



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Conservationists acquired Boneyard Ridge on Tillamook Head in July.

## Land conservancy to hold one-day tree sale

### Buying a tree supports restoration goals

By Lyra Fontaine  
Cannon Beach Gazette

Dreaming of a “green” Christmas? The North Coast Land Conservancy is selling trees from Boneyard Ridge Habitat Reserve, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Dec. 4.

“The trees look really beautiful,” the conservancy’s Stewardship Director Melissa Reich said. “It will be a cool opportunity for people who want to feel good about where their trees come from this holiday season.”

The trees will be from a stand of young firs that the conservancy is thinning to create a healthy forest on Boneyard Ridge. The property, acquired by the conservancy in July, is a former commercial tree farm.

“They planted to maximize timber production,” Reich said. “Our goal is to create an old-growth forest in the future. We need to thin the trees down so that they will grow faster and not compete with each other.”

After the holidays, the conservancy requests that people return their Boneyard Ridge trees to the Circle Creek Conservation Center. The returned

trees will be placed in waterways at Boneyard Ridge or Circle Creek, where they will serve as refuge for juvenile coho salmon and contribute to the food chain for coho and other wildlife.

“We’re doing large-scale restoration on Circle Creek so we can add them to the creek or some of the off-channel wetlands,” Reich said. “It helps create more structure and shade, and the nutrients break down. It’s good for amphibians and fish.”

The conservancy requests a donation of \$100 for each tree. These donations and the trees’ eventual use as habitat will help support the conservancy’s restoration work.

Trees will be sold at the conservancy’s Circle Creek Conservation Center in Seaside from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Most trees are noble firs, about 5 feet tall or higher, with sturdy branches and an airy structure. Some grand firs may be available. Trees will be freshly cut the previous day, and it is encouraged to come early for the best selection.

Circle Creek Conservation Center is at the end of Rippet Road in Seaside, on the west side of U.S. 101, one-seventh of a mile north of the junction with U.S. 26. Follow the road west and north a short distance, passing a gravel quarry on your left, to where it ends at the big barn.

# Circle Creek floodplain provides lessons in habitat restoration

## Bonamici tours floodplain restoration in Seaside

By Lyra Fontaine  
Cannon Beach Gazette

U.S. Rep. Suzanne Bonamici got a bird’s eye view of the North Coast Land Conservancy’s floodplain restoration project from an area on Boneyard Ridge, overlooking Circle Creek and U.S. Highway 101 and the ocean.

Bonamici, D-Ore., visited the land conservancy’s Circle Creek Habitat Reserve and Boneyard Ridge property on Monday, Nov. 21, to speak with staff and see how the project alleviated yearly flooding.

During high tides and heavy rains, Highway 101 would flood every winter and the road would have to close, said Melissa Reich, the organization’s stewardship director. When the highway was impassable, Cannon Beach residents were unable to get to the hospital by ambulance.

### The plan

To restore the floodplain, the land conservancy and its partners — including Clatsop County and the Oregon Department of Transportation — excavated sections of a berm that was built along the Necanicum River, leaving certain areas to maintain older trees.

The partial berm removal in 2013 allowed water from the Necanicum River to naturally flood the Circle Creek floodplain, instead of the adjacent Highway 101, thus preventing unsafe driving conditions, delays and road closures.

“If we had come up here



LYRA FONTAINE/CANNON BEACH GAZETTE

U.S. Rep. Suzanne Bonamici visited Circle Creek and Boneyard Ridge to see the floodplain restoration project Monday, Nov. 21.

**‘Not a lot of properties are excited about having their property flooded, but we are.’**

Jon Wickersham,  
Conservancy associate director

in a flood event, you would see that the whole property is underwater,” Reich said. “Everywhere that’s green is underwater.”

“Not a lot of properties are excited about having their property flooded, but we are,” said Conservancy Associate Director Jon Wickersham.

An analysis after the first year of the project showed that the floodplain resto-

ration prevented the road from having to close at least three times that winter, Reich said. When the highway was closed elsewhere during last winter’s big rainstorm, it was passable by Circle Creek, she said.

Since the summer 2013 project, the land conservancy has planted 10,000 trees each winter, Reich said.

“It’s a win-win for the community because it not

only addressed the flooding, but also provided the restoration and recreation opportunities,” said Bonamici, adding that the project was an example of finding “smarter, better ways to do things.”

Last week, 3 to 5 inches of water covered Highway 101 near Circle Creek, requiring drivers to slow down. However, since the 2013 berm removal, “we’ve had significantly less flooding both in frequency and severity,” Oregon Department of Transportation spokesperson Lou Torres said Monday.

### The habitat

The land conservancy acquired the 364-acre Circle Creek property in 2004. The site now includes the Circle Creek Conservation Center event venue and two walking trails that are publicly accessible daily.

Circle Creek is home to native wildlife such as coho salmon, red-legged frogs, salamanders, beaver, coyote, waterfowl, nesting bald eagles and an elk herd. The winter floods encourage more wildlife to come onto the land, according to the organization.

In July, the land conservancy purchased the 340-acre Boneyard Ridge property, just west of Circle Creek. The acquisition connects 3,500 acres of conserved land.

Wickersham told Bonamici about the conservancy’s plan to acquire 3,300 acres of timberland at Onion Peak within the next five years and informed her of the organization’s 30th year anniversary.

“We’ve seen our base of supporters grow tremendously, even in the last five to 10 years,” Wickersham said. “We really started taking our message out to the community.”

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Tell us your favorite choices for the categories below. Nominees can come from anywhere in Clatsop, Pacific and north Tillamook counties. Clip and mail or bring this form to Coast Weekend, 949 Exchange St. Astoria, OR 97103 or enter online at [www.coastweekend.com/readerschoice](http://www.coastweekend.com/readerschoice). One randomly drawn entry will win a \$50 gift card.

### DINING

- Best Asian Food \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Bakery \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Bar \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Barista \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Bartender \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Breakfast Spot \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Brewpub \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Burger \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Catering \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Chef \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Clam Chowder \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Coffee \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Dessert \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Fine Dining \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Fish & Chips \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Happy Hour \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Lunch Spot \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Mexican Food \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Pizza \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Restaurant for Kids \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Server \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Wine Shop \_\_\_\_\_

### ACTIVITIES

- Best Birdwatching Site \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Cheap Date \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Farmers Market \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Golf Course \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Hiking Trail \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Local Festival \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Local Sports Team \_\_\_\_\_

- Best Museum \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Music Venue \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Neighborhood Park \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Place for a Walk \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Tourist Attraction \_\_\_\_\_

### BUSINESSES

- Best Antique Store \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Art Gallery \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Automotive Shop \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Barber Shop/Hair Salon \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Bookstore \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Car Dealership \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Customer Service \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Dance Studio \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Day Spa \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Florist \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Garden Center \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Gift Shop \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Grocery Store \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Gym \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Home Improvement Store \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Hotel \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Live Theater \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Radio Station \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Real Estate Business \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Seafood Market \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Tech/Computer Repair \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Thrift Shop \_\_\_\_\_
- Best Yoga \_\_\_\_\_

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Information will only be used for contacting entrants and will not be kept or shared. No photocopied entries, please. One entry per person.

**Online Ballot Open: Wednesday, November 16 to 11:59 p.m. Sunday, December 11**  
**See the winners in the Special Readers' Choice Coast Weekend January 26, 2017**

**Vote online**  
The 2016 Readers' Choice Ballot can also be found at:  
[coastweekend.com/readerschoice](http://coastweekend.com/readerschoice)

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