



Hells Bells - February 2025



Stemming the flow of mass firings

Like many of you, we are disheartened by ongoing reports that numerous staff from the U.S. Forest Service and other key federal agencies across the region are being fired in the name of government efficiency. Many of these individuals are our neighbors. So far, over 100 employees from public land management agencies in the region have lost their jobs, and yesterday the Trump administration issued another executive order requiring federal agencies to further reduce their staff.

Please take a few moments to send your Senators and Representatives a note about this. If you reside in Oregon, you can use this pre-crafted letter: [Tell Congress to stop the mass firings of federal employees.](#)



Calamitous Bentz town halls, forest planning meetings postponed

Eastern Oregon Congressman **Cliff Bentz** held a series of four town halls last week in **Baker City, La Grande, Pendleton, and Boardman**, and people showed up! Thank you to everyone who took time out of their day to attend these meetings and speak up about the issues you care about.

Notably, **Rep. Bentz** mentioned that he's unsure whether the sentiment of the crowds (angry) accurately represents the broader public's feelings. Feel free to call his office and share your thoughts: **(541) 709-2040 (Ontario office)**.

All **Blue Mountain Forest Plan Revision** meetings scheduled for this week and next in Eastern Oregon have been **postponed**. We don't have new dates yet, but we'll provide an update as soon as we know.



GOLDEN RAFFLE

The Golden Raffle is here — Only 99 tickets available!

GHCC holds one [Golden Raffle](#) drawing per year, and it's happening now! There are only 99 tickets available, at \$100 each. One lucky winner can select from one of four featured auction prizes. Be sure to purchase your tickets for a chance to **win an epic 5-day rafting trip in Hells Canyon, a 3-night stay at Barking Mad Farm in Enterprise, a 4-night stay at a beautiful home in Bend, or a 3-night getaway at Good Bear Ranch in the Elkhorns.**

[Purchase your tickets](#) before they sell out!

Get your Golden Raffle Ticket!



It's that time of year again - Get ready for **Greater Hells Canyon Council's 2025 Hellraiser in Portland!** Let's get together to raise some hell for Oregon's wild lands, waters, and habitats. This unforgettable evening will feature a **delicious chef-prepared dinner, an exciting live auction with incredible vacation packages, and an inspiring program** to strengthen our collective power to connect, protect, and restore the Greater Hells Canyon Region.

Event Details

Saturday, April 5th, 2025

5:00 PM

Rossi Farms, Portland, OR

Stay tuned for more details on the event, the Golden Raffle, and our online auction in the coming weeks. We can't wait to celebrate with you!

Reserve Your Hellraiser Ticket!



Cascade Ruck spotlights the Blue Mountains Trail

This past week, a group of about fifty die-hard trail lovers gathered in Stevenson, Washington, for the American Long-Distance Hiking Association's Cascade Ruck, where the **Blue Mountains Trail** took center stage as the keynote topic!

ALDHA-West's Ruck events are held annually in several locations across the western United States. They celebrate trail culture, provide opportunities to reconnect with familiar faces, and invite newcomers to learn essential skills before their first long-distance thru-hike.

Some of the other organizations in attendance included the **Pacific Crest Trail Association, FarOut Guides, Six Moon Designs, Queer Mountaineers**, and more. We are honored and excited that the BMT continues to gain recognition and respect from the long-distance hiking community, one of the most active and vocal groups advocating for public land conservation.

Thank you, **ALDHA-West**, for the invitation! Special thanks also to the **Oregon Trails Coalition** and **Travel Oregon** for their support.

Help protect wild places - We're hiring!

We're Hiring! Love the wild places of the Inland Northwest? Passionate about conservation and community? Greater Hells Canyon Council is looking for dedicated folks to join our team! Check out our current job openings and help us protect and restore the incredible landscapes of Eastern Oregon and beyond.

Learn more and apply at hellscanyon.org/jobs.

Other news we're following...

February has been a busy month, to say the least. We're including a few more articles than usual because there's so much going on!

[Other Views: Large trees vital to protecting water](#)

[Idaho conservation groups file lawsuit challenging approval of Stibnite Gold Project](#)

Bentz town hall reports from:

[Baker City](#), [La Grande](#), [Pendleton](#), [Boardman](#)

In Forest Service news...

[The Forest Service is using the threat of wildfires to meet timber targets](#)

[Forest Service chief retires after thousands of layoffs at the agency](#)

[The Trump administration sets the stage for large-scale federal worker layoffs in a new memo](#)

[Eastern Oregon voted for Trump; now federal firings are landing hard](#)

[Federal layoffs expected to leave Eastern Oregon worse off](#)

[In an Idaho mountain town, mass firings provoke a community backlash](#)

Volunteer Opportunities

There are many ways to volunteer with GHCC and the Blue Mountains Trail. We are always thrilled to work with our members, supporters, and fellow conservation advocates.

If you are interested in volunteering with us, be it at a trail stewardship event, doing wildlife and wilderness surveys, monitoring and community science projects, or joining us on a GHCC-led outing, we've created a survey that will help us know where to direct you and which opportunities to send your way. Completing this survey should take 2 minutes or less of your time. Thank you — we look forward to spending time with you!

Volunteer with GHCC

Let's Protect the Greater Hells Canyon Region Together



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