For Immediate Release
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Okanogan Land Trust Accepts Transfer of Buckhorn Mine Mitigation Properties

Six former Buckhorn Mine mitigation properties move into permanent conservation care

OKANOGAN, Wash. — May 19, 2026
Okanogan Land Trust has accepted ownership of six conservation properties from Crown Resources Corporation, a Kinross Gold subsidiary, as part of the Buckhorn Mine mitigation process. Together, the properties cover approximately 580 acres and mark an important addition to OLT's long-term land stewardship mission in Okanogan County.

The properties represent a range of habitat types found in the Okanogan Highlands, from mixed conifer forest and open meadows to wooded wetlands and streams. The six parcels are located in both the Myers and Toroda Creek watersheds, including one that abuts the border with Canada. One of the properties, known as Pine Chee, is set up for public access, featuring a picnic area and a short walking trail through the forested wetland. The trail was built and is maintained by the Okanogan Highlands Alliance (OHA). Visitors can find the trailhead just off Oroville-Toroda Creek Rd. about two miles southeast of Chesaw.

The properties were intended to help mitigate the long-term impacts of the Buckhorn Mine, which operated from 2008-2017. An agreement between the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife and Crown Resources intended transfer of the land once mining was completed, so the transfer to OLT is an important milestone. In the years since the mine closed, OHA helped to keep the memory of the intended land transfer alive so that long-term protection through OLT ownership would not be forgotten. "OHA is looking forward to seeing this important conservation work move into its next chapter with the transfer to Okanogan Land Trust – especially given our concerns about ongoing water quality issues at the Buckhorn Mine," said Sarah Kliegman, Co-Executive Director at Okanogan Highlands Alliance.

"We're honored to be entrusted with the care of these special places," said Kate Miller, Executive Director of Okanogan Land Trust. "We look forward to observing and learning from nature's processes, and supporting them where we can. And we are excited to share the experience with our community!"

Over the coming year, Okanogan Land Trust will continue evaluating the properties, developing stewardship priorities, and working with partners and community members to guide the long-term care of the land.

Okanogan Land Trust is a nonprofit conservation organization dedicated to connecting people to the land and conserving working farms and ranches, wildlife habitats, and water resources in Okanogan and Ferry counties for generations to come.

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