

THE LAND STEWARD

Teton Regional Land Trust's Stewardship Newsletter

Fall 2020

From Our Home to Yours

2020 has been a very different year for our community. With all of the uncertainty surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic, the staff at the Land Trust have continued to work remotely and will do so indefinitely. Therefore, you have likely not gotten the chance to visit with us in person. Please do not let these missed opportunities prevent you from reaching out with questions or concerns related to your conservation easement property. We are still here and are happy to speak with you. Do you have plans to list your property for sale or transfer interest to another entity? Have you been thinking about improvements or management changes to your land? Please do not hesitate to contact us today. Kimberly Holmes, our Stewardship Coordinator, can be reached at the office by calling 208-354-8939 ext. 17, or on her cell at 208-716-0748, or anytime via email at kimberly@tetonlandtrust.org. You can also reach out to stewardship@tetonlandtrust.org to be connected to a member of our Conservation Team. We are standing by to answer all of your conservation easement questions and look forward to visiting with you again in person very soon! Until then, best wishes to all!



Digging into Regenerative Agriculture: Minimizing Soil Disturbance

Healthy soils are home to millions of microbes. In order to build healthy soils, we must ensure these microbes have a biologically diverse habitat to thrive in. Tilling the ground or other disturbances, whether mechanical, biological, or chemical, disrupts these microbial habitats and result in an unhealthy soil with poor structure, limited water infiltration, reduced nutrient flow and minimal organic matter because these soils have to seemingly “start over” after each disturbance. Improving soil health can take many years, so patience is key, but the wait pays off in benefits such as improved soil structure and increased water infiltration. With less disturbance also comes the reduction of noxious weeds, which means less competition for crops, and less money put in to combatting weeds. The improved soil structure and minimized disturbance means a healthier home for microbes and earth worms which will aid in nutrient cycling. Incorporating cover crops will help not only armor the soil, but can also be utilized to balance the carbon and nitrogen in your soil, which makes for happier microbes and a healthier overall soil.

Source: Soil Health Resource Guide, 6th Edition

5 Principles of Soil Health

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

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inspiring you to protect great places



Let it Be: The Importance of Deadwood for Biodiversity

Sure, dead, fallen trees and limbs may look messy, but did you know they serve a healthy ecosystem as much as your healthy standing trees? Dead standing and fallen trees and stumps store carbon, provide habitat and even provide food sources for a variety of species, and are an important part of preserving a biodiverse ecosystem. A healthy forest ecosystem is made up of trees and shrubs of all ages and stages of life, as well as the associated groundcover of forbs and grasses, and even debris! All of these components make up the ecosystem that you chose to protect on your land, even those that don't show signs of life anymore are much more alive than we realize. Fallen dead and dead standing trees, fallen limbs, and even fallen mature trees that are uprooted, exposing their root wads, are filled with microhabitats teeming with organisms and insects important to a variety of species including birds and mammals alike, providing food sources, nest sites and protective cover. All of the species that you enjoy watching on your land depend on a variety of tree and plant types of all ages, including the dense understories we sometimes wish we could more easily penetrate for our daily walks; a songbird may be dependent on for cover, food and safety. Deadwood snags, stumps, logs and branches also enrich our soils to make way for new life. They provide nest space for cavity-nesting birds and can even provide a meal for grubbing bears. So, before you decide to "clean up" your forest, try looking at it from the perspective of the species that you share it with.

CONTACT US

For questions, to schedule a meeting to review your conservation easement or to schedule a visit to walk your land, contact us today!

Teton Regional Land Trust

(208) 354-8939
stewardship@

tetonlandtrust.org

or

Visit us on the web at
tetonlandtrust.org

Many conservation easements have restrictions on the removal of vegetation on the property for these very reasons. To find out if the removal of certain trees on your property is allowed, or if leaving certain trees, shrubbery and fallen dead would be beneficial to wildlife, give us a call. We are happy to talk to you about your conservation easement terms, what is allowed and what might be prohibited.

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!

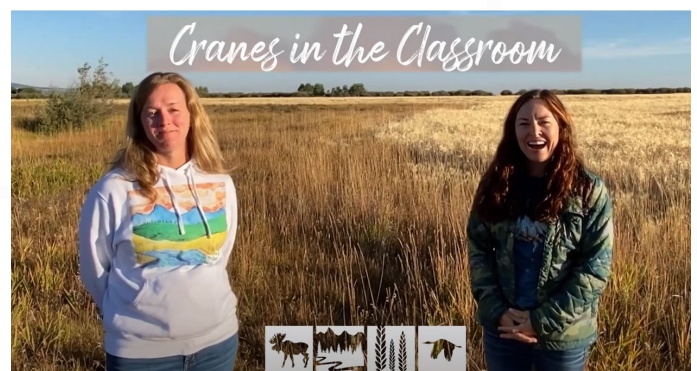
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TETON REGIONAL LAND TRUST

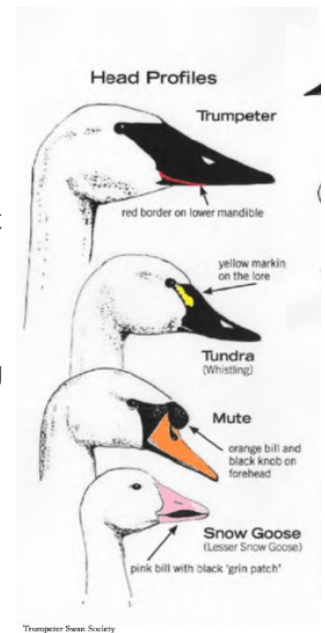


Despite the challenges of celebrating in person, the Land Trust still found a way to connect virtually in 2020, follow these links for great regional content celebrating conservation and wildlife in Eastern Idaho. Thanks for making our first 30 years great!



Know Your Target

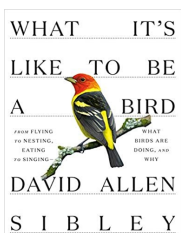
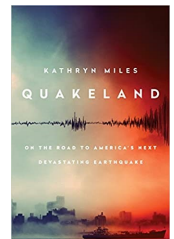
With an experimental swan hunt for migratory Tundra Swans taking place in northern Idaho this fall (restricted to tags in Benewah, Bonner, Boundary, and Kootenai counties) and typical waterfowl hunting seasons for Snow Goose, it is becoming increasingly important for hunters to be able to recognize their target while hunting waterfowl so as not to mistake a Trumpeter Swan for any other target. Trumpeter Swans are designated as a Species of Greatest Conservation Need in Idaho as they were hunted to near extinction by the early 1900s. As you may know, the Teton Regional Land Trust have worked with partners in Eastern Idaho to conserve important winter habitat for Trumpeter Swans along the Snake, Henry's Fork and Teton Rivers, and have also worked diligently with partners to restore the nesting population of Trumpeter Swans in Teton Basin. In recent years, about 100 Trumpeter Swans nested in Eastern Idaho, and they are the most abundant swan species seen in Eastern Idaho during the fall and winter. Distinguishing between Trumpeter Swans and Tundra Swans, in addition to other waterfowl, such as the Snow Goose, takes practice. Trumpeter Swans are considerably larger than geese, and adult Trumpeter Swans have solid white wings and bodies, while Snow Goose have black wingtips on the underside and are smaller than a Trumpeter Swan. Young Trumpeter Swans, called cygnets, are medium gray with a pale belly and wing lining. The Snow Goose also has a pink bill, whereas the Trumpeter Swan has a solid black bill, and a Tundra Swan may sometimes show a yellow marking on the bill, below the eye (also known as the lores). Trumpeter Swans may also show pink to orange marking near the edge of the bill. In Eastern Idaho, if there are no wingtip markings on the underside of your target, don't shoot, you likely have a swan. We would like to remind hunters that there is NO hunting season for Trumpeter Swans in Idaho, and no hunting season for Tundra Swan in Eastern Idaho.



Staff Notes

Spring turned to summer, and summer turned to fall, and things were a lot different this year. One thing that the Land Trust staff was able to take advantage of was a lot of solitude. Whether we were out on field visits solo or finding ourselves at home before the sun sets, we did have a little time to find some new books and podcasts to keep us company during this lonely summer.

With an interest in geology and the forces of what lies beneath our feet, Kimberly Holmes enjoyed reading "Quakeland: On the Road to America's Next Devastating Earthquake" by Kathryn Miles. While it may sound like a gloomy title, the book actually helps explain the science behind our local geologic plumbing and proved to ease some anxieties, while also paying respect to regional historical geologic events such as the great earthquake that formed Quake Lake on August 17th, 1959.



While our staff are normally busy learning the flora and fauna of the different ecosystems that are protected throughout our service area, working from the home office this summer gave us more time to get familiar with the birds in our own backyard. A great table book for identification and general bird knowledge is the beautifully illustrated "What It's Like to be a Bird: From Flying to Nesting, Eating to Singing, What Birds Are Doing, and Why" by David Sibley.

When we did make it out of in the field, podcasts are still a favorite way to take in new information. One little known podcast of regional factoids and tidbits is a podcast broadcasted from Yellowstone National Park called "Telemetry: The Sound of Science in Yellowstone". Shows on this podcast offer 10 to 20 minute soundbytes from park biologists and interpreters, discussing topics such as the management of Yellowstone cutthroat trout to first-hand accounts of grizzly bear encounters.

