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NEWSLETTER OF THE CASCADIA WILDLANDS PROJECT

## Red Tree Voles Forever!

*Cascadia Wildlands Wins Protection for Forests and Wildlife*

by Daniel Kruse

In the spirit of winter and other good things, the Cascadia Wildlands Project has brought a steady rain down upon the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) clearcutting parade. Showers started in early November (how appropriate) with our pivotal victory in the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals that halted two of the BLM's more devastating timber sales, known as "Cow Catcher" and "Cottonsnake." The court's ruling not only put an end to the two ugly projects, which together proposed aggressive logging on 477 acres of southern Oregon's mature and old-growth forests, but also set the stage for a string of legal victories that followed in rapid succession. Within a day of the new precedent, a timber sale called "Willy Slide," which targeted 197 acres of mature forest, was found by a judge to be illegal and was cancelled. By mid-December, two more logging projects called "Brown Elk" and "Pleasant Yankee" had been gracefully removed from the BLM's list of things to do. A Happy Holiday indeed!

In the center of these victories sits the red tree vole, a cute but elusive little critter that lives its entire life high up in the canopy of older Douglas fir forests. Tree voles are an uncommon species — like most older forest dependant species these days — and are an important food source for the threatened northern spotted owl. They are relatively immobile, rarely touching the forest floor or moving

from tree to tree, and are therefore extremely vulnerable to the impacts of logging. For these reasons and others, the Northwest Forest Plan requires the BLM to protect each known red tree vole site with a ten acre no-cut buffer and to conduct nest surveys before any ground-disturbing activities such as logging take place.

For years now the red tree vole has stood, gallant and whiskered, between the bulldozers, chainsaws and the old-growth forests it calls home. The Cascadia Wildlands Project and our incredible volunteer Northwest Ecosystems Survey Team (NEST) have found and documented tree vole nests in a number of proposed timber sales and have used these findings to successfully stop old-growth logging projects throughout Oregon.

But the BLM has not been quick to rally under our banner: "Red

*continued on page 3*

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Presentations held at the Eugene Downtown Public Library (10th and Olive), Tykeson Room, from 6:30-7:30pm

### **Oregon's Backcountry Roadless Areas: Values & Threats Monday • February 5th**

Enjoy a photographic look and interesting discussion of Oregon's backcountry roadless areas, including some close to home.

### **"Red Tree Voles: Life in the Upper Canopy," a presentation by Dr. Eric Forsman Wednesday • March 14th**

Dr. Eric Forsman, nationally recognized forest biologist, and James Swingle will present on the elusive red tree vole, a forest mammal that lives its life in the upper canopy of Douglas fir forests. Their canopy research on this critter has helped us better understand the role the vole plays in Oregon's westside forests.



Francis Eatherington

*Thanks to our lawsuits, over 800 acres of ancient forests, including these in the "Cow Catcher" timber sale, were recently protected.*

THE CASCADIA  
WILDLANDS PROJECT  
*is dedicated to defending the  
forests, waters, and wildlife  
of Cascadia by monitoring  
environmentally destructive  
activities and educating,  
organizing, and agitating  
for a more compassionate  
and responsible relationship  
with the ecosystems of our  
bioregion.*



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# The Tide is Turning

## *Ramblings from the Executive Director*

Creating permanent protection for remaining old growth forests is seeming more and more a political reality. A Democratically controlled Congress is in office for the first time since 1994. Representative Peter DeFazio and Senator Ron Wyden, Oregon's senior elected officials, remain on record wanting to protect old-growth forests. Polling shows resounding public support for permanent old-growth forest protection. Safeguarding carbon sinks, like our temperate rainforests, are becoming recognized internationally as a way to combat a warming Earth. The stars are beginning to align.

And what makes this sweeter are the recent victories for wildlands and critters we've been chalking up. The Smith/Walden bills that would facilitate clearcutting after natural disturbance events have petered out after losing Congressional support. We recently won a string of legal victories against a handful of the worst southern Oregon BLM timber sales. Our Alaska field office gained the support of the Cordova fishing union to endorse our vision for an oil spill response facility—one that wouldn't require punching a 4.5-mile road into virgin temperate forests on the edge of Prince William Sound. Anti-environmental Richard Pombo (R-CA), the former Chairman of the House Resources Committee, recently got ousted from his position of power. Things are feeling different these days.

But the turning of the tide is no reason to let up. In fact, it gives us more reason to keep pushing against reckless resource extraction schemes, sweetheart settlement agreements and annihilation of species that call Cascadia home. We are continuing to defend the critical components of the Northwest Forest Plan that the Bush administration and industry are working in concert to remove, like their effort to strip old-growth and streamside reserves from 2.5 million acres of western Oregon BLM lands. We also remain focused on massive post-fire clearcutting proposals that have surfaced out of the intense 2006 season and southern Oregon BLM old-growth timber sales that are being pumped out one after another. 2007 is shaping up to be an eventful year.

At the end of the day, our eyes remain on the prize: creating permanent protection for old-growth forests here in Cascadia. Opportunity is knocking, and the Cascadia Wildlands Project is committed to attaining this realistic goal. Thank you for your support and enthusiasm in 2006. Our work together is truly making an impact.

#### ***Thank you, Lauren Regan and Jeff Long***

There have been some notable board and staff changes this winter. We recently had a thank you dinner for Lauren Regan and Jeff Long, two critical components of the Cascadia Wildlands Project. Lauren, a founding board member, spent the past 8 years on our board, much of the time as our president. An overworked lawyer by trade, Lauren not only helped guide the direction of the organization, but also represented us *pro bono* on legal challenges, including our two Biscuit lawsuits. Lauren isn't going far, and we know where to find her. Thanks Lauren!

Jeff, our Outreach Coordinator for the past two and one-half years, has left us to hone his carpentry skills. Jeff was responsible for introducing "Doug" to thousands of Oregonians and plugging them into our successful conservation campaigns. And you may have joined him on one of the dozens of hikes he led to various threatened areas. Like Lauren, we are lucky to still have him in town to assist us with our work. Thanks Jeff!



# News in Cascadia

## Post-Disturbance Clearcutting Bill Dies

Senator Gordon Smith's (R-OR) ill-named "Forests For Future Generation's Act" looks to have died on the vine. This bill would have skirted environmental law and public review in order to facilitate clearcutting projects after all natural disturbance events, including wildfire, windstorms, hurricanes and even volcanic eruptions. A growing scientific body has suggested

natural disturbances like wildfire are essential to the evolution and renewal of healthy forests. The Cascadia Wildlands Project's staff, members and volunteers spent significant time over the past two years to defeat this environmentally harmful bill as well as Greg Walden's (R-OR) companion bill in the House.

## "The Forest Service should be taken to the woodshed."

— Rep. Nick Rahall (D-WV), House Resources Committee Chair

forest policy should be made with the cautious precision of a whittling knife.

Instead, the Forest Service is slashing forest laws with a high-powered chain saw," Rahall said. "The Forest Service should be taken to the woodshed." The decision will likely

be contested in the courtroom.

## Lawsuit Thwarts Fed's Cougar Killing

Last summer, the Cascadia Wildlands Project and partners filed a lawsuit to stop the slaughter of 40% of Oregon's mountain lions. In response to the legal challenge, the federal government conceded in December to not participate in cougar killing without first doing a thorough environmental analysis and asking for public input (they failed to do this originally). This small victory does not, however, stop the state of Oregon from proceeding with their slaughter plans. You can help save thousands of wild cats by asking Oregon Gov. Ted Kulongoski's natural resources staff to intervene. Contact Jessica Hamilton at 503.986.6543 or [Jessica.Hamilton@state.or.us](mailto:Jessica.Hamilton@state.or.us).



Post-fire logging after the Biscuit fire in southern Oregon.

## No Analysis on Forest Plans

In early December, the US Forest Service announced that it would no longer go through a formal environmental analysis when creating long-term forest management plans. Even though these plans guide all project plans and decisions, including logging projects, the Bush administration claims they have no adverse environmental effects and do not need to be analyzed for environmental impacts. Rep. Nick Rahall (D-WV), the new House Resources Committee Chair, contends that this policy is part of the Bush administration's ongoing effort to reduce wildlife and watershed protections and make it more difficult for the public to stop illegal logging. "Changes in fundamental

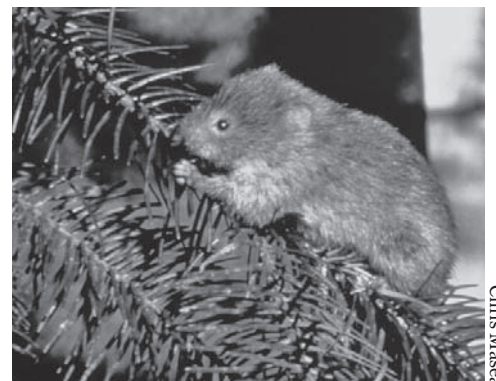
## Voles continued from page 1

Tree Voies Forever!" To quite the contrary, because of our success the BLM has spent the past six years taking underhanded shots at removing the tree vole's protections. In 2001, for example, the BLM produced a memorandum that downgraded the tree vole's protections, and the agency claimed that it no longer needed to conduct surveys for tree vole nests before logging. Then in 2003, the BLM produced another memo claiming that tree voles were no longer a protected species at all and that ten-acre buffers around their nests were no longer necessary. Thus by 2003, though there had been no legal or formal change to the tree vole's status under the Northwest Forest Plan, the BLM had

stopped conducting tree vole surveys, and timber sales were planned in areas where voles were known to exist.

The Cow Catcher and Cottonsnake timber sales, as well as Willy Slide, Brown Elk and Pleasant Yankee, were among the logging projects that the BLM planned under the new authority it claimed in their memorandums. Fortunately, however, environmental protections cannot be undone by agency memos, and after the Cascadia Wildlands Project brought a legal challenge to the Cow Catcher and Cottonsnake proposals, the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals threw out the BLM's rollbacks and reaffirmed the red tree vole's original protections. With the help of our close friends and allies Umpqua Watersheds, Klamath-Siskiyou Wildlands Center, Oregon

Wild, Northwest Ecosystems Survey Team and attorneys Stephanie Parent, Susan Jane Brown, Erin Madden and Marianne Dugan, the red tree vole remains a short furry beacon of hope for the forests and wildlife of southern Oregon's wild BLM lands.



Chris Maseen

This tiny rodent is the primary food source for the northern spotted owl.

# Alaska's Shepard Pointless

## *Proposed Road Would Facilitate Massive Resource Extraction*

by Gabe Scott

We've got another road-to-nowhere boondoggle on our hands in Alaska.

The Final Environmental Impact Statement is out on a controversial proposed 4.5-mile road and deep water port at Shepard Point, in Orca Inlet, Prince William Sound, several miles north of Cordova, Alaska. Long desired for the access it would offer to export resources from the Copper River Delta, now the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) is pushing it forward under the guise of an oil spill response facility.

In reality, the proposed facility at Shepard Point is a smokescreen for private resource development—a money-losing boondoggle and public safety hazard that will weaken community oil spill response.

While claiming the project purpose is oil spill response, BIA's own studies show the facility would actually slow down the response to a potential oil spill. The local fishermen's union opposes the facility. It would leave the shallow Copper River Delta more vulnerable to a spill. Responsible spill response agencies are refusing to move their equipment to the new facility, even if it's constructed. This would be a true road to nowhere.

Even though this is all private land, and the port would be privately controlled, the estimated construction cost of \$30.1 million would all be covered by public money. While taxpayers may disagree, to the beneficiaries

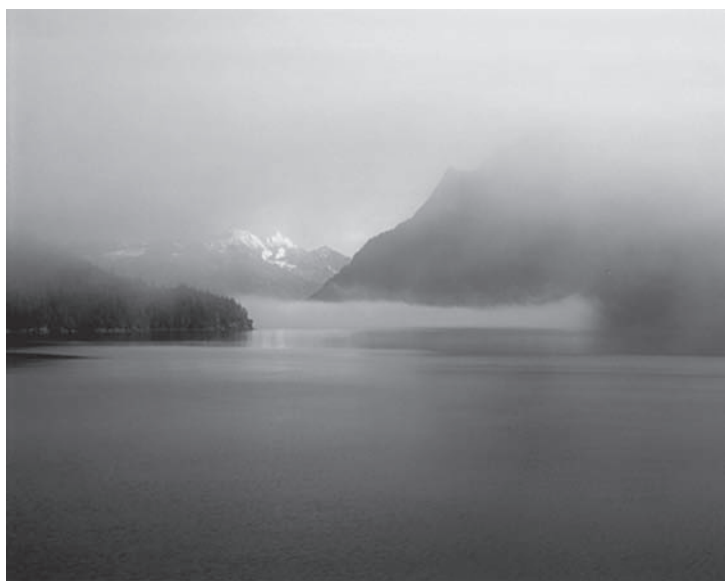
such pork is seen as free money.

The proposed road crosses a gauntlet of 18 major avalanche chutes. Avalanche debris will close the road for days to weeks each year, making uniquely unsuited to emergencies. Public safety is a serious concern. Three townspeople over the last seven years have died in avalanches.

Worse than the danger and pointlessness are the indirect consequences of a web of resource development schemes that would be enabled by the deepwater port. Coal mining and clearcutting east of the Copper River Delta would be facilitated, threatening one of the world's most productive wetlands and home of the famous Wild Copper River Salmon. Also, a fish hatchery along the road is proposed to service potential cruise ship tourists, threatening what many say is Prince William Sound's last truly wild run of pink salmon.

That is why we are leading the drive to construct the spill response facility at an alternative location. Alternative 2 in the BIA environmental study would build on existing infrastructure at City Ocean Dock in Cordova. It has won support for better serving spill response, for roughly half the price, with no new road, and without avalanches.

We'll keep working to stop this road to nowhere before it goes anywhere.



James Johnston

*Proposed road and deep water port threaten these pristine rainforests and fjords of Shepard Point.*

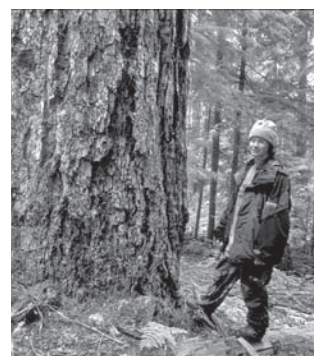
## In Focus: Susan Jane Brown

Susan Jane Brown doesn't like it when you call her Susan. It is Susan Jane. She also doesn't like her old-growth forests, northern spotted owls, or whisky bottles messed with. Armed with an environmental law degree from Lewis and Clark, her job is to protect the former two as a lawyer with the Pacific Environmental Advocacy Center, a public interest firm in Portland. Some consider her the foremost expert on law that governs the endangered owl, and we have been fortunate enough to retain her in many old-growth logging cases where dead owls were the expected collateral damage. Her top-notch representation has allowed us to protect thou-

sands of acres of once-threatened forests our children will now have the opportunity to marvel at.

Susan Jane's shoes will be hard to fill after recently accepting a job as natural resources counsel in Representative Peter DeFazio's (D-OR) office on Capitol Hill. Yes, we will now be encouraging Susan Jane to encourage her boss to create permanent protection for old-growth forests. As difficult it is to lose someone of her caliber, remaining old-growth forests and critters very well may be better off with her taking this exciting position. Good luck, SJ!

~Josh Laughlin



James Johnston



# Pushing for a Fish Ladder

## Eugene Utility Opts for Cheaper “Trap and Haul” on McKenzie

by Josh Laughlin

The McKenzie River is the life-blood of Eugene. It is from here that residents get some of the best drinking water in the country. It also provides many of us with the electricity that powers our homes and our economy. In 1963 the Eugene Water and Electric Board (EWEB) built the Carmen-Smith project just below the river's headwaters to increase electrical production. But the building of that project has had serious negative repercussions on the river's endangered fish populations, repercussions that we now have the opportunity to alleviate.

The project's three dams, Trailbridge, Carmen, and Smith, all located upstream of McKenzie Bridge, are currently up for re-licensing—a process that will ultimately give EWEB a permit to continue operating these dams for the next 30-50 years. During this re-licensing process, we have a once-in-a-lifetime chance to restore some of the natural functions back to these heavily plumbed headwaters, which would benefit not just the human users, but two particular species that continue to be pushed closer to extinction: Chinook salmon and Bull trout.

In September, EWEB startled

conservationists and government natural resource agencies by removing its plan to build a fish ladder over Trailbridge Dam, the first impassible barrier above Leaburg Dam encountered by migrating fish. And in late November, the utility affirmed its

decision to pursue “Trap and Haul” as the preferred option, where endangered fish will be scooped up at the base of the dam, deposited into a tank on a truck, hauled around to the other side of the dam, and finally deposited into the up-river reservoir. Investing in a fish ladder would have allowed endangered fish to efficiently access upstream spawning habitat, which is currently blocked by the 100-foot tall earthen structure.

This was not a popular move. Prominent fish biologists working for the US Fish and Wildlife Service, National Marine Fisheries Service and Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife have all advocated for a fish ladder over this option as a more scientifically sound way to restore ailing fish populations.

Currently, the Cascadia Wildlands Project is in settlement negotiations with a coalition of other conservation groups, EWEB, government agencies and other interested parties, where we are continuing to press for a fish ladder at Trailbridge Dam and other habitat improvements. The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, the agency in charge of ultimately granting the permit, will publish an environmental assessment of the project this spring.



USFWS

The future of endangered fish like Chinook salmon are uncertain in the McKenzie River.

## Now That's Crazy Talk!



“All kinds of rhetoric are used to give the impression that logging is somehow fundamentally different from other forms of forest disturbance. There is no truth to this... Forests are just as capable of recovering from destruction by logging as they are from any other form of disturbance. All that is necessary for renewal is that the disturbance is ended: the fire is out, the volcano stops erupting, the ice retreats, or the loggers go back down the road and allow the forest to begin growing back, which it will begin to do almost immediately.” —Patrick Moore, *“Trees are the Answer,”* Fall 2006 Range Magazine.

*Cascadia responds:* Forests have evolved with wildfire. Fires clear out dense understories, allowing for new tree growth. Trees killed in a fire eventually become part of

the soil again, providing nutrients for new growth. Some tree species require the heat from fires to open their cones and grow new trees. After a fire, a diverse array of plants and trees will begin growing into complex forest habitat.

On the other hand, logging removes trees, depriving the soil of recycled nutrients. Most logging operations disrupt, compact, and erode soils. Piles of limbs and debris are often left scattered across the ground, creating fuel for intense fire to kill new plant growth. After logging, many areas are replanted with dense tree farms that, without variation in structure, tree type, or age, do not provide habitat for many wildlife species.

# A Night to Remember

## 4th Annual Holiday Auction Raises Over \$26,000

by Kate Ritley

December 2nd was a momentous day for the Cascadia Wildlands Project and the landscapes we work to protect and restore. That evening, over 250 smiling people packed the University of Oregon's Agate Hall for our 4th Annual Holiday Benefit Auction. An electric energy filled the room as supporters bid on many incredible items, including a trip for six people to Costa

Rica and a 7-day rafting trip down Alaska's Copper River.

We raised over \$26,000 that evening, making it by far the most successful fundraiser we've ever had. We are overwhelmed and thrilled by the outpouring of community support we received through this event, with over 150 businesses and individuals generously donating items to be auctioned off and over 30 dedicated volunteers

helping make it a night to remember.

Indeed, the staff and board of the Cascadia Wildlands Project will continue to remember that night as it helps fund our conservation work through the new year. On behalf of all the ancient forests and endangered wildlife we will protect in 2007, thank you to everyone who helped make this event a smashing success. Cheers to a Wild Cascadia!

## Huge Thanks to our Auction Supporters

Many thanks to our "Gray Wolf" Sponsors, the **Ring of Fire** and **Revolution Cycles**, and our "Chinook Salmon" Sponsors, **Mountain Rose Herbs**, **Emerald Valley Kitchen**, and **Ninkasi Brewery**. Thank you to all the volunteers that made this event possible. And, of course, it would not have been an auction without the generous donations of all those listed below. Thank you!

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## Leave a Legacy for Cascadia

The Cascadia Wildlands Project has a combined vision of protection and restoration for Cascadia's public lands. We invite you to leave a legacy for Cascadia's wild places by including the Cascadia Wildlands Project in your estate plans. We can help you plan a bequest or other deferred gift. To learn more, please call or write Kate at 541.434.1463, [kritley@cascwild.org](mailto:kritley@cascwild.org), or PO Box 10455, Eugene, OR 97440. We look forward to working with you to create a lasting environmental legacy!





## CASCADIA WILDLANDS PROJECT

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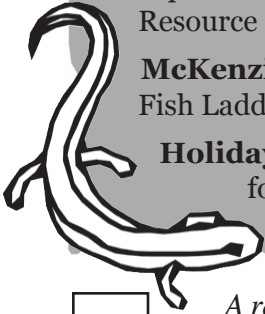
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**Alaska Development:** Road Proposed to Facilitate Massive Resource Extraction

**McKenzie Dams:** Pushing for a Fish Ladder

**Holiday Auction:** \$26,000 for forest protection



*A red check means it's time to renew your membership! Thank you for your ongoing support for wild places!*

## Activist Toolbox

The Cascadia Wildlands Project works to empower people and communities to advocate for their public lands. Each quarter we will offer useful information and tips you can use to help protect and restore the landscapes of the Pacific Northwest!

Southwestern Oregon BLM districts are one of the country's last strongholds of old-growth logging. You can help us change this by contacting land management decision makers. Let them know you want to see old-growth and riparian reserves maintained, and that you oppose mature and old-growth forest logging. For information about specific logging projects, contact [jlaughlin@cascawild.org](mailto:jlaughlin@cascawild.org) or visit [www.blm.gov/or](http://www.blm.gov/or).

#### Medford BLM

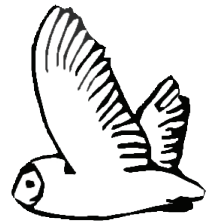
3040 Biddle Road  
Medford, OR 97504  
(541) 618-2200  
[Medford\\_Mail@blm.gov](mailto:Medford_Mail@blm.gov)

#### Roseburg BLM

777 NW Garden Valley Blvd.  
Roseburg, OR 97470  
(541) 440-4930  
[or100mb@blm.gov](mailto:or100mb@blm.gov)

#### Coos Bay BLM

1300 Airport Lane  
North Bend, OR 97459  
(541) 756-0100  
[OR\\_CoosBay\\_Mail@blm.gov](mailto:OR_CoosBay_Mail@blm.gov)



### Join the Cascadia Wildlands Project and Oregon Wild for a Hike!

#### Snowshoe Hikes on Saturday, February 10 and February 17

Explore the freshly blanketed central Oregon Cascades, open to all experience levels. Travel to Clear Lake or into the Maiden Peak roadless area near Willamette Pass, depending on conditions. Bring your own snowshoes. The hike will be about 3 miles round trip. RSVP to Chandra at 344-0675 or [cl@oregonwild.org](mailto:cl@oregonwild.org) for more details.

#### Hike to McKenzie Watershed timber sales • Saturday, March 17

Explore the Mighty McKenzie and learn about its natural history, current threats, and restoration opportunities, including the Trapper and Two Bee timber sales and the Carmen-Smith dam relicensing. RSVP to Josh at [jlaughlin@cascawild.org](mailto:jlaughlin@cascawild.org) or 465.4563.