

# Conserve

News from Lemhi Regional Land Trust and Salmon Valley Stewardship

A Quarterly Newsletter

Summer 2010

## Collaborative Forestry

*The Hughes Creek Hazardous Fuels Reduction Project's design and analysis phases were completed in Spring 2009. Here's a brief look at how collaborative forestry looks once a project has community and agency go-ahead.*

### Background

- The project encompasses about 13,000 acres in the Hughes Creek drainage about 5 miles north of North Fork. This was the first project the Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group worked on collaboratively with the Salmon-Challis Natl. Forest.

### What's Been Done To Date?

- The Salmon-Challis has initiated prescribed burning on about 1,500 acres, reducing hazardous fuels.
- **Lemhi County Wildland Urban Interface Office** has worked with landowners to thin trees on private land.
- Large woody debris was added to a half-mile stretch of Hughes Creek on private land to improve stream conditions and fish habitat. This project was a joint effort between landowners **Lowell and Mary Cerise, Salmon Valley Stewardship** and the **Trout Conservancy**.
- SVS crews inventoried aspen stands; in some of those stands, local

contractors removed encroaching conifers.

- The Salmon-Challis replaced the Ditch Creek Bridge.

- An agreement is in place with the **Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation**. This stewardship agreement will include using local contractors to help work on commercial timber harvest and non-commercial thinning.

### Monitoring Efforts

*The Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group believes strongly in multi-party monitoring to make sure the Hughes Creek project goals are met during implementation and beyond.*

- **Salmon-Challis National Forest** staff have been instrumental in helping forest restoration group members and volunteers understand monitoring methods.
- Last summer and this summer, monitoring crews have worked to establish baseline plots in prescribed burn units, old growth areas, and those units where commercial harvest and non-commercial thinning will take place.
- The Cerise property is being monitored for pool depths, changes in gravel composition, and eventually, presence of fish.
- **Socioeconomic monitoring shows that Hughes Creek project-related work has generated nearly \$215,000 in direct revenues.** The Ditch Creek Bridge replacement and road improvement was the biggest contract at just over \$150,000. Other workers included sawyers, horse loggers, weed sprayers, and monitoring crew members. Of the 35 people engaged in Hughes Creek work activities, about 94% of them were from Lemhi County; the rest were from southwest Montana. These figures do not include Forest Service jobs, which are also extremely important to the community.



*Jake Kreilick of Wild West Institute and SVS Intern Brynn Schroeder in a Hughes Creek burn unit with Andy Klimek, of the Salmon-Challis National Forest. Klimek was teaching monitoring techniques to members of the forestry collaborative and monitoring staff.*

## Policy Update

*Both Salmon Valley Stewardship and Lemhi Regional Land Trust are committed to sharing our place-based experiences with policy makers.*

In April, LRLT Chair Tom McFarland attended the **White House Conference on America's Great Outdoors** and land trust director Kristin Troy joined colleagues from Rural Voices for Conservation Coalition (RVCC) on a trip to DC. They met with members of Idaho's Congressional delegation, and representatives from the Agriculture and Interior Departments.

Congressional members and staff responded so well to LRLT and RVCC's stories of on-the-ground conservation successes in rural communities that Kristin was invited to testify at a July 15 Congressional oversight hearing. **"Locally Grown: Creating Rural Jobs with America's Public Lands"** is the title of the House Natural Resources Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests, and Public Lands.

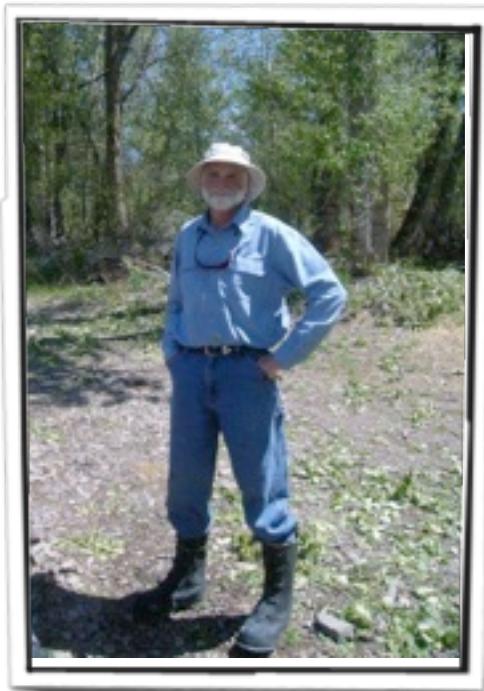
"In Lemhi County and all over the West, we are motivated to create a balance between our environment and our livelihoods. When we figure out how to keep enough water in the streams for fish but still make sure the rancher has enough to irrigate his hay, we know we have succeeded in achieving this balance. We've retained not just a few jobs, but potentially several generations of jobs, and the vibrancy of our small towns, Kristin explained.

We'll keep you posted on these and other exciting policy developments.



*In April, LRLT Director Kristin Troy and SVS Director Gina Knudson met with members of Idaho's Congressional delegation including Sen. James Risch.*

## Volunteer Spotlight



### Ken Thacker

A special thanks to Ken Thacker, who helped make our weedspray days on the 520-acre Kenney Creek Ranch a success. Ken used his professional experience as The Weed Guy to share expertise in proper weed spray application and also to teach all of our volunteers botany tips and conservation rationale behind eliminating noxious weeds.

The stewardship of all conserved properties is one of LRLT's most important objectives, and volunteers like Ken help us achieve that objective. Thanks, Weed Guy!

### Save the Date!

**LRLT and SVS's annual fundraisers are not just a blast -- they are critical to getting our important conservation projects done. Please mark your calendars for the following dates and watch for more information soon:**

- **Lemhi Regional Land Trust Annual BBQ and Fundraiser September TBD. Look for your invitation in the mail.**

- **Salmon Valley Stewardship Fall Harvest Celebration October 16, 2010 (Tickets go on sale soon!)**

## BEHIND THE SCENES

*Both Lemhi Regional Land Trust and Salmon Valley Stewardship are governed by a committed board of directors.*

*Lemhi Regional Land Trust recently welcomed **Trish Dowton** to its board. Trish is a Salmon High School grad and went on to complete her degree in Agricultural Economics from the University of Idaho (1990). She and her husband Stan own and operate Dowton 3X Ranch in the Pahsimeroi Valley. Trish firmly believes that conservation easements in Lemhi and Custer Counties "should include people on the land to take care of the land."*

***Julie Hopkins and Bill McLaughlin** have joined the board of Salmon Valley Stewardship.*

*Julie spent part of her childhood at the Yellowjacket Mine, attending grade school in Cobalt. She currently works for the Forest Service as a Minerals Management Specialist. She says SVS's promotion and support of local foods and sustainable agriculture are some of her biggest reasons for joining SVS and she has agreed to be our new secretary! Hooray!*

*Bill is a Wyoming native who retired as the Okanogan National Forest Supervisor in north central Washington. After retiring, Bill worked as a conflict resolution facilitator so his skills and experience are extremely valuable to SVS as we work with public land management agencies to find community-backed solutions.*



*SVS Board member Bill McLaughlin lends a hand at the Hughes Ck. stream restoration.*

# The SVS Challenge: 5 Ways to Step Up



1. Join the **Anderson Mountain Roadless Field Tour, August 3.** The roadless area will be the most complicated place on the Upper North Fork project to

design restoration and wildfire protection treatments so early input will be a huge plus.

2. Take 4 hours (or so) to be a **community gardner**. Many people enjoy the bounty and the beauty of the Sacajawea Community Heritage Garden, yet the work falls on a few volunteers. Pull weeds or help harvest and prepare produce for the Farmers Market or a needy family.
3. On August 20th SVS is hosting **The Big Green Bus**. Big Green is a 1989 MCI coach bus powered by college students and vegetable oil. The road trip with a mission is to promote simple lifestyle changes that conserve money, energy, and resources through improving efficiency in every day activities. Join us for a potluck dinner the

evening of August 20 at the Sacajawea Center and tour the bus!

4. Sign up to be a **Hughes Creek project monitor**. Citizen science is fun and no experience is required. Some of the sites we monitor require hikes in steep terrain, but others require little hiking. We'll match you to your comfort level.
5. **Become a member of SVS.** Contributions from people like you have been the key to success. At times we've been able to find outside funding for personnel but not needed equipment, as an example. Individual contributions give us the flexibility to realize on-the-ground conservation successes.

## Building Smart Near Streams & Riparian Areas

A Workshop for Builders, Landowners, Real Estate Professionals, and Others

Featuring Instructor Tom Parker of Montana's Bitterroot Valley

August 18 & 19, 2010

Register Now to Secure a Spot for this limited seating event! To register email [salmonvalley@centurytel.net](mailto:salmonvalley@centurytel.net) or call 756-1686.

LRLT and SVS are proud to be co-sponsoring this workshop with Idaho Dept. of Fish and Game, Upper Salmon Basin Watershed Project, Salmon Chapter of Outfitters and Guides, and The Nature Conservancy.



Gary Gadwa of Stanley shot this photo of Valley Creek escaping its banks last spring.

## LAND TRUST ROUND UP

### Kenney Creek Hike

On June 11<sup>th</sup>, a group of Salmon community members and LRLT staff and board members gathered at the Kenney Creek Ranch. LRLT Executive Director, Kristin Troy, explained the complex dynamics of the Kenney Creek acquisition and importance of keeping Kenney Creek connected to the Lemhi River year-round to support Chinook salmon spawning and rearing. Kenney Creek provides critical habitat for anadromous fish when connected to the Lemhi River. Local historian Fred Snook also enlightened the group

with the history of Kenney Creek and the original settlers, dating back to the 1890s.

### LRLT Wish List

If you have any of the following items and wish to donate to a great cause, email [Breann@lemhilandtrust.org](mailto:Breann@lemhilandtrust.org).

- Hand-held GPS Unit
- Digital Camera
- Fire Proof Filing Cabinet
- InFocus-type Projector
- Window Blinds for Meeting Room



Breann Westfall, LRLT's stewardship director, sprays weeds on the Kenney Creek property as part of Lemhi County's cooperative program. Thanks to the Student Conservation Association and all our other great volunteers!

# LRLT Hiking Series

ALL HIKES BEGIN AT OUR OFFICE, 105 S. CENTER, @ 9:30 AM. BRING LUNCH!

*July 23 - Adams Ranch on Hayden Creek.*

*Enjoy Hayden Creek, one of the Lemhi's most important chinook salmon producing tributaries.*

*August 6 - Tonsmeire Ranch on Hayden Creek.*

*Members Only tour. Spot a chinook salmon!*

*August 20 - McFarland Easement on Carmen Creek.*

*See the beautiful Carmen Creek Valley like you've never seen it before.*



Summer 2010

Lemhi Regional Land Trust  
Salmon Valley Stewardship  
PO Box 871  
Salmon, ID 83467

Name  
Address  
Salmon, ID 83467

Visit Us Online!

Salmon Valley Stewardship

[www.salmonvalley.org](http://www.salmonvalley.org)

513 Main Street

Salmon, ID 83467

208/756-1686



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