

KLAMATH FOREST ALLIANCE

EXPLORING THE KLAMATH SISKIYOU BIOREGION



The Klamath-Siskiyou Biregion is ten million acres of rugged, mountainous country in northwest California and southwest Oregon.

In 1992 the International Union

for the Conservation of Nature recognized the Klamath-Siskiyou as one of seven areas of global botanical significance in North America. Because of its biological diversity and unique evolutionary history, the World Wildlife Fund refers to the Klamath-Siskiyou as the “Galapagos of North America.”



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The Klamath-Siskiyou hosts:

- The most productive wild salmon and steelhead fisheries outside of Alaska.
- The largest concentration of Wild and Scenic rivers in the nation.
- The largest acreage of unprotected wild forest remaining on the West Coast.
- 3500 plant species of which 280 are rare or endemic.
- The Redrock Rainforest , a unique ecology based on the world’s largest expanse of exposed serpentine rock.

200 Million Year Old Geology

The Klamath-Siskiyou is defined primarily by its geology. The bedrock geology is nearly 200 million years old. Unlike most of North America that was scoured by large glaciers during the ice age, the Klamath-Siskiyou remained relatively untouched. Nor has it ever been much changed by volcanic activity. The landscape has remained undisturbed for so long giving evolution a lot of time to work its wonders here.



Recently, the World Wildlife Fund made an assessment of all the ecoregions on earth to try to identify the 200 most globally outstanding ones. The Klamath-Siskiyou is in this group, along with the great temperate rainforests of the Pacific Northwest. World Wildlife Fund then ranked these regions within the North American continent.

The Klamath Siskiyou is the second most important ecoregion in North America in terms of endemic species (the forests of the Southeastern US are number one).

The *Darlingtonia californica*, cobra lily, or pitcher plant is a carnivorous plant that grows on serpentine. Insects and other small organisms are attracted to the nectar secreted by the hood and appendages. When the curious organisms enter the hole beneath the hood, they are immediately trapped by hundreds of down-pointing hairs. The microorganisms in the fluid of the tubular base decompose the victim and the nutrients released are absorbed by the cobra lily/pitcher plant.



Endemic species are those species that are found only within one region. They exist nowhere else on earth.

The Firecracker Flower is endemic to the Klamath-Siskiyou.

They can be found on grassy slopes in forest opening, at low or moderate elevations, and are commonly seen along the Salmon River from May to July.

The brewer's spruces or weeping spruce is an endemic tree. It is also a rare relict* species from the days of the dinosaurs.

*Trivia: Relict is the correct spelling! From Webster's: a persistent remnant of an otherwise extinct flora or fauna or kind of organism.

The Klamath-Siskiyou is one of the most biologically diverse places in the world. It is home to more than 3,500 plant species, 281 of which are endemic.

65% of the entire native plant taxa characteristic of the California Floristic Province is present in the northern California portion of the K-S; only 15% of the total land mass of California.

The Showy Thistle, a member of the sunflower family; found on dry open slopes in brushy or grassy areas, or in open woods.

Tiger Lily, Lovely Clarikia, and Arrowleaf Balsam Root: Native Americans and modern day herblists prepare medicinals from the roots.

The Klamath Mountains in the K-S are renowned for their wealth of conifer species and are recognized worldwide as a center of plant biodiversity. In the Russian Wilderness Area seventeen different conifers grow within one mile. They are Dwarf juniper, Incense cedar, White fir, Subalpine fir, Shasta red fir, Brewer's spruces, Engelmann's spruce, Whitebark pine, Western white pine, Douglas fir, Western hemlock, and Pacific yew. In the Little North Fork drainage of the Marble Mountain Wilderness you will find the largest diameter Cedar tree in the world. The Klamath Mountains region also contain the largest concentration of unprotected, low-elevation ancient forests on the West Coast of the United States.



The Klamath-Siskiyou is a stronghold of rare forest carnivores including the Pacific Fisher, Pine Marten, and Wolverine.

The region is third in species richness (for taxa ranging from butterflies and plants to birds and mammals) for all temperate conifer forests across the continent, according to the World Wildlife Fund's research.

138 Species of plants and animals in the region are listed as threatened or endangered by state or federal governments. Within the last 100 years, bighorn sheep, California condors, wolves, grizzly bears, and McCloud River bull trout have all become extinct in the region. Elk and salmon populations have become greatly reduced.

The Roosevelt elk has been reintroduced into the Klamath-Siskiyou region after being almost completely wiped out.

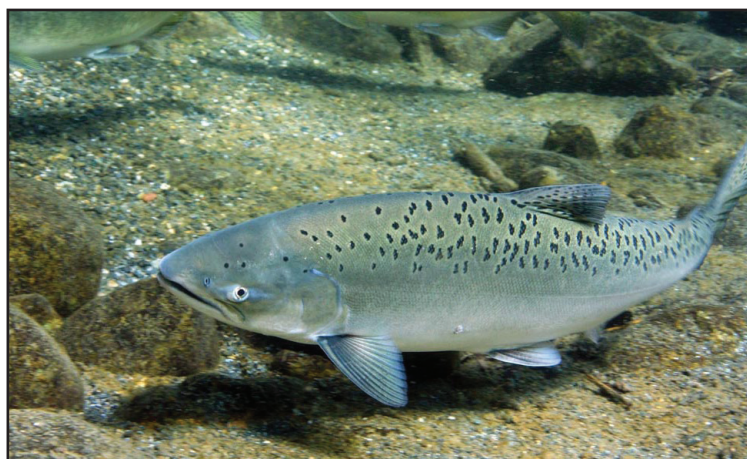
The Siskiyou Mountains of Southwest Oregon and Northwest California have the largest concentration of Wild and Scenic rivers in the nation.

The Klamath River once supported historical salmon runs rivaled in the West by only the Columbia and Sacramento Rivers. Until recently, its remote location in this sparsely populated region kept it a secret to most regional and national conservation groups. This lack of attention allowed for years of non-compliance with laws protecting fish and wildlife and their habitat. Consequently, the Klamath River and many of its tributaries suffer from poor water quality, in-stream flow insufficient to support native salmonids, and inadequate riparian protection.

Anadromous fish are born in fresh water, migrate to the ocean to grow and return to fresh water to spawn and renew their life cycle. While some Klamath Siskiyou streams still support viable runs of anadromous salmonids such as steelhead trout and coho and chinook salmon, other stocks are in serious decline. Some are locally extinct.

To prevent further extinctions, three species have been listed under the Endangered Species Act: the coho salmon, the Umpqua sea-run cutthroat trout and some populations of steelhead.

Salmonids are "keystone species" in many western ecosystems, meaning that they're indispensable to the welfare of many other species—including humans. These fish essentially harvest the solar energy that falls on the Pacific --fixed as carbon in the bodies of plankton and other organisms on up the food chain. Salmon that go to sea as seven-inch smolts can return to freshwater two or three years later weighing 70 pounds.

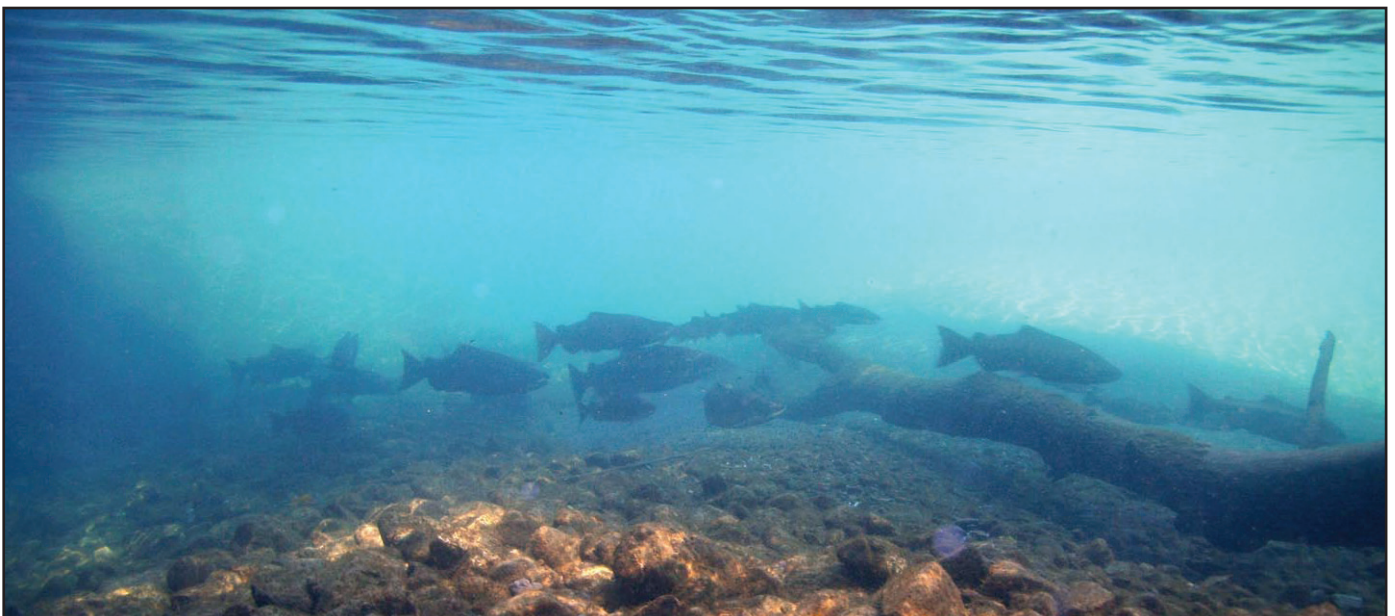




Logging requires roads!

Roads on steep, unstable slopes create erosion, delivering sediment to salmon streams. Roads require constant maintenance for which funding is inadequate. For example, in 1995, the Klamath National Forest was only funded to cover 20 percent of its maintenance costs. The result: MORE SILT... FEWER SALMON!

Removing even some of the trees from steep slopes results in loss of soil strength as roots rot. When heavy winter storms come the result is often a debris slide, like this one in the Klamath National Forest. Even under the 1994 Northwest Forest Plan steep headwall areas are inadequately protected from logging and road construction. Soil continues to slide into creeks and rivers destroying salmon habitat.



Many people think that old growth trees are no longer being logged, but that is not the case. Ancient trees are still being cut in the Klamath-Siskiyou.

This kind of extensive logging and road building is still happening in our National Forests.

Roadless areas are the nurseries where wildlife is reared. They benefit every kind of wildlife, including the more common species like this baby fawn and bobcat.

More Reasons to Protect Roadless Areas:

There are 386,000 miles of classified roads in the National Forest System, enough to circle the globe 15 times and the Forest Service doesn't have the money to maintain 80% of them.

The current backlog of road maintenance and reconstruction on National Forest roads is 8.4 billion dollars. On the average it costs the taxpayer about \$1500 per mile annually to maintain a road on the National Forests.

Small roadless areas are important for maintaining biodiversity, conservation of species with small home ranges, species with special habitat needs, or for providing linkages between larger areas.

Invasion of non-native species into North American ecoregions is one of the most important issues in natural resources management today. Roadless areas serve as refuges against the spread of invasive species.

Invasive weeds are spreading at about 4,600 acres per day on federal lands in the West. The ability of natural resource managers to eliminate invasive species, once they are established is often very limited.

A single off-road vehicle can spread millions of knapweed seeds along miles of backcountry trails.

Eighty percent of the nation's rivers originate in National Forests and 60 million Americans depend on National Forest water. The Forest is the largest water company in the U.S.

Logging and road construction can affect riparian vegetation through removal, soil compaction, changes in drainage patterns and floodplain function, and introduction of non-native aquatic species and invasive plants.

Human Communities

Much of the Klamath-Siskiyou region is rural, remote, and sparsely populated. For example, Siskiyou County, California is the size of Rhode Island and Connecticut combined, yet has a population of just over 43,000 people. Despite sharing a common economy, environment, culture and history, the inhabitants of the region can be very diverse depending upon the area you visit.

Organic Farming; the wave of the future?

While many small family farms are being out-competed by industrialized farming, we believe that it is important to support and promote our local family farms.

Sandy Bar Ranch is located in the Karuk Homelands in the small town of Orleans. It is nestled in a beautiful valley carved out by the Klamath River. There you will find

six riverside cabins, an organic garden, fruit tree nursery, handmade crafts, and Shiatsu massage.

Sandy Bar Ranch
PO Box 347 797 Ishi Pishi Rd
Orleans, CA 95556
Sandybarranch.com
Mail@sandybar.com

Some of our favorite places to visit...

Russian Lake, Russian Wilderness
Butler Creek, a tributary to the Salmon River
Limestone Bluffs on the South Fork of the Salmon River, Katamin, the Karuk Center of the World located on the Lower-Mid Klamath River, Trinity Alps Wilderness, Statue Lake, The Matterhorn, Russian Wilderness, Aspen Lake, Marble Mountain Wilderness

What can you do to ensure that the wilderness and beauty of the Klamath-Siskiyou is protected?

The environmental organizations in the Klamath-Siskiyou are working to restore, protect, and promote healthy, sustainable communities and ecosystems and they need your support. You can stay informed about current issues and threats to the Klamath-Siskiyou and learn more about these organizations through their newsletters, e-mail action alerts, and by perusing their websites.

Salmon River Restoration Council
PO Box 1089
Sawyers Bar, CA 96027
Srrc.org

Mid Klamath Restoration Council
PO Box 409
Orleans, CA 95556
Mkwc.org

Siskiyou Project
950 Sw 6th St.
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Siskiyou.org

Klamath Forest Alliance
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Credits

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Thanks to the People and Nature Partnership for collating wonderful fact sheets about the Klamath-Siskiyou.

Many thanks go out to the staff, dedicated volunteers and activists working to restore, promote, and protect the natural wealth of the Klamath-Siskiyou Bioregion. Your time, energy and love is invaluable.

Boundaries and Ownerships patterns of the Klamath-Siskiyou Bioregion.

10.6 million acres total

5.5 million acres managed by the US Forest Service

3.8 million acres privately owned

1 million acres managed by BLM

200,000 acres of state and tribal land

10,619 acres managed by the US Park Service

Over 60 percent of the Klamath-Siskiyou is in national forests and other federal land.

Regardless of where you live, these are your public lands. Please help to ensure that they are properly managed and protected. Thank you!

Klamath Forest Alliance
In the heart of the Klamath-Siskiyou
Bioregion

Promoting Sustainable Communities and Sustainable Ecosystems in Northern California and Southern Oregon.