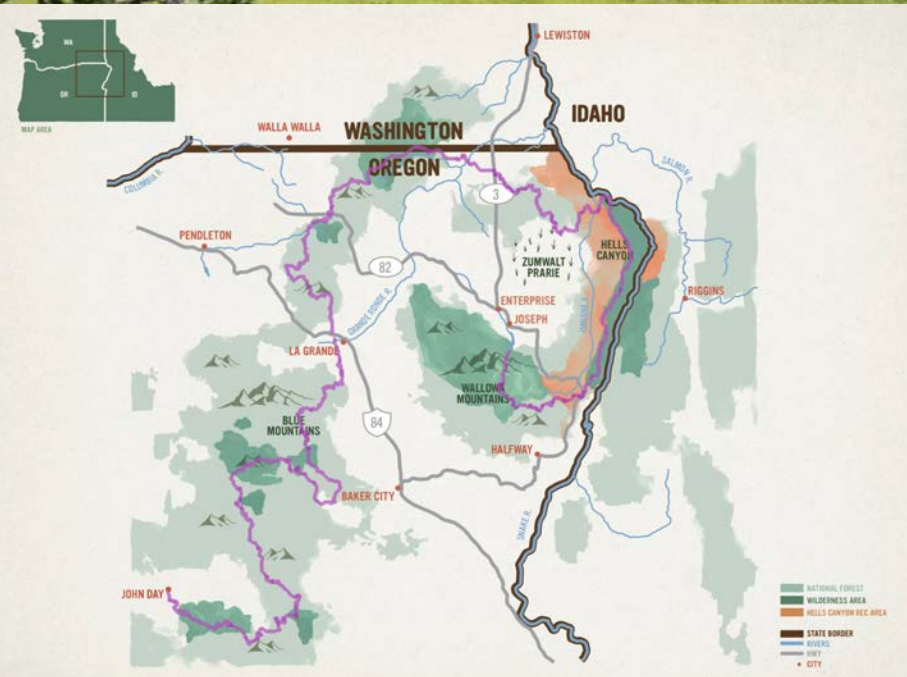




Photo by Renee Patrick



The Blue Mountains encompass all the ranges of NE Oregon. Hikers will cross summit ridges of the Wallows, Elkhorns, Greenhorns, and Strawberries. These are the ancestral lands of the Nez Perce, Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla, and Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs.

BLUE MOUNTAINS TRAIL

Linking Wildlands and Communities from Joseph to John Day



Renee Patrick completed the first solo thru-hike of the trail in 2020. As the coordinator of the Oregon Desert Trail for the Oregon Natural Desert Association, her insights, suggestions, and ideas are vital to our success.

It's official! In November, 2020, Greater Hells Canyon Council launched Oregon's newest long-distance trail –forming a 530-mile spiral. Contemplated, mapped, and dreamed of for more than half a century by conservationists, the Trail is now tangible.

The revised route links all seven of Northeast Oregon's wilderness areas; requires no new trails to be built; limits road walks and bushwhacks; and connects hikers to the communities of Joseph, Troy, Tollgate, La Grande, Sumpter, Austin Junction, and John Day with ties to more nearby towns.

The pace of the past year's work is as breathtaking as the speed of the first four thru-hikers covering rough terrain, bushwhacking alternative paths, and reporting on conditions. News of the Trail's brilliant peaks, rivers, forests, and wildlife is rippling among long distance hikers, tourism groups, communities, businesses, and conservationists.

www.hellscanyon.org

We're looking for partners and financial support as we take the next steps.

Our effort is defined by passionate volunteers who believe in the vision of a wildlands and recreation-based economy that honors a rural quality of life.

Loren Hughes, pictured, founded the BMT in the 1970's alongside Dick Hentze and Greg Dyson. They were joined by Mike Higgins who remains instrumental in today's trail effort.



Record-setting! The Trail features:

Hells Canyon National Recreation Area: deepest gorge in North America and last-free-flowing section of the Snake River.

Wilderness: Eagle Cap (Oregon's largest wilderness), Hells Canyon, Wenaha-Tucannon, North Fork Umatilla, North Fork John Day, Monument Rock, and the Strawberry Mountains.

Wildlands: some of the greatest expanses of unprotected roadless areas remaining in the lower 48 states, including Joseph Canyon and Hell Hole.

Peaks: The majority of Oregon's peaks over 9,000 feet high.

Oregon's Largest Ecoregion and Wildlife Mega-Corridor: bridging the Rocky Mountains to the East, the Cascades to the West, and the Great Basin to the South, the Blue Mountains are a vital corridor for wildlife in an era of climate change.

Zumwalt Prairie: largest intact Pacific Northwest bunchgrass prairie, with 100+ species of wildflowers.

World's largest single living organism: the honey mushroom (Armarillaria) taking up three square miles underground, weighing up to 35,000 tons, and thousands of years old.

John Day River: one of the longest free-flowing rivers west of the Mississippi.

Be Part of the Vision

Blue Mountains Trail excitement is sweeping across NE Oregon like a fresh spring wind uniting people and place. We'll need plenty of partners to make sure all 530-miles are in good shape for hikers, for detailed mapping and route-finding guides, and for creating a sustainable blueprint for the Trail and local economies.

For more information, contact:

Jared Kennedy,
Blue Mountains Trail Project Lead, GHCC
jared@hellscanyon.org

Visit the Blue Mountains Trail webpage:

<https://www.hellscanyon.org/blue-mountains-trail>



Photo by Renee Patrick



Photo by Renee Patrick

“A hike on the Blue Mountains Trail is long on solitude...you are more likely to encounter a black bear, mule deer, or mountain goat on much of the route than cross paths with another hiker.”

—Jared Kennedy, Blue Mountains Trail Project Lead