

Conserve

News from Lemhi Regional Land Trust and Salmon Valley Stewardship

A Quarterly Newsletter

Fall 2011

Beyeler Ranches Win Krosting Sustainability Award

At the SVS Harvest Celebration on October 22, we were pleased to honor Beyeler Ranches with the 2011 David Krosting Sustainability Award. Ron Troy of The Nature Conservancy of Idaho nominated the Beyeler family -- Merrill, Bryant, Curtis, Doug and their families -- for their contributions to the environment, economy, and community.

Beyeler Ranches have placed conservation easements on nearly 2,400 acres of their private land, emphasizing sustainable agriculture practices that enhance fish and wildlife habitat.

Troy said the Beyelers' ideas and actions to help rearing and spawning chinook salmon have been extensive. The list of projects that improve connectivity, flow and riparian habitat is long and includes: the upper Lemhi River, Lemhi Little Springs, lower Mill Creek, Walters Creek, Lower Lee Creek, lower Big Eight Mile Creek,

Big Springs, lower Timber Creek, lower 18 Mile Creek, lower Canyon Creek.

While the restoration projects are already proving to have greatly improved fish habitat, the funding secured for restoration projects has also provided an economic boost to the local economy, Troy said.

Merrill Beyeler is deeply committed to improving the vitality of Leadore and other struggling and shrinking rural communities. Besides managing a large cattle operation, the Beyeler family finds time to support their community in other ways, as

well. Merrill serves on the Board of Directors for the Lemhi Regional Land Trust and coaches varsity basketball at Leadore High School, Bryant coaches junior high basketball at Leadore, and Curtis serves on the Board of Directors for the Lemhi Soil and Water

Conservation District.

The annual David Krosting Sustainability Award is named in honor of the Bureau of Land Management Salmon Field Office manager who lost his battle with cancer in 2003.



Beyeler Ranches grazing allotment on National Forest lands.



The Beyelers were instrumental in figuring out how to restore connectivity, flow, and function to important tributaries like Little Springs. Meanwhile local contractors benefitted from restoration work.



Merrill Beyeler, shown here with just two of his granddaughters, challenged the Harvest crowd to dream big about our rich landscape and ways to restore our rural communities.

For more photos and information about conservation measures on Beyeler Ranches, visit <http://modelwatershed.org/>

Riverfront Easement Property Sets Scene for Picnic

LRLT’s newest donated conservation easement, Dr. Jesse Cole’s Ranch (formerly the Fife Ranch) provided a spectacular setting for the annual fundraiser and appreciation picnic, held Saturday, September 24th. Over 100 land trust supporters attended this event and helped raise over \$4500 for LRLT, while enjoying hamburgers, side dishes and desserts provided by LRLT board members.

Attendees had the opportunity to bid on a variety of silent auction items, including local beef and lamb, hunting and fishing access on area ranches, local artwork and much more. Salmon Valley String Band provided music throughout the evening and Congressman Simpson’s State Natural Resources Director, Laurel Sayer, provided an update on natural resources issues affecting Lemhi County and the State of Idaho.

The event was a great success and LRLT wishes to extend our sincerest thanks to all those who attended, made donations, purchased items and helped us celebrate conservation efforts in Lemhi County.



Laurel Sayer, staffer for Congressman Mike Simpson, addresses LRLT picnic attendees at the scenic Cole Ranch.

Project Notes -- Cole Ranch

- December 29, 2010 -- Dr. Jesse Cole of Butte donated a conservation easement on property located along the Salmon River to LRLT.
- This easement includes 3.1 miles of the Salmon River, associated riparian / wetland ecosystems, protecting these areas by restricting subdivision and development rights.
- Two restoration issues emerged as priorities: 1) constructing a fence to manage livestock grazing within riparian areas and 2) stabilizing a portion of rapidly eroding river bank.
- June 2011 -- Snake River Basin Adjudication Habitat Funding awarded to LRLT for the construction of over 20,000 feet of fence along the riparian area. This fence will provide erosion prevention, pasture management and protection of the existing riparian and wetland areas.
- The property continues to function as a working ranch with Paul Edwards as the lessee.



Dr. Jesse Cole of Butte, Montana, contacted Lemhi Regional Land Trust about donating a conservation easement on the former Fife Ranch.



Cerises Make Hughes Creek More Inviting for Salmon and Steelhead



A Work in Progress

- 2006. The Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group selected Hughes Creek as their first collaborative project, and we looked for chances to improve conditions for salmon, steelhead and bull trout. Fisheries biologists pointed out that the lower private sections of Hughes Creek needed the most help.
- 2008. SVS intern Jo Myers approached Lowell and Mary Cerise about allowing SVS and partners at the Montana Trout



Conservancy to add the missing component -- large woody debris -- to their section of Hughes Creek. The Cerises agreed, and Jo with help from the Trout Conservancy, Wild West Institute, and the Salmon-Challis National Forest, completed a biological assessment for the project with funding support from the National Forest Foundation.

- 2009. Using a grant from the Idaho Conservation League/Formation Capital Conservation Action Program, SVS and the MT Trout Conservancy and many volunteers worked with biologist Jo Christensen, Dave Sturman and his draft horses to place logs in Hughes Ck. to restore its function as a natural stream. Historic placer mining had heavily channelized the Creek, leaving lower sections nearly devoid of good fish habitat.
- 2010. Annual monitoring showed that pools had been created and that smaller gravels -- better for fish habitat -- were accumulating. The five log structures stayed put.
- 2011. High

volume spring runoff causes Hughes Ck. to flow over its bank at the uppermost log structure at the Cerise pasture. High waters continue to flood the Cerise pasture for more than 2 months. The log structures accumulate more debris, but stay in place. In the fall, the Salmon-Challis contracts with the Youth Employment Program to do an electrofishing survey on the Cerise segment of the creek. Mary Cerise joined us as we counted and released chinook, steelhead and other fish species.



Forging the Future: Interview with Seth McFarland



Tom and Seth McFarland riding the range on Carmen Creek. Ilona McCarty photo.

degree at the University of Idaho in 2010 and returned to his family's Carmen Creek ranch, a group of ranchers got together to discuss grazing practices and range health.

Last summer, Seth got a chance to work as a field biologist for the group, now called the Central Idaho Rangelands Network. He gathered photo points and other data

in places like Hughes Creek, Wagonhammer, Upper Pahsimeroi,

Hat Creek, Carey, Ketchum, and Lost River.

"I am truly lucky," he said.

The chance to combine his love of ranching with his "range nerd" interests is fairly ideal. Seth said in addition to seeing a lot of cool country, the monitoring gave him a chance to see how ranchers adapt to their distinct landscapes.

He likes seeing ranchers and agency resource specialists willing to learn from one another and he has high hopes the network will lead to filling gaps in monitoring data and range improvements.

Not long after Seth McFarland finished his rangeland ecology

Tree-mendous News

3rd Annual Fading Gold Aspen Photo Contest - Deadline December 30

Top 3 finalists receive an 18 x 20 color enlargement of their photos, mounted on foam core. Winners will be announced later this winter at the to-be-announced SVS Fading Gold event. Watch our website for more details or to download an [entry form](#). Forms are also available at the Purple Easel downtown Salmon. Up to two entries per person. Please note location of aspens.

Heritage Tree Project Hits the Airwaves

SVS Board member Sadie Barrett and co-conspirator Candace Burns' heritage tree project was featured by journalist Guy Hand on Idaho Public Radio's Edible Idaho and in Northwest Food News. Link from the SVS website or click <http://www.nwfoodnews.com/2011/10/28/seeking-genetic-diversity-in-abandoned-apple-orchards/>.



Howard Carroll



Guy Hand

Summer 2011

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