New projects, grants and changes are happening at BRLC!
A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR - CASEY SNIDER

“It’s been a busy summer for all of us here at Bear River Land Conservancy, probably one of our busiest. I’ll let the pages of our newsletter speak for themselves, but we’ve improved habitat for wildlife, restored portions of the river for which we are named, and engaged with new land owners and partners to protect critical open space, preserving forever farms in the heart of growing Cache Valley.

It is proof that because of your help we are slowly, incrementally, making a difference. All the challenges of growth, development, and change still exist, but at least now we are making progress, and have tangible successes to show for it.

- CASEY SNIDER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BRLC

We are now a member of the Heart of the Rockies Initiative!

We are excited to announce our membership in the “Heart of the Rockies Initiative,” a land trust partnership that focuses on protecting land across the Rocky Mountain range.

Bear River Land Conservancy was selected because of our focus on protecting the Bear River Watershed, which is the southern terminus of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem and provides an irreplaceable link to the Southern Rockies of Utah and Colorado. Because of work with our partner land trust Sagebrush Steppe, they have now included the entire watershed in their maps.

“We are honored to be included in such a wonderful and austere group of land trusts. It is a remarkable opportunity to be able to work on conservation within the entire rocky mountain corridor and we look forward to furthering these efforts on a regional scale,” said Casey Snider, our director.
To Restore A River:
Bear River Streambank Restoration Update

IT STARTED OUT AS JUST AN IDEA, one that had never been tried before. There have been a lot of ideas on how to stabilize the eroding banks of the Bear River over the years. Many have been tried, but the most commonly accepted “best” method involves using old cars and tires.

However, we felt there may be a better way. With the help of Gabe Murray and Matt Combs from the Utah Division of Water Resources and financial contributions from Bridgerland Audubon, the Utah Division of Forestry, Fire and State Lands, Utah Watershed Restoration Initiative and the US Fish & Wildlife Service Partners Program, BRLC set out to try a new method of stream bank stabilization.

The goal was to regrade the eroded bank with an excavator, then plant native vegetation to help stabilize it. Along with these efforts, the Utah Division of Forestry Fire & State lands would work on Russian Olive tree removal as well.

After a few setbacks to our original timeline, by the last week in June the re-grading was completed and sod-mats were picked up from South Fork Native Plant Nursery near Rexburg, ID.

However, this meant that the mats would be planted as the summer was getting hotter, a less than ideal time to be planting aquatic vegetation.

While water released from Cutler Reservoir raised the river enough to help establish several mats, others weren’t receiving as much moisture as needed. We started getting nervous when some mats started showing signs of heat stress, but we also got creative. Rigging up a pump system to an old 1947 Ford 8N Tractor and some rainbirds, we pulled and delivered river water to the plants on site. The majority of the mats were able to stay hydrated enough to survive the tough summer months, and by the end of July there was considerable growth. Some local vegetation even started moving in to the newly graded banks as well.

While the longterm success of this experimental stream stabilization can only be determined after monitoring the bank over several years, we are excited by the possibilities this project could have.

If this method can be replicated on other parts of the river, we could make big strides in stabilizing banks while minimizing impacts to the watershed.

Also, plants would look a lot nicer than old cars and tires.
Donor Highlight: SALLY SEARS

SAVING PLACE - FALL 2019

namesake of Caffe Ibis; local coffee roaster and Cache Valley staple since 1976. Owned and operated by Sally Sears, Caffe Ibis has been one of Bear River Land Conservancy’s largest donors.

It all started 43-years ago, when Sally and her husband Randy Wirth bought the “Straw Ibis” Herb and Grain Company. Clair Rasmussen, a local landowner who started the store had named it after seeing a flock of White-Faced Ibis land in a field of straw. For the first few years, Straw Ibis primarily sold organic and natural foods and goods, “People would come in with empty jugs and we’d fill them up with shampoo or conditioner,” recalled Sally about the early days of the business. One product sold was fresh-roasted coffee beans, but in the late-seventies and early-eighties there was no “organic” standard for coffee.

“Our roaster back in LA at the time encouraged us to get involved with the Specialty Coffee Association, but as we got deeper into the industry we were concerned about the partners who were picking the coffee, women and their children working in the fields, and it potentially affecting their health. So Randy and I thought, why can’t we apply the organic standards we know for grains, beans and seeds, and just apply it to the coffee industry?”

That was just the beginning for Caffe Ibis though. By 1990, they were roasting their own organic coffee and delivering it across the state. Today they serve only organic coffee and much of it is Fair-Trade certified. Additionally, Caffe Ibis is one of only 23 coffee roasters in the United States certified with the Smithsonian “Bird Friendly” gold-standard for shade-grown coffee.

However, Sally’s desire to help protect birds extends beyond Central American Farms where coffee is grown. After working with Brian Dixon through Bridgerland Audubon and Logan Canyon Coalition, in 2012 Sally and Randy decided to start giving 20-cents for every pound of Logan Canyon coffee they sell, amounting to thousands each year.

“Conservation easements are critically important to the well being of greenspace in Cache Valley, and in Utah. We are thrilled that Caffe Ibis can help support the migratory population of the White-Faced Ibis and other birds throughout the valley.”
We are hard at WORK!

BRLC has made it through the selection process with the Quality Growth Commission, and received LeRay McAllister funds from the state to permanently protect the property – stay tuned for future details on protecting this beautiful property!

Expansion of the BEAR RIVER BOTTOMS

We are currently working on a joint agreement between BRLC, PacifiCorps and Cache County School District that will permanently expand the Bear River Bottoms easement 220 acres to the south of our current easement. Stay Tuned!

The EVANS RANCH

CHECK OUT UPDATES ON BRLC PROJECTS THAT ARE IN THE WORKS RIGHT NOW!

The GORING RANCH

This project was identified by the state of Utah as the second most important parcel to protect through the Forest Legacy Program. Because of its proximity to Bear Lake, this property has imminent threats from development and contains critical forest values – this project was submitted for national review.

BRLC was recently approached by a wonderful resident of North Logan about protecting one of the last big ranches in North Logan. While the property is already currently surrounded by development, it still contains high agricultural value and open space potential. **We are going to a fundraiser this winter to match the generous land owner donation and save this property – stay tuned for more information about this property and our fundraiser in a future newsletter!**

We can’t do it without YOU.

**FLIP TO THE BACK COVER TO FIND OUT HOW YOU CAN HELP US DO OUR CRITICAL WORK**
COMPLETED PROJECT:
SCHIESS PROPERTY

A BEAUTIFUL PIECE OF NIBLEY IS PROTECTED FOREVER, Thanks to Boyd & Sherri Scheiss. The Conservation Easement was signed at the end of August after receiving the final piece of funding.

The property is 25.5 acres that runs along the train tracks in Nibley, and is adjacent to a beautiful stream. As Cache Valley continues to grow and develop, Boyd and Sherri decided they’d like to preserve some of their most beautiful land for future generations. “It’s choice ground... so, I’d hate to see it anything but just hay out there, you know?” said Boyd.

“We’d like to keep this green,” said Sherri, “We might be the last little green piece, and it’s so beautiful. There’s not prettier view.”

Congratulations Boyd and Sherri, and thank you for protecting this beautiful property!

PHOTO BY LIZ SODJA

GROWTH IS UNPRECEDENTED...

Property values across Northern Utah are increasing exponentially and our economic window to protect the Bear River Watershed is shrinking every day. It is more critical than ever to work on protecting these wonderful places. Check out our website to learn how you can leave a legacy or donate to BRLC at:

BEARRIVERLANDCONSERVANCY.ORG

PHOTO BY LIZ SODJA
Dear Northern Utah Neighbor,

As the population continues to grow in Box Elder, Rich and Cache counties, our mission to, “conserve and enhance private lands for wildlife habitat, working farms and ranches, land and trails of recreational or historical significance, watersheds, and critical vistas, using education, conservation easements and sound management, to benefit the people of northern Utah, today and in perpetuity.” is more critical than ever.

If you feel the work BRLC is doing is important, please consider becoming an annual “Friend of the Land” member today. Thank you, and happy trails!

- Casey Snider and the BRLC Team

Please send your payment to:

PO Box 4565
Logan, UT 84323-4565

Or pay online at
BearRiverLandConservancy.org/donate

□ $2,500+ Steward of the Land
□ $1000  Land Benefactor
□ $500   Land Patron
□ $250   Land Sustainer
□ $100   Land Saver
□ <$100  Land Friend
□ (Membership $20+)