

*greenbelt land trust*

# Strategic Plan

2011  
5 Year Plan

*Providing a  
connection to  
the natural  
world.*



# Mission

Our mission is to conserve and protect in perpetuity native habitats, working lands, and lands of natural beauty, which provide a connection to the natural world for residents of the mid-Willamette Valley.

# Vision 2016

The Greenbelt Land Trust envisions a future where significant natural areas are protected, with forests, farmlands, wildlife corridors, hills, meadows, wetlands and watercourses weaving through and around our mid-Willamette Valley communities. These areas contribute to a distinct sense of place, secure our sense of community and provide a connection to the natural world.

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# What is the Challenge?

## The Changes are Real

We are at a crossroads in the Willamette Valley. The water, wildlife, and forests we cherish as Oregonians are at risk as we attempt to balance growth and livability. The challenges facing our natural resources are imminent.

★ **Population** predictions estimate an additional 1.7 million people living in the Willamette Valley in the next 40 years. To accommodate this growth, urban edges will continue to expand, absorbing agriculture and undeveloped land into ever-widening development. This conversion of open spaces into urban landscapes cripples wildlife corridors and greenways.

★ **Climate** change may be one of the most serious challenges for the future. The Willamette Valley is predicted to have wetter and warmer winters and dryer summers, resulting in different flow cycles for rivers once fed by snowmelt, greater assaults by exotic invasive species, and increased fire intensities in our forestlands.

★ **Habitat Loss** in the Willamette Valley is one of the greatest threats facing conservation. Native oak savannas and upland prairies once prospered: less than 1% remain. These remnant ecosystems provide vital refuge and nourishment for a host of endangered wildlife and plant species.

## We Have a Choice

Oregonians have protected the environment and our region's quality of life by supporting strong land-use legislation for over 40 years, voicing their support for providing state funding to conservation. In 2010 citizens passed Measure 76, culminating in the allocation of 15% of state lottery dollars to the protection and restoration of our water and land. Because we value the natural resources surrounding us, we have an opportunity to plan how to sustain growth in conjunction with the preservation of our most critical green spaces before they are gone forever.

## The Opportunity

- ★ Link high-quality habitats and protected lands
- ★ Restore River floodplains and riparian areas
- ★ Preserve and enhance sustainable agriculture
- ★ Provide education and access to nature for our community



# Who We Are

## Greenbelt Land Trust is: Families. Wildlife. Rural. Trails. Rivers.

In 1989, 12 people came together to talk about the future. These diverse members of the community were concerned that the beauty and livability of the Willamette Valley would be lost for their children and grandchildren. Twenty-two years ago Greenbelt Land Trust (GLT) formed as a proactive solution to the challenge of diminishing open spaces, and the loss of healthy streams and wildlife, scenic vistas and recreational trails. The philosophy of an 'emerald necklace' of protected gems throughout the mid-Willamette Valley was soon embraced by the entire community.

Through the support and membership of nearly 700 families, GLT has permanently protected over 1300 acres of the most critical lands in our community. Led by a Conservation Plan and in collaboration with willing landowners, GLT works in our watersheds, prairies, and viewsheds to preserve the valley emeralds that we all cherish. From Harrisburg to Wilsonville, we have protected historic side-channels of the Willamette River, family ranchland, trail systems, endangered habitats, and wildlife corridors. By protecting these lands, our story is woven together with the fisherman who wants to see spring Chinook run the rivers once again, the farmer who has been working quietly for years to improve habitat for migratory birds, or the hiker who takes a walk in our natural areas.

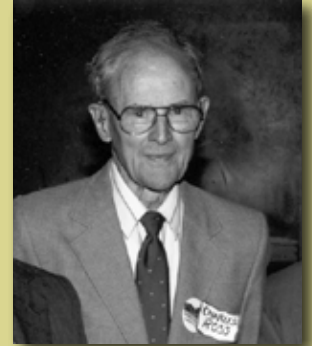
“In the beauty of the land lies the dream of the future.”

- Charles Ross

As our footprint on the land increases, GLT realizes that, in addition to land protection, we must also be cultivating tomorrow's stewards of the earth. We provide opportunities for students to experience planting an Oregon white oak, monitoring the growth of native camas, or constructing nest boxes for at-risk birds. Over 400 students visit Greenbelt properties annually, building the next generation of conservationists.

Whether working with youth and mid-Valley residents to create opportunities for accessing natural areas, collaborating with landowners to find creative solutions for their conservation needs, or joining forces with partners across the state to identify shared ecological goals, Greenbelt Land Trust is about working together to make a better future.

Charles Ross



*Founding member of  
Greenbelt Land Trust*

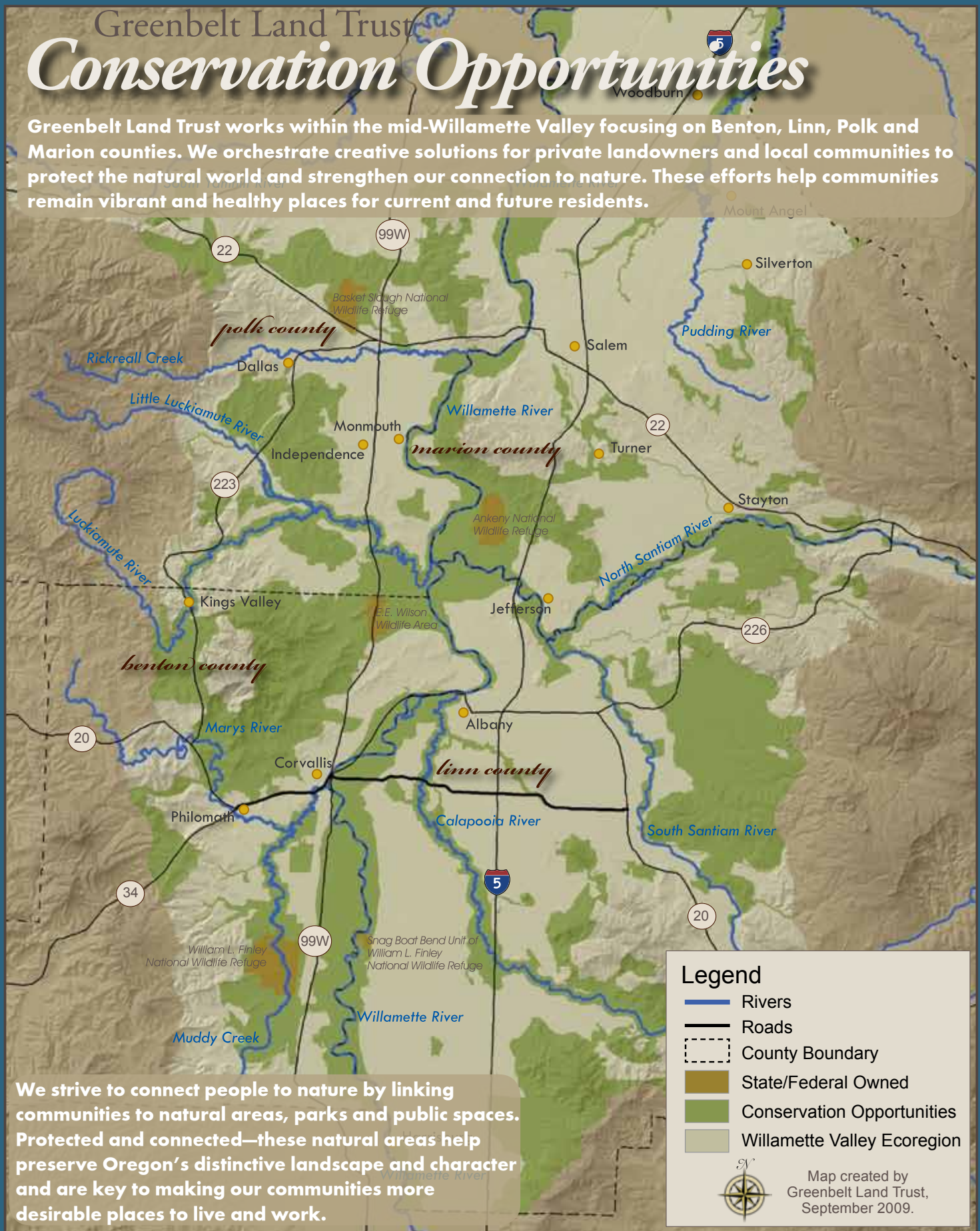
“Our family loves this city, and its incomparable green setting. The undeveloped country that still remains around it is the Glory of Corvallis: the handsome hills and gentle meadows, the old oaks, the tangled wetlands near rivers and streams, the alternately smooth and rolling fields. We do not have other natural features to lend memorable interest to our place - such as bold mountains and wide bodies of water. We see these landscapes around the city - its one saving jewel - going under an ever-advancing shadow of urban and suburban spread. We have only a few years to set aside permanently the open space that will retain a measure of our heritage from a bountiful Creator.”

*From “A Fragment of a Dream”, a speech delivered by Charles Ross at the dedication of Chip Ross Park on September 22nd, 1979.*

# Where We Work

## Greenbelt Land Trust Conservation Opportunities

Greenbelt Land Trust works within the mid-Willamette Valley focusing on Benton, Linn, Polk and Marion counties. We orchestrate creative solutions for private landowners and local communities to protect the natural world and strengthen our connection to nature. These efforts help communities remain vibrant and healthy places for current and future residents.



We strive to connect people to nature by linking communities to natural areas, parks and public spaces. Protected and connected—these natural areas help preserve Oregon's distinctive landscape and character and are key to making our communities more desirable places to live and work.

### Legend

- Rivers
- Roads
- County Boundary
- State/Federal Owned
- Conservation Opportunities
- Willamette Valley Ecoregion



Map created by  
Greenbelt Land Trust,  
September 2009.

# Open Space

## Bond Measure & Owens Farm

In 2000 Corvallis voters passed Measure 94, a \$7.9 million bond measure to preserve nearly 500 acres of open space in our community. Greenbelt Land Trust was a key stakeholder in the effort to pass the Open Space Bond Measure, with volunteers and staff working tirelessly for nearly two years before the Measure passed by an overwhelming majority. Five priority properties were identified for funding, with Owens Farm receiving the highest ranking for protection from



*Students from local elementary school planting rare plant species at Owens Farm.*

a community survey. With a \$2 million price tag for 90 acres of critical oak woodlands and stream connection to Jackson Frazier Wetlands, Greenbelt Land Trust successfully raised the funds to purchase the property in 2001, and was one of the first land trust recipients of a grant from the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board. Owens Farm is now being restored to wet prairie and oak woodlands, and is actively used as a 'living laboratory' for local schools.

# Vision

Significant natural areas are protected, with wildlife corridors, meadows, wetlands, hills, and watercourses weaving throughout the mid-Willamette Valley. We envision a network of natural areas that serve a variety of ecological, economic, and social purposes. These natural areas contribute to a distinct sense of place, secure our community values by providing a connection to the natural world around us.

## A Sense of Place

The Willamette Valley remains Oregon's most fertile and diverse region, despite increasing urbanization. To protect, restore and manage the natural aspects of the Valley, we envision:

- ★ Diverse natural ecosystems
- ★ Sustainable working farms
- ★ Clean and abundant drinking water
- ★ Opportunities for recreation and education
- ★ Preservation of our communities as attractive, desirable places to live
- ★ Inspiring scenic vistas



## Working Together

"Our family has worked and lived on the Willamette River for five generations. We know the health of our crops depends on the health of the river system. Our goal for restoration is to utilize important floodplain areas to improve water quality and protect the valuable farm land that our family farm depends on."

~ Gary Horning

# Values

Greenbelt Land Trust's core value is collaboration with the community for the care and innovative conservation of our natural environment.

**Innovation** - Serve as a model for approaches to land conservation

**Connecting People to Nature** - Ensure a broad range of people are included in our outreach and have access to GLT lands

**Diverse Habitats** - Our properties focus on a balance of diversity of habitat and species

**Partnerships** - Leverage resources to achieve large scale results by partnering with public and private stakeholders

**Leadership** - Provide clear direction for the organization and the conservation movement in the mid-Willamette Valley

**Integrity** - Create a safe environment for open communication and diverse perspectives

**Sustainability** - Ensure long-term organizational viability through sustainable funding and development practices

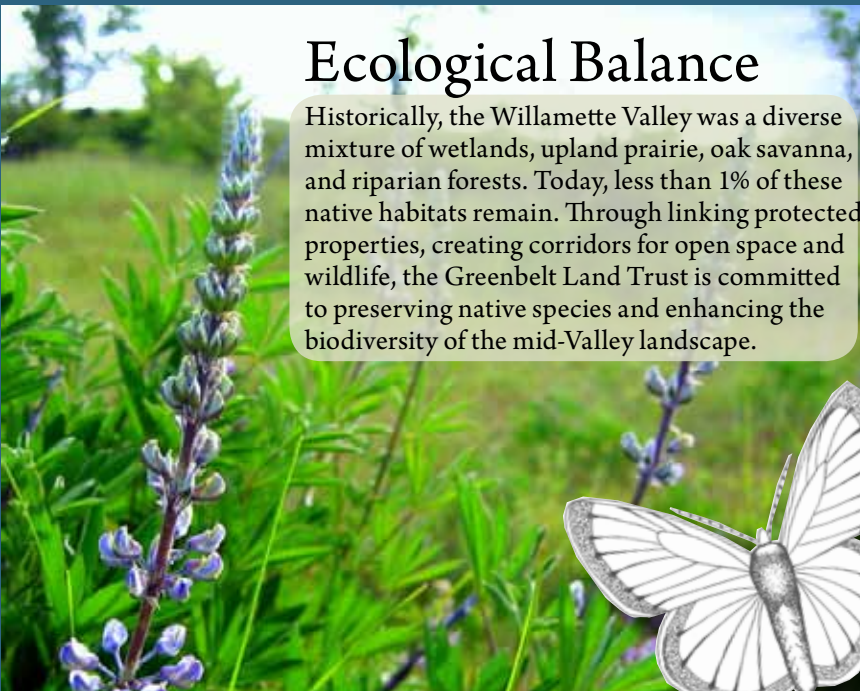
## Connecting People to Nature



The Greenbelt Land Trust works with local schools, teachers, and educational organizations to provide a platform for hands-on environmental learning. At Calapooia Middle School in Albany, students spend the fall in classes learning about how trees and shrubs are important to the health of our rivers and fish. They begin to understand that native Oregon trees along streams strengthen riverbeds, prevent harmful erosion, and help to keep water temperatures nice and cool for fish populations. Teachers at Calapooia have decided to go the extra mile and give their students the opportunity to get dirty and see first-hand how planting a tree makes a difference. In the Spring of 2010, Greenbelt Land Trust began hosting 250 middle-schoolers at a permanently protected property in Linn County along the Willamette River for a week of planting Oregon ash, chokecherry, white oak, and cottonwood along a historic side-channel of the Willamette River. These children are an invaluable resource as the next generation of conservationists, ensuring that our land and waterways are helping fish and wildlife for years to come.

## Ecological Balance

Historically, the Willamette Valley was a diverse mixture of wetlands, upland prairie, oak savanna, and riparian forests. Today, less than 1% of these native habitats remain. Through linking protected properties, creating corridors for open space and wildlife, the Greenbelt Land Trust is committed to preserving native species and enhancing the biodiversity of the mid-Valley landscape.



# Goals & Strategies

## Campbell Legacy Endowment

In 1999 Charles and Elsie Ross created the first organizational endowment for Greenbelt, appropriately named the Campbell Legacy Endowment. Meg and Homer Campbell have been visionary and active Greenbelt supporters and were integral to the formation and continued success of GLT. Through an initial contribution of \$150,000, the fund continues to grow and generate the interest of which supports the ongoing operations and activities of the organization. In addition to Stewardship, Legal Defense, and Land Acquisition Funds, the Campbell Legacy Endowment is a testament to GLT's promise to always be here to steward and protect the most important lands in our region.

## Land Trust Accreditation

In 2008 Greenbelt Land Trust became one of the first nationally accredited land trusts in the country. Through an intensive and rigorous assessment process that evaluated organizational policies, funding, strategies for growth and stability, accreditation ensures that land trusts are capable of 'walking their talk', and are ready to take on the perpetual oversight and stewardship of conserved lands. There are over 1600 land trusts in the US. We are proud to be one of 130 who have gone through the accreditation process.



## Land Protection

In cooperation with partners, landowners and members, the highest priority lands in our region will be protected using a diverse array of conservation tools and funding sources.

1. Refine process for prioritizing conservation lands
2. Communicate openly about priority projects with landowners and key stakeholders
3. Acquire easements and fee-simple purchased land based upon strategic evaluation process

## Stewardship

GLT has an active stewardship program that permanently protects the conservation values on all protected properties.

1. Maintain close communication with property owners to ensure maintenance of easement conservation values
2. Build the GLT Stewardship Fund to support ongoing stewardship, restoration, and legal defense needs for GLT properties
3. Utilize best practices to calculate baseline stewardship management needs and costs on protected properties
4. Actively restore GLT lands in line with adopted management plans

## Organizational Capacity

The Staff, Board, and key volunteers will develop sustainable resources to meet the operational and financial needs of GLT.

1. Increase percentage of unrestricted revenue
2. Diversify GLT's revenue sources to minimize reliance on any single source of income
3. Build stable and adequate funding to support the organization and provide endowments for long-term organizational sustainability and for the stewardship of GLT lands
4. Ensure Board capacity and training grow with the organizations evolution

GLT has an active and growing membership that assists in supporting the organization.

1. Follow the strategies and goals outlined in the GLT Development Plan to engage and sustain members and newcomers to GLT
2. Prioritize long-term relationships with donors

## Connecting People to Nature

GLT builds connections between the people of the mid-Willamette Valley and the region's natural environment by working with many partners and volunteers in our community. We strive to create a community of people throughout the mid-Valley who value and support conservation.

1. Support efforts to acquire, build, and maintain a network of trails to connect and provide public access to natural areas and parks
2. Create and enhance opportunities for residents of the mid-Willamette Valley to learn about, enjoy, and conserve GLT lands
3. Maintain an active and comprehensive volunteer land stewardship program
4. Increase opportunities for youth to learn more about native habitats and species and participate in on-the-ground conservation activities
5. Expand public awareness of GLT and land conservation and restoration throughout the mid-Willamette Valley

## Partnerships

GLT continues to enhance its reputation as a professional leader in the land trust community.

1. Maintain full accreditation with Land Trust Alliance Accreditation Commission, and prepare for re-accreditation in 2013
2. Continue as an active member of Land Trust Alliance (LTA)
3. Engage with the Coalition of Oregon Land Trusts and LTA

Greenbelt works proactively with partners to carry out conservation, restoration, and recreation activities.

1. Promote private, voluntary land conservation in Oregon
2. Continue to work with partner organizations to set priorities for conservation throughout the mid-Willamette Valley
3. Assist in the implementation of Benton County's Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP)
4. Develop stronger partnerships with Soil & Water Conservation Districts and Watershed Councils in our service area to carry out conservation, restoration, and education goals
5. Work with local governments and state legislature on conservation and stewardship priorities
6. Continue to work jointly with area partners to collaborate on activities and outreach

## Coalition of Oregon Land Trusts

Greenbelt Land Trust has an opportunity to share the story of conservation with the dozens of other land trusts that serve diverse regions across the state. From national organizations like The Nature Conservancy, to land trusts working from the Wallowas to the Coastal estuaries, Oregon land trusts share common opportunities and challenges to secure and manage land in their community. Through the formal partnership of COLT, Oregon land trusts have a strong and unified voice for conservation among the policy makers of Salem, members in our communities, and landowners interested in preserving Oregon's unique landscape.





greenbelt  
land trust

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# Greenbelt Land Trust What We Have Accomplished

## LUCKIAMUTE

- 145 acres
- Conservation Easements (2 owners)
- Upland & Wetland Prairie, Riparian Forest



## SOAP CREEK

- 9 acres
- Conservation Easement
- Douglas Fir Forest, Upland Prairie, Pond Habitat



## KINGS VALLEY

- 39 acres
- Conservation Easement
- Farmed Pasture, Mixed Hardwood Forest



## FITTON GREEN

- 143 acres
- Conservation Easement
- Mixed Hardwood Forest, Upland Prairie



## LONE STAR RANCH

- 199 acres
- Conservation Easement
- Upland Prairie, Oak Woodland/Savanna, Ranch Land



## BALD HILL PARK

- 41 acres
- Conservation Easement
- Upland Prairie, Oak Woodland/Savanna



## NEWTON CREEK

- 7 acres
- Conservation Easement
- Wetland Prairie



## EVERGREEN

- 221 acres
- Owned & Managed by Greenbelt
- Wetlands, Riparian Forests, Farm Fields



## LUPINE MEADOWS

- 58 acres
- Owned & Managed by Greenbelt
- Upland & Wetland Prairie, Riparian Forest



## WILLAMETTE BLUFFS

- 120 acres
- Conservation Easement
- Savanna, Prairie, Marsh, Mixed Woodland



## OWENS FARM

- 95 acres
- Owned & Managed by Greenbelt
- Upland & Wetland Prairie, Riparian Forest, Oak Woodland/Savanna



## LITTLE WILLAMETTE

- 199 acres
- Conservation Easement
- Savanna, Prairie, Floodplain Forest, Wetlands, River Side Channels



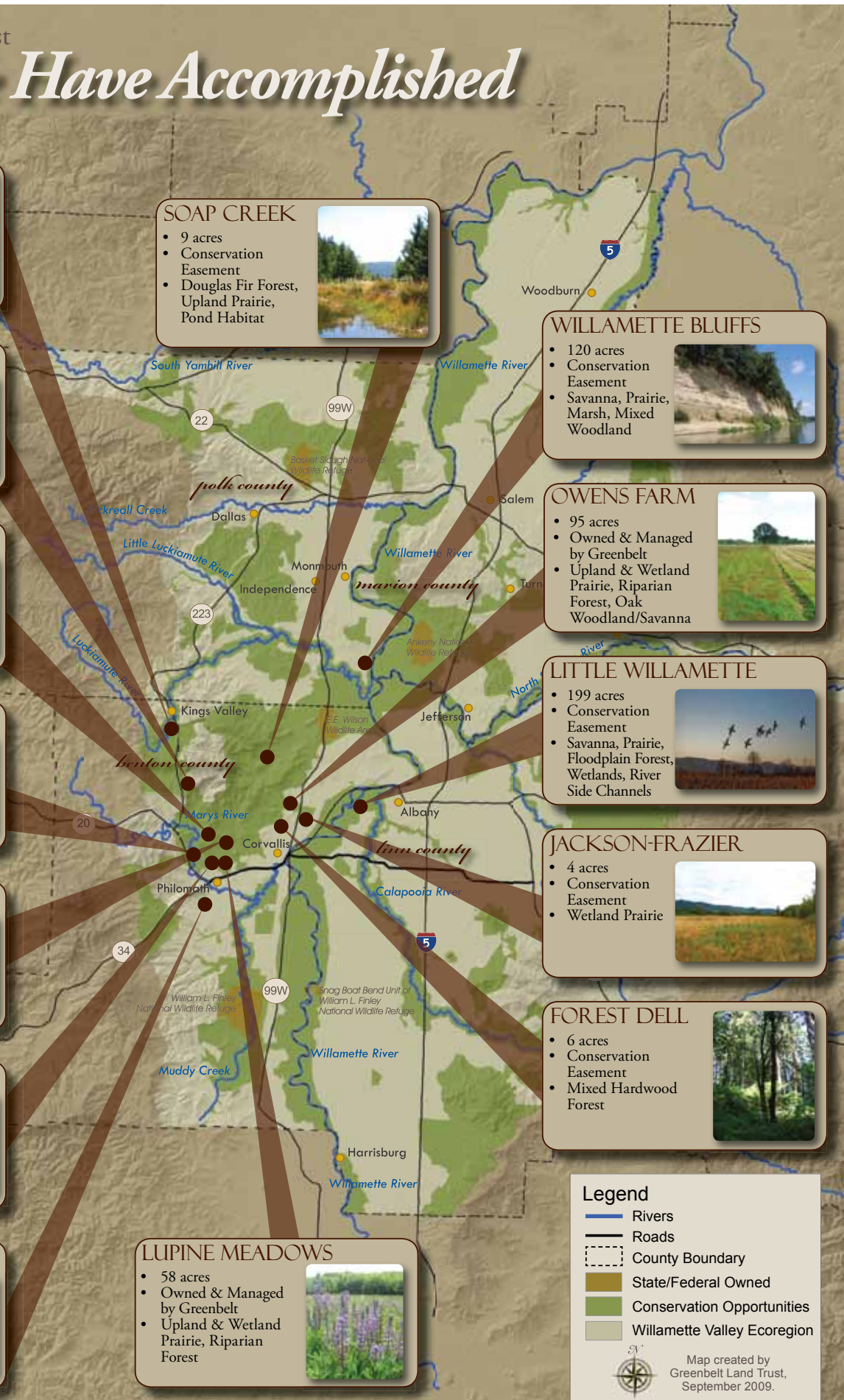
## JACKSON-FRAZIER

- 4 acres
- Conservation Easement
- Wetland Prairie



## FOREST DELL

- 6 acres
- Conservation Easement
- Mixed Hardwood Forest



**Legend**

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Map created by Greenbelt Land Trust, September 2009.