



landscapes

CONSERVING LAND FOR WILDLIFE, SCENIC VIEWS, AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES.

DESCHUTES LAND TRUST NEIGHBOR NEWS {SPRING 2015}

FOCUS: TROUT CREEK CONSERVATION AREA

SMALL FOREST PROTECTS SPECIAL SPECIES

The Trout Creek Conservation Area is 161 acres of pine forest owned by the Sisters School District next door to Sisters High School. This small little forest provides important habitat for woodpeckers, deer, elk, coyote and is home to the rare Peck's penstemon. Trout Creek Conservation Area is preserved in perpetuity through an agreement with the Deschutes Land Trust. Learn more about this local forest you may have crossed while walking trails near your neighborhood:

Why is this area special? Trout Creek Conservation Area offers refuge for local wildlife including white-headed woodpeckers, flammulated owls, deer, and more. The conservation area also provides habitat for the rare Peck's penstemon (*Penstemon peckii*), a flower that only grows in a small region of Central Oregon and cannot be found anywhere else in the world. The Trout Creek Conservation Area is estimated to have 10% of all the Peck's penstemon flowers in the world.

What does Peck's penstemon look like? Peck's penstemon is a perennial flower with a dark maroon stem and slender green leaves. Its tubular blooms can be varying shades of white, pink, lavender and blue. The plant grows from 10 to 27 inches in height.

What is the Deschutes Land Trust's role in the Trout Creek Conservation Area? The Deschutes Land Trust partnered with the Sisters School District to permanently preserve the Trout Creek Conservation Area in 1997. The resulting land protection agreement ensures that the property will remain in its natural condition forever and conserve important Peck's penstemon habitat. The Deschutes Land Trust annually monitors the health of the property.

The Trout Creek Conservation Area has a small network of publically accessible trails. Hiking, bird watching, and other low-impact, non-motorized activities are permitted. **Thanks for staying on the trails and not disturbing plants and wildlife.** ➤



JOHN WILLIAMS

HOW CAN I HELP THE PECK'S PENSTEMON THRIVE?

Recreate mindfully. Hiking on trails helps minimize the danger of trampling the fragile Peck's Penstemon.

Learn more about the species. Join the Deschutes Land Trust for a guided wildflower walk and then tell your friends and family about the importance of this special plant. Land Trust 2015 Walks + Hikes will be online April 1. Details: deschuteslandtrust.org



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GETTING STUDENTS INVOLVED

The Trout Creek Conservation has played an active role in the lives of local students. Sisters High School students use the property to learn to identify native plants and animals, conduct scientific field studies, and develop a conservation ethic.

Students have conducted a variety of studies at Trout Creek Conservation Area including research on local small and large mammal populations and the distribution of Peck's penstemon on the property. These hands-on studies instill an understanding and care for nature that indoor classroom experiences cannot provide. As part of these studies, students have set up permanent points marked in the forest as plot centers. Thanks for leaving any plot markers you find in place so as not to interfere with ongoing studies.

Last year a group of fourth graders from Sisters Elementary School met with Sisters High School students from Rima Givot's biology class. The goal: have the older students teach the younger students about native plants and their local environment.

Younger students were equipped with a field journal to take notes as they learned about vanilla-scented Ponderosa pine, antelope bitter brush (an important food source for local deer), and Peck's penstemon.

At the end of the day, each student left the Trout Creek Conservation Area with a better appreciation for our local landscapes and what makes them so special. An important forest where students can come together to learn about nature, the Trout Creek Conservation Area allows us all to create a better future for Central Oregon. ➤

LEARN MORE ABOUT THE NATURE OF CENTRAL OREGON:

Join the Deschutes Land Trust on a guided Walk or Hike! Every year volunteers lead free nature walks at Land Trust Preserves in and around your home. Whether it's a bird walk, history talk or exploratory hike, you are guaranteed to learn a little more about your backyard. Land Trust Walks + Hikes will be online April 1. Details: deschuteslandtrust.org

DID YOU KNOW?

*The Deschutes Land Trust is charting the future of Central Oregon with the **Campaign for Whychus Creek**: a three-year campaign to conserve and care for high priority lands along Whychus Creek. Make your mark on the future, get involved today: deschuteslandtrust.org/campaign*



JIM MATHER



THE DESCHUTES LAND TRUST IS PROUD OF OUR GENEROUS FAMILY OF SUPPORTERS. JOIN US TODAY: [DESCHUTESLANDTRUST.ORG/JOIN](http://deschuteslandtrust.org/join)

LANDS IN TRUST PROTECTED FOREVER

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BOB WOODWARD