



landscapes

CONSERVING AND CARING FOR THE LANDS AND WATERS THAT SUSTAIN CENTRAL OREGON.

DESCHUTES LAND TRUST NEIGHBOR NEWS {SPRING 2021}

DESCHUTESLANDTRUST.ORG/NEIGHBOR-NEWS

WILLOW SPRINGS PRESERVE RESTORATION

Restoration plans for the multi-year stream restoration project at Willow Springs Preserve are now complete! As we prepare for the implementation in 2022, we wanted to share more details on our plans to build a healthier Whychus Creek.

Today, the portion of Whychus Creek that flows through Willow Springs Preserve is disconnected from its surrounding meadow. Habitat within and along the creek is very basic, lacking the diversity that fish and wildlife need to thrive. Fortunately, the creek has not cut down so deep into its channel that it cannot move from its current position. In fact, the creek is already starting to elbow its way out of its main channel in several parts of the Preserve, creating new meanders.

Restoration efforts at the Preserve will focus on returning the creek to a healthy, biologically diverse condition. We will use a low-tech approach to transform a single channel into a braided series of channels that spreads out across the valley floor (like the rendering below). Approximately 130 different structures made of natural materials will be added to a ¾ mile stretch of Whychus Creek. Most of these will be log structures, which look like log jams in the stream, but instead they are constructed with vertical wooden posts that are angled against placed logs in order to provide stability. These will be used to shift the flow of the creek in certain directions.

Smaller dam-like structures will also be built on side channels to imitate beaver dams, create pools, and help connect Whychus Creek to the surrounding meadow. Neither structure type is intended to be permanent and, instead, will change and evolve as stream processes take over. Finally, thousands of native plants will be added to the restoration area to provide stream shade, soil stability, and habitat for wildlife. We will complete two additional restoration phases at Willow Springs Preserve over the next 5-10 years. —

Dig deeper into the restoration: deschuteslandtrust.org/willow-springs



YOU'RE INVITED!

Join the Land Trust for a virtual Willow Springs Preserve restoration session. Land Trust restoration specialist Jason Grant and Mathias Perle from the Upper Deschutes Watershed Council will give a brief overview of the upcoming Whychus Creek restoration project at Willow Springs Preserve followed by an extended question and answer session.

• June 15th, 12-1pm

Register online:
deschuteslandtrust.org/hikes



LITTLE MEADOWS MAKE A BIG IMPACT

We talk about meadows a great deal at the Land Trust. Many of our core Preserves protect this important feature on the landscape. But why are meadows important ecologically? What role do they play in nature?

First, let's start with the basics: what is a meadow? Interestingly, "meadow" itself is more of a cultural term with people calling lots of open, grassy spaces meadows. However, most meadows are defined as a type of habitat that is dominated by one or more plant communities such as grasses, sedges, rushes, wildflowers, or other non-woody plants. Shrubs and trees can be present in the meadow system, but are not dominant.

In Central Oregon we have all kinds of meadows! From higher elevation alpine meadows to meadows along our streams and rivers to drier meadows surrounded by trees. The Land Trust has conserved and now protects several wet meadows that we are working to restore to a healthier state—think Camp Polk Meadow Preserve. We also protect what is often called a dry meadow. These meadows tend to be dominated by drier plants like grasses and wildflowers. Dry meadows are biologically rich places that support all kinds of plants that will not thrive under a canopy of trees. These plants in turn support a wide variety of butterflies, moths, and other insects that rely on wildflowers for pollen and nectar. Deer and elk use open meadows for browsing grasses and raptors hunt in these open areas for small animals. The east side of Indian Ford Meadow Preserve is a great example of a dry meadow. It stays dry year round while the west side is more of a wet meadow.

Today, dry meadow habitat is shrinking compared to what it would have been historically. Nearby trees are moving into these open spaces in the absence of fire. That's why the Land Trust has been working for years to maintain the open meadow at Indian Ford Meadow Preserve by hand cutting small juniper and pine before they get too big. You can help care for this important little meadow by staying on the trail to protect the fragile meadow plants that so many other creatures depend on. ➤



LEARN MORE ABOUT MEADOWS:
[DESCHUTESLANDTRUST.ORG/MEADOWS](https://deschuteslandtrust.org/meadows)



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LANDS IN TRUST PROTECTED FOREVER

210 NW IRVING AVENUE, SUITE 102, BEND, OREGON 97703
[DESCHUTESLANDTRUST.ORG](https://deschuteslandtrust.org) PHONE [541] 330 0017

CAMP POLK MEADOW PRESERVE RESTORATION

The native plant restoration project in the Hindman Springs portion of Camp Polk Meadow Preserve is entering its final phase! Huge thanks to all the volunteers who have helped spread plastic, plant new starts, and care for these new plants the last few years. The results are stunning (see above!). Weeds are diminished and the habitat is much healthier for all kinds of wildlife!

Learn more: deschuteslandtrust.org/hs-restoration