

PRESERVE: Acquisition provides critical continuity

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expediting this new phase of the rebirth of Whychus Creek.

“It would probably take about 20 years to do the whole thing one reach at a time, like we did at Camp Polk,” Egertson said.

Although the heavy work of rechannelizing the stream will not begin for another year, the overall process has already begun. Dozens of downed trees, root balls still intact, have been trucked to the site in preparation for the creation of diversions and log jams in the new channels and meanders.

“We have a lot of other restoration projects already going on,” said Egertson. “In the meantime, we’re stockpiling things as they become available.”

The current plan calls for restoration to be undertaken in one-mile segments, beginning with the lower half of the new property, which would be about mile four of the six-mile stretch presently being

targeted. This portion of the acreage includes beautiful stands of orange-barked ponderosa pines and lush grasses, so extra care will be needed to preserve some of the prime habitat already present.

“This is a really large floodplain, here,” Egertson said. “In these reaches, we will be knocking down (Army) Corps of Engineers berms and putting in log jams and letting the water do its work.”

As the restoration of one area continues, beginning phases of the ongoing process will move into the next segments to be treated. Probably the next segment to be addressed would be the upper half of the new acquisition, to be followed by the two segments in the original Whychus Canyon Preserve holdings.

Egertson said that the canyon, and hence the floodplain, in that area is quite a bit narrower than the newer half and would, therefore, require less extensive restoration work.

“There are some areas there and at Rimrock Ranch where the stream has already done a good job of restoring itself,” she said.

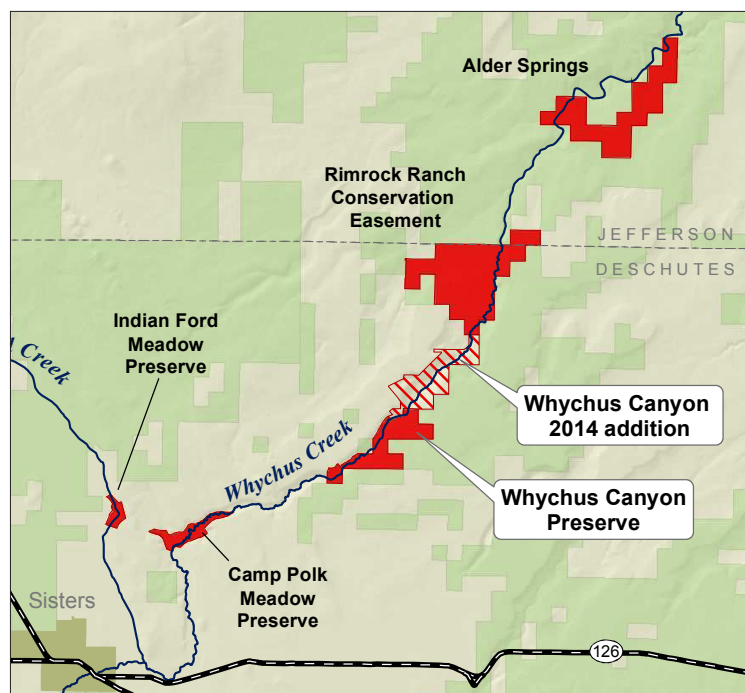
Extensive work at Rimrock Ranch is still probably five or six years away, Egertson said. She explained that the work at the ranch would probably be a mixture of rechanneling plus preserving and enhancing natural processes already underway.

Visits to Land Trust sites are always a balancing act between public access and habitat preservation. DLT is already working with ODFW and the BLM to look at the feasibility of extending the existing trail system in the area. Additionally, six historical interpretive signs are to be installed in the next few weeks along the historic Santiam Wagon Road in the previously developed area.

Generally, there will not be public access onto the floodplain.

“We will, however be hosting tours,” Egertson said. “Some are scheduled for the fall. We will, of course, have stream restoration tours even before it begins so folks can see what it looks like now and what it will look like afterward.”

For more information about the Deschutes Land Trust, their free guided tours, volunteer opportunities, or to contribute to the Campaign for Whychus Creek, contact the Land Trust at 541-330-0017 or visit www.deschuteslandtrust.org.



GRAPHIC PROVIDED
The crosshatched section shows the new addition to the Whychus Canyon Preserve. This acquisition completes a six-mile stretch of Whychus Creek that is now entirely under the protection of DLT.

Sisters salutes...

• Chris Frye wrote:

I would like to take a second to salute Darren Layne. Civic duty doesn’t begin to describe what Darren has done for this community.

Darren has been on boards or committees continuously since 1995. Darren has served on: Sisters School District Fund Raising Committee aka Sisters School Foundation; several stints

on Sisters School District Budget Committee; several terms on the chamber board; the Fiscal Advisory Committee; several terms on Sisters Planning Commission; and currently the Sisters Park & Recreation District board; and Sisters High School Hall of Fame Committee.

It is people like Darren Layne that make Sisters the amazing place it is today.

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Kathy Bourdage (left) and Peggy Anderson clear debris during a volunteer cleanup at Metolius Meadows.



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