

METHOW CONSERVANCY NEWS

For Wildlife ♦ For Farming ♦ For Community ♦ Forever

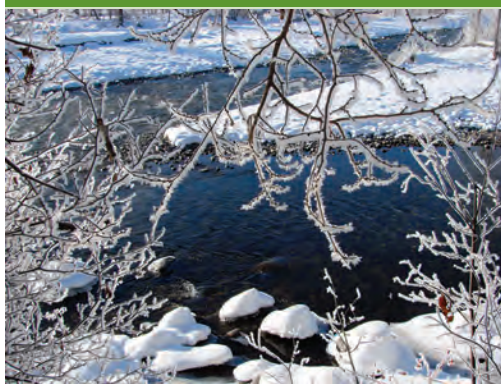


Photo credit: Mary Kiesau

Winter 2018-19 Newsletter

December 2018

*Inspiring people to care for
the land of the Methow
Valley since 1996*

This Issue Features:

From the Director

The Dirt on Soil

*Conservation Shorts:
Your Impact!*

Winter Wonder of Owls

Homestream Park

*“Meat”ing Producer
Needs*



More than 200 people joined us in the Winthrop Barn for our Annual Holiday Social and December First Tuesday. We celebrated a trio of community members with our annual awards and were astonished to learn more about the Conservation Canines program at the University of Washington. In the photo above, Executive Director Jason Paulsen gave the packed audience a few minutes to greet each other and meet someone new.

Photo credit: Alyssa Jumars

A Truly Inspiring Evening

There is always something special about a full Winthrop Barn on a cold winter's night. This December, more than 200 people gathered to meet Sampson, an incredible 14 year-old Labrador able to sniff out the scat of carnivores as big a grizzly bears and as small as the remains from the San Diego pocket mouse.

His handler, Julie Ubigau, from the Conservation Canines program at the University of Washington shared a truly uplifting story of smart people figuring out innovative approaches to solving conservation issues by working with the brilliant capacities of rescue dogs. We heard many people comment they wish someone like Julie had been at their high school career day many years ago!

This annual gathering also provided a chance to honor community members who have made a difference on the ground.



Julie Ubigau and Sampson from the Conservation Canines program at the University of Washington shared their fascinating story for our December First Tuesday program. Photo credit: Alyssa Jumars.

Tina and Eliot Scull were named this year's Ken White Award winner—our lifetime achievement award for individuals or organizations with a history of inspiring conservation efforts in the Methow Valley. Ken White, long-known as the Methow's naturalist shared his deep passion for appreciating this special Valley with anyone interested.

This past year, they established the Tina Scull Conservation and Stewardship Opportunity Fund for the Methow Conservancy, thereby enabling the Methow Conservancy to conserve and protect the Heckendorn property just outside of Winthrop. Methow Conservancy Associate Director Sarah Brooks notes, “Tina and

(cont. on page 3)

We were honored to recognize Tina and Eliot for their life-long commitment to conservation in North Central Washington. Active with the Methow Conservancy, the Chelan Douglas Land Trust, the Wenatchee Foothills Project, and integral to the success of Pearygin Lake State Park, Tina and Eliot have always chosen to get involved and do what's right for the land.



Sarah Brooks presented the Ken White Award to Tina and Eliot Scull, sharing their inspiring story that led to the conservation of the Heckendorn property in Winthrop. Photo credit: Alyssa Jumars

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From the Director

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Methow
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Dear Friends,

On a beautiful blue-sky day just before Thanksgiving, I was reminded once again that sometimes it is the things we can't see that can have the greatest impact on our lives. In this instance, the invisible force was the black ice lurking around one of those shady corners above Ross Lake. Thankfully, there was no actual "impact" to report, but definitely a heightened sense of awareness as I contemplated the challenges of an accident in that lonely spot on the highway.

I was on my way home from our annual Methow Mixer event in Seattle where we gathered with over 120 friends of the Methow Conservancy to share our love for the Methow and learn about the history of North Cascades National Park. Notable for me that evening, aside from the passion that people have for this place, was the fact that early advocates of the North Cascades National Park once envisioned as many as four mountain-top trams, helicopter tours and other amenities aimed at making the Park experience something very different from what we know today. Had I not attended the program, I wouldn't have realized what I "wasn't seeing" on those peaks rising above Ross Lake.

Much of the work you make possible at the Methow Conservancy is similar. When we execute our Mission well, you don't perceive visible change. In fact, when it comes to iconic viewpoints, open hillsides, or working farmland, I like to joke internally that "No one is better at making nothing happen than we are!"

This reality is doubly challenging when it comes to our work on things like land use planning, or our efforts to support the Methow Headwaters Campaign. Often our role is quiet, behind the scenes, and rooted in the relationships we've worked to foster over our two-plus decades of work here in the Methow Valley. I'm grateful

for the capacity our community provides for us to be engaged in this way.

I am also very thankful for the many ways you make it possible for us to be very visible here in the valley through our First Tuesday programs, numerous field programs, our School Yard Science program at Methow Valley Elementary School, and an increasing array of volunteer opportunities where you can get involved in our work in very tangible ways. And I can't wait to roll-out a new pilot-project we aim to launch next spring that seeks to engage even more landowners as participants in our work regardless of the size of their property!

Whether you live in the Methow or are visiting for the first time this winter, I hope you will join me in elevating your own awareness as you drive or ski through the valley. From lower valley orchards and agricultural fields along East County Road, to the stunning vistas visible from the ski trails at Hancock Springs, Arrowleaf or at the Tawls-Foster Suspension Bridge, there's a lot you won't see.

Thanks to you and your support of conservation in the Methow Valley, that's no accident at all!

Happy New Year!

Jason Paulsen



Johnnie & Daniel on Team Methow Conservancy

We are excited to announce that seasonal employees Johnnie Duguay and Daniel Senner will join us as year-round members of Team Methow Conservancy!



Johnnie, who has served as our full-time Stewardship Technician for the last seven months, has been promoted to the role of Stewardship Associate. She will continue to monitor our 112 conservation easements while with us full-time spring through fall, and in the winter months will spend one to two days a week in the office developing our field-based educational classes and workshops for the year ahead, ensuring that we are providing opportunities to help everyone learn how to be thoughtful stewards of the land.

Daniel, who has been a Conservation Fellow since last May, has been promoted to Community Conservation Coordinator, a full-time, year-round position. He will manage our growing number of volunteer opportunities including new citizen science projects, community outreach events like our First Tuesday series, and will assist with communications and conservation project development.



"Johnnie and Daniel have both proven to be excellent additions to our team," notes Executive Director Jason Paulsen. "Their skill-sets are a perfect match for our current and projected future needs. They are both knowledgeable, passionate about our mission, and great assets to the community – and we are pleased they will be on Team Methow Conservancy year-round."

Feel free to stop by the office and say hi to Johnnie and Daniel this winter!

Exploring the Dirt on Soil

by Alyssa Jumars, Agricultural Coordinator

On our farm, the most valuable thing we have built is not our greenhouse. It's not our 8-foot deer fence or even our walk-in cooler. The most valuable thing that we have poured our sweat, tears, and many thousands of dollars into -- is our soil.

Ask any farmer here in the Methow Valley, and they will surely say the same. Each spring or fall finds them in the field, applying tons (literally) of compost, compost teas, mulch, chicken manure, feather meal, blood meal, calcium carbonate, potash, bone meal, fish hydrolysate, mycorrhizae inoculants, magnesium, sulfur, boron, etc... You get the idea.

Healthy soil is not a static state and the work is never done. Building healthy soil is a lot like weed control – it's not a destination, it's more of a journey.

Farmers are constantly learning and adjusting their nutrient management programs, based on observations in the field or on new information learned from other farmers, publications, the latest research, or agency resource providers like the



Building soil health is part science, part art, and a great deal of trial and error. This extra-healthy soil is from Ruby Slippers Farm.

Photo credit: Sasha Swerdloff.

WSU Extension, the NRCS (Natural Resource Conservation Service), or the Conservation District.

This year we are hosting a winter Conservation Course on soil health, in the hopes of demystifying some of the basics of soil science and applied practices for improving soil health.

We're excited to offer our community of avid gardeners the opportunity to dig in, and hear from speakers from Washington State University, Wenatchee Valley College, and our local ag community.

We'll be introduced to the basics of soil chemistry and soil biology, and we'll take a closer look at the role and the cycle of carbon in the soil. We'll also explore common practices for improving soil health, and come away with some hands-on lessons to take to the field or the garden in the spring!

The seminar series will meet Monday evenings from 6pm to 8pm, beginning February 25th and running through March 18th. The price for the 4-class course is \$95, or \$30 per class; location TBD. For more information or to register, email alyssa@methowconservancy.org.

An Inspiring Evening, con't.

Eliot have already inspired others to think about living their conservation legacy, rather than leaving one in their estate. Their gift gave us a chance to make a community win possible and they have the joy of getting to be here to see it all unfold. They have truly set the bar for what it means to be community visionaries."

Davis Lake area resident Scott Stluka was presented with the Susie Stephens Award for his exceptional volunteer service over the past three years. This award has been given annually for 14 years in memory of Susie Stephens who served as the Methow Conservancy's Development Director in the early 2000s. The award recognizes individuals who carry on Susie's endless energy for helping others, and her strong belief that education about conservation can make a difference.

Scott has donated literally hundreds (and probably thousands) of hours to restoration

work, trail maintenance, barbed wire removal, and any other hard physical labor on conserved lands to help ensure they are healthier than when he found them. His never-say-no approach to volunteering inspires others to sweat on behalf of a place they love.

In presenting the award, Daniel Senner, our Community Conservation Coordinator, said, "In addition to the hard work and can-do attitude, what I really admire about this individual, is that they are a real student of land. Always looking to learn something new, constantly paying attention to their surroundings, and truly appreciating what an amazing place we are able to call home."

Finally, Hannah Dewey was honored with the You Inspire Us Award for her commitment to the Methow Headwaters campaign.

Hannah Dewey, the Outreach Coordinator and Community Organizer for the Methow Headwaters Campaign earned the You Inspire Us Award for her powerful, strategic, and collaborative work in building a critical mass of diverse support for this homegrown effort to make the upper Methow Headwaters off-limits to industrial-scale mining.

Executive Director Jason Paulsen notes, "From day one, Hannah recognized the importance of building a big tent of diverse people who see that the Methow Valley headwaters are too special to mine. She pays attention to every detail and has a truly graceful way of bringing diverse people together around their love for this valley. She



Hannah Dewey received the You Inspire Us Award with the help of daughter, and future community leader, Finley. Hannah has been instrumental in the Methow Headwaters campaign effort.

Photo credit: Alyssa Jumars.

reminds us what it means to build a movement."

The Methow Conservancy initiated the You Inspire Us Award in 2014 to recognize people or organizations who have been inspirational to the staff and Board of the Conservancy organization, and who have, through their good work, inspired positive change in the whole community.

In reflecting on the evening as a whole, Sarah Brooks concluded, "I just love this annual event. The combination of hundreds of people gathering on a cold night to socialize and then celebrate the hard work of people in our community is so inspiring to me. Add to it an educational program like Conservation Canines and you can't help but leave reminded that people do amazing things for the world and the places they love."



Daniel Senner presented Scott Stluka with the Susie Stephens Award, honoring Scott's endless hours of physical labor on behalf of the land of the Methow Valley. Photo credit: Alyssa Jumars

Interested in leaving a legacy for the land?

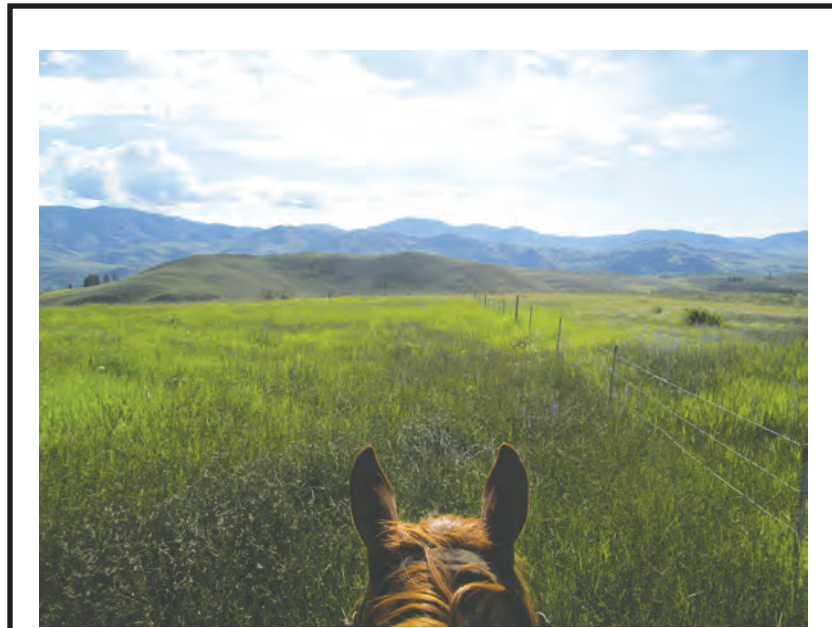
You can include the Methow Conservancy in your will or as a beneficiary on an investment account. You don't have to be able to leave us millions of dollars and you don't have to be near the end of life to consider the legacy you want to leave for the land of the Methow Valley. (You should, however, consult with a financial advisor or legal professional.) Contact Sarah for more information, at 509-996-2870 or sarah@methowconservancy.org.

Want to stay up-to-date on the Methow Conservancy?

Make sure you receive our monthly E-News! We only print a newsletter twice a year - but each month we send out the latest and greatest on conservation in the Methow Valley via our E-News. To sign up, e-mail us at info@methowconservancy.org.

What's Happening at the Methow Conservancy?

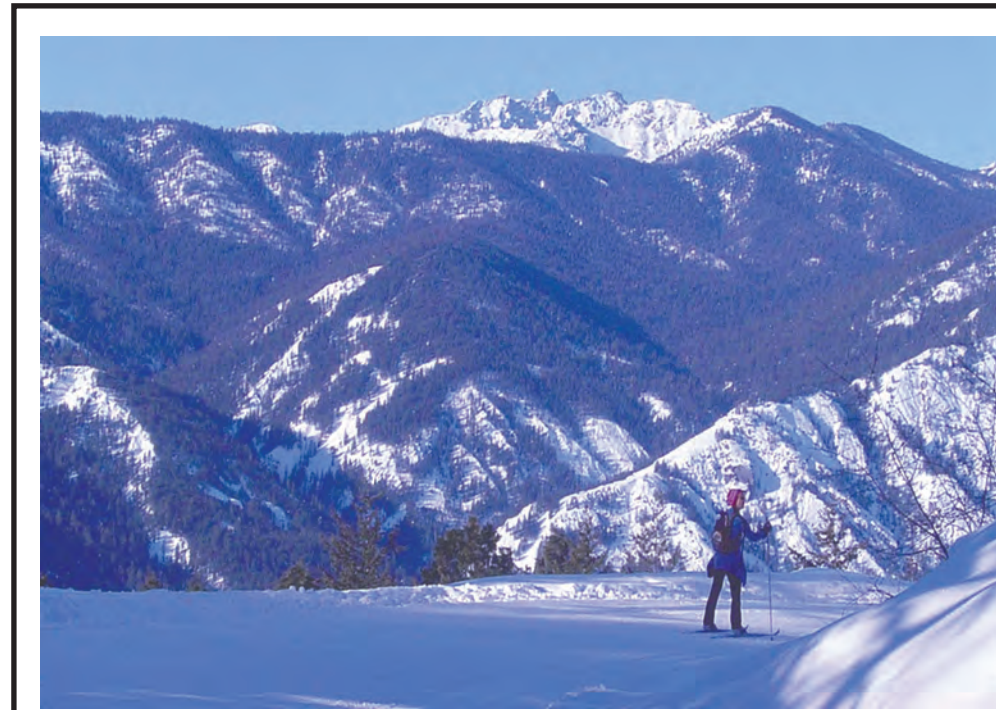
Great memories from 2018 to show the impact you make! Thank You!



Your Impact: Each year our Stewardship staff visit all of the 112 conservation easement properties you have helped us to protect and preserve. Some days that means covering thousands of acres on horseback -- making a day at the office pretty terrific. From Pateros to Lost River, along the rivers, through fields, and forests, with landowners who have lived in the Valley for generations to brand new owners from afar, we cover the almost 9,000 acres of land you have helped to protect. To put that in perspective, that's about 6,800 football fields of protected diverse wildlife habitat, healthy agricultural soil and take-your-breath away views. Thank you! *Photo credit: Johnnie Duguay*



Your Impact: Our mission is to inspire people to care for the land of the Methow Valley, but sometimes you inspire us! That's certainly true in the case of Mark Westerfield and Carolyn Mistell. They are neighbors to the 146-acre Heckendorn property you helped us protect this spring. Mark and Carolyn were excited to learn that the Methow Conservancy had bought the property and will ultimately provide a free public walking path on this breathtaking hillside. When they heard that one of our first priorities as new landowners was to remove derelict barbed wire from the property -- it was a danger to wildlife and humans!--they leaped into action. Removing barbed wire is a delicate art that they have mastered through their more than 68 hours of effort (wow!). We sure appreciate being in a community full of people like Mark and Carolyn (and you!) who recognize that when you love a place, you have to care for it! *Photo credit: Daniel Senner.*



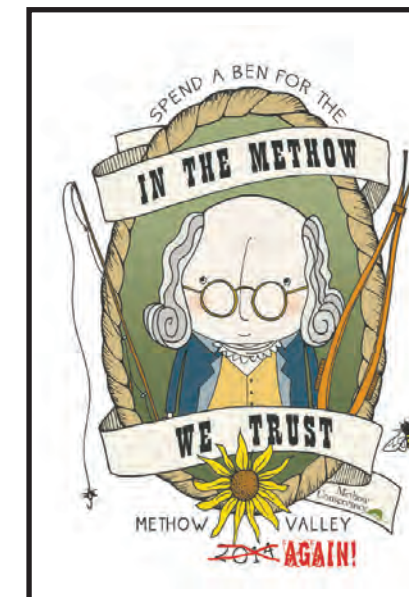
Your Impact: While we leave the trail maintenance and expert grooming to our amazing neighbors, Methow Trails, we do our best to help protect the beautiful views you capture when gliding along on your skinny skis in the Methow. In fact, almost 1500 acres of land visible from the ski trails is protected via conservation easement with the Methow Conservancy and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife. Next time you stop to catch your breath on the trail, you can take pride in knowing you've helped ensure future generations of skiers will enjoy some of those same heart-stirring vistas. *Photo credit: Jason Paulsen*



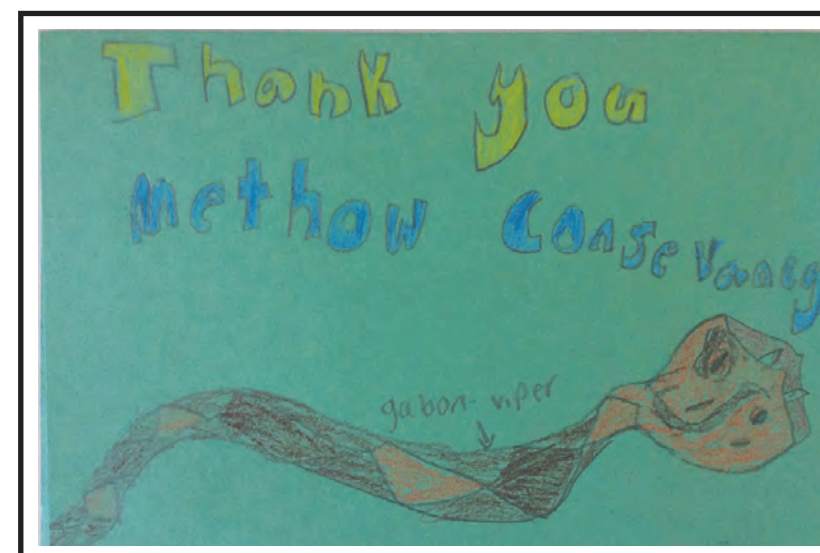
Your Impact: What, you may be asking, is the Methow Conservancy staff doing with roller skates? We took part in the 10 Days of Volunteer Service that Volunteer Methow hosted in April. We spent a few hours as a staff helping the Community Center in Twisp to clean their inventory of roller skates. It was inspiring to give back and it's a great reminder that Volunteer Methow is powerful. Volunteer Methow -- the supercool website connecting nonprofits and community volunteers (www.volunteermethow.org)-- is another example of an innovative idea you helped spur. While the website was brilliantly built by local talents Kelli and Neil Rotstan, the idea was born at a gathering of our GenNxt program, reaching the next generation of community leaders. *Photo credit: Mary Morgan*



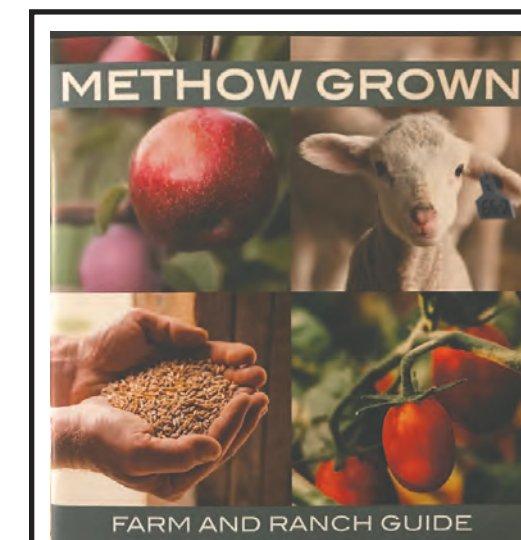
Your Impact: You make it possible for us to play a role -- sometimes quietly, strategically behind-the-scenes -- in advocating for the conservation needs of the Methow Valley. The photo above is taken from Flagg Mountain -- a spot that is definitely "too beautiful to mine." We've been an active partner in the Methow Headwaters Campaign, a coalition of local businesses, nonprofit organizations, and residents and visitors working toward a mineral withdrawal on more than 340,000 acres near the Methow River headwaters. At the time we have gone to print with this newsletter, the outcome of this political effort is unclear, but we will keep you updated! *Photo credit: Jason Paulsen*



Your Impact: After another summer of wildfires and smoke, both of which had a real impact on local businesses, we brought "Ben" back. We created the Spend a Ben for the Methow program back in 2014, encouraging people like you, who love the Methow Valley, to make a special effort to remember Methow businesses. The local business community has supported our work for more than 20 years and this is the least we can do to help in turn! *Photo credit: Baylie Peplow of Red Umbrella Designs*



Your Impact: You keep our education programs thriving! Each year we offer a variety of ways for anyone--from the novice to the advanced--to learn more about the wonders of the Methow Valley. This awesome thank you note came to us from one of our 4th grade School Yard Scientists. We're in our fourth year of working with Methow Valley Elementary School on this once-a-month exploration of science outside. In addition to School Yard Science, we offer walks, workshops, field classes, and presentations for all ages. In 2018, we learned about wolverines, dragonflies, apple maggots, Cascade red foxes, purple martins, and much more. We hope you'll join us for more learning opportunities in 2019 -- see our Events Calendar on Page 8. *Photo credit: MVES 4th grader*



Your Impact: You have helped grow awareness of the innovative and hard work of the Methow Valley's farmers, ranchers, and orchardists. This spring we published our first Methow Grown guide (free and available at various places around the Valley). It's so popular, we're excited to work on edition 2 in 2019. *Photo Credits: Rachelle Weymuller and Sasha Swerdtloff*

The Winter Wonder of Owls

by Julie Grialou, Conservation Biologist

When I think of wildlife that are active during the winter, I often think of owls. Why? Because owls, unlike other wildlife, start their breeding season during the winter months.

The Methow is home to a wide diversity of owls, with six species that are relatively common and are year-round residents, and another nine species that are relatively rare.

Owls most commonly seen or heard in the Methow include the great horned owl, northern saw-whet owl, northern pygmy-owl, barred owl, western screech owl, flammulated owl. So ... why do owls breed in the winter, and how do they manage to locate and capture small mammals moving underneath the snow?

Winter Breeding

Breeding during the winter, when temperatures are frigid and prey availability is low, inherently seems like a bad idea. So, why do owls choose this time of year to breed? The reason lies in differences in the length of the egg incubation period and the fledging period (time from hatching to leaving the nest) for owls compared to other birds, with these periods being



Common throughout the Methow Valley, the great horned owl nests in winter, often using the discarded nests of other large birds like hawks, eagles, herons, or ravens. You can often hear the deep hoot of the Great Horned Owl on a dark winter's night. Photo credit: Jason Paulsen

much longer for owls. The great horned owl, for example, incubates eggs for about 5 weeks, and owlets do not fledge until they are 6 or 7 weeks old. In comparison, a robin incubates eggs for about 12 days, and fledging robins leave the nest about 2 weeks after hatching.

Capturing Prey Under the Snow

Owls have an uncanny ability to locate and capture voles and other small mammals scurrying under the snow. It is their unique manner of hearing that allows them to accomplish such a feat.

Owls have: (1) a facial disc, which helps to direct and concentrate sound waves toward the ears; and (2) ears that are located asymmetrically on their

head. Owls can tell which direction a sound is coming from because of the very small time difference between when the sound is heard between the left and the right ear.

So when you are out adventuring this winter, keep your eyes out for the Methow's other winter enthusiasts -- owls.

Homestream Park Coming to Winthrop

The community of people who know and love the Methow Valley never ceases to inspire us, and it is in that spirit that we share news from Board Member Phil Davis and his wife Cathy about their pretty amazing plans to restore a natural floodplain right near the town of Winthrop and dedicate the space to raising awareness about salmon and the rivers they call home.



This 2-acre property just outside of Winthrop will be restored and become a place to learn more about salmon and the rivers they call home.

the Methow Conservancy) in transforming the property into a park space honoring the rivers and salmon of the Methow Valley by making it a public space providing river access, an interpretive trail, sculptures, and exhibit space in the property's iconic barn. The remaining land will be restored to its natural riparian and floodplain condition in support of the salmon it will honor.

Long-time conservationists and leaders active in many Methow Valley non-profit organizations, Phil and Cathy recognize that they are taking on a big project, but they are motivated by their reverence for the miraculous journey of the Methow's salmon and a deep love for this Valley.

We'll let Phil share this vision in his own words below, as we say "Wow!, thank you for this gift to our community Phil and Cathy!":

I am captivated by salmon. I never tire of seeing a spawning pair over their cobbled nest in a shallow run. I even wrote a story, The Last Salmon, inspired by my own son's encounter with a dying Chinook and by the true story of a single returning Snake River sockeye salmon, Lonesome Larry.

I grew up in Connecticut where salmon just weren't a part of our collective identity. But when I transplanted to the Northwest, I was awed by the majesty and tragedy of their story.

Majesty, born in waters millions of years ago, with a life journey that is truly remarkable, guided by a singular purpose, just one chance to spawn a new generation back in their home stream. And then die.

Tragedy, in their losing battle against unrelenting human pressure. Yet they keep trying.

More and more people are working to help salmon regain their rightful majesty. I want to be one of those people. I want our community to be those people.

Cathy and I are thrilled to be creating a park on one of the best salmon tributaries of the Columbia system, the Methow River.

Located on two riverfront acres just downstream from the town of Winthrop, WA, we are rehabilitating an old horse corral with native plantings, public art, interpretive trail, and a gathering space with river access. The park's focus will be on the rivers and fish of the Methow Valley. It will be named Homestream Park.



Phil and Cathy Davis are planning to restore a natural floodplain and create a park dedicated to raising awareness about salmon.

“Meat”ing Producer Needs

by Alyssa Jumars, Agricultural Coordinator

Many small farms in the Methow Valley and across Okanogan County are raising “farm-to-table” meats. These farms often give particular care and attention to stewarding the land and to raising animals with compassion. Many of these producers are experiencing growing opportunities in “niche” markets, however, they struggle to find access to the final step in meat production: slaughter.



Currently, the closest USDA-inspected meat plant that accepts animals from small farms is a 300-mile round-trip from the Methow Valley. Photo credit: Rachelle Weymuller

We spent the better part of 2018 working on a feasibility study to fully understand livestock producers’ need for improved access to slaughter and butchering. The study was funded by a grant from the USDA Rural Business Development Program and was conducted in partnership with the Okanogan Conservation District and the TwispWorks Foundation. The study work was led by our Agricultural Coordinator, Alyssa Jumars, and was advised by a group of a dozen livestock producers from across the county, including several producers from the Methow Valley: Deb Jones Schuler of Wild Plum Farm, the Smith family of BCS Livestock, and Jenn Hover, formerly of Hover Highland Cattle Company.

The study worked to identify the potential demand for USDA-inspected slaughter and butchering services among diverse livestock operations in Okanogan County. There are two types of certification for butchering: USDA-inspected, or “custom-exempt.” Meat processed at a custom-exempt facility can only be consumed by individuals or families, and cannot be distributed to stores or restaurants. In order for a farmer or rancher to access most market opportunities, they must have their meat processed at USDA-inspected facility.



The USDA Rural Business Development Program funded a feasibility study of livestock processing needs in Okanogan County that found a significant need for improved access to USDA-inspected processing. Photo credit: Rachelle Weymuller

While there are three custom-exempt butchers in Okanogan County (down from five two years ago), the closest USDA-inspected meat plant is a 300-mile round-trip from the Methow Valley. The objective of the study was to determine whether there might be sufficient demand within Okanogan County to support a USDA-inspected facility.

In the spring, we launched a county-wide producer survey and reached 95 farmers and ranchers. Twenty-eight percent of responses came from the Methow Valley; 38% from the Omak-Okanogan area; and 17% from the Tonasket area. Respondents reached in the survey also included producers from Brewster, Conconully, Nespelem, and the Oroville areas.

Some highlights from the survey data:

- 93% of respondents indicated a desire for access to USDA-inspected processing;
- 31% of respondents indicated that access to USDA-inspected processing is a primary barrier to the growth and success of their farm business;
- With improved access to USDA-inspected slaughter, 51 responding producers indicated as a whole they would raise an additional 130 beef, 100 pigs, 170 sheep, and 100 goats for market opportunities they have already identified or established.

Using these survey results, the study estimated an overall potential demand for USDA-inspected slaughter and processing services in the county of approximately 690 beef (or beef equivalents). This falls short of industry-standard bare minimums of 1200 beef (or beef equivalents) needed per year to justify or sustain a small, new USDA meat plant.

As a result of this informative data, the study team explored intermediate opportunities to meet the identified demand, at the appropriate scale. Ruling out a brand new plant, the study focused on the feasibility of upgrading and expanding an existing, custom-exempt meat plant within the county.

Half a dozen industry consultants participated in the facility evaluations and guided the project team to focus efforts on Double S Meats, in Tonasket -- primarily because the facility is newly-constructed and located in close proximity to the majority of the livestock raised in the county. Double S Meats is operated by Gavin Pratt and was founded in 1981 by Gavin’s grandfather. Under Gavin’s management, Double S Meats built a new facility in 2013 with future USDA-inspected applications in mind.

In light of the estimated demand for services, costs of additional infrastructure and improvements, marginal operating costs, and projected revenue, the study determined that adding USDA-inspected slaughter at Double S Meats was feasible.



The study indicates a promising potential for Double S Meats in Tonasket to upgrade their existing facility to USDA inspected status.

The study further concluded that an incremental approach to developing USDA-inspected slaughter capacity at Double S Meats could offer the highest possibility of success with the least risk to the small, family-run business. In particular, the study suggests utilizing a temporary, pre-manufactured, USDA-inspected slaughter unit as an alternative to a new building. This would allow Double S Meats to test assumptions about demand for USDA-inspected slaughter in the region, before determining to make a bigger investment in a more permanent facility. The study also concluded that there was significant interest among livestock producers to play an active role in any future project implementation.

So, what’s next? We are actively exploring next steps and opportunities to implement the study findings. If you are curious to learn more or want to request a copy of the full report, email alyssa@methowconservancy.org.

So Many Ways to Give

by Sarah Brooks, Associate Director and Ashley Lodato, Board Member

I will admit that there are times I wonder if anyone reads newsletters anymore. But, then just last week, I stopped at Lone Pine Fruit Stand en route to Wenatchee. While waiting for my sandwich order, I spotted a Methow Conservancy supporter.

We chatted and she headed on her way. Five seconds later, however, she returned, saying something along the lines of: I just had to tell you. After reading the Methow Conservancy newsletter article about different charitable giving tools a few months ago, I was inspired to open a donor advised fund. Thank you for sharing that information. I would have never known about it otherwise.

That exchange made my day. And, it reminded me that it is worth sharing a few tidbits each newsletter about ALL of the different ways you can give to show your love for the Methow Valley.

There's the obvious starting place: you can make a donation to our Annual Operating Fund. Thank you if you already have and if you still need to, you can use the handy form below. Or, you can email me at sarah@methowconservancy.org to learn more about donating stock, donating through donor advised funds or your IRA.

You can also donate your time. We love volunteers. Sometimes we need people to help with physical labor, or office work, or special expertise like photography. Check out our Volunteer Methow page for the latest (www.volunteermethow.org).

We also offer a monthly or quarterly giving option through our website at www.methowconservancy.org/membership.html. In a recent conversation with Board Member Ashley Lodato, I was reminded just how cool recurring gifts can be. She offered to share her thoughts on it:

In our days before kids and mortgages and life insurance, one of the first things my husband and I did that really made us feel grown up was signing up for a sustaining membership to National Public Radio. We hardly noticed the monthly charge on our credit card bill, and it meant that we could listen to our favorite programs guilt-free, because we knew we were helping to support them. We've been giving automatically to NPR now for decades, switching our membership to the nearest local station wherever we move: CA, WA, MT, TX, ME, and now, again, WA.

So it's surprising that it took us so long to realize that we could give monthly to the Methow Conservancy, through an automatic credit card charge or bank account withdrawal. We like being on the monthly donation plan: we don't have to remember to write a check, and the modest monthly charge impacts our household budget less than a larger yearly donation used to. Best of all, as a Methow Conservancy board member I know that the Conservancy can better plan for its programs in conservation, stewardship, and education--as well as more ambitious projects--if it can count on a reliable revenue stream. The monthly giving program provides the Conservancy with the assurance of steady support, so it can plan strategically and better protect special places in the Methow Valley.

If you've read this far, and you're inspired, let me know at sarah@methowconservancy.org.



Events Calendar

See www.methowconservancy.org/events.html for more details and new calendar additions. To register for any of these events or classes, contact us at 509-996-2870 or daniel@methowconservancy.org.

Jan. 3rd: Citizen Scientists and Seasonal Snow Modeling with David Hill @ The Merc Playhouse. Doors Open at 6:30pm. OSU Environmental Engineering professor and co-leader of the NASA-funded Community Snow Observation Project, David Hill will share more about this ongoing project to better understand mountain snow distribution using citizen science and satellite remote sensing.

Jan. 12th OR Feb. 9th: Winter Wildlife Tracking 8:30am-12:30pm, \$45, Explore the winter landscape of the Methow Valley with professional wildlife tracker and educator Nate Bacon. Snowshoes and good fitness are necessary.

Jan. 8th: Methow GenNxt – Snowpack Outlook and Night Skiing Social, 6-8pm, Join us upstairs at the Winthrop Ice Rink as local professional ski guide and avalanche forecaster Drew Lovell talks about the present snowpack and seasonal outlook while we eat pizza and then we will head outside to night ski on the Methow Community Trail!

Jan. 16th: Big Valley Owling Adventure, 7 - 8:30pm, We'll walk or ski the Big Valley loop looking and listening for owls!

First Tuesday February Arctic Double Header:

- **Feb. 7th** - @ The Winthrop Barn. Doors open at 6:30pm, Mary Gallagher of the Alaska Wilderness League and Susan Ballinger with the Chelan Douglas Land Trust will share their photos and experiences traveling through the Alaska's Arctic Coastal Plain and the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. .
- **Feb. 8th** - @ The Winthrop Barn. Doors open at 6:30pm, Join Seattle based writer of "Arctic Solitaire" and award winning photographer Paul Souders as he showcases his amazing photos and tells incredible tales from his quest to photograph polar bears in their Canadian arctic home.

Feb. 20th: Big Valley Owling Adventure Round 2, 7 - 8:30p, We'll walk or ski the Big Valley loop looking and listening for owls!

Feb. 26th: Special Feature! Melissa Arnot the Athlete, Advocate, and Adventurer, @ The Winthrop Barn. Doors open at 6:30pm, Winthrop-based professional mountaineer Melissa Arnot will share stories from her adventures and advocacy in Washington, Nepal, and beyond!

Feb. 25th – March 18th, 2019 Conservation Course: The Dirt on Soil Health - \$95, or \$30 per class.

- **Feb. 25th:** Basics of Soil Chemistry, with Jeff Bullock, Ph.D of Agricultural Sciences, Wenatchee Valley College
- **March 4th:** Basics of Soil Biology, with Dr. Lynne Carpenter-Boggs, Ph.D of Soil Science, WSU.
- **March 11th:** Carbon Cycling in the Soil, with Dr. Haiying Tao, Ph.D of Crop and Soil Sciences at WSU.
- **March 18th:** Applied Practices for Improving Soil Health, with local farming and garden gurus.

Feb. 28th: Volunteer Appreciation and Spring Preview, 6 – 7:30pm, Calling all Methow Conservancy volunteers! Come join us at Six Knot Taphouse for dinner and drinks while we regale tales from the volunteer field and get excited for the work yet to come!!

Share Your Love for the Methow Valley!

Your tax-deductible donation permanently protects the Methow Valley you love.

Use these levels or decide on an amount that works for you:

Individual	\$35 - \$49
Family	\$50 - \$99
Supporting	\$100 - \$499
Sustaining	\$500 - \$999
Leadership Circle	\$1000 & up
Other	\$_____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email(s) _____

(you will receive our once-a-month E-News, our primary source of news and events and periodic updates)

Phone _____

You may also donate with a credit card. Use our secure on-line donation system.

Go to www.methowconservancy.org and click the "Make a Donation" button.

Thank You!

The Methow Conservancy is registered with the State of Washington Secretary of State's Office under the Charitable Solicitations Act - you may call 1-800-332-4483 or visit www.sos.wa.gov/charities for more information.

Mail with your check made payable to Methow Conservancy to: PO Box 71 • Winthrop, WA 98862