



- [Close Window](#)
- [Print This Page](#)
- [Expand All](#) | [Collapse All](#)

Save Skyline Forest - Grant

Grant Name	Save Skyline Forest - Grant	Today's Date	12/14/2023
Staff Size	8	Organization Name	Central Oregon LandWatch
Total Membership	907	Annual Operating Budget	\$1,278,948.98
BIPOC-led	No	Operating Budget Year	
C-Suite Staff		Tax Status/Organization Type	501c3 Organization
Notes			

Project Information

Project/Campaign Name	Save Skyline Forest	Project Address	
Project Location (State or Territory)	OR	Amount Requested from Alliance	\$50,000.00

Proposal Questions

1. Purpose/History Of Organization	Central Oregon LandWatch's mission is to defend and plan for Central Oregon's livable future. For over 35 years, we've helped ensure people, fish, and wildlife thrive in our region by stopping sprawl onto our cherished wild places and vital farmlands and catalyzing development of complete communities within city limits. In 1985, a disillusioned corporate attorney-turned-ranch hand formed the Sisters Forest Planning Committee (SFPC) and successfully organized the community to stop the piping of Whychus Creek and clear-cutting of its banks. The SFPC later became known as Central Oregon LandWatch, a powerful and effective grassroots organization responsible for some of the region's most important conservation wins, including securing permanent protection of the Metolius River Basin; halting one of the largest illegal timber harvests in US history; and preserving vast swaths of vital elk habitat in the Ochoco National Forest from timber sales and harmful off highway vehicle routes.	7. Measurable On-Ground Outcomes	1) ACQUISITION NEGOTIATIONS ADVANCE: Ideally, a conservation-focused acquisition deal is made with the seller in 2024. Or active acquisition negotiations remain open and continue to move in the right direction. 2) DEEPER, BROADER COMMUNITY SUPPORT: The implementation of our 2024 engagement plan sustains momentum and increases community support for protecting Skyline. 3) ELECTED LEADERS CONTINUE TO STEP UP: Local and state leaders know and care about Skyline and support conservation. They publicly express support for protecting the area and actively help acquire it in ways that best support the campaign and active acquisition negotiations. 4) NO LARGE SCALE, LUXURY DEVELOPMENTS MOVE FORWARD: Our strategies and engagement continue to deter any prospective buyers who want to build large scale, luxury developments in Skyline Forest.
2. Final Success	The Save Skyline Forest campaign goal is to permanently conserve 33,000 acres of intact forest land for critical wildlife habitat, close-to-town outdoor access, world-class recreation opportunities, regional water quality, and improved fire safety that is paramount to the well-being of Central Oregon Communities.	8. Evaluate Your Progress	-Acquisition negotiations advance : A conservation-focused acquisition deal is struck (ultimate success) or active acquisition negotiations remain open and continue to move in the right direction (on-going progress). Should a deal happen, a compelling, community-driven capital campaign is prepared. -Deeper, broader community support: At

least 6,000 people support the campaign through direct action such as signing petitions, submitting letters, attending events, engaging on social media, and/or participating in other campaign actions.
 -Elected leaders continue to step up: Lead 3 meetings with elected officials to shore up their knowledge of and support for conserving Skyline. Local and state leaders publicly express support for conserving Skyline, as needed.
 -No large-scale, luxury developments move forward: No offers predicated on large-scale, luxury development are accepted by the seller. If needed, execute a specific deterrent strategy based on the legal/liability implications

3. Location Details

Known as Bend and Sister's backyard, Skyline Forest is a massive, intact, and beloved landscape encompassing 33,000-acres of privately owned forest land. Skyline Forest is vital to Central Oregonians for all it provides: outdoor access, abundant recreation opportunities, local climate stability, wildlife habitat, clean water, stunning views, and more.

Surrounded by state and federal lands, Skyline Forest's intact, green Cascade foothills are critical habitat for iconic migratory species like mule deer and elk. Snowmelt provides an influx of clean, cold water into the Deschutes River system, which sustains the fish, wildlife, and people who call this place home. Locals and visitors alike come to Skyline for its world-class cycling, trail running, horseback riding, birding, wildlife viewing, and breathtaking panoramic views. Thus, a broad variety of outdoor groups, local businesses and community members have livelihoods and indelible experiences deeply tied to this place. As the impacts of climate-fueled drought and wildfire increase, protecting and proactively managing landscapes like Skyline are top of mind for Central Oregonians. Our region's quality of life is directly connected to this beloved forest's future.

4. Strategy & Timeline For Final Success

2024 will see the continuation of a pivotal phase of this effort. Active negotiations with the landowner kicked off in 2023 and continue to steadily progress toward a conservation-focused acquisition agreement. Our target timeline for achieving success is 2024. However, this may be a prolonged 'dance' - particularly with a variety of cultural norms in play that are critical to respect and respond to - that may take the campaign into 2025.

One of the inherent tensions in our campaign is the need to pursue a quiet purchase agreement while keeping the community engaged in our campaign: private land sale negotiations are slow

9. TCA Funding Plan

In the year ahead, Central Oregon LandWatch will use funding from Conservation Alliance to achieve the key campaign outcomes detailed here and to ensure our strategies deliver the key progress and success metrics we've outlined. This includes:
 -Working with community partners to advance conservation-focused acquisition negotiations and, ideally, reach a deal with the seller this year;
 -Creating and leading the essential, community-driven capital campaign to accompany the acquisition offer (if needed);
 -Increasing deep, broad engagement and support from local partners, landowners, elected officials, community leaders, and historically marginalized community members; and
 -Continuing to deter luxury development in Skyline Forest using our land use and legal expertise.

10. JEDI Efforts and Impact

We recognize that the conservation movement has harmed frontline communities (especially BIPOC), and that land use policy has been used to uphold white supremacy through exclusionary zoning and other racist policies. Committed to ensuring we do not perpetuate those injustices and working to undo them in the future, we are nearing completion of a two-year process with consultants from Aurora Commons to develop an equity blueprint using the Awake to Woke to Work framework. This work began with our team developing a shared language and tools for identifying how to serve our mission in more diverse and equitable

and quiet while the community-focused effort to save Skyline from large-scale, luxury development is urgent and elevated. We will navigate this healthy tension with ongoing coordination with our acquisition and community partners about the right volume and pace of this campaign.

Thus, at this phase of the project, our campaign strategies are focused on:

1) Supporting opportunities for conservation-focused acquisition of the property – which is a quieter and behind-the-scenes strategy. This may be a prolonged ‘dance,’ particularly with a variety of cultural norms in play.

2) We’re also leveraging and sustaining the incredible community-driven momentum for conservation by successfully rolling out the values-focused “Faces of Skyline Forest” project and related engagement opportunities. This project will keep the community engaged at an appropriate and impactful level during a potentially longer acquisition negotiation. And finally,

3) We will continue to deter any and all large-scale, luxury development interests.

There are myriad positive impacts to Central Oregonians and the environment that a successful acquisition agreement will deliver. Before being closed to the public in 2022, Skyline Forest was renowned as a recreational oasis for Central Oregon communities. The landscape and its network of trails have long been enjoyed by hikers, bikers, birders, runners, equestrians, and others seeking a place to explore amidst fresh air and scenic views. Local biking groups have enjoyed and cared for this special place for decades, freely sharing intel on the best gravel biking in Skyline Forest with the greater Bend biking community. Professional bikers came here to train and enjoy themselves on these trails close to town. The birding community delighted in a diverse selection of prime areas from which to view our feathered friends - from the high vantage point of Three Creek Butte down to the wildflower-laden creekside of Bull Springs. Skyline Forest’s location beneath the towering Cascades to the west and panoramic desert views to the east affords locals and visitors some of the best sunrise and sunset views in Central Oregon.

A conservation solution that restores and sustains public access will ensure more equitable, close-to-town access to Skyline Forest in perpetuity. This is huge for our local community and economy,

ways. We then moved to a teams model where we examined our internal operations, relationships and programmatic work to identify opportunities to center on being more diverse, equitable and inclusive. In 2024, this work will catalyze an action plan and form a new committee structure to ensure our organization continues to embrace these values and deepen our commitment.

given Skyline Forest's proximity to Bend and the variety of outdoor pursuits this diverse landscape sustains. By acquiring this property for the public and eliminating the uncertainty over access that exists under private ownership, the greater Bend community can better steward, enjoy, and explore these 33,000 acres.

Furthermore, as Central Oregon grows and the impacts of climate change-driven wildfire near our cities and towns increase, our communities need to develop in thoughtful, pragmatic, and fire-wise ways. Wildfires will continue to exist on this landscape and in Skyline Forest for generations to come, and what happens next in this forest will determine what the future looks like for fire on this landscape. This is an opportunity for a conservation-minded land steward to acquire and proactively manage this forestland with wildfire safety as a top priority. Through thoughtful management, Skyline Forest can be restored to a more fire-adapted landscape, reducing some of the costly risks associated with wildfire-prone landscapes to Central Oregon communities.

5. Key Decision Makers

The ultimate decision maker is the current owner of the property, Shanda Asset Management. Our work is to inspire them to agree to a conservation-oriented sale price and ensure that, when they do, the community and its leadership are ready to contribute to the acquisition.

There is overwhelming grassroots support for conserving Skyline Forest. Our outreach and engagement strategy has made it abundantly clear that now is the time for leadership and collaborative action to move conservation-focused acquisition and management solutions for Skyline Forest forward.

We've secured the support of local political leaders who believe in this vision for its future, including Bend Mayor Melanie Kebler, Bend City Councilors Anthony Broadman and Mike Riley, and Deschutes County Commissioner Phil Chang. We will continue to engage City Councilors in the cities of Bend and Sisters and Oregon State Reps. Jason Kropf and Emerson Levy as needed. LandWatch is highly confident that our efforts will continue to effectively garner the public support of key elected leaders who are in the position to tangibly advance conservation opportunities for Skyline Forest.

Additionally, saving Skyline Forest was recently elevated to a priority issue by Envision Bend, a community visioning organization, in their most recent Vision

11. Confidential Items

We've included more explicit details about the ongoing offers, negotiations and dynamics of the ongoing acquisition negotiations in past reports. Given the very delicate nature of private land acquisition and negotiations, we continue to ask that those details be kept confidential.

Action Plan. This highly-connected and impactful community platform will be instrumental in elevating our movement at this phase of the effort and helpful in implementing the shared vision for Skyline's future in the years to come.

6. Elevate Voices

The Save Skyline Forest campaign continues to engage diverse stakeholding communities whose unique perspectives and priorities are essential for ultimately realizing a shared vision for Skyline Forest's future.

We've completed production of a seven-part "Faces of Skyline Forest" video campaign that was intentionally co-created with participants in order to authentically elevate their diverse voices. The "Faces of Skyline Forest" video campaign will launch in early 2024, featuring a Klamath Tribe spiritual leader with a deep connection to the landscape, a local Latino community organization with new opportunities to gain from a conservation solution, a LGBTQIA2S+ business leader whose professional convictions are informed by their connection to places like Skyline Forest, and more. Through audiovisual storytelling, in-person events, and other engagement opportunities, we will highlight a variety of inspirational voices representing different stakeholder communities, each with their own unique connection to Skyline Forest. This will elevate specific values that make Skyline Forest so vital to our region's livable future. It will also continue to deepen engagement with Skyline Forest's diverse stakeholder base of artists, local businesses, and community leaders—and, by extension, their community and networks.

Further, and perhaps most importantly, this engagement is intended to foster more seats at the table, so once acquisition of Skyline is complete, there are meaningful opportunities for underrepresented people in our community to actively shape long term management and stewardship of this area.

Created By Ben Gordon, 12/14/2023, 1:45 PM

Last Modified By Ben Gordon, 12/14/2023, 1:45 PM

Copyright © 2000-2024 salesforce.com, inc. All rights reserved.