

Celebrate the East Moraine on Sept. 10

By Lisa Britton

Go! Magazine

JOSEPH — After a delay of two years, the community is now ready to celebrate the protection of the East Moraine.

In 2020, 1,800 acres of Wallowa Lake's East Moraine was transferred to Wallowa County after work by the Wallowa Lake Moraines Partnership, which includes Wallowa County, Wallowa Land Trust, Wallowa Resources and Oregon Parks and Recreation Department.

"Moraine" refers to the rocky hill bordering Wallowa Lake that was formed by a glacier.

A celebration of this milestone was delayed by the COVID-19 pandemic, but on Saturday, Sept. 10 the community is gathering for a special event.

At 3 p.m. that day, participants can join a guided hike up the East Moraine led



Leon Werdinger/Contributed Photo

A community celebration is planned Sept. 10 to recognize the protection of the East Moraine Community Forest.

by Dr. Ellen Morris Bishop, Kathleen Ackley and Larry Nall.

Ackley, executive director of Wallowa Land Trust, will talk about the history of the partnership. Nall is a forester, and will speak to that aspect of the area, and Bishop, a geologist, will talk about the natural landscape.

At 5 p.m., a catered dinner and live music is planned on the lawn of the Wallowa Lake Lodge.

These events are free and open to the public. Organizers are requiring an RSVP to plan for the events. Participants can sign up for the hike, the dinner, or both. Please

RSVP by Sept. 5 at www.wallowaresources.org/east-moraine-celebration-rsvp.

HISTORY

After fundraising efforts garnered nearly \$6.5 million in grants and donations, Wallowa County purchased the East Moraine in early 2020 with the vision of managing the land as a community forest and protecting native plants, wildlife and cultural resources. This also protects the area from future housing developments.

A management plan is set to be approved soon.

"That's been a collaborative, long process," said Sarah Kleinhanzl, communications and outreach coordinator for Wallowa Land Trust.

Individual donors contributed more than \$1.1 million to the purchase. Other funds came from the USDA Forest Service's Forest Legacy Program, Oregon Parks and Recreation and The Nez Perce Tribe.

Although there is private property along the East Moraine, there are two areas of public access — the "green gate" and Turner Lane.

"There are a series of trails to the top of the moraine," Kleinhanzl said.

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