

Conserve

News from Lemhi Regional Land Trust and Salmon Valley Stewardship

A Quarterly Newsletter

Fall 2017

Lemhi Regional Land Trust Gives Salmon School Garden Project Permanent Home

In 2014, when a group of volunteers joined forces to found The Salmon School Garden Project (SSGP), their first order of business was to secure a lease on the property adjoining the Salmon Junior-Senior High School to provide a home for their project. This one acre parcel provided a convenient location and featured a number of fruit trees, but the committee was troubled by the lack of permanency with a year to year lease, so in 2016, they approached Lemhi Regional Land Trust (LRLT) for advice on securing a more permanent arrangement. Around this same time, Seth and Amy Tonsmeire had contacted LRLT to share that their parents and LRLT founding board members, Fran and Joe Tonsmeire, had left LRLT a financial gift following Fran's passing in 2015. It was a true gift in the sense that they had placed no restrictions or expectations on how the money would be used and it also came at a time LRLT was growing and stretching to make ends meet. But instead of using those funds to the important work of land conservation, the entire board and staff of LRLT committed to setting that gift aside to use for something special someday.



Then in early 2017, LRLT Executive Director, Kristin Troy, and Vice Chairman, Bob Russell, attended a training on community conservation and were both inspired with the same idea: using Fran and Joe's gift to purchase the SSGP property. They both knew the SSGP was struggling with their lack of permanency and that the kids of our community needed the opportunity to have land to cultivate and the special place to learn that had been created by the SSGP, so on June 9th, LRLT purchased the SSGP property. LRLT's ownership of this property ensures that the SSGP will have a permanent home and that students will always have the opportunity to dig in the soil, grow their own food and stay connected to our rich agricultural heritage.

Public Lands Collaborative Underway



Salmon Valley Stewardship has been convening public meetings in preparation for the now underway, Salmon-Challis Forest Plan Revision, for two years. So, it was a happy day this August when the group came together to officially announce its formal membership and commitment to work together as the Central Idaho Public Lands Collaborative.

A great turnout at the Salmon Public Library on August 16 was symbolic of the excitement around the first official meeting of the Central Idaho Public Lands Collaborative. Community members from North Fork to Mackay to Arco, representing four different counties and countless user groups that live, work and play on the Salmon-Challis National Forest, committed to work together as the Forest and BLM revise their 30-year old plans.

SVS has been bringing together individuals that representing timber, mining, ranching, economic development, conservation, motorized and non-motorized recreational interests, as well as citizens, who will work together through this historic opportunity to provide input on the future of public lands management.

Aspen Galore!

In July, Salmon Valley Stewardship in partnership with Bureau of Land Management, Idaho Department of Fish and Game, and Salmon-Challis National Forest Service, hosted an Aspen workshop. This workshop was inspired by the reconvening of the Central Idaho Aspen Working Group, which SVS coordinates. The goal of the collaborative workshop was to inform managers, citizens, and other interested stakeholders about current aspen science in the context of central Idaho's forest and wildlife concerns. We enjoyed having a diverse group attend with participants having none to 32 years of experience working with aspen. The group discussed aspen ecology and potential avenues for aspen restoration and monitoring. Dr. Paul Rogers from the Western Aspen Alliance and Dr. Eva Strand, a Forest, Rangeland, and Fire Sciences professor from the University of Idaho, came to add their expertise to the workshop. The group toured local aspen stands to learn about aspen stand restoration projects, lessons learned, and next steps forward. We also had a fun trivia night at the Pork Peddler with aspen-themed trivia questions! We learned from Dr. Rogers, "Certainty in ecology is almost an oxymoron."



Celebrating Community Conservation

The 2017 LRLT Working Lands Celebration was full of surprises. After a few weeks of sitting on the secret, on June 22nd we were joined by members of the Salmon School Garden Project Committee, members of the Tonsmeire Family and Salmon School District #291 staff and board as we revealed that we had purchased the Salmon School Garden Project Property! We were thrilled that so many of you joined us and were there to share in the celebration as we embark on a new chapter of community conservation work. But we had one more surprise up our sleeve. USFWS intern Joe Stewart had shared with us that he played the bagpipes competitively, and yes, his bagpipes were in Salmon, and yes, he would perform at the Working Lands Celebration! Thanks to the generosity of our sponsors and everyone who attended we were able to raise over \$26,000 to continue conserving the landscapes and lifestyles those of us who live, work and play here cherish.



ALEX SHOLES PHOTOGRAPHY



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SVS 10th Annual Harvest Celebration

Lively as ever, the 10th Annual Harvest Celebration was a big success in gathering the community around our organization and our public lands. The event featured local food, drinks, a silent auction and the presentation of the 2017 David Krosting Sustainability Award

This year, the Salmon Public Library was chosen as the Krosting Award recipient because of the way the current staff and board has physically and culturally transformed the space into an invaluable community pillar. Ella Deutchman, SVS Board President stated, “at a time when libraries could become irrelevant, the board and staff at the Salmon Public Library have made themselves relevant”, pointing to their consistent STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts, and math) programming and amazing resources such as the sound recording room. “Any time you drive by the library during its hours you see it buzzing with activity”, she added. “It’s a place where people go to learn, create, and communicate.” The Library graciously placed the credit for their success on the community, emphasizing that the energetic participation of the Salmon community is responsible for their relevance.

Lastly, we’d like to give a BIG ‘thank you’ to all of our sponsors, auction donators and purchasers, and everyone who came out to celebrate another fantastic year of Salmon Valley Stewardship!



Change is in the Air...

After twelve years at the helm of Lemhi Regional Land Trust, Executive Director, Kristin Troy will be leaving the organization at the end of 2017, though she won’t be going far. Together, with her husband, Mark, she will be managing Middle Fork Lodge on the Middle Fork of the Salmon River in the heart of the Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness. The Troys managed the Lodge from 1998-2000 prior to purchasing Idaho Adventures and are excited for what this next chapter holds for their family.

Troy joined LRLT as the first, and only, staff member in 2005 after being approached by founder Joe Tonsmeire. At the time there was no checkbook, no office and no funding, yet something about the opportunity drew her in. She agreed to work ten hours per week out of her office at Idaho Adventures to help the group get off the ground. While the early years were lean ones, under her leadership the organization has grown to four full time staff, holding thirteen conservation easements and owning three pieces of property and is recognized in the land trust world as a heavyweight champion despite its small size.

Welcome Aboard!



LRLT is excited to welcome Ingrid Fulstone of Tendoy to our board of directors! Raised on a family farm in Nebraska, Ingrid grew up with a deep appreciation for agriculture and its rich history and is dedicated to ensuring agriculture opportunities remain available for future generations. After graduating with a bachelor’s degree in Rangeland Management, she started her career working for the United States Forest Service as a Rangeland Management Specialist. Throughout her career she has worked in South Dakota, Nevada, eastern California and occasionally in Azrou, Morocco before settling in Lemhi County in 2010 with her husband. Working as a Range Specialist Ingrid still enjoys her occasional work overseas and values the opportunity to raise her family in the Lemhi Valley.



We Went Batty!

On October 7th SVS hosted an afternoon of bat education at Sweet Water Hollow. About 40 people of all ages came to decorate bat-shaped cookies and assemble bat houses, using plywood, caulk, screws, and a thick coat of paint! The purpose of the event was to bring in the Halloween season while highlighting bats, an important piece of our urban ecosystem (did you know they can eat up to 1,000 mosquitoes in a single hour?!), and to remind folks that you don’t need to travel out of town to find “wildness” and wildlife. The event was followed by an evening fundraiser and community celebration featuring the band Shakewell, hosted by the Adventure Crew. During the event the bat houses were enthusiastically raffled off to raise money for our education programs!



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