



# THE PACIFIC FOREST TRUST

*Our Private Forests are Our Public Treasures.*

**June 2, 2007**

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## **The Pacific Forest Trust Fulfilling the Promise of Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument Readies Nearly 5,000 Acres to be Transferred to Public Ownership**

**Ashland, OR** – More than a hundred supporters and wilderness enthusiasts joined the Pacific Forest Trust (PFT) and Soda Mountain Wilderness Council (SMWC) at the Buckhorn Springs Resort today for a seventh birthday celebration honoring the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument (CSNM) and the anticipated public acquisition of close to 5,000 acres designated for the Monument.

“The Monument is a key anchor for biodiversity in the Klamath-Cascade eco-region,” said PFT President Laurie Wayburn. “Conserving these nearly 5,000 acres of threatened forest, meadows and wetlands within the Monument’s planning boundaries is a critical milestone towards ensuring the integrity of this globally outstanding region. We look forward to working closely with the Monument’s supporters, Oregon’s congressional delegation and the Bureau of Land Management to complete our vision of expanding the Monument’s protected areas,” Wayburn added.

Established in 2000 as the only national monument designated specifically for its extraordinary biodiversity, the Monument includes high desert plant life of the Great Basin and flora and fauna of the Pacific Coast rainforests. This region, considered by many to be the Galapagos of North America, is home to over 3,500 plant and animal species, many of which are found nowhere else on Earth. Only 60% of the Monument’s total planning area of 85,300 acres, however, is currently protected. The remaining 40% of the area, which is privately owned, is under significant development and conversion pressure. Developing or converting these lands would shatter the vision of creating a fully integrated ecosystem for the Monument region.

Recognizing the need to act quickly to protect the most important and vulnerable parcels within the Monument's planning boundaries, PFT purchased many of these threatened tracts, including lands along the historic Pacific Crest Trail. These protected lands will create a more cohesive landscape, one that will improve the ecological integrity of the wildlands, watersheds and wildlife habitats within the Monument. By purchasing and protecting these lands, PFT is also helping to unify the region under a common conservation strategy.

PFT and its partners are now working with the Bureau of Land Management to have these lands permanently protected within the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument.

“The Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument area provides crucial biological connectivity between the globally significant Klamath-Siskiyou eco-region and the rest of the West,” explained Dave Willis, who chairs the SMWC and spearheaded the campaign that led to the Monument's proclamation. “But commercial and development pressures have turned this crucial connectivity corridor into an unraveling ecological thread. PFT's important work here – paired with the best protection possible for the Monument itself – is what it will take to turn this unraveling thread into a strong biological rope that will keep the ecological connections strongly tied together into the future,” Willis added.

The celebration included guided tours of Monument lands by PFT and SMWC staff, as well as a barbeque reception and presentations featuring award-winning wilderness writer Kathleen Dean Moore, PFT President Laurie Wayburn and SMWC Chair Dave Willis.

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*The Pacific Forest Trust (PFT) is the nation's leading non-profit organization dedicated to protecting America's private working forests for all their many public benefits. To learn more about the Pacific Forest Trust and our campaigns, please visit [www.pacificforest.org](http://www.pacificforest.org).*