



For Immediate Release

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Major Milestone Brings Rare Peat Wetland Closer to Protection

Community support and a \$50,000 pledge from North Central Washington Audubon Society move Bonaparte Meadows closer to permanent protection.

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Okanogan Land Trust's *For the Fen!* campaign has reached a major funding milestone, raising \$916,097 toward the permanent protection and long-term restoration of Bonaparte Meadows, a 745-acre property in the Okanogan Highlands that includes approximately 260 acres of rare peat fen habitat.

Okanogan Land Trust must raise \$1.5 million by July 31, 2026, to complete the acquisition and protect the property from future development. A groundswell of support, including a \$50,000 pledge from North Central Washington Audubon Society, has brought the campaign within \$583,903 of its goal. Okanogan Land Trust is now seeking donors to help close the gap and bring this important conservation effort across the finish line.

Located below Mount Bonaparte near Bonaparte Lake, Bonaparte Meadows contains Okanogan County's largest peat wetland and is home to one of the rarest wetland types in Washington and the United States: a calcareous fen, fed by mineral-rich groundwater. Its deep peat soils hold water, store carbon, and play an important role in biodiversity and watershed resilience. Bonaparte Creek flows out of the wetland and is a headwater tributary of the Okanogan River.

"From a riverine perspective, Bonaparte Meadows serves a truly critical function in delivering cold, clean water to this headwater stream that hosts salmon and steelhead," said Jordan Fields, Aquatic Resiliency Specialist with Trout Unlimited.

Bonaparte Meadows is a biodiversity hotspot, supporting rare plant communities and wildlife species prioritized for habitat protection in Washington. Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) documented at the property include Columbia spotted frogs, Western toads, Barrow's Goldeneye, Cinnamon Teal, Bald Eagles, Lesser Scaup, and others. Protection also creates an opportunity to restore the water table, which has been lowered for peat extraction. Restoration will aim to improve the wetland's water-holding capacity and support cold-water flows into Bonaparte Creek.

"As the Columbia Basin is increasingly affected by drought and warming temperatures, this kind of natural water storage plays an important role in long-term watershed and wildfire resilience," said Kate Miller, Okanogan Land Trust's Executive Director. "Many community members have been waiting decades for the chance to protect this unique and iconic piece of our landscape. We are deeply grateful for the support that has brought us this far."

Okanogan Land Trust is partnering with Trout Unlimited, North Central Washington Audubon Society, the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, Sparrow Song Consulting, and others on this project.

To learn more, make a gift, or discuss a leadership contribution, contact Kate Miller, Executive Director, at kate@okanoganlandtrust.org or visit the campaign page at okanoganlandtrust.org.

Follow Okanogan Land Trust on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [YouTube](#) for updates from Bonaparte Meadows.

Okanogan Land Trust is a nationally accredited conservation organization serving Okanogan and Ferry counties that has helped protect 18,878 acres across the region.

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