

METHOW CONSERVANCY NEWS

For Wildlife ♦ For Farming ♦ For Community ♦ Forever

*Spring/Summer
2011 Newsletter*



*2010/2011
Annual Report*

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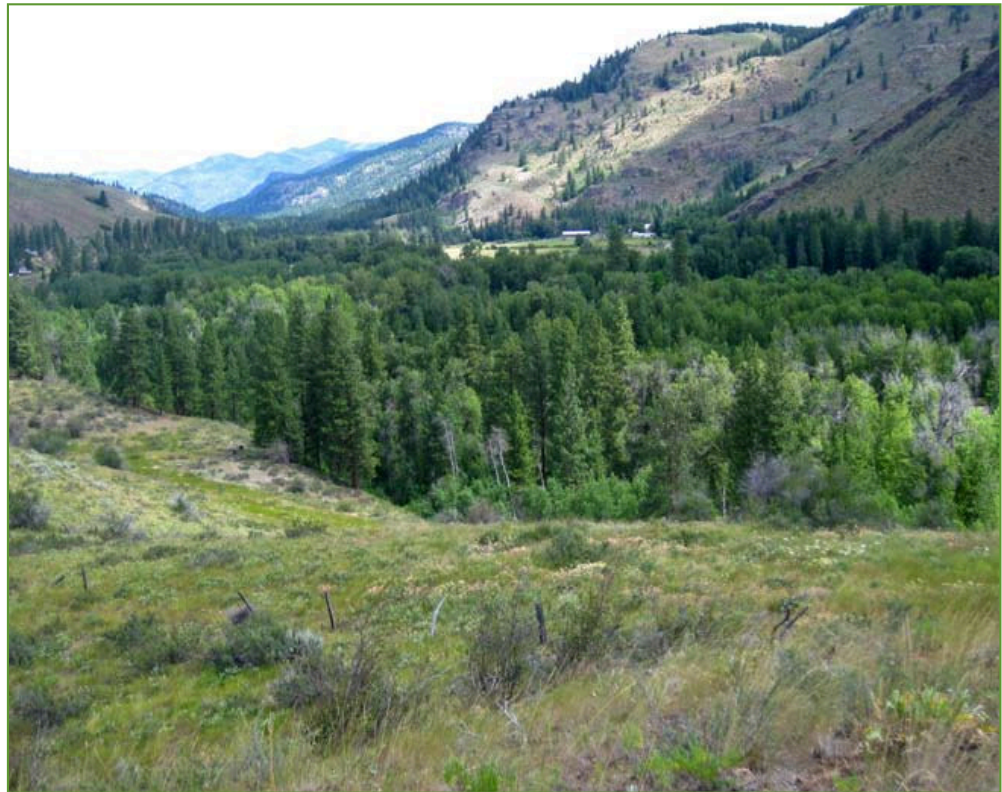


A Cowgirl's Conservation Story

Over 100 people, from many different walks of life, have placed Methow Conservancy Conservation Easements on their property. This is a story about one of those people.

It's fitting that Sarah Parrington is camping on her Chewuch River property. Camping is how Sarah first came to know the Methow Valley and Pasayten Wilderness in the 1980s when she began coming over in the summers to work as a cook for local backcountry outfitters.

For twelve years, Sarah worked for many different outfitters and packers, including Aaron Lee Burkhart, Steve Darwood and the Forest Service trail crews lead by Ellis Fink. Sarah has seen the Sawtooths and the Pasayten in ways that most of us will never know. Imagine sunsets along the Boundary Trail and sunrises from Cathedral Lakes; camping on top of Tatoosh Butte



Protection of the riparian area, wetlands, beaver ponds, cottonwood forests and 1150 feet of river front on the Parrington conservation easement will support endangered fish species by providing critical elements like large woody debris, shade for cooler water temperatures, and groundwater recharge. Photo by Eric Bard.

and sleeping under the stars at Spanish Camp. These are the places that Sarah knew before she had her own swimming hole on the Chewuch River.

Sarah Parrington owns 41 acres along the Chewuch River and she recently placed a conservation easement on the unique property that features an interesting mix of distinct Methow Valley land types. Intact agricultural land with good soil adjoins high quality shrub-steppe and then transitions to lush riparian habitat and Chewuch River shoreline. This special piece of land,

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The Methow Conservancy's mission is to inspire people to care for and conserve the land of the Methow Valley, ensuring it will remain a place where future generations can enjoy the rural character and natural beauty we cherish today.

Board Member Spotlight

MEET OUR NEW BOARD MEMBERS

Craig Boesel

Craig's roots in the Methow Valley run deep. His father's side of the family homesteaded in the late 1880's at the north end of what is now WDFW's "Big Valley" along Highway 20 north of Winthrop. Soon after that his Grandfather (Boesel) homesteaded at the mouth of Falls Creek up the Chewuch River where the open field is now a WA Dept. of Fish and Wildlife camping area. His great grandfather on his mother's side of the family, the Andersons, had a place in Lower Bear Creek in the early 1900's that was used as a WSU research center. This is where it was discovered that iodine was needed to supplement animal's diets in this area of Washington (shortage of iodine was shown to cause certain anomalies in baby pigs etc.) His great, great grandmother, Martha Ann Bacus Filer, arrived in 1891. She was a widow with three children who homesteaded on the Bear Creek land that is part of Craig's place today. In Craig's youth, that part of the home place in Bear Creek was all apple orchards. Craig attended the old brick Winthrop (Pirates) High School and graduated in Education and Physical Therapy from Washington State University. He financed his college by working for the United States Forest Service, and continued working for them, mostly as a smokejumper, for most of 16 years while putting a cattle ranch together. In 1980, Craig became a full-time cattle rancher running cattle primarily on public lands in the mountains of the upper Beaver Creek area in the summers. Craig feels fortunate that he was given the opportunity to raise four sons on a cattle ranch in the Methow. Part of Craig's ranch was the first conservation easement for the newly incorporated Methow Conservancy in 1998. He placed a second conservation easement on more of the ranch in 2008. Craig has served as a director on several boards in the valley, including the MV School Board, Okanogan County Electric Coop, Okanogan Conservation District, Fulton Ditch Company, Barkley Irrigation Company, Chewuch Canal Company, and Methow Valley Education Foundation.



Richard Hart

Richard Hart is a historian who provides expert testimony in cases involving Native American tribes and environmental issues. He has testified on numerous occasions before the United States Claims Court, federal district courts, state courts, and United States congressional committees in both the House and Senate. He was Executive Director of the Institute of the North American West and its predecessor, the Institute of the American West, from 1977 to 1996, and currently heads HWA, a private historical research company. He is the author or editor of six books, has published more than fifty articles and essays, and has presented more than fifty professional papers. He and his wife, composer Lynette Westendorf, first came to the Valley in 1989 and moved here permanently in 2000.

THANK YOU HAIKUS TO RETIRING BOARD MEMBERS

Steve Dixon and **Vicky Welch**, both long-term Methow Valley community members, just finished six years of Methow Conservancy Board service. Our by-laws limit board members to two three-year terms and then they must take at least a one year break. This six-year term was Vicky's second in our 15 year history. Now that's commitment! Our existing Board wrote Haiku poems for Steve and Vicky's "retirement." Here are a few we thought you'd like!

For Vicky Welch:

*Vicky tends to Earth
Comp plans, compost, compassion
Keeper of the place*

By Gordy Reynaud

For Vicky Welch:

*Vigil valley friend
May you rest some, recover,
You have given much.*

By Paul Butler

For Steve Dixon:

*Longbeard wiseman came
guiding thru the mind-maze
creatures still have space*

By Jane Gilbertsen

Carpe Diem Stevum

*Onward old man life
Toward rising waterfall
Drink deep sweet nectar*

By Vic Stokes

Field Notes

Stewardship News

By Heide Andersen, Methow Conservancy Stewardship Director

For those of you I have not yet had the chance to meet, my name is Heide Andersen and I have been working as the Stewardship Director since the end of January. Prior to moving to the Methow Valley, I worked for the last 12 years as the Open Space and Trails Director for the Town of Breckenridge in Summit County, Colorado. Before that I lived in Boulder and worked for the Colorado Mountain Club as their Conservation Director. I have also worked for an environmental consulting firm; the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; and the U.S. House of Representatives. Most of my work has been focused on public land acquisition and management, and balancing conservation and outdoor recreation needs. I am originally from the Puget Sound area, but left when I was in elementary school. My father worked for the National Park Service, so besides living on Mt. Rainier and in the North Cascades and the Olympics, I also ended up living in a number of beautiful places across the country. Now that I'm in the Methow, I'm eager to discover more about the area's spectacular ecology and vibrant community. I look forward to meeting more of you, our members and supporters, this year!

With summer upon us, I have begun exploring the wild lands of the Valley, monitoring some of our conservation easements, and assisting landowners with stewardship needs. I also help oversee the Methow Beaver Restoration Project which is in its fourth year and continues to be funded by the Department of Ecology, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and the Yakama Nation. It is a collaborative project between the Methow Conservancy, U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife. This year's field season started in late April with our "beaver crew" of four wildlife biologists continuing to relocate nuisance beavers to potential habitat higher in the watersheds. This year, we will be installing temperature gauges and flow meters to quantitatively measure in-stream habitat parameters in locations where beavers will be strategically translocated and compare them to data taken in control locations. Aside from positive feedback that the project participants have received from the major funding entities, other agencies have begun to look at the success of this project and how relocating beavers in other areas may assist with landscape level restoration efforts. A critical part of this project is working together with landowners to find solutions to their beaver issues, as well as to educate them and the general public on beavers and their important roles as ecosystem engineers. Learn more about the Methow Beaver Restoration Project and see a video at www.methowconservancy.org/beaver_project.html.



Lewis' Woodpecker by Paul Bannick

The Owl & the Woodpecker

**Don't Miss this Methow Conservancy Program in Seattle!
Tuesday, June 21 at the Burke Museum on the UW campus**

We are once again teaming up with award-winning Seattle photographer and author Paul Bannick to bring you a fabulous, free program where we'll bring the outside inside for a fun, social evening. Paul has worked with us two times to give programs in the Methow Valley. Now, we are thrilled to be able to work with the Burke Museum and Paul Bannick to present a Seattle program. We hope our westside members and their friends will join us!

Tuesday, June 21: Doors open at 5:30 and we'll have two presentation times (6:30pm and 8pm) in an effort to accommodate everyone. Enjoy refreshments and mingle with fellow Methow Valley friends and bird and photography fanatics. The event is free and open to everyone.

Look for more details on our website!

- Tour the Burke Museum's newest special exhibit, *The Owl and the Woodpecker*, featuring the photographs and field stories of Paul Bannick.
- Sit and absorb an unforgettable visual and auditory presentation by Paul.
- Look at and purchase Paul's stunning book *The Owl and the Woodpecker*, which continues to be one of the bestselling bird books in North America.

The Owl and the Woodpecker presentation will provide an inside look at the ways owls and woodpeckers define and enrich their habitats, how the lives of these cavity-dwellers are intertwined, and the critical importance of conservation.

Learn more about the exhibit at:

www.washington.edu/burkemuseum/owl_woodpecker/

Learn more about Paul Bannick, his exquisite book and much more at: www.paulbannick.com

Cowgirl Conservation (continued)

zoned for 5-acre lots, is now permanently protected with a conservation easement and will only ever see one home on it.

Sarah is a third generation Seattleite and she still lives on the westside, in Kingston, where she maintains a small farm and raises grass-fed Hereford cattle on the same property where she was raised. Of course, no farm is complete without a flock of chickens, and a productive garden. Sarah returned to the property in 1978 and has been farming it every since. In 2003 the farm was named “Wildlife Habitat Farm on the Year” by the Kitsap County Conservation District.



Sarah Parrington worked for backcountry outfitters in the Methow Valley and North Cascades for over a decade in the 1980s and 90s. She raises grass-fed beef cattle and vegetables in Kingston where she grew up. Here in the Methow, she protected her peaceful Chewuch River property with a conservation easement.

Sarah’s grandfather, a UW professor, came to Seattle in 1908. With summers off, he spent time in the Kingston area with his family as a member of the University Outing Club. Sarah’s father grew up playing on the tide flats and in the forests north of Kingston. He also became a teacher with summers off so Sarah and her siblings spent their summers on the same property exploring the tide flats, swimming and boating in the Sound, building forts and spending as much time outside as possible.

While Sarah was still young, her parents bought the farm she lives on today, and the dream of nearly all little girls came true – she got a horse! Sarah and her sister spent lots of time on the back of a horse. During high school, Sarah showed hunters/jumpers, but over time it was just riding, being outside and camping that she wanted to do. Sarah was a cowgirl at heart but it would take some time for her to realize that and make it a full-time reality. College and a white-collar world came first.

Sarah has seen the Sawtooths and the Pasayten in ways that most of us will never know.

After majoring in studio art at Colorado College, Sarah studied architecture and drafting and worked as a mechanical draftsman. Sarah says this was back when things were “old school” - before computers - when everything was drawn by hand.

In 1978, Sarah moved back to Kingston and by 1980 Sarah had discovered the Methow Valley. That’s when she began coming over in the summers to work as a cook for outfitters. It was her notable cooking skills, horsemanship and hard work that gave her so many great summers in and around the Methow Valley, but now Sarah’s looking ahead to some well-deserved down time in the Valley, enjoying her peaceful spot on the Chewuch River, and listening to all the things her land has to teach her.

Undoubtedly, she’ll be learning a thing or two about fish. The Methow River basin, including the Chewuch River, is the upper limit of wild, naturally-reproducing spring Chinook salmon and summer steelhead in the mid-Columbia River ever since the creation of Grand Coulee Dam in 1939. The numerous side channels and pools, and the intact nature of the Chewuch River watershed combine to create a productive drainage that has made the Chewuch River a conservation priority for several endangered fish species (spring chinook salmon, steelhead trout, and bull trout).

Protection of the riparian area, wetlands, beaver ponds, cottonwood forests and 1150 feet of river front on the Parrington conservation easement will support fish by providing critical elements like large woody debris, shade for cooler water temperatures, and groundwater recharge. Additionally, gravel bars, river ripples, and backwater pools of the meandering Chewuch River provide important habitat for spawning and rearing juvenile salmonids.

We thank Sarah Parrington for protecting her special piece of Chewuch River frontage and agricultural land, and for sharing her story with us. We also want to give a shout-out to Lee Miller, a local realtor and Methow Conservancy Advisory Council member. Lee introduced Sarah to us when he realized she was interested in a conservation outcome for her property. Last but certainly not least, partial funding for this conservation easement project was made possible by the Bonneville Power Administration and the Yakama Nation through the Columbia Basin Fish Accords. Now, here’s to a summer of sleeping under the stars, cooking over a campfire, and exploring new and old places. Happy trails everyone!



The numerous side channels and pools, and the intact nature of the Chewuch River watershed combine to create a productive drainage that has made the Chewuch River a conservation priority for endangered spring chinook salmon, steelhead trout, and bull trout. Photo by Eric Bard.

Owl Peak

Help Us Protect a Unique Piece of the Methow Valley

The Owl Peak property is unique – at 238 acres it is one of the Valley’s largest remaining tracts of pristine shrub-steppe habitat. It hosts intact and diverse native plant communities, lush riparian draws and abundant wildlife high above the Methow Valley floor in the Rendezvous area. We need your help ensuring that it stays protected forever. The property was bequeathed to the Methow Conservancy in 2006 by Ann Lennartz. Ann was committed to restoring native plant landscapes. She focused her time and energy on this endeavor throughout the Pacific Northwest, including this amazing piece of property here in the Methow. Ann protected and restored natural places that will speak to us deeply for generations to come, and she left us a very tangible legacy of a healthy landscape that we now call Owl Peak. We have an incredible opportunity to protect this distinctive conservation property, but we need you, our members, to help us do it right.



The Methow Conservancy is currently marketing the Owl Peak property. At the sale of the property, a conservation easement will be placed on the entire 238 acres, allowing one homesite and prohibiting further subdivision. What could have been 11 houses will forever remain one thoughtfully placed homesite surrounded by incredible wildlife habitat and critical open space. And the funds from the sale will go directly toward the ongoing work of the Methow Conservancy so that more special places in the Methow can be protected.

Whether purchasing a property like this is in your deck of cards or not, you can still help. We are asking you to be an ambassador for conservation and help us spread the word. Maybe you know people who would be interested in Owl Peak. We are looking for someone or a group of people who not only want to own an extraordinary property, but who also find value in playing a pivotal role in protecting one of the Valley’s largest remaining tracts of intact shrub-steppe habitat. Thank you!



Owl Peak at a Glance

- Approximately 238 acres of pristine shrub-steppe, sitting high above the valley floor with one-of-a-kind views of Gardner Mountain and the Sawtooth Wilderness
- Perched between world class recreation, vast acres of already protected land, and the convenience of town



- Fantastic skiing and snowshoeing out your back door and close to the Rendezvous Nordic trail system
- Stunning rolling terrain, a seasonal creek, aspen woodlands and abundant wildlife
- High quality off-grid custom-built cabin with gracious covered porch, hot rocks sauna, custom stone walls and woodworking, an outdoor shower, large garage/shop and a custom guest cabin
- Keep it the way it is; expand existing structures; or design something new within the designated homesite zone
- Fantastic opportunity for a group purchase; spread out the costs and share the large property with family and friends

See details at www.methowconservancy.org/owlpeak. Contact Jeanne White, our Conservation Project Manager, at 509.996.2870, to schedule a meeting to discuss the proposed conservation easement terms, stewardship plan, and our Land Sales policies.

From the Director

Dear Members and Friends,

Given that the value of “transparency” has been a subject of much discussion in the non-profit world over the past couple of months, let me start by disclosing right up front that this is not my first attempt at this edition of our newsletter’s *From the Director* piece! In fact, it is probably more like draft number three or four.

It seems that each time I have seized upon a relevant thought or observation to build from, the world has moved on, changing the backdrop just enough to leave the kernel of initial inspiration feeling less relevant. You can take heart in knowing that you’ve been spared everything from ramblings on the impact of video-taped donor meetings and 60 Minutes inquiries into organizational transparency, to reflections on recent community engagement in the Comprehensive Planning process inspired by hours spent on hard plastic chairs or in the bleachers of schools across our County. This list goes on.



Executive Director, Jason Paulsen, on a backcountry ski outing this winter.

This is not to suggest that constructive participation in efforts such as the on-going County Comprehensive Plan process are not worthy of as much attention as we all can devote, or that transparency is not a critical part of any organization rooted in the public trust. In fact, you’ll note that we’ve incorporated Part One of our FY 2010-11 Annual Report with this newsletter, with Part Two coming in the fall after our annual financial audit is complete. There should be no question that as members, you deserve to know how we spend each dollar with which you entrust us.

Rather, after three weeks and no less than four false starts, I’ve come to realize that this most recent lesson in how fast today’s world shifts has been an important reminder of why our conservation work here in the Methow Valley is so important.

At the end of the day, what you are supporting when you support the work of the Methow Conservancy is permanence. When a private landowner chooses to work with us to create a conservation easement protecting wildlife habitat, productive farm soils, dynamic riverfront or scenic views, they do so trusting and knowing that future generations - FOREVER - will come to know and enjoy these values that contribute so much to the rural character of our community.

In a world where documents like Comprehensive Plans and even local zoning can be changed at the whim of local politics, and where breaking news streams in from around the world around the clock, I hope you take some comfort in knowing that each new conservation easement project you make possible in the Methow Valley represents an opportunity to slow down, to breathe deeply, and to know that we have made a difference that will be felt and appreciated beyond today’s headlines. This may not make the most compelling headline or Twitter-feed (it may not even make the most compelling “From the Director” piece) but it matters. And, it will matter forever.

Thank you for your support and best wishes for a summer season filled with opportunities to enjoy all that you are making possible here in the Methow Valley.

Jason Paulsen, Executive Director

Got Kids?

Then you’ll definitely want to get a copy of our brand-new ***Young Naturalist’s Activity Booklet!***

The multi-page booklet is free and is both downloadable from our website or available at our office and many places around the Valley.

It features Methow Valley-specific mazes, crossword puzzles, coloring pages, word finds, and other games, with fun facts about the Valley’s abundant flora and fauna.

Look for these fun, new Methow Conservancy publications in late June!

Keep up with all of the latest news from us with our monthly **E-Newsletter**

www.methowconservancy.org/enews

Wanna Be a Naturalist?

We’ve been busy this spring, so along with the kid’s Activity Booklet, we also just created a “pocket” ***Field Guide to the Methow Valley.***

In this easy-to-carry “pocket naturalist guide” you can identify over 100 plants, birds, reptiles, amphibians and mammals in the Methow Valley.

Look for details about getting your ***Methow Valley Field Guide*** on our website, in e-news, or on our Facebook page!

We Need YOU ~ Your Support Matters!

*Your tax-deductible donation can help permanently protect the Methow Valley you love.
Please consider making a donation TODAY!*

Use these optional 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'll receive our once-a-month E-News, our primary source of news and events)

Phone _____

You may also contribute online. Go to www.methowconservancy.org and click the "Donate/Become a Member" button.

I've enclosed my check I would like to give anonymously

Please charge \$_____ to my credit card. (We take Visa, Mastercard, Discover and American Express)

Card # _____

Exp. date: ____/____/____ Signature: _____



Thank You!

Mail To: Methow Conservancy • PO Box 71 • Winthrop, WA 98862

2010-2011 Accomplishments

Membership - Over 880 members (households and individuals) donated over \$400,000.

Volunteers - Dozens of community members contributed well over 400 hours of volunteer time, from field work to office chores to event prep.

Imagine the Methow - Completed a three-year campaign to raise over \$20M in private donations and public grants for the protection of priority conservation lands in the Methow Valley.

Conservation - Completed nine new land conservation projects including the permanent protection of two large farmland properties on the Twisp-Winthrop Eastside Rd so that over 1000 acres have been protected in the Winthrop to Twisp corridor since 1996.

Stewardship - Monitored our Methow Conservancy conservation easements, now totaling 88. Completed a three-year riparian restoration project, caging over 700 young trees on 13 local properties. Continued the Methow Beaver Project, relocating 57 beaver to upland sites for water and habitat restoration.

Community - Our active conservation education program continues to expand. Our "1st Tuesday" natural history series, now in its 14th year saw an average monthly attendance of 94 people. The "1st Tuesday" program also hit the road for the first time when we partnered with the Burke Museum in Seattle this past March.

Your generous support makes our work possible.

Thank you!



Here we are! From left to right, standing: Joy Schwab, John Sunderland, Heide Andersen, Dawn Woodruff, Jason Paulsen, Jeanne White with Cooper; kneeling: Mary Kiesau, Sarah Brooks, Julie Grialou with Theo, and Mary Morgan

THE METHOW CONSERVANCY
PO BOX 71
315 RIVERSIDE AVENUE
WINTHROP, WA 98862
509.996.2870
WWW.METHOWCONSERVANCY.ORG



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Upcoming Events



The view from Upper Bear Creek Rd across the landscape of Pearygin Lake State Park and the hills of Winthrop show a summer growing up lush and green. Snow from the mountains will water the creeks and rivers, helping farmers and fish, for many months to come. Photo by Mary Kiesau.

June 21st: “The Owl & the Woodpecker” Methow Conservancy “1st Tuesday” at the Burke Museum in Seattle with Paul Bannick. See the article on pg 3.

July 1st: “Living with the River” River Ecology Raft Trip, 9am to 3pm. Registration required; space limited; \$95.

July 13th: The Methow Conservancy sponsors the Kids’ Activity at the Mazama Community Market. The Market runs from 5-7pm. Free.

August 3rd: “1st Tuesday” program (on a Wednesday) “Hiking Washington’s History: Trails Found and Not Found,” with Judy Bentley, 7:30pm at the Mazama Community Center. Free.

Upcoming “1st Tuesdays” include programs on **Bull Trout** and **Grouse**, and upcoming field classes will be on **Geology** and **Alpine Wildflowers**. *Stay tuned to E-News for details on all our programs, field classes and more.*