

# Illinois River property purchased by Western Rivers Conservancy for \$2.25 mil.

Western Rivers Conservancy (WRC), a non-profit group based in Portland has purchased 871 acres along Illinois River.

The land is located near the point where the Illinois flows into the Rogue River, 50 miles east

of Gold Beach.

Phil Wallin, WRC president, said that the group has conveyed the land to the Siskiyou National Forest to be managed as part of the Wild and Scenic River.

The land is directly

across Illinois River from Oak Flat recreation area near Agness. Wallin said that Western Rivers had worked for five years with the land owner, Bill Sweet, and Siskiyou National Forest to get the land into public ownership.

The purchase was made possible by an appropriation of \$2,250,000 from the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund.

Sen. Gordon Smith took an active role in seeking the funds and said the appropriation was another

"team effort" by the Oregon delegation.

The project is in the district of Congressman Peter DeFazio, who also helped in the appropriation.

DeFazio noted that Sweet had purchased additional river shoreline and

held it until the public could acquire it from him.

Western Rivers Conservancy is a private, non-profit organization whose mission is to conserve the most outstanding river ecosystems in the Western United States, primarily through land acquisition.

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