

Conserve

News from Lemhi Regional Land Trust and Salmon Valley Stewardship

A Quarterly Newsletter

Fall 2010

Celebrations a Success

This fall, the Lemhi Regional Land Trust and Salmon Valley Stewardship invited the public to help celebrate successes, support future work, and have a good time. Following are notes from the events.

LRLT

Held at the Kenney Creek Ranch on September 18th, LRLT hosted the Annual Appreciation BBQ and Fundraiser. Over 100 burgers and delicious side dishes were served to a crowd of conservation-minded supporters and landowners.

The Salmon Valley String Band performed while attendees ate locally grown BBQ beef burgers and browsed the silent auction items. With the help of many supporters, the silent auction was a huge success. Locally donated silent auction items included an alpaca rug, ½ beef cow, ½ fat lamb, jewelry, and lift ticket vouchers to Sun Valley Resort and Lost Trail Powder Mountain, to name a few. LRLT raised just over \$3,000 from the event. Doug Westfall also gave rides in his authentic Yellowstone Stage, with paint horse team Lefty and Jerry.

Kenney Creek Ranch is LRLT's newest conservation easement property, totaling 520 acres. The event was a wonderful success for LRLT. Thank you to everyone who contributed to the event. (For a list of contributors, go to our website at www.lemhilandtrust.org).

SVS

On October 16, Salmon Valley Stewardship's 3rd Annual Harvest Celebration showcased local food, drink, and fun. The event marked the catering debut of the Odd Fellows Bakery who did a fabulous job of sourcing local foods and preparing



Doug Westfall, wagon master of the Yellowstone Stage, gives a horse drawn tour of the Kenney Creek Ranch in September. (photo by Breann Westfall)

them in delicious and creative ways. As always, Nick Bertram's beer reminded us how lucky we are to have a brewery in Salmon, and Salmon's hometown winemaker Mike Crowley provided his incredible Syringa Wines. Now we all know what Primitivo is.

Karen Launchbaugh, a professor at the University of Idaho, delighted us all with her thoughts on the importance of learning more about grazing and rangeland ecology. She pointed out that school children learn more about ocean environments than rangeland, despite being surrounded by it.

SVS's 2010 David Krosting Sustainability Award went to the Lemhi County Humane Society. "Not only does Rags and Wags divert thousands of pounds of material from the landfill, but the re-use of clothing, furniture, and you-name-it is easier on the pocketbook and the environment.

Income generated supports an aggressive spay and neutering program, which in turn benefits birds and other wildlife who can suffer at the paws of domestic animals. Furthermore, as the Society restored a Main Street building, they incubated the Odd Fellows Bakery," SVS Board President Anita Andrus told the sold-out audience.



Rags and Wags Thrift Store helped earn the Humane Society's Sustainability Award.

Policy Update

Both Salmon Valley Stewardship and Lemhi Regional Land Trust are committed to sharing our place-based experiences with policy makers.



In October, about 45 people attended the Rural Voices for Conservation Coalition’s Idaho and Montana Policy Roundtable “Sensible Solutions for Working Landscapes.” The workshop was held at the Sacajawea Learning Center in Salmon. We were honored to have a political realities panel with **Leslie Huddleston** from Sen. Mike Crapo’s office, **Laurel Sayer** from Rep. Mike Simpson’s office, and **Mike Roach**, staffer for Sen. James Risch in attendance.

Special thanks to [Sustainable Northwest](#), [Northwest Connections](#), and the [Brainerd Foundation](#) who all helped make the regional event possible.

In December, Kristin and Gina will be attending the 10th Annual Rural Voices for Conservation Coalition Annual Policy Meeting in Troutdale, Oregon, joining hundreds of peers from around the West who work to create durable jobs and protect traditional ways of life in natural resource rich areas like Central Idaho.



In July, LRLT Director Kristin Troy testified at a Congressional oversight hearing, “**Locally Grown: Creating Rural Jobs with America’s Public Lands.**”



Female Chinook salmon on Hayden Creek, protecting her redd containing thousands of eggs.

LRLT tour participants observed two different females and their associated redds within the 2.5 mile section of Hayden Creek on the Tonsmeire Ranch.

Volunteer Spotlight

Jude Trapani

BLM fisheries biologist Jude Trapani volunteered to lead a LRLT Summer Series tour on Hayden Creek



in August. Jude shared his immense knowledge of fisheries in our region while leading LRLT members to spot Chinook salmon on the Tonsmeire Ranch.

Throughout the summer, LRLT invited members to tour three conserved properties -- the Kenney Creek Ranch, the Adams Ranch on Hayden Creek, and the Tonsmeire Ranch on Hayden Creek. In August, about 30 interested LRLT supporters attended the Tonsmeire Ranch hike to observe Chinook salmon at the end of their journey from the Pacific.

Hayden Creek is a year-round connected tributary to the Lemhi River, making it one of the few

tributaries that will support Chinook salmon spawning and rearing habitat on the Lemhi.

Adult females will prepare a redd (or nest) in a stream with suitable gravel composition, water depth and velocity. Hayden Creek allows for miles of exceptional spawning grounds, producing many redds within the stream. Each redd is estimated to have 2,000-10,000 eggs. Redds are constructed by the female using her tail and head as digging devices to create the nest and constructing a dome-like structure about 5 feet in diameter to cover her eggs. After laying her eggs in a redd, the female will guard the redd for a few days to a month before dying.

According to Jude Trapani, only about 1% of these eggs will make it as juveniles to the ocean.

Chinook salmon hatch 3-5 months after deposition. In Hayden Creek, deposition takes place anywhere from the last week in July to the last week in August, depending on seasonal water discharge. Juvenile Chinook may spend anywhere from 3 months to 2 years in freshwater rearing habitat before migrating to the Pacific Ocean to mature. Chinook salmon remain at sea for 1 to 6 years (usually 2 to 4 years), with the exception of a small proportion of yearling males (called jack salmon) which mature in freshwater or return after 2 or 3 months in salt water.

Upper North Fork ---

Collaborative Group Makes Recommendations



Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group members hiked many miles over the course of two summers to better understand forest restoration needs in the proposed project area.

This fall, the **Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group** provided Salmon-Challis National Forest Supervisor Frank Guzman with a list of recommendations for the proposed **Upper North Fork Restoration Project**. The recommendations are based on two years of meetings and field trips and informed by preliminary field work done by Salmon-Challis technical specialists.

The Forest Service is expected to publish a Notice of Intent and call for public comments on the purpose and scope of the proposal before the end of the year. Then, specialists can begin work on environmental analysis.

The project area encompasses more than 40,000 acres of National Forest lands between Lost Trail Pass and the Hughes Creek drainage. The area is rich with a diverse array of wildlife and plant species, and complex with issues like pine beetle, wildfire risk, and steep terrain. The forestry collaborative spoke with and included community members bordering the project. Bill Grasser, manager of Lost Trail Powder Mountain, John Goodman, project manager for Moose Creek Estates, and Paul Werner, Gibbonsville resident, are collaborative members and the group met with members of the Gibbonsville Improvement Association to discuss the proposal.



The Salmon Valley String Band provided homegrown entertainment for the Land Trust Picnic and the Harvest Celebration. Thanks to these talented musicians!

Bob Wilson, owner of [Moose Creek Estates](#), said he’s seen first-hand how important the area is for wildlife. Moose, deer, and elk frequent the property, and recovery efforts have helped restore a beaver population and even seen the return of Chinook salmon to the tributary. In 2003, Wilson and Goodman also witnessed first-hand the imminent danger of wildfire. Since then they’ve become one of the first Firewise communities in Idaho, and Wilson said he very much supports complementary work on neighboring public lands.

After touring the collaboratively designed Hughes Creek Hazardous Fuels Reduction project area just south of Moose Creek Estates, Wilson said, “We have invested heavily in environmental enhancement and restoration at Moose Creek Estates and can’t wait to see the Upper North Fork Forest Restoration project implemented.”

“This kind of collaborative approach should be used nationwide,” Wilson added.

On the Job with SVS

Students Take Their Knowledge to the Field



Students monitor an aspen stand on BLM land.

Salmon Valley Stewardship was thrilled to employ three local youth -- Bryn Schroeder, Matthew Hall, and Mary Bennett -- to assist with our forest restoration field work last summer.

Supervisors Michelle Tucker and Terry Myers led the team in ecological monitoring of old growth stands in the Hughes Creek project area, and in conducting aspen inventory and monitoring throughout the Bureau of Land Management’s Salmon Field Office Area.

“This is the third summer in a row we’ve been able to employ area students in interesting and relevant outdoor work,” said SVS Director Gina Knudson. “Thanks to the BLM and the Central Idaho Resource Advisory Committee, we’ve been able to fulfill our goal of reconnecting our community with the job of stewarding our forests and rangelands.”

Fading Gold Photo Contest

SUBMISSIONS ARE DUE DEC 24 FOR THIS 2ND ANNUAL ASPEN PHOTOGRAPHY CONTEST

No entry fee. Up to 3 submittals per person please.

Top 3 finalists receive an 18 x 20 color enlargement of their photos, mounted on foam core. Winners will be announced later this winter at the to-be-announced SVS Fading Gold event. Watch our website for more details or to download an [entry form](#). Forms are also available at the Purple Easel downtown Salmon.



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