



OVLC News

Dedicated to maintaining the unique qualities of the Okanogan Valley, Okanogan Highlands and Western Ferry County

Okanogan Valley Land Council

October 2009

eNewsletter

OVLC Welcomes

- ◆ **Lester Kinney** was welcomed to the September Board Meeting as a guest. Kinney provided feedback to the board regarding our Stewardship Handbook. Kinney is an outstanding steward of his Wauconda Ranch in the Okanogan. His concerns mainly focused on weeds and weed control. Kinney agreed to provide assistance to OVLC in the future on updating the Handbook and putting information in the eNewsletter. OVLC welcomes your feedback and ideas.
- ◆ **Christine Olson** returns to OVLC as our newest board member. Christine was the dedicated, first administrative assistant for OVLC from 2004 to 2008. Christine is interested in working toward increasing the overall effectiveness and long-term health of the organization and its work. She is looking forward to working with current board members, staff, and community members. Please join us in welcoming Christine back to OVLC.

- ◆ **Berent Culp**, Executive Director, attended a retreat at Lost Lake the end of August. His visit their resulted in eight new memberships with OVLC. See the next page for more details on this retreat.
- ◆ **OVLC** will welcome its supporters on October 25th for the Sixth Annual Harvest Dinner. We will celebrate the Okanogan harvest and our supporters. For more information please contact the office.



Photo by Justin Haug

Volunteers Needed!

Support OVLC with your gift of time and service

In an effort to further our success in the Okanogan Valley, OVLC is looking for volunteers to help with the many tasks involved in conservation work. Join our Executive Director and staff with outreach, fundraising, special projects, office tasks and much more as we continue our efforts. Please call the office at (509) 486-2765 or (509) 846-3394 if you would like to share your time or ideas with us.

President's Message

Here along the Okanogan River, autumn has arrived suddenly and it's time to bring in the remaining tomatoes, peppers and eggplant. While gardening slows down til spring, OVLC's land protection efforts aren't slowing a bit. Before year's end, we're striving to complete easements protecting two properties permanently from subdivision and development. And secure funds protecting several large commercial ranches from a similar fate. Not to mention beginning work with the Crown Resources Corporation to place easements on six properties for mitigation associated with the Buckhorn gold mine.

Such land protection is one leg of our mission, but the other is building community awareness and support for land and habitat conservation. Our executive director, Ber Culp, has really pressed on this front, participating in the Republic Forest Landowner's Field Day, Lost Lake Camp, and Forest Service Fire Ecology School, as well as befriending the Lost Lake Bikers!

Like walking in from the garden with a harvest basket, it's gratifying to feel growing community support for our conservation work, and greater recognition by landowners that agricultural or conservation easements are a tool that may accomplish both their land management needs and habitat goals. I'm thankful for the year's accomplishments by our great staff, volunteers, and board of directors. I hope you'll celebrate the harvest with us!

-Todd

From Lost Lake to Tonasket, by Bicycle, the Hard Way by Chuck Beek

A dozen riders saddled up at Lost Lake, in the piney woods and 90 degree dry air, to take the back roads to Tonasket: about 40 miles.

Relaxing from a long ride the day before, I decided to support the group, in our '92 Toyota RV. It gave me a little different perspective.

It's hard to believe the many

miles of traffic-free terrific roads.

Times change, but the roads remain for luxury cycling!

The first 12 miles was downhill to Chesaw, a sweet spot for refueling and reconnecting with the group. Then they started to climb out of the valley, determined, strong, and hot.

I parked at a false summit with a

shady, commanding view of God's country and the unspoiled ribbon of roadway, and waited.

When the 20 bikers spotted me they were glad for cool water, shade and new confidence, to finish the climb to Sitzmark.

Then came the long run down, flying past Havillah to Tonasket, through golden range and gorgeous grassland, grand views down the Antoine Valley and west to the Tiffany Mountains.

Riding in this place, removed from the insanity of the city, cleared my mind and helped me rediscover simple, basic values.

For more on the Lost Lake Bikers visit these youtube links.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SrZYQ60CncQ> Bicycle ride to Chesaw on the gravel rd.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=naq_pYer97Y A few scenes from the kitchen

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XT8Fqu9Tp54> the bicycle races

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JjThg-oCTPk> Hazel rides the course



Okanogan Bikers take a break at Chesaw Store.

Photo by Louise McGrody

OVLC comes to Seattle



The Okanogan Valley Land Council will be hosting its first Seattle area event this Fall.

The meet and greet will be held Thursday, November 12th from 6-8pm at the Pike Pub and Brewery.

This event will bring friends of the Okanogan, OVLC members, new and old, together to meet one another under a common cause.

If you would like to contribute names of friends you know who would be interested in joining us for the event, please contact the OVLC office.

- Find out more about the venue at www.pikebrewing.com

Nelson Ranch on the Farmland Preservation Task Force Tour

by Walter Henze

In early September, the Washington State Farmland Preservation Task Force held one of their regular meetings here in Okanogan County, and took the time to tour some of the area farmland as well. OVLC staff Ber Culp and Cari Haug and board member Walter Henze took advantage of the opportunity to give input to the Task Force members as well as to other state and county officials who attended.

The most important of the four tour stops was Brian and Cynthia Nelson's ranch. Last summer, OVLC was successful in getting a large grant from the state Farmland Preservation Program to purchase 50% of a agricultural/conservation easement on the 1000 acre ranch in the Okanogan Highlands. Our application received the second highest score among all applicants. But, the application by Trust for Public Lands (TPL – our partner in this project) to the federal Farm and Range-

land Protection Program for the other half of the money needed to complete this easement ranked low and out of the money, due to last minute changes in the federal scoring system which heavily favored densely populated counties on the west side of the state. In fact, ALL the land protection awards in the initial round went to the west side, so the Task Force members got an earful from the Okanogan County folks who attended the event.

This effort appears to have had a successful outcome. Our state has decided to split the next round of federal dollars into separate award pools for the eastern and western parts of the state so that we on the east side have a decent shot at it.

In the meantime, TPL is hard at work coming up with the necessary matching funds for the Nelsons from either the next round of federal grants, or from other sources.



Brian Nelson outlines the difficulties facing ranchers in the economic downturn.

Photo provided by Bob Clark



Walter Henze and Joel Kretz discuss ways to improve the plight of eastern Washington ranchers and farmers.

Photo provided by Bob Clark

OVLC • By the Numbers

Land protected by the efforts or assistance of Okanogan Valley Land Council

Total Easements	7	Pending Easements	8
Total Acres	1170	Pending Total Acres	1246

Biking in the Okanogan Highlands by Andy Goulding

Uphills are long & warm. The expression on my face? It may not look like I'm having fun. And it is true, I am working hard.

Downhills are long & cool. Vistas so open you can lay off the brakes and run it out. Now I'm smiling, with mouth closed, to keep grasshoppers out of my teeth.

Open vistas except for Highway 20, down Bonaparte Creek to Tonasket, under hanging basalt and Indian petroglyphs. Heads up there!

Best time of year? When sunflowers bloom. (Balsam root?)

I need to come back, spend a weekend, drawing barns.

Biking in the Okanogan Highlands is the closest I will get to being a cowboy. Back in the Saddle Again, and Don't Fence Me In are songs in my head.

Okanogan Highlands are like the backroads of Montana, except WA has speed limits and is closer to home. Fewer grizzlies.

Highland lakes are cool and lovely during & after a ride. Lost Lake is a great find. Bonaparte Lake has a rock formation shaped like Napoleon's face.

Cattle guards: Hit them fast and true, as you un-weight your bike, like skiing over moguls. Or, "walking is not crowded." and you will see cattle on the roadway. Slow down and they divide to let you pass.

Road biking is like skiing: Out there, fast, all legs and lungs, quiet. Factor in head and tail wind to the formula. Most skiers don't draft.

Drivers super courteous, as if they see bikers every day; which they likely do not.

Chesaw major destination. They've got it all. Old dude talked my arm off about his family and tractors.

Hee-Hee Rock and other OK history markers beautifully wood carved and eloquent. Don't miss Molson ghost town with restored buildings and equipment. Look for the paved road.

Excellent bike shop in Okanogan. Plenty of campgrounds & RV parks.

206'rs and 509'rs on best behavior at Tonasket Garlic Festival.

Best. Ride ever: north to south all downhill along Sanpoil River, Highway 21, from Curlew to Keller Ferry on Columbia River. 60 miles! Hotter the better. Take naps and dips. No traffic or towns.

Okanogan Valley backroads and Forest Service roads great fun to discover and explore. Let's work together with OVLC to keep the countryside that way!

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Donate Now!

The mission of The Okanogan Valley Land Council is to enhance wildlife, fish, agricultural, and forestry values in the Okanogan by accepting and overseeing conservation easements from private landowners, creating educational opportunities and projects for people interested in land conservation issues, and assisting private landowners who wish to preserve family land for future generations.

We are a community based, non-profit and rely on your support.

Become a volunteer or member, send this newsletter to a friend or two, make a donation, find out more or call with ideas and comments!

Contact us at PO Box 293, Tonasket, WA 98855 or (509) 486-2765.