CONSERVATION is CLIMATE ACTION
Think of Oregon’s natural places as our life support system. When we take good care of them, they take good care of us—from forests cleaning the air and water, to wetlands protecting coastal cities from floods. Now, as climate change threatens lives and livelihoods across the state and beyond, we need those natural places more than ever.

That’s where land conservation comes in. Research shows that, in addition to reducing carbon emissions, we can help curb climate change by giving our natural world the support it needs to fight back.

Conserving forests, grasslands and wetlands helps reduce carbon in the atmosphere, all while empowering local communities and protecting important plant and wildlife species. So in this pivotal moment for our planet, we’re spreading the word: conservation is climate action!

Here are six ways caring for the land is part of the climate solution.
Our wild places can be a powerful defense against the effects of climate change—and they’re most effective when they stay wild. Healthy land absorbs more carbon from the atmosphere, keeps plants and wildlife thriving, and offers natural protection to our communities from threats like flooding and pollution.

When we turn land into developments, those benefits go away. Land trusts play the long game, helping nature help itself (and all of us) by saving important places from development and returning degraded habitat to its natural state.

Benefits include:
- Less carbon in the atmosphere
- Cleaner air and drinking water
- Cultural preservation for native peoples
- Stronger rural economies
- Increased biodiversity

Trees are carbon-reducing superheroes, and Oregon has more than most states. That’s why a balanced approach to caring for them is so important.

One key part of that approach is letting trees grow longer. Adding 10-20 years between timber harvests can give immature tree stands the time they need to grow into healthy forests—keeping our Pacific wonderland thriving while continuing to support local economies. Land trusts help key players navigate forest management practices like this one so everybody wins.

Benefits include:
- Healthier forests can mean fewer severe wildfires
- Stronger timber harvests over time
- Less carbon in the atmosphere
- Sustainable forest jobs
- Cleaner water for people and wildlife
**CLIMATE ACTION #3**

**WATCH OVER WETLANDS**

Caring for the places where the water meets the land is a huge part of what land trusts do—and for good reason. Did you know that some coastal wetlands can store more carbon per acre than tropical rainforests?

They act as a filter, cleaning water as it passes through and soaking up pollution that would devastate communities and habitats.

But due to environmental degradation, even these superstars of the natural world need our help. So as we brace for climate change in Oregon, land trusts are doing the critical work to restore native wetlands to all their absorbent glory.

**Benefits include:**
- Less carbon in the atmosphere
- Cleaner water
- Affordable wastewater treatment
- Natural flood and storm protection
- Sustainable fish and wildlife habitat

**CLIMATE ACTION #4**

**COOL DOWN RIVERS & STREAMS**

As the impacts of rising temperatures threaten the quality of our drinking water and destroy habitat for fish and wildlife, looking out for our rivers and streams is more important than ever.

Land trusts work hard to keep local waterways healthy through efforts like caring for (or planting) surrounding trees and vegetation, restoring the natural path and flow of rivers and streams, improving in-stream wildlife habitats, and more. Keeping water cool means native fish, and the ecosystem, can thrive.

**Benefits include:**
- Cleaner, cooler drinking water
- Flood prevention
- Nursery habitat for young fish
- Healthy fish for a fishing recreation economy and food supply
- Less carbon in the atmosphere

**CASE STUDY**

**More than a marsh**

**McKenzie River Trust** is restoring Wren Marsh, a tidal wetland that will not only provide a place for the Siuslaw River’s flood waters but will also work hard to absorb carbon from the atmosphere once restored. This habitat could offer refuge to many sensitive fish and wildlife species, as well—from American bald eagles to short billed dowitcher to coastal coho, steelhead, and Chinook salmon.

**CASE STUDY**

**Beavers know best**

As part of **Deschutes Land Trust**’s work to restore Whychus Creek at Camp Polk Meadow Preserve, volunteers mimicked beavers by building dam-like structures to help improve habitat and water quality. Their efforts are critical to native fish like salmon and steelhead, helping restore high quality spawning and rearing habitat on Whychus Creek for these important species.
CLIMATE ACTION #5
FARM FOR THE FUTURE

By using farming and grazing practices that keep soil healthier, farmers and ranchers play a critical role in combating the impacts of climate change.

There are lots of ways farmers and ranchers can join the fight—from from tilling soil less often (or not at all), to planting cover crops, rotating crops, removing chemicals and incorporating well-managed livestock grazing. They can also harness the natural power of plants to draw carbon out of the atmosphere and into the ground, a process called carbon sequestration.

Benefits include:
- Nutritious crops
- Fewer chemicals in our food system
- Additional income to farmers
- Healthier, more productive farmland
- Better food access in rural communities
- Less carbon in the atmosphere

CLIMATE ACTION #6
CONNECT WILDLIFE CORRIDORS

For wildlife to play their vital role in our ecosystem, they need connected access to food, water, and shelter—along with pathways for great migrations (like those of monarch butterflies, songbirds or pronghorn antelope).

Unfortunately, human-made barriers and unconnected habitat make it harder for animals to move and survive. And climate change complicates things further as some habitats will change and move with a warming world. Scientists work to map and plan where those shifts could happen to make sure habitats stay connected for species now, and in the future.

Benefits include:
- Healthy wildlife and migration routes
- Protection for endangered species
- Intact wild places for people and animals to enjoy now, and where places might exist in a changed climate

Feeding the next generation
Working lands can be a part of stopping climate change—and Woody and Megan Wolfe’s farm is living proof. Together with Wallowa Land Trust, the Wolfes are helping to permanently protect 463 acres in Wallowa, Oregon that encompass one of the healthiest, most intact stretches of the Lostine River in the Wallowa Valley. Their efforts today will ensure this land can keep feeding and protecting Oregonians for generations to come.

Creating connections
The Southern Oregon Land Conservancy is standing up for wildlife by working to keep a huge swath of Pacific wonderland connected through their Colestin-Siskiyou Summit Focus Area project. So far, they’re defending landscapes from over development and clear cutting across 2,258 acres. The big vision? Conserve an even larger corridor of private land between the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument and National Forest lands.
WE TRUST THE LAND

We trust the land to keep our world in balance. We trust its power to protect clean water, fresh air, and plentiful food. And now, as we face the climate crisis, we trust the land to know how to fight back. So we’re helping it do just that.

Join us as we take care of Oregon’s lands—from farms and forests to wetlands and watersheds—so these places and systems can take care of us all.

COALITION OF OREGON LAND TRUSTS

We represent more than 25 nonprofits across Oregon—all advocating for our natural world. At COLT, our mission is to serve and strengthen the land trust community in Oregon. We do that by building connections and advancing policies that help protect our natural world—our water, wildlife, and open space—for all people, forever.

oregonlandtrusts.org

TAKE ACTION NOW

Speak out: Tell your elected officials to prioritize conservation
Vote: Cast your ballot in favor of policies that protect Oregon’s land
Volunteer: Contact your local land trust to get involved
Contribute: Support the work of your land trust to help fight the climate crisis