

THE LAND STEWARD

Teton Regional Land Trust's Stewardship Newsletter

Spring 2022

Welcome to the Team!

Katie Guetz joined the TRLT as a Land Steward in August 2021. After spending the fall and winter getting familiar with her role on the Stewardship team, she is excited to get in the field and meet with landowners in person! Katie is from Golden, Colorado, where throughout her childhood, she witnessed widespread development across the Front Range. In 2011, Katie moved to Bozeman to attend college at Montana State University (MSU). During this time, she explored the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem through both personal and academic pursuits, and in 2015 she earned a B.S. in Earth Sciences from MSU. Following college, Katie spent summers gaining professional natural resource experience in Arizona, Alaska, and throughout Montana, but always returned to Bozeman when the field season ended. Over the course of 10 years, Katie watched the rapid development of Gallatin Valley, reminiscent of the development that shaped her hometown in Colorado. This widespread growth, and its impact on water resources, prompted Katie to attend graduate school at Northern Arizona University where she earned an M.S. in Environmental Sciences and Policy, researching restoring river connectivity in the western U.S. Following graduation in 2020, Katie moved to Jackson, Wyoming for a position with the Forest Service quantifying flows of the Wild and Scenic Rivers in the Upper Snake Headwaters region. It was during this time that Katie recognized how special eastern Idaho is and how development pressure could impact this important landscape. Moving to Driggs in 2021, Katie is grateful to call Teton Valley home and to work towards the long-term protection of the vital ecosystems of our service area in her role at TRLT.



Katie Guetz, Land Steward

Teton Regional Land Trust Staff

Tamara Sperber,
Conservation
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Digging into Regenerative Agriculture: Promote Plant Biodiversity

Providing plant diversity is important to building soil health. Historically, our landscapes consisted of perennial polycultures supplying the soil food web with exudates from a diversity of plants harvesting sunlight and carbon dioxide. With traditional farming practices, these were often later replaced by annual monocultures, which supply the soil food web with carbon exudates from only one annual plant at a time. Using crop rotations, we can begin to mimic historic landscapes and thus provide more soil biodiversity, benefitting the soil food web, which improves rainfall infiltration and nutrient cycling and reduces disease and pests. Crop rotations of cold and warm season grasses and forbs can improve your overall soil health and contribute to the long-term sustainability of soil and food security. Source: Soil Health Resource Guide, 6th Edition



NRCS, Oregon

5 Principles of Soil Health

- Protect the Soil
- Minimize Disturbance
- Promote Biodiversity
- Leave Living Roots
- Livestock Integration

inspiring you to protect great places



View from Spencer Peak,
Caribou-Targhee National Forest

Spring Greetings

It's time for the longer days and vibrant colors of spring to grace us again. As we look forward to this time of renewal, I think about how resilient our community has become as we've navigated the changing tides of a pandemic. That same resiliency we see in nature, the ability to recover gracefully after a disturbance, many of us have had to find in ourselves. Like many of you, the Land Trust staff have been making plans for their summer field season. With the pandemic feeling a little further behind us, we are looking forward to visiting with many of our amazing landowners again this year. In the coming months, please expect a call from our Stewardship team to discuss your plans for your property this year. Please don't forget to update us on changes to land management, any changes in contact information, plans to make changes to the property, or plans to lease or sell the property. If you already have these ideas in mind, please don't hesitate to give us a call now so that we can ensure we have the proper documentation and approval (as needed) for the activity that you plan to undertake as required by your conservation easement. If you are not sure if an activity requires prior notice or approval, give us a call and we can let you know what your conservation easement says about the proposed activity.

Over the past two years, the Land Trust has seen an unprecedented number of conservation easement properties change hands to successor landowners. If you are considering selling your land, please call us today. It is important for the Land Trust to be available to answer potential buyer questions and ensure any deed transferring interest includes the required reference to the conservation easement in a separate paragraph of the deed. Also, if you are leasing your land, please inform your lessee of the conservation easement and go over the terms related to grazing and agricultural uses, fencing language, and prohibited uses. Third-party violations of a conservation easement are often the landowners responsibility to resolve; ensuring all parties are informed of the conservation easement terms can go a long way to make sure the conservation easement is upheld. If you'd like for our staff to meet with you or your lessee to go over the terms of the conservation easement this summer, please let us know. Also, we encourage you to work with the Land Trust when it's time to renew any lease to ensure the lease incorporates the required specific reference to your conservation easement. Taking these notification measures can ensure that you do not unintentionally violate your conservation easement, which can take a lot of time and expense to resolve. Together, we can ensure that the conservation values protected by the conservation easement on your land remain intact in perpetuity.

— Kimberly Holmes, Stewardship Director



When to Give Notice

If you are unsure if an activity requires prior notification and/or approval from the Land Trust, or if you are unsure of the timeframe you need to give the Land Trust to grant approval of an activity,

Give us a call!

We are always happy to answer questions regarding your conservation easement.

Planning to build or add on to a structure?

Give Us a Call!

Planning to change your land management practices?

Give Us a Call!

Planning to build a fence or road?

Give Us a Call!

Planning to sell/gift your conservation easement property?

Give Us a Call!

Need to update your contact information or preference?

Give Us a Call!

Have you been approached about a commercial lease or utility easement?

Give Us a Call!

208-354-8939



TETON REGIONAL LAND TRUST

Regional County Weed Contacts

Don't forget to reach out to your local county weed representative to stay up to date regarding any weed control assistance that might be available:

Bonneville County:
Judd Elkington,
Weed Superintendent
208-529-1397

Clark County:
Bo Billman,
Weed Department
208-709-6706

Fremont County:
Bryce Fowler,
Weed Supervisor
208-624-7442

Jefferson County:
Mitch Whitmill,
Weed Superintendent
208-745-9221

Madison County:
Jeremy Johnson,
Weed Supervisor
208-356-3139

Teton County, ID:
Devan Wadsworth
Weed Superintendent
208-354-2593

Teton County, WY:
Lesley Beckworth
Teton County Weed &
Pest District
307-733-8419

Weed Assistance Info by County

Bonneville County: Potential cost-share of 50 %, Call county Weed Superintendent for more information

Clark County: Call the county Weed Department for more information

Fremont County: Landowners can get chemicals at half price. The county will spray for landowners for \$35/acre. \$5 rental for backpack, herbicide included. County has equipment to rent (ATV sprayer, Truck sprayer, ATV sprayer, backpack)

Jefferson County: Potential fall cost-share, contact county Weed Superintendent for more information

Madison County: Call the county Weed Supervisor for more information

Teton County, ID: Herbicide available for landowner purchase (no 2022 discounts or rebates). Contact county Weed Superintendent for information on small scale assistance

Teton County, WY: Standard program - 50% cost-share on select herbicides for Teton County, WY residents. Purchase at office or through website for office pick up. Provide on-site consultations, inventory, and management plans free of charge



Satellite Imagery and Restoration:

Since the beginning of the pandemic, it has been difficult for Stewardship staff to get into the field with landowners on annual site visits. This was especially true during lockdowns when TRLT had to adapt quickly in order to uphold our annual conservation easement monitoring obligations. Additionally, as TRLT works with landowners to protect more properties each year, the Stewardship team's workload grows with more properties to visit annually. Therefore, the Stewardship team has spent the past two years developing and refining remote monitoring procedures to "visit" properties using commercial satellite imagery.

In 2022, we were awarded a grant from the Land Trust Alliance to continue exploring how this technology can enhance our work. We have partnered with Upstream Tech, a technology company that houses the latest and best remote imagery and data in a platform called Lens, to monitor our conservation easement properties from afar. Moving forward, remote monitoring will not take the place of our on-the-ground-visits, but will help supplement them, as observing landscapes from space is often a more effective way to notice large-scale changes over time. As we become more familiar with the capabilities of this technology, Stewardship staff will explore utilizing remote sensing to identify, evaluate, and prioritize habitat restoration and enhancement opportunities on easement lands. In partnership with landowners, and as funding and capacity have been available, past restoration activities that TRLT has helped with include stream bank stabilization, fence installation or removals, riparian and wetland enhancements, and native plant reseeding.

Do you have a habitat restoration or enhancement project you would like us to evaluate? We are eager to hear from our landowners about potential restoration needs on your conservation easement property as we continue to develop plans for using this remote sensing technology.

If you have a project for us to consider during this pilot evaluation phase, please contact the Stewardship team at stewardship@tetonlandtrust.org You can also give us a call at the TRLT office at 208-354-8939 and ask for Katie Guetz, Land Steward or Kimberly Holmes, Stewardship Director



Fire and Drought - Fire Prevention and Water Conservation

As we head into yet another dry summer, it's important to remind ourselves of the small things we can do to avoid accidental fires and to conserve our scarce water supply.

Fire Prevention : did you know the national average of human caused wildfires is 87%? (Idl.Idaho.gov)

Before you Burn! Is your area under a burn restriction? Do you need a burn permit? Do you know the rules?

<https://www.idl.idaho.gov/fire-management/>

Before you Go! Are your trailer tow chains crossed to avoid dragging? Check your tire pressure, are your wheel rims exposed? Do you need new brakes? All of these could cause igniting sparks that can cause a wildfire quickly in dry vegetation conditions. Also, be cognizant of the areas you drive off-road. Is there tall dry grass or brush that could ignite with exhaust contact? Never idle over dry vegetation and consider alternate routes when driving over dry vegetation. This goes for recreational vehicles, too, such as motorcycles, and ORVs.

Before you Camp! Everyone loves a good campfire. Before you build one, make sure there are no burn restrictions in your area. Take care choosing the location, flat and open and away from fuels (brush, leaves, needles) with at least a cleared 10-foot diameter. Have an extinguishing method in place (water, shovel). Never leave a campfire unattended. Ensure the fire is completely extinguished before departing - use the "drown, stir, feel" method.

Before you Mow! Landscaping and farm equipment can also cause sparks that can ignite a wildfire. Mow before 10 am and never in excessively dry or windy conditions. Avoid rocks and dry weedy areas. Check your exhaust, spark arresters and engine to ensure no carbon buildup. Keep fire extinguishing methods nearby.

Be Weather Aware! Before you do any activity that could cause a spark, whether that's driving, towing, recreating or landscaping, look at the weather. Avoid these activities when drought conditions are present and especially when it is hot, dry and windy.

While we all know these rules, it's important to remind ourselves annually and be aware of the conditions that could produce a wildfire before engaging in any activity that could result in an unintended spark.

Worsening drought conditions, an increase in development and land conversion, and a rapidly growing population are all major stressors on our already limited water resources in Idaho. At present, it is more critical than ever to conserve water resources; this means we all must do our part. Keep in mind, every drop of water that is conserved is kept in our local waterways, allowing more water for irrigation, fish, and aquifer recharge. If everyone practices water conservation strategies, all of eastern Idaho benefits!

Tips for saving water in your home this upcoming season:

Be mindful of running water! Take shorter showers, do fewer loads of laundry (or put more into a load!), and turn off water when brushing teeth or cleaning dishes (if you have a dishwasher, use it! But, first, make sure it's a full load)

Skip the disposal, put fruit and veggie scraps in a compost bin (then use it in your yard!)

Install high efficiency restroom fixtures such as low-flow shower heads

Check for leaky toilets – you can place food coloring in the tank and observe if water in the bowl becomes dyed! If buying a new appliance look for "Energy Star" and "Water Sense" ratings

Tips for saving water outside your home this upcoming season:

- 1) Make sure sprinklers are running early in the day (between 4:00 am - 8:00 am is best), and ensure water is being utilized and not running onto pavement
- 2) The healthiest lawns receive 2-3 deep waterings of 1" per week – you can purchase an inexpensive timer and rain sensor to monitor this!
- 3) Plant drought tolerant trees and plants in your yard
- 4) Purchase or build your own rain barrel
- 5) Adjust your mower to the highest setting, keeping taller grass retains more moisture in your yard.

