

BETWEEN  
THESE PAGES

# Northwest Passage

The Bureau of Land Management Magazine for Oregon and Washington

Winter 2014

blm.gov/or  
Oregon / Washington

BLM

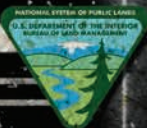


# Winter Harvest

BLM RECYCLES



ADVENTURE  
AWAITS



# TRAIL-HEAD



*“What good is the warmth of summer without the cold of winter to give it its sweetness?”*

John Steinbeck wrote that line in *Travels with Charley*, his travelogue about a cross-country road trip he took in 1960 with his beloved dog. Mr. Steinbeck launched his journey from my home state of New York before traversing the nation – which included a visit to Oregon and Washington.

And though I would agree with our esteemed author that a balance of the cold and rainy do indeed help us to better appreciate the warm and dry, I would also suggest that the story of “rough winters” in the Pacific Northwest is actually somewhat of a secret handshake. A bit of myth that helps keep this area from becoming overcrowded.

Recently, for example, we’ve enjoyed almost exclusively cool and sunny days. And if you head over to our high deserts – to a place like Harney County – you’ll enjoy as many days of annual sun as you would in Miami. Throw in our lush trees to the west and majestic mountains to the east, and what better place could you find to get outdoors and enjoy all our public lands have to offer?

Virtually all year long you can ride mountain biking trails at Sandy Ridge near Portland or take photos of whales or historic lighthouses along the coast or hike the unspoiled wilderness areas that are part of this year’s 50th anniversary of the Wilderness Act.

But, as Mr. Steinbeck himself wrote of his trip, “...it was raining and it was Oregon.” A truer statement there never was. Because our rain will come back. But when it does? We’ll enjoy a return to warmer temperatures. And it’s often nothing more than a fine mist. So just grab a light raincoat.

(As an aside, when I first moved to Oregon I was told to throw away my umbrella as I wouldn’t be needing it. I’m not sure that sentiment is totally correct, but it’s not far off either.)

So if you happen to be one of the lucky residents of the Northwest or a valued visitor, I salute your wise choice and look forward to seeing you out there this winter.

As in John Steinbeck’s travels, let us all enjoy the journey.

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





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### ***You Talkin' to Me?***

This beautiful & majestic elk hails from Oregon's Dean Creek Elk Viewing Area which is open to visitors 365 days a year.

See more photos and plan your visit online at <http://bit.ly/1ffn3wP>

Photo by Stephen Baker

[youtube.com/blmoregon](http://youtube.com/blmoregon)

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

[flickr.com/photos/blmoregon](http://flickr.com/photos/blmoregon)

## Take it Outside!

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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.



## WELCOME TO WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE

**A**re you ready to #GoWild?!

(Whoops. Sorry, too much Twitter...)

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the Wilderness Act of 1964. The historic legislation, signed by President Lyndon Johnson, has led to the protection of more than 100 million acres of wilderness.

So what is wilderness? It's a rugged landscape free of modern development. It's a place of peace and beauty protected for the American people. It's a destination where you can go – for free – to leave behind the daily grind and become one with nature.

Here in Oregon and Washington, the BLM manages nine wilderness areas from the Rogue River to the Badlands to Hells Canyon and beyond. (Seriously, how rock n' roll are those names?) For more information and to plan your trip, check out <http://on.doi.gov/M0xPIF>

Throughout the year we'll be celebrating all things wilderness. In addition to hosting and joining fun local events, we'll also be featuring amazing videos, photos, and stories each week at our social media pages.

So as we celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Wilderness Act, let's show everybody how 50 is the new 25 – and get ready to go wild.

— MATT CHRISTENSON  
[m1christ@blm.gov](mailto:m1christ@blm.gov)

our contributors to  
the pacific northwest

# BEST IN THE WEST

“In the depth  
of winter,  
I finally learned  
that there was in me  
an invincible  
summer.”  
- Albert Camus

Burning flames! This summer, we almost lost a major historical monument. Wildfires threatened the cabin of Zane Grey, American master of the western novel. **Kristen Haugh** and **Pam Robbins** take us on an exciting journey that starts with Zane’s life and brings us up to the present time with a high-tech mission that wrapped his cabin like a space-age burrito to protect it from being burnt to the ground. When they aren’t writing exciting rescue stories, Kristen is an archaeologist with the U.S. Forest Service, and Pam is busy enjoying her recent retirement. Photographer and ranger **Colby Hawkinson** helps tell this story with some amazing photos that reflect his 20 years of experience as a guide to the great outdoors. And making his triumphant return to these pages with two complete articles is **Kevin Abel** who starts by putting us in his time machine for a trip back to the aptly-named Crack-in-the-Ground where we descend deep into a thousand-year-old volcanic fissure. Then Kevin rocks a Bill Nye science vibe to explain how we’re rehabilitating rural marshlands back to their historic glory. And last but not least is newcomer **Jodi Bean** who took a break from her normal gigs with public affairs and yoga to make an inaugural appearance in *Northwest Passage* with a story about the BLM reaching out to our Native American neighbors to get their help in planning for the future of Oregon’s forests.



# A Crack

Est. 10

**B**OOM.

For more than a millennium, Oregon's Crack-in-the-Ground has served as a majestic memento of its explosive past.

Across eons, earthquakes and volcanos have split and splintered the earth's surface. Such shocks to the system are not uncommon over the span of six billion years.

But still, they have caused many cracks and blisters in the ground.

*So...why doesn't more of our earth look like the Grand Canyon - if not "Land of the Lost?"*

# Crack-in Time

101 A.D.  
(approximately)

## DAY-HIKE

*written & photographed by kevin abel*

### WELCOME TO THE ROCK

Located about 100 miles south of Bend, Oregon, Crack-in-the-Ground is like a mini Grand Canyon and can be visited on a day trip. (Just make sure to bring your camera so you can amaze your friends.)

# CRACK

## IT'S LIKE THE "LA OR

**(Pro Tip: *Land of the Lost* isn't the same as *Lost*. IMDB it, friends...)**

The reason we don't see as much blunt trauma to local landscape is because, over time, rock rubble along with hardening lava generally serve to refill and patch up fissures. As the earth cracks, so it fills itself. Think bondo.

But not all breaks mend equally.

### Time Traveling

Eight miles north of Christmas Valley in south central Oregon – some 100 miles from Bend – there's a unique fissure called, aptly, Crack-in-the-Ground. The volcanic crevice covers over two miles and descends 70 feet. This particular split has likely been open for 1,000 years.

And it's also available to visit on your public lands.

Normally, fissures like this one would have been washed away with soil and rock through years of erosion and changing landscapes. But because Crack-in-the-Ground exists in such an arid, desert-like region, very little filling-in has occurred.

In fact, several walls of the crack have actually expanded to allow greater access to deeper parts of the fissure. So because Crack-in-the-Ground exists today nearly as it did shortly after its formation, a visit is like taking a trip back in time to see what this land looked like right after the initial event.

### The Lost Fountain...of Ice Cream?

Crack-in-the-Ground may live in the desert, but it is also a source of cool weather. The temperature at bottom of the crack can be as much as twenty degrees cooler than that of the surface above it.

Reub Long, renowned author of *The Oregon Desert*, reported that when he lived at Christmas Valley as a boy, he used to explore "the Crack" as it was called locally. He remembered homesteaders who went there to hold picnics where they made homemade ice cream from the ice they found in the caves of the chasm.

Today there's no guarantee of free ice cream. But the entire two-mile length of the fissure can be hiked. An established trail runs along the fissure's bottom from the parking area – which is open to the public year-round.

Ultimately, Crack-in-the-Ground is a gateway to the past. And if you're ready to drop down into an adventure and go back in time to see what this land looked like 1,000 years ago, your journey awaits.

**Plan your trip to Crack-in-the-Ground  
at: <http://on.doi.gov/YM1IRU>**

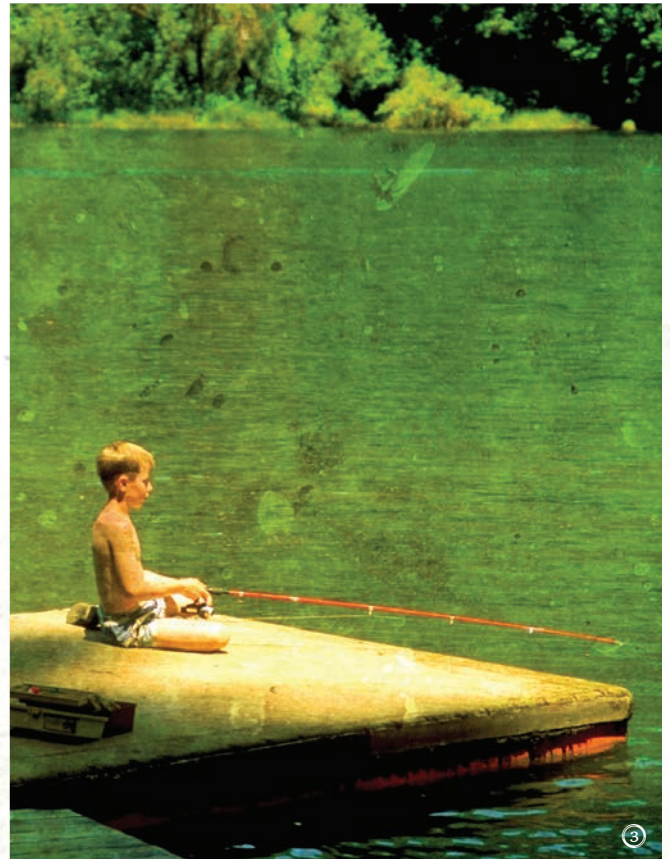




ND OF THE LOST."  
R EVEN "LOST."



# Discover



The BLM's 10 Districts in Oregon & Washington



## SAGE SUGGESTIONS

The **Burns District** recently met with hundreds of local residents to hear direct feedback about the next steps regarding Greater Sage-Grouse conservation. The BLM's public outreach comment period was open through February 20. Follow progress online at <http://on.doi.gov/J6h42H>. ①

## PRESERVE & PROTECT

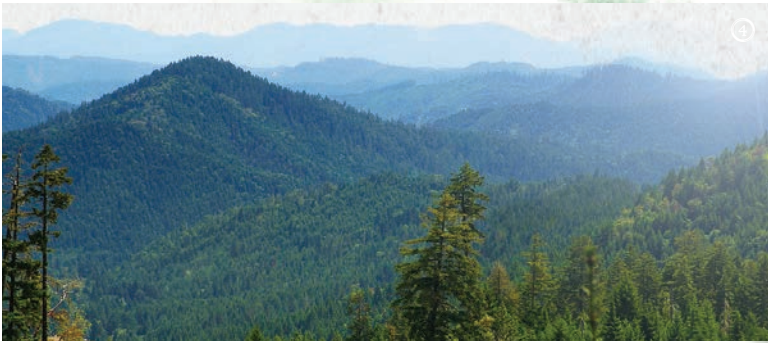
In the **Coos Bay District**, the public was invited to submit applications for funding to support natural resource restoration and maintenance projects as part of the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act. Contact the local resource advisory council representative for further details and updates at <http://on.doi.gov/1fjHxEK>. ②

## GOOD NEWS FOR LOONS

Loon Lake Campground fans! Coos Bay is looking to move forward to allow site reservations for 2014. After being closed due to a lack of potable water, Loon Lake is back on track to welcome visitors to one of Oregon's finest beach

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

# Northwest



destinations. Current plans will likely see Loon Lake open on weekends for swimming, fishing, water skiing, and more! Track us at <http://on.doi.gov/1dCuB9W>. ③

## THE FUTURE OF FORESTRY

A meeting was held in Eugene, Oregon, to learn and chat about the Resource Management Plans for Western Oregon project. Topics included harvest practices for sustainable timber, stream protection for healthy water and fish, and the protection of clusters of habitat and older forests for spotted owls. The **Eugene District** was pleased to welcome an excellent turnout. And future meetings and updates are available at <http://on.doi.gov/J9v1hb>. ④

## A CALL TO SERVE

Employees from the Lakeview District reached out to their neighbors at a local job fair to highlight current job opportunities in positions such as fire, botany, archaeology, business administration, recreation, and

more. The BLM also provided assistance to explain the application and hiring process. Those interested are invited to also visit online at <https://www.usajobs.gov>.

## OREGON TRAILBLAZERS

Back in the fall, a number of volunteers joined the **Medford District** to help reroute a section of the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail to reduce environmental impacts, promote restoration in the meadow, and to preserve and enhance habitat for the Mardon Skipper Butterfly, a special status species. New interpretive signs describe the project and the fragile meadow habitat and also direct hikers to the rerouted trail. Many thanks to all the volunteers who helped with this successful project!

## GET READY TO GO WILD

The Medford District also documented new photos of local Wilderness Areas as part of this year's 50th anniversary of the Wilderness Act. Check out hundreds inspirational and beautiful images at <http://bit.ly/1mEN1fz>. ⑤

next page >>

# Discover



## A NEW PLACE TO PARK

Representatives from the BLM's **Prineville District** held a public meeting to request input on the Oregon State Parks application to lease more than 10,000 acres of public land in the lower John Day River basin as part of the Cottonwood Canyon State Park. If this lease moves forward, the park would become the largest in Oregon. Updates to this potential plan can be found at <http://on.doi.gov/1jtZSnI>. ©

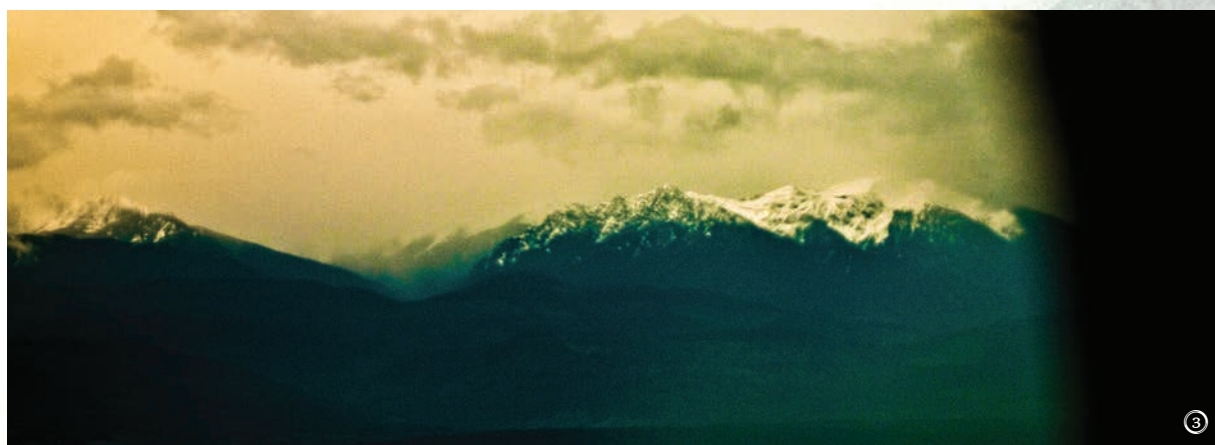
## POST-FIRE PROJECTS

Two public meetings to discuss possible treatments and projects in areas burned last summer by the Douglas Complex and Big Windy Complex wildfires were held by the **Medford and Roseburg Districts**. The goal of the meetings was to share information on post-fire projects and discuss ideas with members of the public on a number of topics to include economic recovery, road safety, emergency stabilization, and more.



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

# Northwest



## SHINING A LIGHT

The Yaquina Head Outstanding Natural Area in the **Salem District** held two community events in late 2013. A botanist showed the public how to identify wild mushrooms. And the Yaquina Head Lighthouse hosted a Victorian holiday celebration to relive the 19th century holiday traditions celebrated by the families of Yaquina Head Lighthouse keepers. ②

## NEW MONUMENT MANAGER

The **Spokane District** announced that Marcia deChadenedes would become the manager for the San Juan Islands National Monument in the San Juan Archipelago which recently became our nation's newest National Monument. ③

## HIGH PLAINS PARTNERSHIP

Bringing District news full-circle, the **Vale District** recently met with nearly 200 local residents to discuss next steps related to the management of the Greater Sage-Grouse. Please see link on previous page for more info. ④

# R E S T H E R

STORY

*As the  
fires  
raged...*

# CUE

# OLOGUE

BY KRISTEN HAUGE, MATT CHRISTENSON & PAM ROBBINS  
PHOTOS BY COLBY HAWKINSON

*would  
there be  
enough  
time?*





*A band of firefighters rush to save Zane Grey's historic cabin from wildfires along the Rogue River.*

# RESCUE THE ROGUE

**W**estern author Zane Grey's historic Oregon cabin had to be turned into a space-age silver chalet to protect it from raging summer firestorms.

But before there was a cabin to save, there was a man.

His name was Zane Grey.

Zane Grey, one of the earliest masters of the American western novel, made Oregon's Rogue River not only the backdrop to his novel, *Rogue River Feud*. He also made this area his home.

Iconoclast Zane Grey was a novelist, explorer, world record-holding angler, minor league baseball player, and intermittent dentist. An unsterotypical Ivy Leaguer, Grey began his adult life attending the University of Pennsylvania on a baseball scholarship before graduating to play in the minor leagues.



# ROGUE

But after struggling on the professional diamond, Grey succumbed to growing pressure from his father to take a more suitable livelihood. Thus did the former New Jersey outfielder become Dr. Zane Grey, dentist, hanging his shingle in New York City – an inauspicious introduction to one of America’s greatest outdoorsmen and chroniclers of thrilling tales.

## CABIN FEVER

Amidst extractions and cavities, our dentist soon became restless. He told his family and friends he needed adventure. And thus Zane Grey did look west to explore the remaining unsettled natural lands – and begin a writing career that would span 40 years.

Hearing his wild siren’s song, Zane Grey went rogue to leave the confines of New York City for the open splendor of the natural world. And in the Northwest, he was specifically drawn to the solitude and the hunting and fishing in Oregon – especially that which he found along the fittingly-named Rogue River.

After running the Rogue’s rapids, Zane purchased a mining claim here at Winkle Bar where he built his cabin in the early 1920s. The author spent many happy years in this picaresque location that inspired *Rogue River Feud*.

## A PARTNERSHIP FOR POSTERITY

Zane Grey died at the age of 67 in 1939. But his historic property has lived on. First it was purchased by the Haas family, long-time owners of Levi Straus. This transition of Grey’s property seemed well-suited to the makers of denim overalls for the western pioneers of the 19th century. And though the Haas family built new homes on the property, they always maintained Zane Grey’s cabin, welcoming intrepid visitors willing to run the Rogue or make the five-mile overland hike to reach this isolated property.

Then beginning in the 1970s, the BLM joined with the Haas family to share a management agreement and provide support for the land in a spirit of cooperation. And in 2005, when The Trust for Public Land notified the BLM that they intended to purchase the property from the Haas family, both organizations worked together to obtain these 32 acres. In 2008, the official transfer to the BLM took place.

## TROUBLE BREWING

Cut to 2013. Summer storms let loose lightening in this area and caused a storm of wildfire. A series of three fires – collectively known as the Big Windy Fire Complex – burned thousands of acres and threatened to destroy Zane Grey’s cabin.

In order to protect Zane’s Oregon legacy, BLM firefighters spent weeks digging fire lines that would create natural barriers to limit the fire’s spread. In

## SERVE & PROTECT

addition, the firefighters prepared the buildings to be able to withstand a possible burn-over.

Protecting Zane Grey’s cabin began with a few basics such as reducing everything around it that could potentially burn. Brush and trees were cut. Overhanging branches were trimmed. Other flammable woody debris was removed from the structure’s perimeter. And firefighters installed smart sprinklers driven by a generator that would wet down the cabin and the adjacent area should flames become a direct threat.

In addition, the cabin was wrapped with protective material that turned it into a silvery space-age rendition of a log cabin. This same fire shelter material which also protects firefighters from flames was wrapped around the building to keep heat and embers from igniting the dry logs and shingle roofs.

Now all the firefighters could do was wait.

## A HAPPY ENDING?

So what happened to Zane Grey’s celebrated cabin? Well, thanks to the work of BLM firefighters, this historic site survived the 2013 wildfires. This structure looks to remain safe and secure for another hundred years – right along with our heartfelt tribute to the rogue along his Rogue.

But that doesn’t mean you should wait that long to visit it.

See for yourself this piece of history (and firefighting marvel). Take the trip by boat or by foot to walk the same path where America’s past – and current – heroes have tread.

Directions to Zane Grey’s cabin – and other incredible stops along the Rogue River – can be found online at <http://on.doi.gov/1fdATUP>



## FROM FARM TO FISH

What was once a drained farmland is now enjoying a return of the water that has supported local fish and fowl for generations.

A fisherman wearing a plaid shirt, a cap, and waders is standing in a boat on a river. He is holding a fishing net. The background shows a river with reeds and a clear blue sky. Large white letters 'GO' are overlaid on the image, with the 'O' containing a circular inset showing a close-up of water splashing.

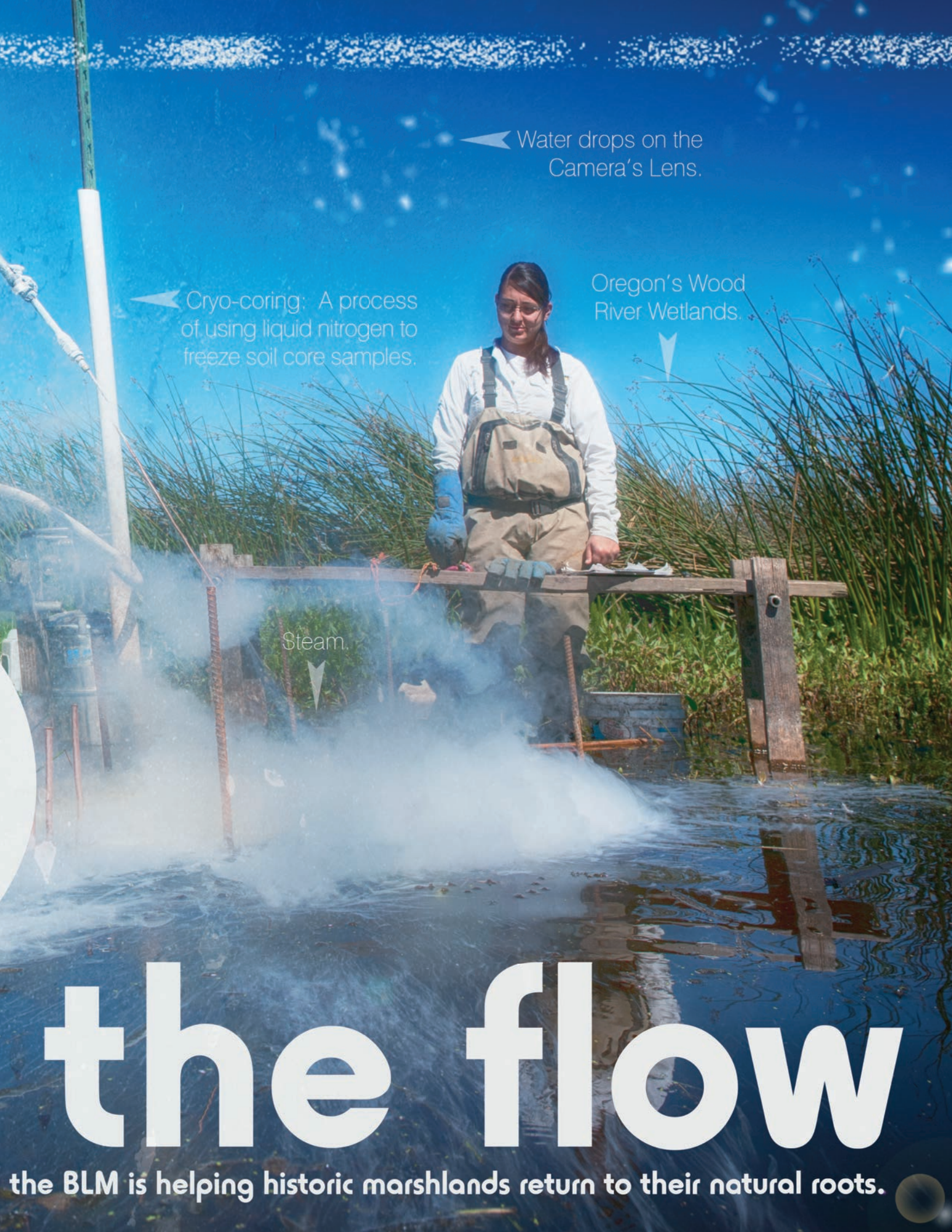
# GO

Story & Photos by Kevin Abel



# with

In central Oregon,



← Water drops on the  
Camera's Lens.

← Cryo-coring: A process  
of using liquid nitrogen to  
freeze soil core samples.

Oregon's Wood  
River Wetlands.

Steam.

# the flow

the BLM is helping historic marshlands return to their natural roots.

# **Back in the 1940s, Oregon's Wood River Wetlands were converted from marshes to farmlands. Good for growing crops? Absolutely. But not particularly sustainable.**

Today we now know that converting this type of land to agricultural use often requires draining water. A lot of water. And as water levels are reduced and farming introduced, the natural character of the soil may become depleted over time. And if it does? The land needs help.

## **ENTER THE BLM**

2014 marks the 20th anniversary of the BLM's support of this historic river delta. And by all accounts, every effort to repair this marsh north of Agency Lake and return the land back to local flowers and fish is going quite, shall we say...swimmingly.

But that's not to say progress hasn't been without its challenges.

## **RAISE THE LAND**

By the time the BLM acquired this area in 1994, the wetlands had significantly subsided (read: "sunk") some two to five feet – a level approximately six feet below the water surface elevation of nearby Agency Lake. Given this drop, the BLM couldn't just "turn on the faucet" by allowing the nearby lake waters to flood this emerging marsh without drastically altering the landscape. Changes would have occurred too quickly for the environment.

So the idea is to raise the Wood River Wetlands at a more natural pace – a progress of around one inch per year – until the wetland surface is elevated enough to meet the water levels from Agency Lake. The BLM has already begun its process of rebuilding through a number of scientific techniques that include growing and maintaining local vegetation. And in the meantime, BLM hydrologist Andy Hamilton points out that "a system of pumps, water control structures, ditches, and levees is required to manage this wetland."

## **TESTING, TESTING...**

But how can we test to make sure the BLM's techniques are working? How will we know our efforts are helping reverse the sinking in order to rebuild these wetlands?

The BLM has placed clay markers in the area to provide a visual baseline that will track annual growth. Local soil is measured yearly by "cryo-coring," a process of using liquid nitrogen to freeze soil core samples. This method is invaluable for measuring the amount of organic soil that accumulates over the top of the markers.

Hamilton says, "This method is good for extracting an intact soil core because it freezes a small section without disturbing the rest of the soil around it." (Plus it makes for a pretty cool photograph.)

## **THE LONG HAUL**

Long-term, the BLM's vision is to reverse the erosion that occurred at the Wood River Wetlands as a result of the original draining and farming of these native marshes.

"We think that if we could gain approximately two feet of soil over portions of the wetland, we could allow Agency Lake to flood and maintain the integrity of wetlands," says the BLM's Hamilton. He continues to point out that this progress would also allow for the re-introduction of threatened and endangered fish.

So by taking the long-term approach, the BLM will ensure this area will not stay sunk below the level of the nearby lake and thus become flooded before it's ready to return to its natural state. No doubt local plants and fish will be grateful.

Revitalization is a part of nature's continual ebb and flow. And a careful approach to this process at the Wood River Wetlands will ensure long-term success. It may not be rushed, but that's okay. For now these wetlands seem very happy to go with the flow.



*Esther Annabelle and Ileana Simmons  
Boiler Bay, Oregon 1941*



*Photo courtesy of Heather Ulrich, BLM archaeologist (and Esther's granddaughter)*

# VOICES CARRY

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The BLM reaches out to Native Americans to help plan for the future of Oregon's public lands

Story by Jodi Bean

***"When we show our respect for other living things, they respond with respect for us."***

**A** wise sentiment.

Last November, the BLM gave pause during Native American Heritage Month to reflect on the teachings of the first Americans. The above proverb from our neighbors in the Arapaho Nation to the east not only represents our respect for the public lands, it also applies to our deep respect for our fellow citizens.

Recently, residents of Oregon have been spending a great deal of time talking about and planning for the future of Northwest forests. For the BLM, an important part of this dialogue has meant reaching out and incorporating the wisdom and experience of those who came before us.

In particular, the BLM visited five Federally-recognized tribes to request their feedback on the direction of western Oregon's wooded wonderland. Conversations covered a variety of topics such as forestry, recreation, and conservation on more than 2.5 million acres in western Oregon.

The BLM's Heather Ulrich said, "These listening sessions were really valuable to hear what the tribes are interested in – and to accurately reflect and portray tribal voices in the land planning conversation."

Meetings included the Siletz Tribe, the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde, the Cow Creek Band of the Umpqua Tribe of Indians, the Klamath Tribes, and the Coquille Indian Tribe. At every assembly, tribal members shared excellent advice with the BLM.

"The Grand Ronde Tribe was pleased to host the BLM leaders and have them on the reservation to talk about the planning project. It's the largest group of BLM leaders we've had in a long while – possibly ever," said Mike Wilson of the Confederated Tribes of Grande Ronde. "The tribal leaders were happy with the listening session and look forward to a continued dialogue and continued collaboration on this and other BLM projects."

Nationally, one of the BLM's top priorities is to strengthen ties with our Native American neighbors. Thanks to these recent gatherings, the BLM will carry forward the esteemed voices of Native American tribes to help shape the future of Oregon together.

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Want to learn more about the future of Oregon forestry? Check out this short animated video: <http://bit.ly/1eqsRmp>



GO WITH THE  
FLOW VOICES  
CARRY OREGON  
SPACE AGE SIL  
VER  CHALET  
LONG LIVE THE  
ROGUE DISCOV  
ER LAND OF THE  
LOST & MORE

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