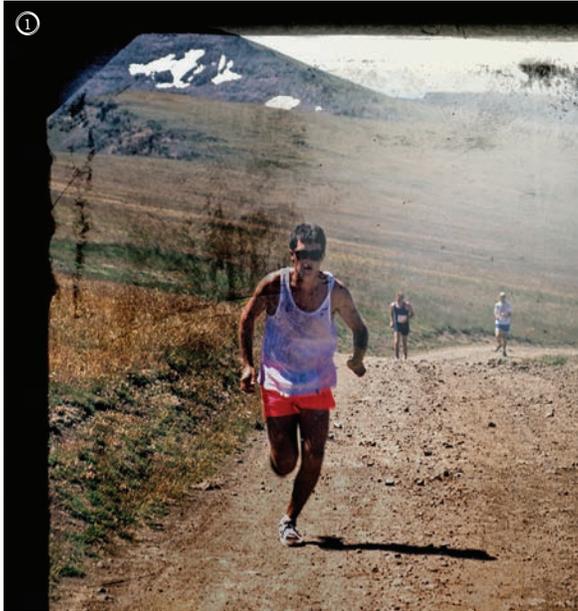
9 REWRITE THE FIGHT: Though its name was born of battle, the Row River Trail is now jointly managed by partners such as the City of Cottage Grove at the western trailhead and for first three miles of the trail and the BLM's Eugene District for the remainder to include two additional trailheads. Further, Lane County looks after the covered bridges, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers maintains Dorena Dam.

10 A SPECIAL DESIGNATION: In 2012, the State of Oregon designated the Row River Trail to be a Covered Bridges Scenic Bikeway within the system of nine Oregon Scenic Bikeways.

Visit us at <http://on.doi.gov/XPYDL5> for directions and a map of the Row River Trail.



Discover



The BLM's 10 Districts in Oregon & Washington



DEDICATED TO OREGON

In the **Burns District**, archaeology experts Scott Thomas and Dianne Ness were recognized with the 2012 Oregon Archaeological Society President's Award for their support of and dedication to the mission of the Oregon Archaeological Society. And the Public Lands Foundation chose forester Jon Reponen as the recipient of their Technical Outstanding Professional Employee Award.

RUN, RUNNER!

The annual **Chris Miller Memorial Steens Rim Run & Walk** is set for Saturday, August 3. More information at steensrimrun.com. Come run above the clouds! ①

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE

After 34 years of public service – to include seven at Oregon's **Coos Bay District** – Mark Johnson retired May 31. He will be greatly missed, and we wish him a long and happy retirement!

News from the BLM's 10 Districts in Oregon & Washington

Northwest



FUTURE HARVEST

Seventy students from the Cascade Middle School in Eugene, Oregon, headed outdoors to plant nearly 200 trees at the Clay Creek Campground. These new plantings will replace alder and maple trees that had been removed from the popular recreation site because they were deemed hazardous due to rot. Each year, fisheries biologist Leo Poole of the **Eugene District** works with local students who carry out a number of tree planting projects. ②

VETS TO THE RESCUE

The **Medford District's** military veteran fire crew took advantage of fire-free conditions to remove 24 miles of downed trees along the Rogue River Trail. Thanks to their work, the trail will be safely passable for summer hikers. ③

HORSE SENSE

At the 26th annual Horse Packing and Wilderness Skills Clinic, the **Lakeview District's** Klamath Falls

Resource Area talked with visitors about their public lands and horse camps in between fun and educational events like a mountain trail competition and a Friday night dance. ④

FULL BLOOM

The **Hinsdale Rhododendron Garden** was resplendent on its annual opening day of May 11. Thanks to the help of the newly formed Friends of the Hinsdale Garden, this rhododendron destination will be open for public tours later in the blooming season. For updated tour information and to plan your own trip to this special area, please visit us online at blm.gov/or/districts/coosbay. ⑤

SCOUTING TRAILS

In the **Medford District**, the BLM and the Boy Scouts got together to prepare Rainie Falls and the Rogue River Trails for summer. The group cleaned debris, cleared rock slides, and repaired flood damage to ensure these trails are ready for your next adventure!

next page >>

Discover



OREGON TRAIL OVERHAUL

The BLM's **Prineville District** celebrated National Get Outdoors Day by building a trailhead at the historic Huntington Wagon Road which is part of the Oregon Trail. Early travelers who took this trail include Native Americans, members of the lost Meek Wagon Train (featured in the recent film, *Meek's Cutoff*), and gold prospectors. ①

BLEED & FEED

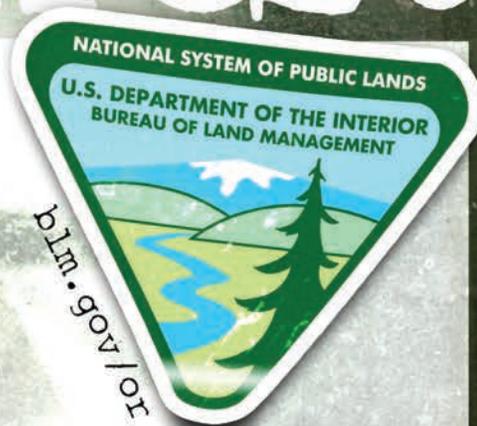
No, we aren't talking about a new vampire movie. In **Roseburg, Oregon**, the BLM has been holding monthly "Bleed and Feed" events in conjunction with the Red Cross. This caring crew is on track to provide 140 units of life-saving blood this year. And as part of the "Feed," donors enjoy a potluck BBQ to help get back their strength. ②

RESTORATION DIVIDENDS

North of Corvallis, Oregon, the **Salem District** has been restoring Maxfield Creek by partnering with a group that uses a helicopter to airlift Douglas-fir logs that were encroaching

News from the BLM's 10 Districts in Oregon & Washington

Northwest



upon the local oak meadows. The fast-growing fir trees can block out necessary sunlight from reaching the meadows. By removing the fir, the meadows should stay healthy while generating timber income for the local economy. ③

BACK TO OUR "ROOTS"

Back in April, the Spokane Tribe and the **Spokane District** hosted the Annual Root Day, a celebration of the return of spring roots considered staples to the traditional Native American diet in the Columbia Plateau. This event is held each spring in Lincoln County and provides an opportunity for tribal youth to practice root gathering and learn about their culture and customs. ④

DRILL DELIVERY

The **Vale District's** Drill Shop headed out to Utah, Idaho, and Nevada to retrieve drills used this winter to reseed areas impacted by last summer's fires. While the land recovers, the drill shop will maintain the drills and get 'em ready for another season. ⑤



AIRC MUS



RASH

story & photos by kevin abel

EUM

The ghosts of two airplane crashes 30 years apart haunt the same desolate stretch of southern Oregon's desert.

But from tragedy comes responsibility to honor the memory of the pilots who made this their final descent.

FLIGHT LEAD

The BLM designated this area a historic site to preserve the memory of the pilots for future generations.



A-6 PILOT LT ALAN G. KOEHLER AND NAVIGATOR LCDR PHILIP D. DUHAMEL



On September 19, 1973, A-6 Intruder Pilot Lieutenant Alan G. Koehler, age 27, and Navigator Lieutenant Commander Philip D. duHamel, age 33, were on a low level night training mission out of Whidbey Island Naval Air Station in Washington when their plane crashed at this location, killing both men. The debris of the A-6 is left as a tribute and memorial to Lieutenant Koehler and Lieutenant Commander duHamel who perished in the service of their country.

The remains of the plane are a historic site and should not be removed or defaced.
Please respect the memory and sacrifice of these men.

For further information, please contact the Lakeview Office of the Bureau of Land Management, United States Department of the Interior.

"I just completed my first pass at the target when I saw Lieutenant Clark start his pass; he started with a vertical bank at approximately 11,000 feet. The airplane rolled over and went into a barrel roll to the right and down..."

J.R. Schelter,
1st Lt., Army Air Corps
February 9, 1945
War Department
Report of Major Accident

Burma Rim in southern Oregon is a veritable air crash museum.

Spanning nearly 30 years, this site has witnessed two major military airplane accidents. The first, a World War II airplane, dropped out of the sky to rapidly descend two miles before hitting the ground. And then in 1973, a Vietnam-era aircraft augered in, leaving a debris field spread over three-quarters of a mile in its wake.

PUSHING THE ENVELOPE

As visitors approach these two crash sites, distorted metal debris strewn in all directions announce the catastrophic events. Eerily, the two are located within one mile of each other in an Oregon desert location managed by the BLM's Lakeview District.

The first debris field contains the remnants of Lieutenant Clark's Lockheed P-38 Lightning that went down during a



THE RIGHT STUFF

To honor these veterans, the BLM officially declared the two aircraft crash scenes historic Federal sites at a Flag Day ceremony on June 14, 2007.

At the official ceremony, representatives unveiled interpretive plaques which pay tribute to the military and provide context for the historic significance of each location. The signs also help tell the story behind each accident while respectfully promoting preservation of the downed remains.

Over the years, many visitors have honored the crash sites with flags and mementos as part of their trip to witness the large portions of aircraft that remain very much intact. However, some have scavenged parts and pieces while others have scratched their names and dates into the faded paint of the fallen cyclopean colonnades.

“BLM public lands are special places. In this case, the BLM observes a high level of responsibility to care for the historic memory of our military veterans and safeguard the crash site on behalf of the families and future generations,” said E. Lynn Burkett, the BLM’s Lakeview District Manager.

WINGS OF GOLD

The BLM asks that the public help preserve this history and honor these veterans who paid the ultimate sacrifice for their nation and their families.

If you visit this site, the BLM recommends using a four-wheel-drive vehicle because the route to the crash sites includes unpaved roads and rough terrain. And while visitors may observe all-terrain vehicle tracks in and around the memorial sites, no vehicle traffic is allowed. A three-quarter mile walk over uneven rock is necessary to reach the memorials.

Once reaching the site to honor our fallen heroes, photographs and video are very much allowed and encouraged. But all visitors are asked to not alter or remove any of the wreckage as this is a protected memorial site on public lands for all to visit.

gunnery training flight. His witness, First Lieutenant Schelter, stated in the official report that he had told Clark to bail out and saw the plane’s canopy eject but did not see the pilot escape. Second Lieutenant Max J. Clark, age 25, 432nd U.S. Army Air Force, was killed upon impact.

The second downed plane is a Navy Grumman A-6 Intruder Bomber from the Naval Air Station at Whidbey Island, Washington. This aircraft hurtled to the ground in 1973 during a low-level night training mission. The only known observer to this crash was the pilot of a U.S. Air Force B-52 who reported seeing a flash of light and a fireball followed by an explosion.

The Lake County Sheriff reached the Bomber’s wreckage at about the same time as a search-and-rescue helicopter from the Naval Air Station. But both crew members, pilot Lieutenant Alan Koehler, age 27, and navigator Lieutenant Commander Philip Duhamel, age 33, had perished.

To plan a trip to this site, please email or call the BLM’s Lakeview District. Contact info at <http://on.doi.gov/ZnGtll>



story by randall rishe and jeff clark • photos by jeff clark

SAN JUAN
ISLANDS

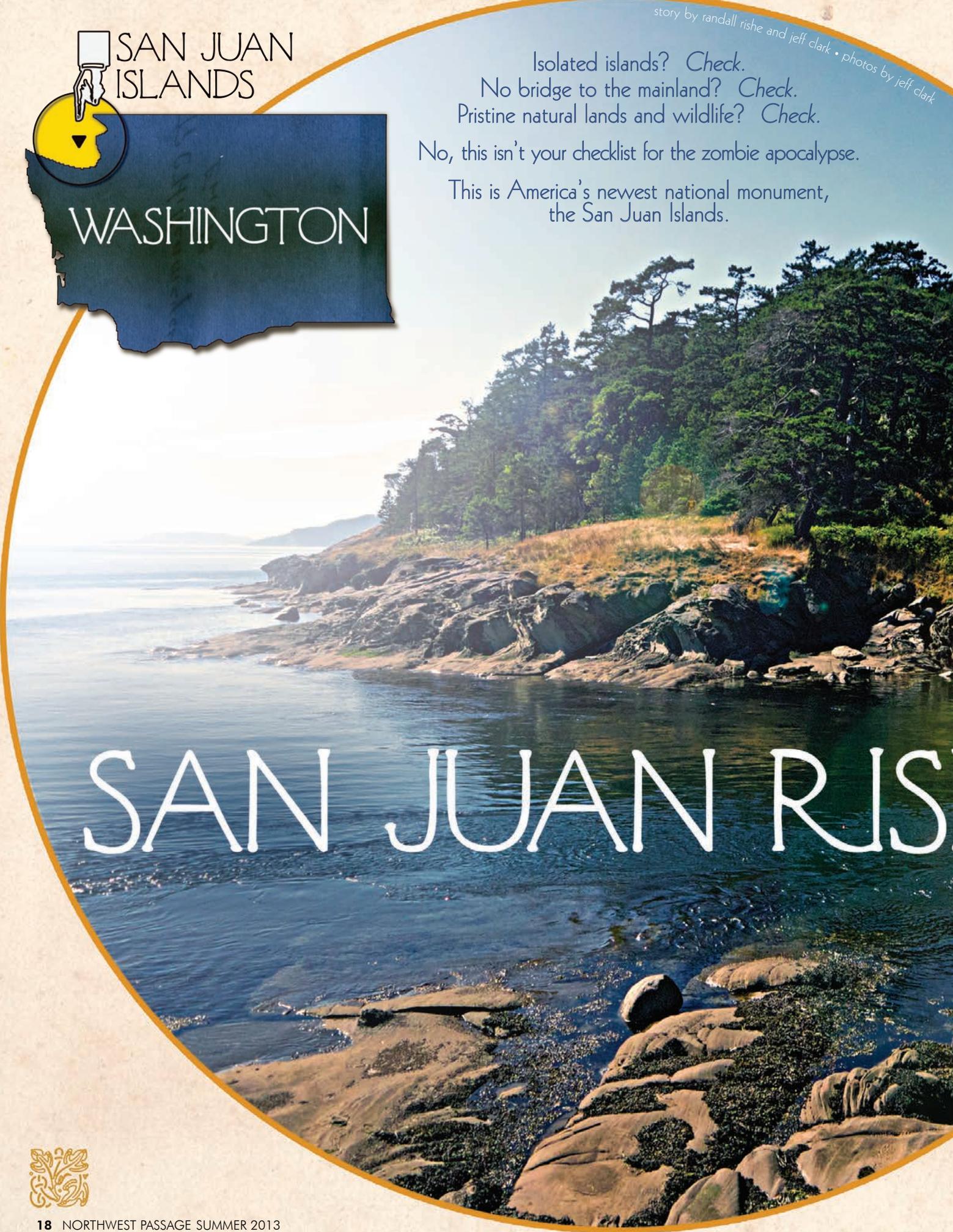


WASHINGTON

Isolated islands? *Check.*
No bridge to the mainland? *Check.*
Pristine natural lands and wildlife? *Check.*

No, this isn't your checklist for the zombie apocalypse.

This is America's newest national monument,
the San Juan Islands.

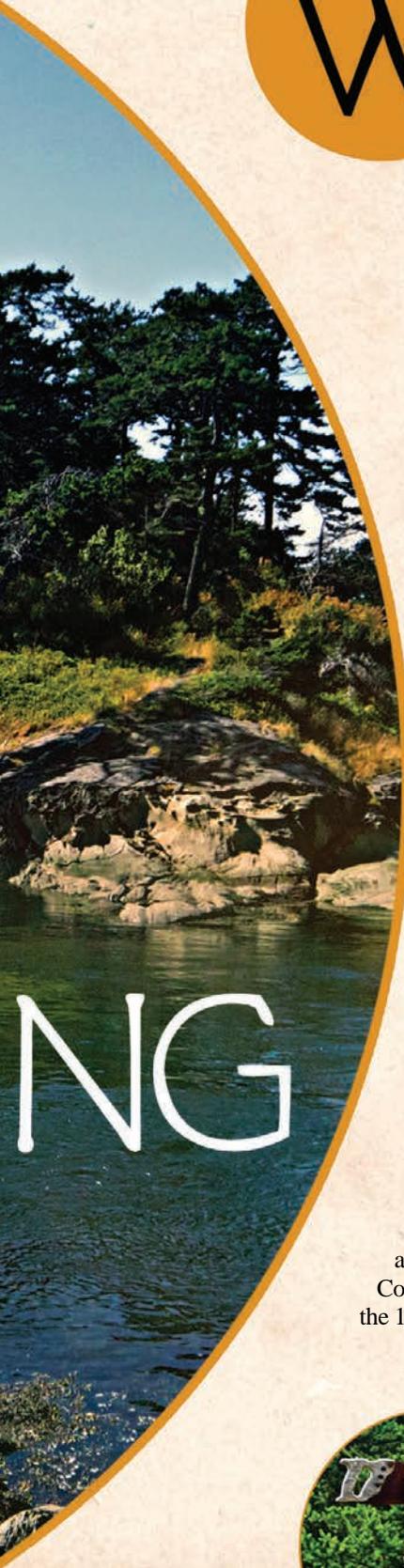


SAN JUAN RISI





WE'LL TELL YOU THE TRUTH.



IT AIN'T EASY GETTING TO THE SAN JUAN ISLANDS. There's no bridge. No major airport. And unless you're Michael Phelps, it's a bit too far to swim.

But those who have reached the shores of the San Juans will tell you it's a unique landscape of incomparable contrasts. Forests spring from rock. Distant, snow-capped peaks provide a stunning backdrop. And some of the world's most beautiful sandy beaches sing a siren song that turn many welcome visitors into aspiring long-term residents.

THE BEST ISLANDS IN AMERICA

Thanks to their natural and diverse beauty, these small islands at the northwest tip of Washington state are receiving international acclaim. Travel guide Lonely Planet has proclaimed the San Juans third on their Top Ten U.S. Destinations for 2013. And popular online resource TripAdvisor named San Juan Island "the best island in America" before being crowned with their Traveler's Choice Award as the fourth-best island destination in the world.

So what is it about this area that attracts some 80,000 visitors a year? Many come from around the world for exciting wildlife watching in a landscape that provides refuge for countless species. Others are drawn by the world-class recreation that includes boating, camping, and cycling as well as fishing, hunting, and hiking. And all travelers enjoy the solitude of being in a remote and peaceful destination whose idyllic nature keeps traffic, stress, and cell phones at bay.

A RICH HISTORY

The islands have a rich history as well which is part of the traditional territories of the Coast Salish people who first used the area near the end of the last glacial period, about 12,000 years ago. Europeans explorers came here in the late 18th century, helping to open the way for American expansion.

In more recent years, the local community and a Congressional delegation have been leading efforts to preserve the splendor of the San Juan Islands. U.S. Senator Maria Cantwell and Congressman Rick Larsen, with the support of U.S. Senator Patty Murray, former Congressman Jay Inslee, and current Congresswoman Suzan DelBene, introduced legislation in the 112th and 113th Congresses to establish the San Juan Islands as a national monument.

[continues on next page]



FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

[continued]

Their efforts were rewarded May 25, 2013, when President Barack Obama established the San Juan Islands National Monument. The move, as Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar put it at the dedication ceremony, “culminates years of locally driven conservation efforts to ensure this treasured landscape will be conserved for future generations to enjoy.” As one of five new national monuments designated by President Obama under the 1906 Antiquities Act, the San Juan Islands include nearly 1,000 acres of lands currently administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). “We are honored that the President has entrusted the BLM with managing San Juan Islands National Monument as part of our multiple-use mission,” said BLM Principal Deputy Director Neil Kornze. “These lands are some of America’s most breathtaking, and they’ll now be permanently protected as National Conservation Lands.”

“San Juan Islands National Monument will always be a proud reminder of what communities can do when they come together to protect the places they treasure,” said Salazar. “This community-driven designation shows how local citizens can leave a deep and positive imprint on America’s public lands.”

More photos + links to the San Juan Islands National Monument at: <http://bit.ly/16PHH6U>



BEFORE YOU GO

SO, YOU'VE DECIDED TO VISIT THE SAN JUAN ISLANDS THIS SUMMER?

Awesome! Excellent choice.

If it's your first time, you may be wondering where to start. Well, we've got some must-see recommendations from the people who live and work on the islands.

First, you'll definitely want to check out **Iceberg Point** on the southwest tip of Lopez Island. Majestic views of rugged bluffs and rocky shorelines are connected by an extensive network of hiking trails. You'll witness amazing wildlife and flowers so make sure you bring a camera. (Camera? Who has a camera any more?) Well, you know what we mean. Bring your phone. Then upload your pics directly to Facebook so you can make all your friends jealous. Parking and outhouses are available at the San Juan County Park day-use area at Agate Beach.

Next, you're going north. Far, far north. Accessible only by water, **Patos Island** is the northwestern-most point in the lower 48 states. The Patos Island Lighthouse built in 1893 is so close to Canada, you'll feel like you can practically reach out and touch it. And with the Canadian

and the Cascade and Olympic mountain ranges providing the scenic backdrop for your photos, if your Facebook pals were jealous of Iceberg Point, this is where they may consider unfriending you. Please note that Patos Island is primitive – no fresh water available on-site, and mooring buoys and campsites in Active Cove are offered on a first-come, first-serve basis.

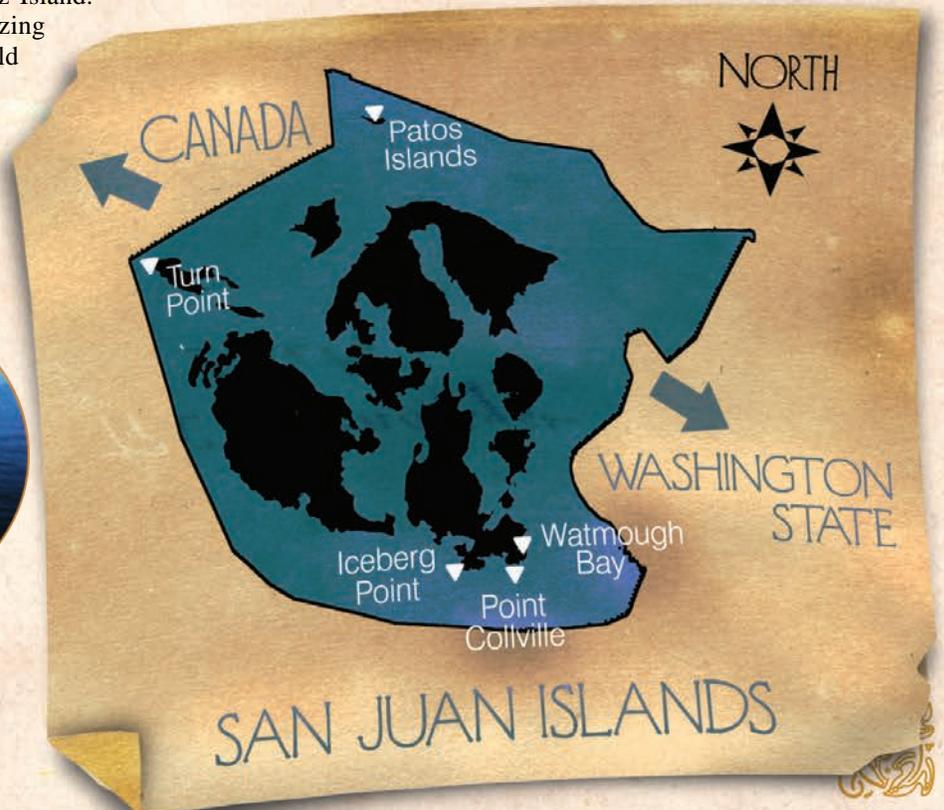
With its commanding view of Haro Strait and the Canadian Gulf Islands, **Turn Point** is next on our trip. Want to see orca whales? (Pro tip: Yes, you do.) Well, just park yourself by the historic Turn Point Light Station built in 1893 that has long provided light to the seafaring mariners of the Salish Sea. A wonderful vantage point and a seasonal museum make for a great escape. And as you plan your excursion to Turn Point, note that most visitors arrive by sea kayak or private boat into Reid Harbor.

Now we head back to our start on Lopez Island.

Point Colville features one of the most amazing and secluded beaches in the world. And should you get tired of perfect relaxation, you can hike and explore local forests, grasslands, and wetlands.

Like Point Colville, **Watmough Bay** is protected by the sea and offers unparalleled beauty and solitude. Go snorkeling to see the eel grass and seaweed sea floor that serves as excellent habitat for juvenile Chinook salmon and other species which call this home. There's a great trail from the parking area to the beach which allows easy access for all visitors. But the truly adventurous will arrive by dinghy, sea kayak, and other non-motorized smaller skiff to float directly onto the sands.

For more info, please visit the San Juan Islands homepage: <http://on.doi.gov/YDSgAp>



A dramatic landscape with a fire in the background and a forest in the foreground. The sky is filled with smoke and a bright sunburst effect. The foreground shows a field of dry grass and green trees.

FREQ FLYER MILES

Think your job is stressful? Try flying over a raging firefighters below. No movie. No magazine. And

U E N T R S

A firefighting plane, marked with the number 42 on its tail, is shown in flight, dropping a thick stream of bright red fire retardant onto a large, intense wildfire. The fire is a mix of orange and yellow, with thick black smoke rising into the sky. The foreground shows a dry, brushy landscape with scattered evergreen trees.

wildfire for eight hours while you direct traffic for
you don't even get a bag of peanuts.

*story by jim whittington
photo by kevin abel*

MOBILE WARMING

In 2012, the BLM traveled throughout the Pacific Northwest to fight fires that burned seven times more acres than the previous year.

JERRY AIR ATTACK

Jerry Serbia doesn't get frequent flyer miles even though he flies in an airplane nearly eight hours a day.

The reason Jerry doesn't get free trips to Fiji or Bermuda is because he's not flying commercial. No security lines. No peanut bags. No kid kicking the back of his seat.

Jerry's on a mission. A fire mission.

While most passengers would be reading magazines or watching a movie, Jerry is constantly on the alert. He's directing wildland firefighting helicopters, smokejumper aircraft, and air tankers from the cockpit of a small plane continuously circling a fire. This makes Jerry a special kind of BLM wildland firefighter commonly called an "Air Attack Group Supervisor."

"As Air Attack Supervisor," says Jerry, "my job is to manage the air space above the fire, direct the air tankers and helicopters to the critical areas for water or retardant drops, communicate with firefighters on the ground if I see a change in how the fire is behaving, and above all, make sure everyone stays safe."

Jerry looks out an airplane window for hours at a time, all the while talking to pilots and ground crews on the radio. Because of the nature of his job, flight time is limited to eight hours per day – which generally puts Jerry on the ground just minutes ahead of the limit.

"It's a critical job, but it can wear on you. The hardest thing mentally is keeping track of everything – while the hardest thing physically is looking out one side of the plane for hours at a time."

Fortunately, new technology such as mobile tablets helps Jerry by providing him with the ability to map fires in real time and then relay those details to the ground forces. In a rapidly flowing environment, timely data such as aerial hazards and critical areas like Sage-Grouse habitat along with updates to weather and radio frequencies are essential to the overall mission.

And by having both Jerry's eyes and modern digital information available up "in the cloud," the BLM can also provide regular updates to the public who live and work in areas near the fires.

BLM Fuels Specialist Mike Appling, a division supervisor in charge of a section of land with numerous firefighters and fire suppression equipment, works with Air Attacks as well as local fire departments and the public.

"It's not unusual for members of the public to find you and start asking questions," Mike says, "particularly when their home is threatened. I try to give them as honest an answer as I can and assure them that we know where their house is and every effort will be made to keep the fire from reaching their property."

Jerry Serbia finishes Mike's thought for all the firefighters with the BLM: "If people need us, we'll be there."

No frequent flyer miles necessary.

More firefighting photos and links to the BLM's Fire Resources Management Program are online at <http://bit.ly/11rOs5x> – or just point your smartphone or tablet at our QR code.





**"YOU
HAVEN'T SEEN
A TREE UNTIL
YOU'VE SEEN ITS
SHADOW FROM
THE SKY."**

Amelia Earhart

FREQUENT FLYER MILES

PLOVER'S PROGRESS

20 years after being listed as a threatened species, the western snowy plover is making a comeback.

DON'T BLINK.

Or you just might miss 'em.

The western snowy plover? It moves like lightning. Often out of necessity. These small shorebirds have to keep one step ahead of a number of factors that challenge their existence – from human disturbances to urban development to changing environmental conditions.

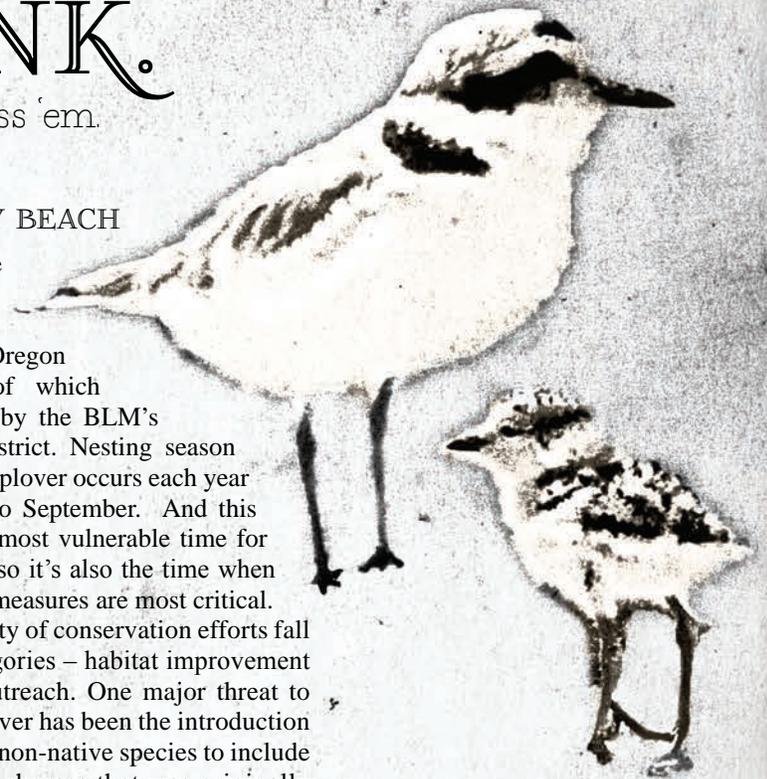
Twenty years ago, diminishing numbers of snowy plovers led them to be listed as a threatened species by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. In addition to concern for the species, this loss of plovers could also have a long-term impact on the local environment.

But thanks to the BLM and its partners, the snowy plover is making a comeback. Since the listing in 1993, the BLM has been working on a plan for the plover's survival with a network of concerned parties. Their goal? To restore the plover's habitat and remove some of the most significant threats to the species.

A SNOWY BEACH

There are eight snowy plover sites along the Oregon coast, two of which are managed by the BLM's Coos Bay District. Nesting season for the snowy plover occurs each year from March to September. And this season is the most vulnerable time for the species – so it's also the time when conservation measures are most critical.

The majority of conservation efforts fall into two categories – habitat improvement and public outreach. One major threat to the snowy plover has been the introduction and spread of non-native species to include European beachgrass that was originally planted to stabilize sand dunes but now encroaches into snowy plover habitat.



STORY BY STEPHEN BAKER



This grass can reduce good nesting areas as well as provide cover for predators of the plovers.

Over the years, the BLM and its partners have removed hundreds of acres of European beachgrass and other harmful plant species to help return these areas to healthy plover habitat and reduce the advantage for predators. In particular, partners like the Northwest Youth Corps, which the BLM employs each summer to conduct plover habitat restoration, have been instrumental in these recovery efforts.

Additionally, the BLM and its partners have improved the nesting sites. Fences and enclosures were built to protect nests and allow the plovers to move freely while restricting their predators. Further, the BLM has worked with local oyster companies to spread oyster shells around beach nesting sites to provide greater cover and protection.

PUBLIC SUPPORT

While habitat improvement measures have helped tremendously, public support is paramount to protect the plovers and ensure the species' long-term recovery. Every year during nesting season, land managers for Federal, state, and county beaches with plover populations work with the public to reduce potential harm from beachgoers. These efforts include fencing, posting signs, and limiting activities such as driving on the beach and walking dogs

near sensitive areas. Implementing these restrictions have helped keep young plovers safe while increasing their chance for survival.

PLOVERS FOREVER

Now, thanks to these collaborative efforts, the western snowy plover in Oregon is seeing its highest numbers in quite a long time. And they should reach a major recovery within the next few years.

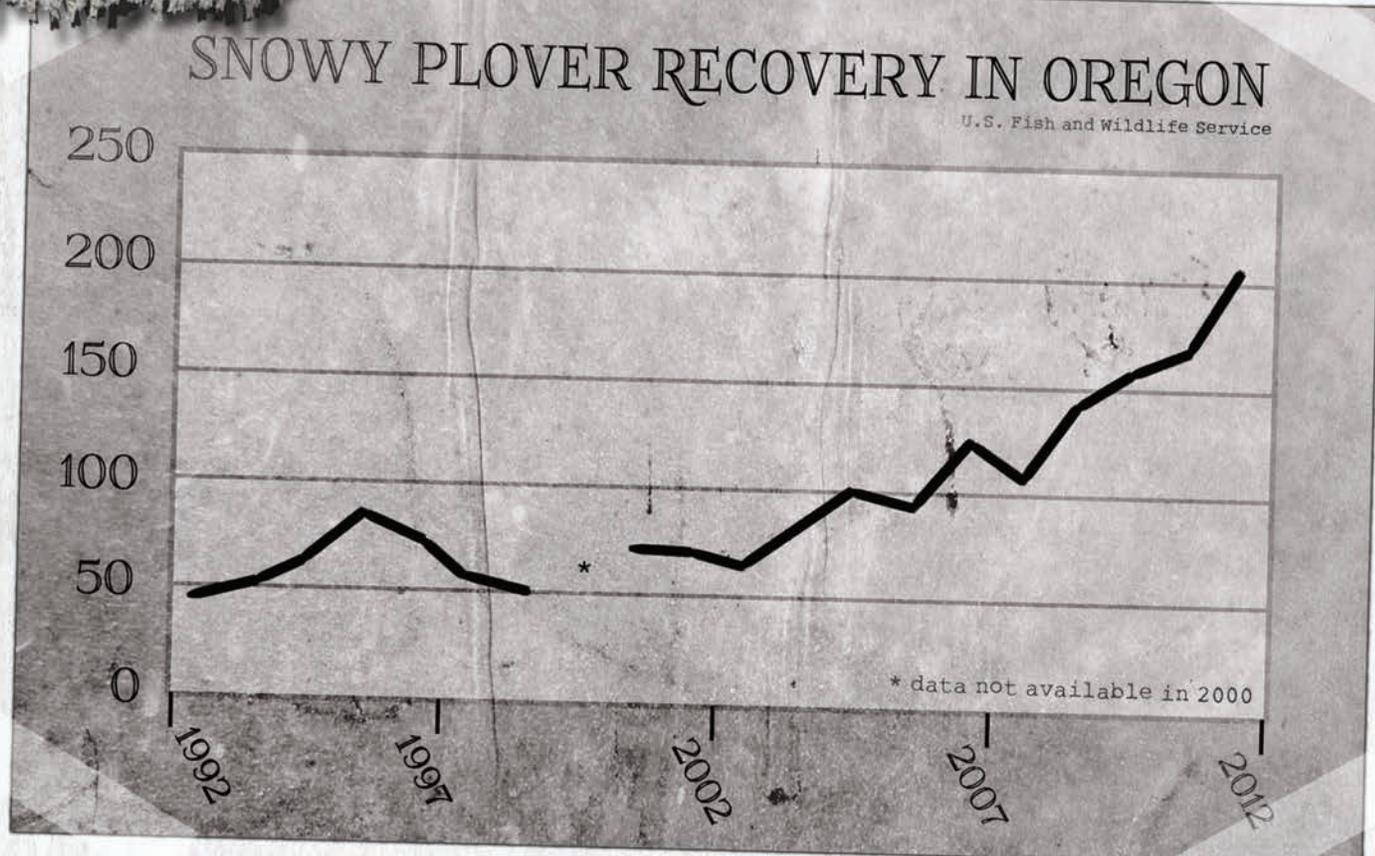
BLM partners have implemented a comprehensive monitoring program that tracks the success of recent conservation measures. Annual monitoring currently shows snowy plover populations experiencing a healthy recovery with numbers growing steadily each year. Back in 1993, when the plover was officially listed as threatened, only 45 birds were counted across the eight breeding sites in Oregon. This past year 206 birds were counted.

The recovery goal for Oregon is 250 birds, a level the BLM is confident will be reached with continued support from the public. Please help us safeguard the western snowy plover by observing posted signs and avoiding protected, closed-off areas when visiting the beach.

By working together, we can help these fast-moving birds sprint ahead to a long and healthy future.



p.s. video alert! see actual plovers in action!



MUSTANG

story & photo by tara martinak

1,000 WILD HORSES. 1,000 ADOPTIONS. ONE MILLION DOLLARS.

In the southeastern town of Hines, Oregon, the BLM manages a Wild Horse Corral Facility that serves as a temporary home for a number of wild mustangs. It's a comfortable place. The horses are well treated. But these amazing animals are still looking for their "forever homes."

Enter the Mustang Million event and competition.

The Mustang Million's goal is ambitiously simple: adopt 1,000 wild horses to folks who will love them and train them this summer. Then in September, these horses and their trainers will be eligible to enter the Mustang Heritage Foundation's special Mustang Million competition in Fort Worth, Texas.

Did we mention this competition features a million-dollar purse?

Here in the Northwest, a Mustang Million adoption event at Oregon's Wild Horse Corral Facility brought together 150 excited equine lovers on a Saturday morning to adopt 69 horses. The mustangs went to new homes in Oregon, Idaho, Utah, California, Wyoming, and Washington.

Many of these horses will soon meet up again in Fort Worth. A sort of homecoming. And regardless of whether they win or not, they've finally found their forever home.

*More information online
at mustangmillion.com*



MILLION