

VOLUNTEERS OF THE YEAR

During the wee hours of the morning and often late into the evening, Bill Mitchell and Carol Wall wander the depths of Camp Polk Meadow Preserve. They quietly stroll the ponderosa pine groves or look deeply into the aspen stands or simply sit back and enjoy the burbling sound of Whychus Creek.

While there are many Land Trust volunteers who wander Camp Polk Meadow or help with one Land Trust project or another, Bill and Carol top the list for 2009. As volunteer bird surveyors, they've helped monitor bird populations so the Land Trust can manage for healthy habitat and see how the birds react to change.

But bird surveys are just part of Bill and Carol's volunteer stories. Bill, who has field research experience with the National Park Service and the state of California, is often found outside at one of the Land Trust Preserves. "I really enjoy having the opportunity to see a bird that I've never seen before, or to catch the coyotes in the meadow, or to watch the trees and plants change with the seasons," said Bill.

"The feedback we get from Bill, often on a weekly basis, helps us feel the pulse of our Preserves. It's these small changes that provide valuable insight into the overall health our Preserves," said Amanda Egertson, the Land Trust's stewardship director.

In addition to his bird survey hours, Bill has volunteered for many work parties, been an active member of the Weed Warriors, helped monitor properties, and even



ABOVE: CAROL WALL AT INDIAN FORD MEADOW PRESERVE. BELOW: BILL MITCHELL PADDLES AROUND THE THOMAS PRESERVE.

weed whacks trails at Camp Polk Meadow! Not to be put off by cold winter months, Bill also logged many hours in the office helping with mailings and cataloging photos. Thanks Bill for your dedication and effort!

A retired UC Davis professor, dean and vice chancellor, Carol Wall first began volunteering to help with bird surveys in the spring of 2008. From there "it was obvious that Carol—a lifelong educator with a passion for birds—would be a great addition to our tour program" said Sarah Mowry, the Land Trust's outreach manager.

Carol began shadowing other Land Trust tour leaders and has since gone on to lead her own tours at various Land Trust Preserves. "I enjoy sharing the goals of the Land Trust and these great spaces with such wonderful people who share an interest in conservation" Carol noted. Thanks Carol for helping keep our bird surveys going while contributing to our ever-expanding tour program!

Congratulations Bill and Carol! We're proud to honor you as our 2009 Volunteers of the Year! And thanks to the 147 individuals and groups who donated more than 3,800 hours to the Land Trust last year—we couldn't do our work without you! —

