



LOCAL STEWARDSHIP OF GLOBAL TREASURE

James Thompson

RARE COLUMBIA RIVER SPRUCE SWAMP TO BE CONSERVED BY NCLC

After years of collaborative stewardship, The Nature Conservancy in Oregon is transferring ownership of 902-acre Blind Slough Swamp Preserve to North Coast Land Conservancy.

Much of the original forested floodplain along the Oregon side of the lower Columbia River was long ago logged off and diked for pasture. Blind Slough Swamp near Knappa, east of Astoria, is an exception. This tidal Sitka spruce swamp

“IT’S DIVERSE AND VERY COMPLEX AND VERY SPECIAL.”

is considered the best remaining example in Oregon of a habitat type that was once common from Tillamook County to Alaska but is now globally rare.

TNC began conserving land here in 1992. Meanwhile TNC began collaborating with NCLC to care for the property, culminating in

last summer’s Swampathon, when volunteers from both conservancies spent a weekend working together to weed that preserve and nearby NCLC habitat reserves. Blind Slough is adjacent to Lewis and Clark National Wildlife Refuge, which multiplies its conservation impact.

“It’s one of the more extraordinary natural places I’ve had the pleasure of exploring,” said NCLC Executive Director Katie Voelke, who first *(continued on page 3)*



Jeff Roehm

Wildflower Warrior Cheryl Conway helping scatter seed bombs at Reed Ranch

SEED-BOMBING THE PRAIRIE

Seeding the coastal prairie is tricky. The soil is mostly sand, and seeds tend to blow away before they can germinate. So NCLC Land Steward Eric Owen came up with an innovative answer to this restoration challenge in the Clatsop Plains. Last fall he and a cadre of volunteer Wildflower Warriors made thousands of

little balls, or “seed bombs”: clay packed with seeds of more than a dozen native plant species. Then the team scattered the seed bombs in a large plot at our Reed Ranch Habitat Reserve. Eric expects the project to translate to more grasses and wildflowers in the prairie—and ultimately, more butterflies and other native wildlife.



LINKED BY LAND AND WATER

Butte Creek flows through the forest northeast of Neskowin.

NCLC doesn't just conserve land. We look for strategic ways to connect conserved lands. This approach helps us create conservation corridors, multiplying

our impact on plants, wildlife, and people. Blind Slough Swamp—next to a wildlife refuge and near other conserved land—is a great example (*see page 1*). Two more

land purchases NCLC completed in November provide more habitat connectivity. Read more at NCLCtrust.org/NCLC-adds-acreage.

BUTTE CREEK KEEPING IT FISH- FRIENDLY



Neal Matine

Butte Creek Habitat Reserve was created in 2015 with a gift of two parcels of land near Neskowin, in southern Tillamook County, from landowner Sue Gabriel. This 36-acre reserve was named for the salmon-bearing stream that runs through both parcels. In 2018 Sue's neighbors Jane and Jack Casey gave NCLC another 10-acre parcel located between Sue's two. Conservation of these three stream-linked tracts of land will encourage coastal coho to continue spawning in Butte Creek as they have for millennia.

NEACOXIE PRAIRIE MORE WILDLIFE HABITAT



Mike Patterson

As farms and golf courses and lawns began to replace native prairie habitat on the Clatsop Plains, the once-common Oregon silverspot butterfly disappeared. More habitat will allow us to reintroduce it. NCLC has been slowly acquiring parcels of land in what it calls the Neacoxie Wildlife Corridor, to benefit butterflies and other wildlife; those lands now total more than 800 acres of prairie and wetlands. The newest parcel more than doubles the size of NCLC's Neacoxie Prairie Habitat Reserve. It now includes both sides of Neacoxie Creek.

VOLUNTEER STEWARDSHIP DAYS

MARCH 13: Plant willow wands at Clear Lake

APRIL 17: Knotweed Be Gone (see story at right)

MAY 11: Bust broom at Surf Pines Prairie

Dates are weather-dependent. Find details under EVENTS at NCLCtrust.org.

BOTANICAL BULLY: KNOTWEED

Japanese knotweed is one of the toughest invasive plants to eradicate. It has a foothold on the banks of the Necanicum River, including at our Necanicum Forest Habitat Reserve, which is otherwise lush with healthy native habitat. NCLC is in the second year of a project to wipe out the knotweed there, where Klootch Creek meets the Necanicum.

Our treatment of knotweed at Necanicum Forest has included hand-pulling, which can be effective on small populations when done regularly and repeatedly, as our dedicated site stewards Bill Hutmacher and Vince Huntington have done (helped by volunteers like Hannah Braun, below). We're planning a more robust assault on April 17, at the start of the growing season; visit NCLCtrust.org/events for details on this stewardship day. There you will also find a link with guidance for how to most effectively control knotweed on your own property.



IT'S MY HAPPY PLACE



Margo Lalach of Cannon Beach has traveled the world. The more she's seen, the more committed she's become to supporting conservation in her own backyard. As she puts it, "We have to take care of this planet."

Margo's automatic monthly donations to NCLC make her a Sustaining Steward. Her reasons for doing so are both visionary and pragmatic. "I'm focusing my support on something I know is going to be a legacy for future generations. Nature gives me solace, it gives me joy, it's my happy place. I want to make sure it's protected. Systems change, politics change: this is one of the few things we have control over. This is a commitment I've made for myself in the time I have left on Earth." Besides, she says, her frequent travels make it hard for her to volunteer often. "By being a Sustaining Steward, I know I'm contributing and I know it's making a difference."

 **YOUR LAND TRUST**

Become a Sustaining Steward in February, or increase your current monthly contribution, and NCLC will treat you to a cup of coffee. Details at NCLCtrust.org/love-your-land-trust.

GLOBAL TREASURE *(continued from page 1)*

visited Blind Slough Swamp while mapping invasive plant species there in 2005. "I'm excited that NCLC will now be its official caretaker." Stewardship Director Melissa Reich also knows Blind Slough Swamp well; prior to joining NCLC, she worked for The Nature Conservancy, where she organized volunteer work parties at the preserve. Blind Slough Swamp is impossible to explore on foot but is a popular destination for kayakers.



**NORTH COAST
LAND CONSERVANCY**

*Helping to conserve
Oregon's coastal lands,
forever.*

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

*John Mersereau, President
Vianne Patterson, Vice President
Ron Logan, Treasurer
Tom Horning, Secretary
Betsy Ayres
Layton Borkan
Kevin Brownlee
Randall Henderson
Tammi Lesh
Lisa Phipps*

STAFF

*Executive Director
Katie Voelke
Associate Director
Jon Wickersham
Stewardship Director
Melissa Reich
Development Director
Lorraine Ortiz
Project Manager
Amy Hutmacher
Outreach Manager
Lynette Villagomez
Land Steward
Eric Owen
Communications Coordinator
Bonnie Henderson*

MAILING ADDRESS

*P.O. Box 67
Seaside, OR 97138*

PHYSICAL ADDRESS

*2609 N. Roosevelt Drive
Seaside, OR 97138*

CONTACT US

*(503) 738-9126
nclc@NCLCtrust.org*



**PRINTED ON FSC PAPER
WITH SOY INKS**



CONSERVATION LANDS AND PUBLIC ACCESS: JOIN THE DISCUSSION!

**Thursday, March 14
7 p.m., Pine Grove Community House
Manzanita**

**Wednesday, May 8
7 p.m., Cannon Beach Library**

As NCLC continues work on its biggest-ever project—acquisition of the 3,500-acre Rainforest Reserve—it is considering how much public access is the right amount, there and on all its conserved lands. What are the risks and benefits? Every human activity has the potential to cause harm. Yet our firsthand experiences outdoors are what cause us to care so deeply about the land and want to conserve it.

NCLC Executive Director Katie Voelke has been leading a series of open-ended discussions on this topic this winter and spring. They're free; bring your questions and share your perspective. More details at NCLCtrust.org/conservation-land.



SOUTH TO THE SILETZ

CoastWalk Oregon 2019

**September 12-15
Registration opens March 1
CoastWalkOregon.org**



In its fourth year, CoastWalk Oregon will tackle another spectacular stretch of Oregon's wild coastline in what has become NCLC's signature fundraiser.

CoastWalk will start with a Thursday evening orientation in Pacific City, followed by three days of hiking between Sand Lake Estuary and the mouth of Siletz Bay, the southern end of NCLC's service area. Participants will ascend sandy Cape Kiwanda, explore forested Cascade Head, and enjoy epic views from that headland and The Knoll. As always, whenever you need a shuttle, we'll be there with a bus or a boat.

Don't delay; CoastWalk fills quickly. In 2020 CoastWalk will cycle back to start at the mouth of the Columbia River.

*Stay current and engaged by
following North Coast Land
Conservancy on Facebook
and Instagram*



*Find us on the web at
NCLCtrust.org*

