



# KS WILD

Klamath-Siskiyou Wildlands Center  
PO Box 332, Williams OR. 97544  
[www.kswild.org](http://www.kswild.org)

Non-Profit  
US Postage  
PAID  
Permit 348  
Medford, OR

**SISKIYOU CREST  
HIKE SERIES**  
JOIN US FOR A HIKE ALONG  
HISTORIC TRAILS, THROUGH  
WILDFLOWER MEADOWS  
AND ATOP BREATH-TAKING  
MOUNTAINS—SEE INSIDE.

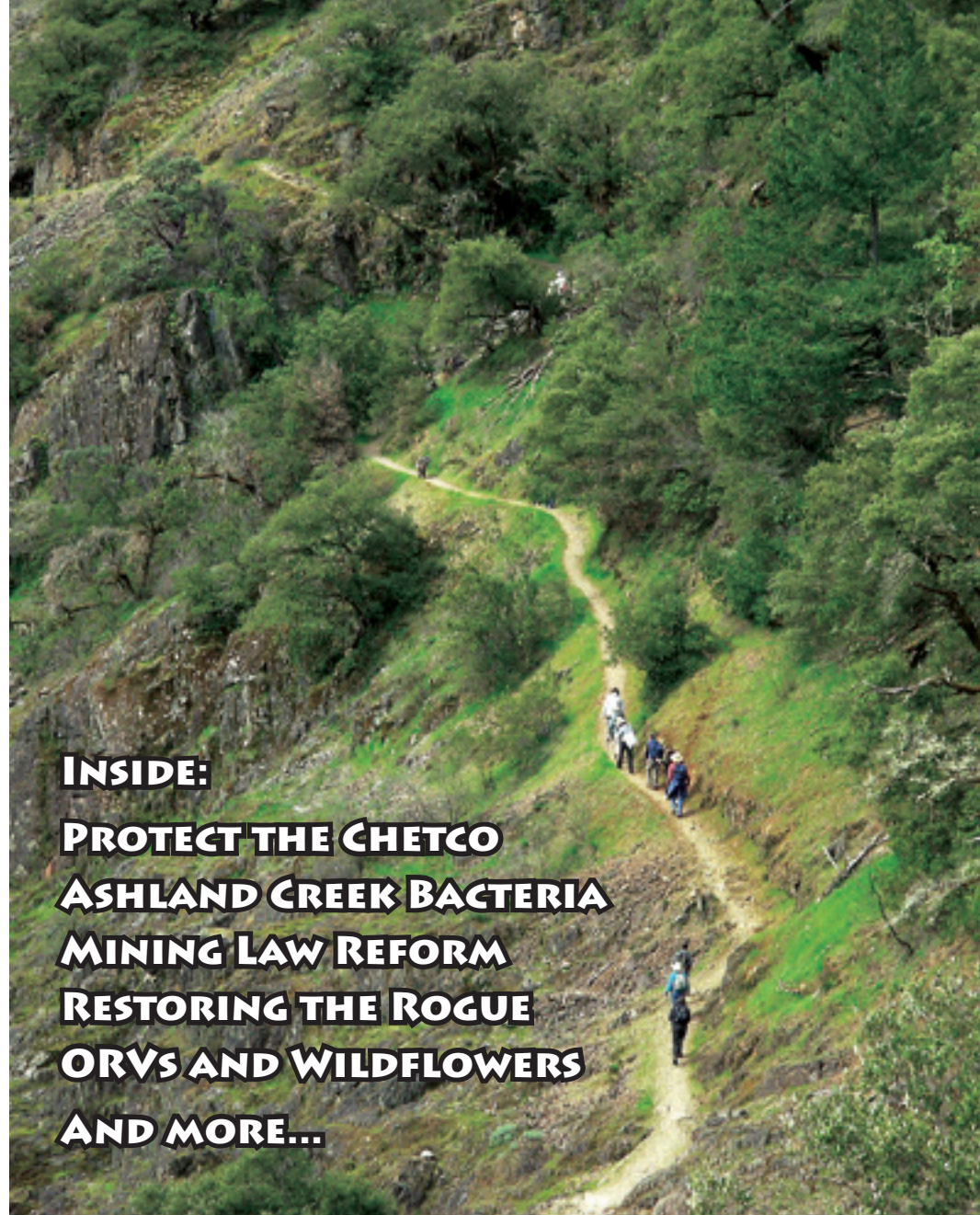
Cover Photo: KS Wild public hike along the Rogue River Trail. Photo by George Sexton.

PRINTED ON SAKURA 100% POST CONSUMER WASTE, CHLORINE-FREE PAPER, WITH SOY-BASED INKS.



# KS WILD NEWS

The Journal of the Klamath-Siskiyou Wildlands Center  
Summer 2010



**INSIDE:**  
**PROTECT THE CHETCO  
ASHLAND CREEK BACTERIA  
MINING LAW REFORM  
RESTORING THE ROGUE  
ORVs AND WILDFLOWERS  
AND MORE...**

## STAFF

Lesley Adams  
Rogue Riverkeeper

David Levine  
Administrative Director

Gary Powell  
Door-to-Door  
Canvass

George Sexton  
Conservation Director

Laurel Sutherland  
Grassroots Organizer

Stephanie Tidwell  
Executive Director

Joseph Vaile  
Campaign Director

## OFFICES

**Membership:**  
P.O. Box 332  
Williams, OR 97544  
541.846.9273

**Conservation:**  
P.O. Box 102  
Ashland, OR 97520  
541.488.5789

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Susan Jane Brown  
Chuck Burr  
Shannon Clery  
Liz Crosson  
Shelley Elkovich  
Joseph Flaherty  
Tracy Harding  
Grey Hecht  
Stuart O'Neill  
Gene Rhough

[www.kswild.org](http://www.kswild.org)

KS News is produced  
by the KS Wild staff.



Martha McCord

## SISKIYOU CREST HIKE SERIES

**MAY 15: LITTLE APPLIGATE VALLEY** The historic Sterling Mine Ditch trail stretches through the Little Applegate, traversing diverse habitats from old-growth canyons to pine-oak savannahs. Thanks to the Siskiyou Uplands Trail Association, long overgrown sections of this trail are now open, and the wildflowers should be near their peak! Moderate, 6 miles. Meet at Evo's at 9am and Ruch Country Store at 9:50am.

**JUNE 19: BIGELOW LAKES, MT ELIJAH** Join Board member Joseph Flaherty and longtime supporter Greg Walter for a walk along the eastern Siskiyou Crest above Oregon Caves. This botanically rich area is freshly free of livestock grazing and the wildflowers are bounding back. Moderate, 5 miles. Meet at 9am at Coffee Heaven in Cave Junction.

**JULY 17: WAGNER BUTTE** Hike to the top of Wagner Butte—the second highest peak in the Siskiyou Range—and enjoy birds-eye views of Ashland, the Rogue Valley and the south Cascades. We will hike through forests, meadows, sagebrush, mountain mahogany and pass by an unusual aspen grove. Difficult, 10 miles. Meet at Evo's (Ashland) at 9am.

**For all hikes:** Bring lunch, water, appropriate clothes and shoes and binoculars if you have them!

## OREGON CAVES, WILD ROGUE

Visit [kswild.org](http://kswild.org) for updates on our efforts to expand protections for the Oregon Caves and Wild Rogue River.

## KS WILD'S MISSION:

*KS Wild is an advocate for the forests, waters and wildlife of the Klamath and Rogue Basins of northwest California and southwest Oregon. We use environmental law, science, collaboration and education to defend healthy ecosystems and help build sustainable communities.*

## MANY THANKS TO ALL OUR SUPPORTERS

**VOLUNTEERS, ALLIES AND COLLABORATORS:** John Alexander, Kimberley Baker, Bob Barker, Jan Brotman, Susan Jane and Paul Brown, Kristopher Cahoon, Holly Christiansen, Tom Dimitre, Francis Eatherington, Roger Flynn, Tom Harasin, Scott Harding, Andrew Hawley, Kavita Heyn, Melanie Jessee, Maria Kelly, Andy Kerr, Jerry and Janet LaFountain, Josh Laughlin, Sally Mackler, Erin Madden, Duane Martinez, Autumn McIvor, Kristi Mergenthaler, Mookie Moss, Larry Newcomb, Mark Riskadahl, Hope Robertson, Ron Roth, Olivia Schmidt, Melissa Schweisguth, Dan Serres, Ben Shelton, Opie Snow, Diana Spade, Kristin Stankiewicz, Sherry Straus, Chant and Susanna Bahaar Thomas, Paul Torrence, Craig Tucker, Barbara Ullian, Pete Wallstrom, Greg Walter, Amaroq Weiss, Dave Willis, Jan Wilson and others.

**DEEP GRATITUDE GOES TO:** Rachel Aquino, Joseph Bower, Paul Brown, Ginger Cassidy, Elizabeth Coker, Linda Connolly, Romain Cooper, Clint & Mary Driver, Robin Eckert, Shelly Elkovich & Jeff Heglie, David & Carol Gasser, Brad Horwitz, Philip Krohn, Tracy Parks Lamblin, Sally Mackler, Ann Macrory, Steven & Jennifer Marsden, Katherine Mechling & Jim Gurley, Tom Powell & Maud Macrory, Thomas Pike and Megan Danforth, Margaret Purves, Lundy & Fredric Reynolds, Gene Rhough, Hope Robertson, Edward & Gloria Robin, Peter & Karen Salant, Melissa Schweisguth, Lynda & Steven Sirianni, Leah Soltar and Frederick Cathey, Matt Oliva and Davis Wilkins, Joyce Stahmann, Janie & Kirk Starr, William and Barbara Steele, Hans Stroo, Valerie Swales, Steven & Priscilla Weaver.

**BUSINESSES MEMBERS:** Abbott's Cottages, Adult & Pediatric Urology, Ashland Commons, Ashland Fabrication, Ashland Financial Solutions, Ashland Food Coop, Ashland Historic Railroad Museum, Ashland Lock & Safe, Ashland Pets, Ashland Yoga Center, Barking Moon Farm, Steven J. Bernard Construction, Black, Chapman, Webber & Stevens, Blue Ribbon Shoe Service, Book Exchange, California Functional Foods, Capricorn Creations, Chamberlin Homes, Chanticleer Inn, Cold Creek Inn, Crown Woodworks, Crystal Clear Satellite, Dagoba, Rosemary Dunn Dalton, LCSW, Dan the Backhoe Man, Helena Darling Catering, Carlos Delgado Architect, Deluxe Awning Company, Downtowne Coffeehouse, EcoTeas, Eric Strong Furniture, Euro-Mek Auto, Evo's Coffee, Expressive Voice Therapy, Julie R. Fagundes, DDS, Fish Queen, Full Circle Real Estate, Gallerie Karon, Gallery Samarron, Get in Gear, Gift Community, M. Kirk Gooding, M.D., Greenleaf Restaurant, HealthNAK, Hemporium, Herb Pharm, Penny Herman's Counseling Service, Jefferson State Financial, Jega Gallery & Sculpture Garden, KenCairn Landscape Architecture, Kistler, Small & White, Kokopelli River Guide, John Little Construction, Loftus Landscaping, Master Craft Wood Floors, MichaelJGibson.com, Mihama Teriyaki-Grill, Morning Glory, Naturalyards, Nectar Boutique, Northwest Biological Consulting, Northwest Nature Shop, Jerry Nutter General Contractor, One Voice Associates, Pacific Domes, Pangea Grills & Wraps, Patagonia, Plant Oregon Nursery, Rising Phoenix Biofuels, Rogue Valley Runners, Shypoke Vineyard, Siskiyou Skylights, Southern Oregon Mediation Center, Spirit of Shakti, Kathy Sprick, D.D.S., Standing Stone Brewing, Carlyle F. Stout III Attorney at Law, Sunday Afternoons, The Solar Collection, Tree Star, Trillium Natural Foods, Truelove Music Studios, Upper Limb-It, Video Explorer, Wholeness for Life, Wild Wines.

## PLEASE JOIN KS WILD TODAY!

Yes, I want to support KS Wild's efforts with a tax-deductible membership donation of:

\$35     \$50     \$100     Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Mail this form along with your membership donation to: KS WILD, P.O. Box 332, Williams, OR 97544  
or visit [www.kswild.org/JoinNow](http://www.kswild.org/JoinNow) to donate with a credit card

# FOCUS ON OUR KS WILD FAMILY

## BEAVER - *CASTOR CANADENSIS*

It would be difficult to overstate the central importance of beaver in North America less than 200 years ago. The world's second largest rodent transforms its environment—these ecosystem engineers have literally shaped aquatic zones throughout the west.



Beaver ponds provide habitat for juvenile steelhead and Coho salmon (an endangered species) in Washington and Oregon and this hardworking rodent can extend the release of water late into summer. Scientists are now documenting that water flowing downstream from beaver dams is cooler than when it flowed in, a significant discovery in a region where water temperature is a serious threat to native salmon runs.

It is estimated that North America had at least 60 million beaver before European settlement. Explorer David Thompson observed that the continent was “in the possession of two distinct races of beings, man and the beaver.” Historical records show “60 to 80 beaver” per mile of stream. After a century of trapping, the beaver population shrunk to an estimated 100,000, resulting in a dramatically altered landscape. Populations are slowly rebounding, and KS Wild is working in a coalition to encourage the California Department of Fish and Game to launch a reintroduction program for beaver and porcupine along the Klamath River.

## BARBARA ULLIAN

When it comes to defending the ecological treasures of southwest Oregon and the greater Kalmiopsis, few have shown greater dedication than Barbara Ullian. Barbara's family moved to the Rogue Valley in the 1940s, and she spent much of her formative years fishing, rafting, and hiking, forging a deep appreciation of these rugged wildlands. Her passion grew into a lifelong commitment to conservation, with photography, radio show hosting, and managing an outdoor store rounding out a longtime stint as Conservation Director for the Siskiyou Project. Barbara is currently the coordinator of Friends of the Kalmiopsis. KS Wild has had the honor of working with Barbara on public lands mining reform, travel management, post-fire logging, and increasing protections for the Kalmiopsis wildlands and the Chetco River. We are continually amazed by the depth of her knowledge, her perseverance, and the incredibly high quality of her work. Her three decades of conservation advocacy are truly an inspiration to us all.



Barbara Ullian

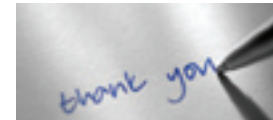
# PUBLIC INPUT HELPS RESTORE APPLLEGATE SALMON HABITAT

Ever wonder if clicking “send” on KS Wild action alerts or writing a letter to decision makers actually influences anything? Rest assured your voice matters. We only ask for your emails and letters when we truly think they will make a difference for the Earth. Case in point, the recent Applegate Legacy Roads Decision.



NOAA/NMFS

For decades, poorly built logging and mining roads have been dumping sediment into the Applegate River tributaries below the Applegate Dam. Due to the steep slopes, poor road construction, and erosive soils, wild salmon reproduction has been severely limited. Your letters helped convince the Forest Service that now is the time to restore prime salmon habitat by putting 28 miles of decaying, un-needed logging roads to bed. The decision also included closing nearly seven miles of road and “storm proofing” 44 miles of road. Thanks to you the wild Coho salmon of the Applegate River have a brighter future.



**TAKE ACTION:** To help us take another step in the direction of watershed protection, please take action to help protect the Chetco River and reform the outdated and destructive 1872 Mining Law (see pages 7-8).

## KLAMATH-SISKIYOU REVUE

Thursday, June 3 at 7pm  
CultureWorks, 310 Oak Street, Ashland

Join the KS Wild staff for an evening of education, exploration and celebration of the world-class region we call home. This free event will be a snap-shot of current issues in the bioregion and KS Wild's efforts to address them, including mining, LNG, logging, off-road vehicles and threats to water quality. We will also showcase our ongoing efforts to secure permanent protections for the Wild Rogue, Oregon Caves and the Siskiyou Crest.



# PUBLIC LANDS MINING REACHES BOILING POINT

## MINERS RATCHET UP VIOLENT RHETORIC

It is nothing new to see overheated rhetoric on the Internet. Indeed, sometimes it seems like there's nothing but bombast on the web. But when a public lands miner recently posted a death threat towards a KS Wild public hike that included a time, date, method and political objective for killing us and our supporters, that seemed a little over-the-top, even in this age of Internet bluster.



George Sexton

**INTIMIDATING THE PUBLIC :** This sign is posted on a public lands trail in the Kalmiopsis Wilderness.

In a post to the “Oregon Gold Hunters” website, one of the site moderators wrote of a KS Wild hike: “now we know where and when they will be congregated as a group,” and suggested that one could “sit up in the woods with a high powered assault rifle and put an end to the group in one swift action.” Other miners on the site responded that they thought this was a good idea and indicated they might participate in such a confrontation.

---

*“I respect the rights of individuals and organizations to make their arguments over what they feel are the highest and best uses of public lands. However, violence and threats of violence by either side have no place in these conversations.” - Senator Ron Wyden in a letter to U.S. Attorney Dwight Holton and Oregon Attorney General John Kroger.*

---

KS Wild took this threat seriously, and reported it to law enforcement, the BLM, Forest Service and other agencies that are involved in mining regulation. We are currently working with those organizations to ensure the safety of all public lands visitors.

## SENATOR WYDEN CALLS FOR AN INVESTIGATION

Following the death threat, Senator Ron Wyden wrote to the US Attorney’s Office and Oregon Attorney John Kroger asking them to investigate the threat and “to use your authority to ensure the safety of community groups that use public land.”

We greatly appreciate the response from Senator Wyden, and the outpouring of community support that we have received.

# FEATURED HIKE: BOUNDARY TRAIL

The Boundary Trail on the Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest offers spectacular ridge-line views of both the Illinois and Applegate watersheds. Located in the Siskiyou Mountains near the Oregon Caves National Monument and the Red Buttes Wilderness Area, the trail is known as a botanical hotspot and a wildflower paradise.



Evelyn Roether

Until recently the unique botanical values near the trail were protected by the Forest Service as designated “Botanical Areas” and “Research Natural Areas” in which hiking and horseback riding were allowed, but motorized use of the meadows was prohibited. For years, renegade off-road-vehicle (ORV) users have ignored these regulations and have ruined the quiet backcountry hiking experience of Forest visitors who follow the rules.

**STRADDLING THE APPLAGATE AND ILLINOIS:** The historic Boundary Trail offers endless views and opportunities for remote, backcountry experiences.

As part of their “motorized use” planning process, the Forest Service recently decided to amend their Forest Plan so-as to allow and encourage ORV use through the Botanical Areas and Research Natural Areas along the Boundary Trail. The stated reason for changing the rules was to facilitate the “ongoing use” of the hiking trail by ORV riders. In other words, if you break the law long enough, the Forest Service will reward you by changing the law. To read about KS Wild’s efforts to stop this, see pages 9-10.

While it is no fun to run into large groups of extreme off-road motorcycle enthusiasts in body armor tearing down the trail, the Boundary Trail is so beautiful, and the Botanical Areas are so impressive, that it would be a tragedy if hikers simply write the area off because of the aggressive motorcycle crowd.

---

*The stated reason for changing the rules was to facilitate the “ongoing use” of the hiking trail by ORV riders. In other words, if you break the law long enough, the Forest Service will reward you by changing the law.*

---

There are a number of access points to the Boundary Trail. Perhaps the most popular and scenic of these is the Mt. Elijah trail out of the Oregon Caves Monument. Taking this trail also greatly reduces your odds of running into off-road motorcycle riders. As always, take a Rogue River/Siskiyou National Forest map and plenty of water.

Please visit [www.kswild.org](http://www.kswild.org) to stay up to date on our efforts to protect the Botanical Areas along the Boundary Trail.

# ROGUE RIVERKEEPER TACKLES CHRONIC BACTERIA PROBLEM

On a hot August afternoon in southern Oregon, it can be very appealing to cool off your feet in one of the Rogue Basin's mountain streams, or let your child wade in its refreshing waters. Yet, depending on the stream, you may be risking your health.

Many of you may be familiar with a nearly annual event when the Ashland Parks Department posts a sign on Ashland Creek warning people to not drink, bathe or swim in the water due to high levels of bacteria contamination (in this case, *E. coli*). Ashland Creek is not alone. According to Oregon's Department of Environmental Quality, more than a dozen creeks in the Middle Rogue and Bear Creek sub-basins violate water quality standards because of high bacteria levels in the water. Streams listed as impaired include Bear, Coleman, Jackson and Little Butte Creeks.

Ingesting bacteria-polluted water can cause abdominal cramping, diarrhea and nausea and it most severely impacts the young, elderly and immunity-compromised. *E. coli* is particularly damaging to the kidneys and other organs responsible for removing toxins from the body. In young children, *E. coli* bacteria can create a poisonous toxin that weakens the walls of the small intestine.

Many streams in the Rogue Basin are tested in the summer in order to protect the public from health hazards by posting warning signs when waters exceed bacteria limits. While this is an important safety service, it does not address the root cause of the problem.

For years, agencies and individuals have wondered what is causing the bacteria pollution in Ashland Creek, but research efforts have not been conclusive or consistent. Rogue Riverkeeper is organizing with community members and the City of Ashland to design and implement a program this summer to once and for all identify the source of the bacteria and stop this chronic pollution.



Rogue Riverkeeper intends to expand such efforts to other streams in the Rogue Basin that have recurring bacteria pollution. This effort requires the help of community members who want to identify the source, and be a part of the solution. Please contact Lesley@kswild.org if you would like to volunteer.



Lesley Adams

**IDENTIFYING THE SOURCE:** Rogue Riverkeeper and the community are looking for solutions.

## A LONG HISTORY OF VIOLENCE

Mining in southwest Oregon and northern California has been plagued by violence since its beginning. When not shooting one another over gold claims, the first wave of miners to the Illinois Valley and its surrounding watersheds would periodically conduct militia raids on the Native American residents. Calling themselves "exterminators," these miner militias slaughtered many of the Chetco Indians in 1853, the Lower Coquille Indians in 1854, and the Takilma Indians in 1855.

Angry that the California legislature recently decided to enact a moratorium on some destructive forms of in-stream mining (to protect water quality and at-risk salmon runs), present-day miners near the Klamath River have posted an Internet thread called "cowboys and Indians" in which they ominously advocate "finishing the job."

## TRIGGER HAPPY THUGS

When public lands miners are able to tear themselves away from posting threats on the Internet and go to our National Forests to mine, they often don't take kindly to other members of the public visiting our public lands.

In April 2009, miner Eugene Spears objected to public use of the Forest Service road near the federal mining claim he was working, and shot recreational driver Glen Graybill at close range with a shotgun. On March 21, 2010 the Grants Pass Daily Courier reported that after eleven months and seven surgeries, Mr. Graybill's arm required amputation. Mr. Spears remains imprisoned on a felony assault charge.

## AN ENTITLEMENT CULTURE

Miners on public lands currently enjoy a privileged status: they extract valuable minerals from lands they do not own and pay no royalties at all to the landowner (in this case the U.S. taxpayer). Further, once they've ripped all they can from the streams and forests, it is often the taxpayer who is left holding the bag to clean up their toxic mining waste. Currently, millions of taxpayer dollars are being spent to mitigate water quality damage occurring from the abandoned Almeda Mine on the Wild and Scenic Rogue River, the abandoned Blue Ledge Mine in the Upper Applegate, and the mothballed Benton Mine on the Whisky Creek tributary to the Rogue River.

Given that the archaic 1872 Mining Law gives away our federal forest lands to miners, and that the public gets nothing in return (other than the clean-up bill) it is perhaps understandable that some in the mining community would prefer gunplay and threats to reasoned debate. It's hard to rationally defend a mining policy that enriches a few at the expense of many while trashing public lands and polluting water quality (see page 8).

## TAKING A PEACEFUL STAND

KS Wild is taking this opportunity to recommit ourselves to ensuring that we are the last generation that will be threatened by the excesses of some public lands miners. Please join us in working to permanently protect public lands and waterways from reckless destruction. You can give a booster gift to KS Wild in support of our "Mining Watch" program, become a new member today, and/or take action for 1872 mining law reform: [www.kswild.org/miningreform](http://www.kswild.org/miningreform).

# RESTORING THE ROGUE

## REPORT OUTLINES PUBLIC LAND RESTORATION PRIORITIES

Since 1997, KS Wild has provided public oversight of federal land management projects in the Rogue and Klamath River Basins. During that time, we have advanced restoration goals for public land that include in-stream restoration, road removal and repair and thinning overstocked tree plantations.



Lesley Adams

**A RESTORATION ECONOMY:** KS Wild highlights opportunities to restore habitat and provide jobs. Fire-suppressed forests, like this one in the Applegate watershed, need restoration.

Last year, KS Wild set out to develop a map-based plan to more comprehensively guide our restoration advocacy. We focused on the Rogue Basin, the northern portion of KS Wild's coverage area, where our most active collaboration is occurring. While we recognize the importance of restoration efforts on private land, this report focuses on the 62% of the Rogue Basin that is in federal ownership, where restoration is more easily accomplished. With a watershed that covers 3.3 million acres (over 5,100 square miles), there are many opportunities to restore degraded public resources and provide high quality jobs. Highlights from the report:

**THINNING AND RESTORING:** There are about 450,000 acres of tree plantations on federal land (generally these are stands previously logged and replanted to maximize fiber production) – we prioritized 166,000 acres for restoration treatments due to their age and their location near old-growth forests.

**PROTECTING, ENHANCING OLD-GROWTH AND ROADLESS AREAS:** There are 728,341 acres of roadless area in the Rogue Basin and 719,235 acres of old-growth forest over 150 years of age. We ranked the watersheds where roadless area expansion could most easily occur due to already low road densities. We also ranked the most important watersheds for the northern spotted owl to attempt to capture the watersheds most important to species associated with old-forests and to prioritize where the acceleration of older forest habitat was most important.

**RECOVERING CLEAN WATER AND SALMON HABITAT:** Roads that bleed sediment, fish passage barriers, and water quality issues were all identified as problems. There are nearly 1,000 miles of coho salmon streams in the Rogue Basin, with 99 fish passage barriers. Of the nearly 10,000 miles of roads on federal land in the basin, 1,293 pose a serious threat to aquatic habitat due to their proximity to streams and location in the “transient snow zone.”

use on our public lands. The Forest Service's environmental analysis indicated that less than 2% of forest visitors participate in ORV recreation. Guess whose preferences won the day? If you said the 98% of Forest visitors who follow the rules and who want National Forests managed sustainably...you'd be wrong.

In order to promote ORV use in previously protected botanical areas and backcountry non-motorized areas, Forest Supervisor Conroy signed a “plan amendment” formally exempting some of the most botanically diverse meadows on the planet from the restriction on ORV use. Similarly, he signed another plan amendment encouraging ORV use in backcountry non-motorized areas.

### FIGHTING FOR FLOWER FREEDOM

There's no two ways about it, KS Wild loves wildflowers. We're proud posy huggers. And if the Forest Service won't protect world-class botanical meadows, we will. Along with our friends at the Siskiyou Project, we filed an administrative appeal of Forest Supervisor Conroy's decision to hand over botanical meadows and backcountry wildlands to the 2% of Forest visitors who would like to use these areas as motorized race tracks and obstacle courses. We're also working with attorneys Susan Jane Brown and Dave Bahr to ensure that ORV use on the Forest does not harm water quality, salmon recovery, or put other forest visitors at risk.

There are large and appropriate places for motorized recreation on our National Forests, and that is on the vast network of existing logging roads—not on meadows, wetlands, creeks or hiking trails.

## THE HEARTH

### INTO THE WILD: WILDERNESS TALES

#### SOUTHERN OREGON'S STORYTELLING SERIES

MAY 13, 7 PM ASHLAND COMMUNITY CENTER

The Hearth is Southern Oregon's new storytelling series. Every other month, a handful of local folks gather to tell a true story, first person, without notes, on the monthly theme. On May 13th the theme is, “Into the Wild: Wilderness Tales” and **all proceeds for this event are donated to KS Wild**. Admission is \$5 (includes live music).

*Snowstorms. Wildfires. River-treks. Lightning strikes. Mountain-top epiphanies. Squirrel attacks. Backpacking disasters. Fishtales. Ecological conversations. Tree-hugging romances. Raised by wolves. Join us for a night of wilderness tales—true stories of human beings encountering nature.*



# PLAN CALLS FOR ORVs IN BOTANICAL HOT SPOTS

A few precious areas of the Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest are supposedly protected as “botanical areas” and “backcountry non-motorized areas” by the Forest Service. The idea is that a handful of places on the Forest contain such unique biological diversity and unspoiled backcountry values that they should be protected from harm.



Karen Phillips

**SPECIAL MEADOWS UNDER THE WHEELS:** The Forest Service is proposing designated Botanical Areas for motorized recreation.

While protecting botanical areas and backcountry wildlands is a great idea, the reality is that for years off-road vehicle (ORV) enthusiasts have ignored the rules and driven through these specially designated areas, and the Forest Service has done nothing to stop them. Many hikes along the magnificent Boundary Trail (see page 12) that winds through several botanical wonderlands have been ruined by large groups of motorcycles roaring through the meadows. Numerous visitors to the Pacific Crest Trail have encountered illegal ORV use in and around the Red Buttes Wilderness while the Forest Service has turned a blind eye.

When the Rogue River/Siskiyou National Forest announced that it was beginning a planning process to determine where motorized use is appropriate and where it is harmful and unsustainable, many of us who love biodiversity and wildlands were elated. We had high hopes that the special places that the Forest Service had designated as botanical areas and backcountry non-motorized areas would finally be safe from ORV damage. How wrong we were.

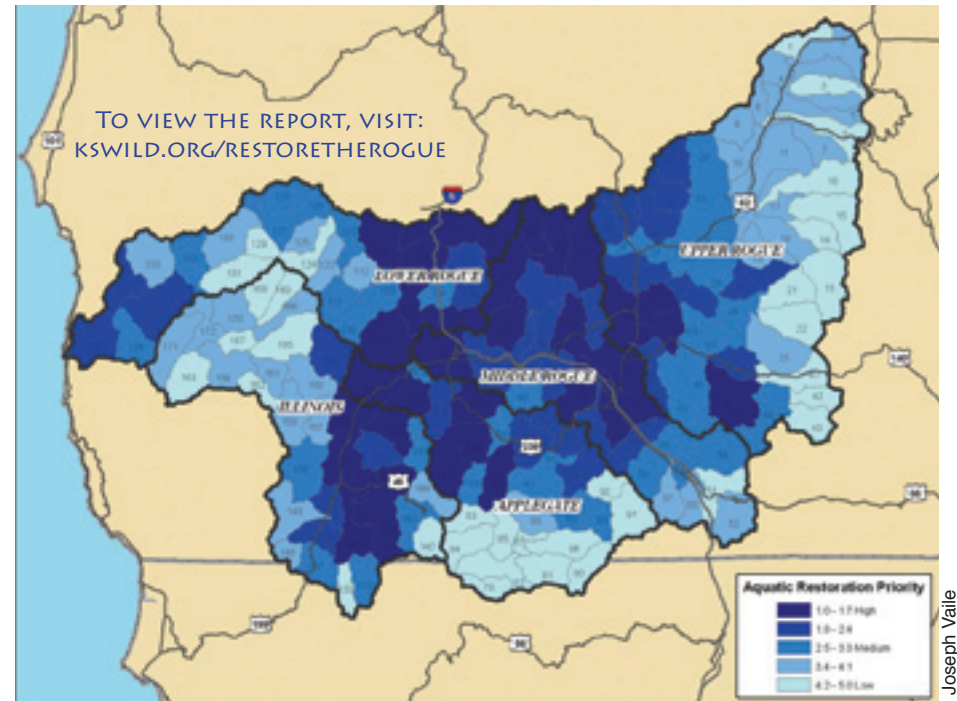
## REWARDING ILLEGAL BEHAVIOR

Rather than ban ORV use in these specially designated areas within the Forest, Supervisor Scott Conroy decided that he would amend the Forest Plan to allow and encourage ORV use in botanical areas and backcountry non-motorized areas where it had previously been prohibited. His rationale? Because some ORV users had been violating the rules for so long that it would be unfair to ask them to stop now.

Over 10,000 Americans wrote to Mr. Conroy asking him to hear their concerns about botanical hot spots, water quality, and user-conflict when deciding where to allow ORV

**FIRE, NOXIOUS WEEDS AND MORE:** Watersheds were also ranked for the amount of fire hazard near communities, the amount of forest stands that have missed fire cycles and are in need of treatments, the acres of priority noxious weeds for removal and the amount of grazing conflict areas.

The purpose of “Restoring the Rogue” is to define restoration priorities and opportunities on public lands in the Rogue Basin, thereby better informing collaboration and encouraging the most effective use of scarce resources. Such restoration will enhance fish and wildlife habitat while creating high quality jobs in the forest. We hope that this plan is a useful tool for federal land managers, decision makers and the many businesses, organizations and communities working to restore the Rogue River Basin.



Joseph Vaile

**A MAP-BASED PLAN:** The Restore the Rogue report contains 21 maps that describe restoration priorities on public lands in the Rogue Basin.

## SUSTAINABLE, SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS CLASS TO BENEFIT KS WILD

Tap a unique opportunity to benefit your business, communities, the environment and KS Wild by taking a sustainable business course with Melissa Schweisguth, sustainability professional. Four sessions: 5/24, 6/28, 7/26, 8/23, 7-9 pm, Ashland Public Library. Cost is \$200, with 100% of fees donated to local non-profits, including KS Wild. Contact [melissa.schweisguth@gmail.com](mailto:melissa.schweisguth@gmail.com), 541-727-0460 and visit [www.fullcircleimpact.com](http://www.fullcircleimpact.com)

# ASK OBAMA TO PROTECT THE CHETCO AND SOUTH KALMIOPSIS FROM MINING

The National Wild and Scenic Chetco River is a world-class fishery, flowing from the Kalmiopsis Wilderness to the spectacular Wild Rivers Coast. It was designated a Wild and Scenic River in 1988 in recognition of its strikingly clear blue and emerald green waters, wild salmon, steelhead and cutthroat trout populations. The river is now threatened by a proposal to mine nearly half its length using suction dredges - on public lands.



U.S. Forest Service

**WILD AND SCENIC CHETCO RIVER:** A miner has bought claims on 24 miles on the Chetco River, which is nearly half the river's length. (Claim #11 pictured here in the Kalmiopsis Wilderness).

Rough and Ready Creek is a prime example of the botanical diversity for which the Siskiyou Mountains are globally recognized. It flows through the South Kalmiopsis Roadless Area, the Rough and Ready Creek Botanical Area and an Area of Critical Environmental Concern. It hosts the highest number of rare endemic plants in Oregon, is an eligible Wild and Scenic River, and was recommended as Wilderness by the Bush administration in 2004. The extremely high values of Rough and Ready are at risk by plans for extensive mining.

In November 2009, Oregon Senators Wyden and Merkley and Congressman DeFazio asked the Obama Administration to reinstate a Clinton-era mining withdrawal in the Siskiyou Wild Rivers area. Due to immediate threats, they specifically requested immediate withdrawal of the Chetco River, Rough and Ready Creek and the South Kalmiopsis from mining. This action was requested in order to reserve time for legislative solutions. To date the Secretaries have not acted.

The Oregonian wrote, "The ultimate solution in the Siskiyou is congressional expansion of wilderness and wild and scenic river protections, if not a national monument or park designation. However, getting those kind of lasting protections...takes time, and with a growing number of mining conflicts, including threats of violence, the Chetco and other streams in the Siskiyou don't have that kind of time (*Slow down the gold rush*, April 7, 2010)."

**TAKE ACTION:** The entire Siskiyou Wild Rivers has been recognized for decades as an area deserving special designation. Today we have an opportunity to protect part of this area that is imminently threatened by mining. Please contact the Obama Administration and ask that they implement a withdrawal from the 1872 Mining Law for the Chetco River, Rough and Ready Creek and South Kalmiopsis. For talking points, recent media coverage and an auto-email, visit: [www.kswild.org/chetco](http://www.kswild.org/chetco).

# THE 1872 MINING LAW HAS GOT TO GO

Each summer, tens of thousands of Oregonians raft the Wild and Scenic Rogue River and serenely float by the abandoned Almeda mine that has been discharging carcinogenic heavy metals into the river for decades. The toxic Almeda mine embodies all that is wrong with the 1872 Mining Act that governs mining on public lands and waterways.



Lesley Adams

Here is how it works: (1) A private mining interest files a mineral claim on federal lands near a stream; (2) the mining interest extracts all the valuable minerals (i.e. gold) from the public lands while paying no royalties; (3) laws that would limit the environmental damage of the mining are largely waived or ignored; (4) the mining interest packs up and leaves; and (5) the taxpayer is left paying to clean up the cyanide, arsenic and toxic metals left behind.

**CARRYING THE BURDEN OF MINING POLLUTION:** Taxpayers have spent nearly \$10 million to partially clean up the abandoned Almeda mine (pictured here) and the abandoned Blue Ledge mine in the Upper Applegate.

In the case of Almeda, taxpayers have already shelled out hundreds of thousands of dollars in unsuccessful efforts to keep the toxic stew out of the Rogue River and still an ultimate solution is unknown. It may be that no amount of public-funded remediation can repair the dig-and-run damage at Almeda. The 2009 stimulus bill contained nearly \$10 million for clean-up of toxic mining waste on public lands in southwest Oregon, and that barely scratches the surface of the problem.

---

*Mining kills fish, pollutes water, and costs taxpayers billions, all the while mining interests get free minerals from public lands. It's time to update the 1872 Mining Law.*

---

For years salmon enthusiasts, commercial fishing interests and taxpayer groups have advocated for changes to the 1872 Mining Act. In 2007, Congress came tantalizingly close when the U.S. House passed legislation to require that taxpayers receive royalties from mineral extraction on public lands while bolstering watershed protections. Unfortunately, the Senate failed to act.

**TAKE ACTION:** Congress must finish its work and reform this outdated law so that water quality and taxpayers don't always play second fiddle to private mining profits extracted from public lands. Visit [www.kswild.org/miningreform](http://www.kswild.org/miningreform).