



## Hells Bells - September 2024



Scenes from last year's Fall Gala in La Grande - We hope to see you all again this year!

## This Year's Fall Gala is Almost Upon Us!

GHCC's 2024 Annual Fall Gala will be on Saturday, October 5th in La Grande. This year, we're celebrating the 60th anniversary of the Wilderness Act, with stories from our friends who've fought for the protection of Eastern Oregon's wild places. Don't miss this chance to be part of an inspiring and impactful evening.

Grab your tickets today before they're gone! We look forward to catching up with you there.  
-The GHCC Team

[Event Tickets](#)

## We Hope to See You This Saturday at Ladd Marsh!

Join us this weekend for Grande Ronde Public Lands Day at Ladd Marsh Wildlife Management Area! This event is part of the annual National Public Lands Day celebration, where volunteers have the opportunity to come together to restore and maintain natural areas, including wetland projects and habitat improvements.

We're looking forward to connecting with new faces, as well as catching up with our friends and supporters. This is a great opportunity for anyone who appreciates public lands and wants to give back to the environment. We hope to see you there!

[Sign up here!](#)





*Trails Coordinator Pip Redding with some folks from PDX People of Color Outdoors*

## Portland People of Color Outdoors Visits the Blue Mountains Trail

Recently, GHCC was honored to host [Portland People of Color Outdoors](#) for a visit to the Blue Mountains Trail. This group, founded in 2017, works to create safe and inclusive spaces for BIPOC folks to thrive outside through nature education and outdoor recreation of all kinds.

Five new friends from the Portland area joined BMT Coordinator Pip Redding for short excursions in Hells Canyon and the Eagle Caps. Some highlights included Zumwalt Prairie, Buckhorn Overlook, Indian Village Grove, Little Alps day use area, Wallowa Lake Tramway, spawning Kokanee, [Nez Perce Wallowa Homeland Project](#), and sharing food and stories about the outdoors!

Thanks to the [Eastern Oregon Visitors Association](#), whose support allowed us to organize this and other outings in 2024. We are so pleased to show off what makes Eastern Oregon's wild spaces special, and to contribute in some small way to PDX POCO's meaningful work.

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## Senator Merkley's Virtual Environmental Town Hall

Mark your calendar for Tuesday, October 8th, 3:30pm PT to attend a virtual town hall with Senator Jeff Merkley, organized by OLCV. He will be giving updates on his environmental priorities and how climate investments of the 2021 Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and Inflation Reduction Act will benefit Oregon.

If you get a chance to ask a question please consider the following topics:

- Right now two major Oregon forest plans are being revised - the Northwest Forest Plan and the Blue Mountains Forest Plan. What conservation safeguards is the Senator hoping to see enacted to protect the last of our big, climate change fighting trees, and to prevent fragmentation of the limited undeveloped lands from road building and destructive logging practices?
- Oregon's salmon and orcas are in decline and don't have time to waste! Will the Senator support removal of the Lower Four Snake River Dams by the end of this decade?
- Right now there are opportunities at both the federal and state levels to construct wildlife crossing infrastructure (over and underpasses, fencing, etc). What is the Senator doing to support these efforts?

[RSVP with OLCV](#), for the opportunity to submit questions. The zoom link will be provided in the days leading up to the event.





Preview - Hells Bells 9/2024

## GHCC at Great Old Broads for Wilderness Conference

[Great Old Broads for Wilderness](#) is hosting their [Wilderness & Beyond Conference](#) in Este Park Colorado, October 14-17. Emily will represent GHCC, highlighting the importance of the Blue Mountains and the Greater Hells Canyon Region to the national audience attending on two panels.

The first is on forest planning revision processes currently happening on National Forests across the West (a seemingly never ending process in the Blue Mountains!). The panel will talk about the general process under the “new” 2012 planning rule and highlight our own Blue Mountains Forest Plan and the Northwest Forest Plan. We'll discuss the ramifications of these plans for decades to come based on what management activities are or are not allowed in these overarching plans. For example, the current rule protecting trees over 21" in diameter is on the chopping block.

The second panel is on Senator Wyden's River Democracy Act legislation. With reintroduction earlier this summer we are hopeful that these critical waterways around our state are acknowledged and given helpful Wild & Scenic River status to protect for the important conservation and/or recreation values they offer.

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## Other news we're following...

[US Forest Service puts seasonal hiring on hold, affecting hundreds of temporary Northwest jobs](#)

The U.S. Forest Service has paused its seasonal hiring for 2025, impacting temporary jobs in Oregon and Washington next summer, except for fire-related roles. This decision stems from budget constraints, which will affect positions such as trail building and engineering, and may result in noticeable changes to forest maintenance and services during the summer months.

### [Biden administration is taking steps to eliminate protections for gray wolves](#)

The Biden administration has requested the reinstatement of a Trump-era rule that removed Endangered Species Act protections for gray wolves. If successful, it would place wolves under state oversight and allow hunting to resume in some regions. Environmental groups argue this could reverse progress in wolf population recovery.

### [Oregon House Republicans target forests for wildfire reform as grass and shrubland burns](#)

Oregon House Republicans are pushing for wildfire reform efforts that focus on forest management, despite recent fires primarily burning grass and shrublands. They argue that more proactive measures are needed in forests to prevent larger, catastrophic fires, even as environmentalists caution against over-emphasizing forest treatments at the expense of other ecosystem values and services.

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## 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

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## Let's Protect the Greater Hells Canyon Region Together





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