

OREGON PALEO LANDS CENTER

November 2015

Our Mission Statement

The Oregon Paleo Lands Institute works with the Gateway Communities of the John Day Fossil Beds National Monument to build social and economic vitality through efforts:

To conserve and promote the region's ancient and living landscapes, including the Earth's most complete record of the Age of Mammals (past 65 million years).

To develop and connect, with partners, the region's visitor services, recreational services, and natural history education, that support Eastern Oregon's top destination.

To welcome visitors and area residents at the Oregon Paleo Lands Center.

**Contact OPLI at:
Post Office Box 104
333 Fourth Street
Fossil, Oregon 97830**

**(541) 763-4480
paleolands@gmail.com
www.paleolands.org**

President's Message

With donor support, the Paleo Lands Center expanded its summer hours this year to Thursday-Saturday. Regular donors and new sponsors are instrumental in helping to keep the doors open more days year round. Basic Center operations cost about \$1600-2000/month. With your regular support now, staffed Center hours can expand to five days a week next summer and several days in other seasons, starting last September. All donations are tax deductible, and qualify for the Oregon Cultural Trust tax credit.

For great educational and travel information every day, check out the Center's new outdoor visitor kiosk and www.paleolands.org.

Grants support the Center's special projects. The Partner Project, supported by the Oregon Community Foundation and Meyer Trust, is developing major partners to share the Center.

This school year the Center's Schools project is providing expert speakers at local schools and assisting visiting schools with talks and tours, thanks to the Juan Young Trust and Trust Management Services. Supported by the Wheeler Foundation over the next year, the Center will get some needed physical improvements, upgraded exhibits, and a master development plan with new partners will be created.

Under our Sponsor Policy, supporters can get their website and marketing promoted by the Oregon Paleo Lands Institute. Find out how at paleolands.org and consider a donation by PayPal. Thank you for helping us spread the word about the Seven Wonders of the John Day Basin. We are open to serve visitors and schools year round by appointment at 541-763-4480.

Oregon Paleo Lands Center Winter Hours

Thanks to grantors and donors, doors will remain open on weekends; Saturday afternoons from 12-4, and Sundays mornings from 9-1 -- weather permitting. Feel free to call or email and schedule your visit if you have a school group who would like to come in on a weekday. We are happy to assist you! Please check our website at paleolands.org for updated hours and announcements.



Crook County Historical Society, Sept 2015

Want to Volunteer?

The Paleo Lands Center invites you, to meet the public and school groups at our educational hub of the John Day Basin. Volunteers can serve as docents and help share exciting natural history exhibits, brochures, and books with visitors and schools.

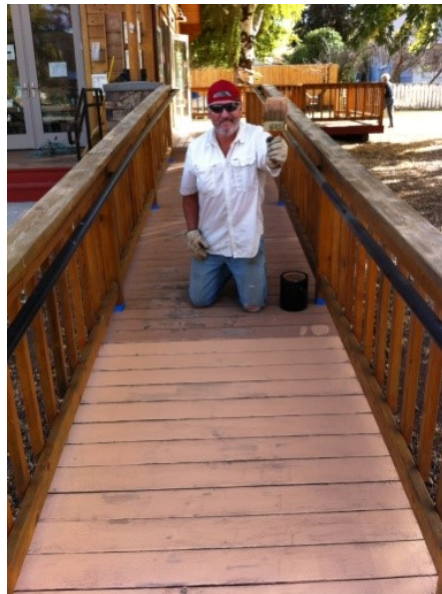
Please contact the center at 541-763-4480 or paleolands@gmail.com for details and to schedule your times.

Camping for weekend volunteers is informally available at no cost on the Center grounds. The Wheeler County Fairgrounds in Fossil has a 12 space RV park with full hook-ups, including cable TV, as well as restroom and shower facilities. Phone: 541-763-4560. For other nearby camping or lodging options, check www.paleolands.org

Paleo Lands Center Gets Facelift

by: Mark Amara

Board members Jeffrey Kee, Richard Ross, Bonnie Lofton, and Mark Amara met at the Paleo Lands Center September 25-27, 2015 to do maintenance on the building and landscaping. Among the projects started were to prepare decking and rails for staining and then staining parts of them, applying special traction adhering paint to the entry ramp, and pruning of some of the trees on the grounds.



Local Sights Within Reach

By Mark Amara

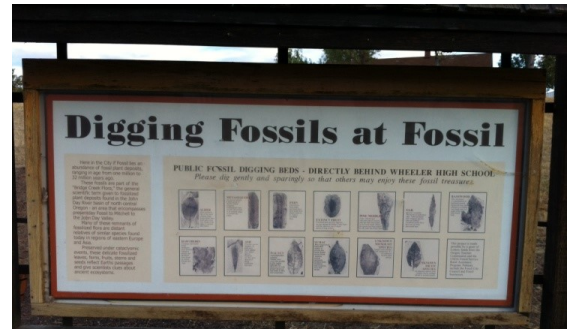
Fossil-ites know the local sights but others may not and the public and visitors are encouraged to check them out. Of course there are the fossil beds open to public digging at Fossil High School behind the field on the hill. From the check in station, follow the trail up the hill to the dig site on a relatively steep hillside. The sandstone has been picked over but there are still some new discoveries to be made! Anyone can dig for a nominal fee; tools and safety glasses are provided.



Board members Kee, Ross, and Lofton paint while Amara photo-documents the process.

Since it was not realistic to stain the building even though the south and east sides are quite weathered, that part of the project was deferred and professional painters were hired. Based on the need, bids were acquired and a donor came forward to contribute several thousand dollars to have two sides of the building and decks restained by a professional painting contractor from Condon in November 2015.

Note the difference in color between the old and new traction gripping rough stain on the ramp. Jeffrey Kee (left) poses with his brush.



Micro-Beavers Discovered Oregon 30 million Years Ago!

In May 2015 the John Day Fossil Beds National Monument reported the exciting news that prehistoric micro-beavers crossed the Bering land bridge from Asia 28-30 million years back, to settle here in Beaver Nation! These pioneering Oregon Beavers, 1/10th the size of today's critters, may be closely related to their modern relatives, who now are doing terrific environmental restoration work, all over the John Day Basin. In 2011 the Fossil Beds also reported the discovery of the then-oldest North American Beavers 7-7.3 million years. The John Day Fossil Beds is a living, changing museum....where we still have much to learn about North America's landscape, its animals, climate change, and the original Beaver Nation.

Another local attraction in Fossil is the Bowerman Loop, a 1.25 mile wide graveled trail and paved loop that begins at the Wheeler County Fairgrounds (past the Haven House retirement home, where Bill and Barbara Bowerman once lived) next to the County RV park inside the grounds on its south side. The trail winds up the hill in a couple of short switchbacks to the hill top through shrub-steppe habitat. At the top of the hill there is a commanding view of the city of Fossil from next to the water tower as well as points in all directions. The trail winds down the hill and enters the city following A Street to a turn to the south that terminates back at the starting point. Among the many sponsors and supporters of this project was the Oregon Paleo Lands Institute.



Natural History Speakers Program

Thanks to the Juan Young Trust grant, OPLI works with expert speakers of various topics, and expanded educational experiences for children in grades K-12.

Late September, one of our expert speakers, Hyon Fielding, engaged local students in an event called, "Arts in the Parks." Hyon Fielding is a noted water colorist of the John Day Basin.

Hyon held three painting sessions at the Spray John Day River Park. The three sessions were grouped based on their grade level. One session was held for grades 1-4, another for grades 5-8, and a third for grades 9-12. Children enjoyed learning about watercolor basics, and enjoyed the experience of painting outdoors.

The Oregon Paleo Lands Institute is privileged to work with Hyon, as well as our other expert speakers, and we are thankful to the Juan Young Trust for helping make this happen!



Taste of Oregon's Old West

On September 12th, 2015, the Oregon Paleo Lands Institute participated in the "Taste of Oregon's Old West" event at Cottonwood Canyon State Park. It was a warm day in the canyons. Many visitors stopped to look at our display of rocks and fossils from Wheeler County, and several picked up our handouts. We hope you enjoyed visiting us as much as we enjoyed visiting with you! We look forward to doing more events like this in the future.

Oregon Science Teachers Association Conference Event



Public Educator: Karen Masshoff and Board Member: Bonnie Lofton, representing OPLI at the Oregon Science Teachers Association conference in Bend, OR.

On Saturday, October 17th, Oregon Paleo Lands Institute participated in the Oregon Science Teachers Association conference event held at the Central Oregon Community College in Bend, Oregon. This was a great opportunity for us to hand out hard copies of our teacher packets to educators.

These packets have information regarding local cultural history, some educational methodology, and some general geology. We were delighted to not only give out information, but to gain some as well from other vendors who participated at the event.

Interested in a teacher's packet to use as a resource for your classroom? Call or email paleolands@gmail.com to request a copy. Our office coordinator, Emily Fernandes, is more than happy to send you physical copies or electronic versions.

September-November 2015 Donors and Sponsors

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Molly Kee
Sandra A. Suran
Mark Amara
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*Thank you for
your
continued
support!*

Oregon Paleo Lands Center Needs You!

You can support the Oregon Paleo Lands Center in a variety of ways. Your financial support now in 2015 is vital to continue our mission of exploring, teaching about, and protecting Oregon's paleo lands. Donor benefits include a 10% discount on retail merchandise at the Oregon Paleo Lands Center in Fossil, a regular newsletter with information about scientific discoveries, history, and news of the Paleo Lands, and advance notice of upcoming OPLI and partner organization events. All donations are tax deductible.

Interested in volunteering at the Center or serving on the Board?
Contact us at paleolands@gmail.com or www.paleolands.org or at PO
Box 104, Fossil, Oregon 97830 (541) 763-4480.