

## News From Northwest LAND Conservation Trust

*Saving Oregon's natural resources – farmland, forest land, wildlife habitat, and scenic open space*

SUMMER 2004

### Protecting Small Acreages with Conservation Easements

*By Linda Anderson, member  
Northwest Land Conservation Trust*



Many Oregonians associate conservation easements with preservation of large parcels of land. Sharon Moore, however, has entered into a conservation easement with Northwest Land Conservation Trust which will safeguard the natural resources on her small five acres. The property is zoned "Acreage Residential" and located just outside Salem's urban growth boundary. Oregon's broad land conservation statutes make this possible.

Aside from protecting the rural heritage, wildlife habitat, and scenic open space of her property, Sharon has created both a playground and a refuge for neighborhood children. Kids are her calling. She believes that they need spaces where they can get away from the TV and the computer, be physically active, play those games that require the company of other kids, and have a safe place in which to hang out.

Accordingly, she has equipped her acreage with some remarkable play equipment. These include a swing, a swinging teeter-totter, a slide, and a rig that can hoist a child

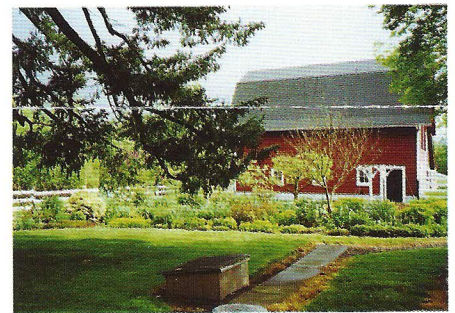
30 feet into a tall Douglas fir for a bird's eye view of the surrounding neighborhood.

A former middle school teacher, she volunteers at the local elementary school, mentors children, conducts a reading club for neighborhood kids during the summer, and still finds time to play badminton at the local Y. With her own children grown, she enjoys seeing the neighborhood kids having fun in her "yard".

Over the years, many kids have tried to construct a tree house in her centuries-old live Oak, but Sharon does not permit the use of nails and tarps on its branches. The easement protects this remarkable tree, with its huge trunk and thick mossy branches evocative of the Swiss Family Robinson. The easement also protects all the other trees on the property, including towering firs, fruit trees, and a mix of native tree species in an adjoining strip of woodland that Sharon has recently added to her holdings.

For kids who are into animals, as Sharon is, there are also sheep, cats, and Muscovy Ducks! The quackless ducks, imprinted on Sharon at hatching, follow her about the yard, murmuring to each other and eating her zucchini. Housed behind the greenhouse in a garden that features many varieties of vegetables, herbs, blueberries, and flowers, the ducks also patrol the shrub beds around her historic gabled 1930's house. These graceful beds contain many rare species of shrubs and flowering perennials.

Sharon has also created a great space for adults. Behind the house, on the second floor of a heavy beamed barn, with a small stage and balcony, free concerts and dances are held during the summer. Skilled amateur musicians whom Sharon recruits at a spring folk music camp perform in styles that range from keyboard and fiddle to swing jazz guitar. Peanut shells are scattered on the floors for dances.



This beautiful and well maintained old barn acts as a venue for affordable entertainment and for amateur musicians who want to share their talent with an audience. And while the adults dance and listen to music, their kids entertain themselves on a slide that runs from the second floor of the barn down into the yard.

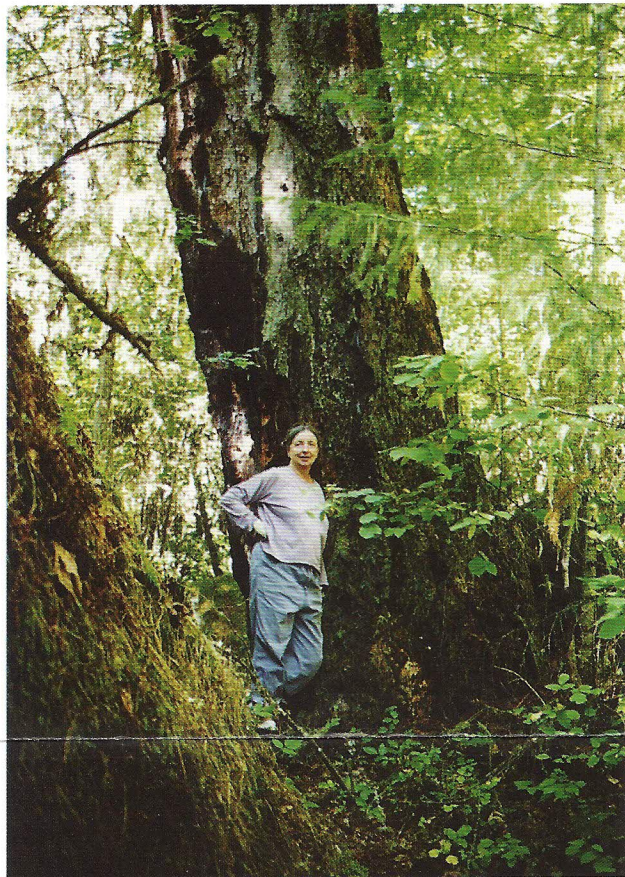
Through the use of the Conservation Easement, Sharon has found a way to protect her property in perpetuity, as well as the resources it offers to the community.

*If you would like to be added to Sharon's concert/dance listserv, e-mail her at [Sharonmooree@comcast.net](mailto:Sharonmooree@comcast.net)*



# “Lynn’s Cliff”

by Reida Kimmel, member  
Northwest Land Conservation Trust



*Lynn Bowers*

On the north side of Lower Fox Hollow Road in Lane County there are several areas of extensive basalt cliffs. One such area which contains numerous old growth trees as well as thirty year old second growth, has recently been included in a land trust.

This cliff, known as “Lynn’s Cliff”, is a beautiful place. There are rock shelters and, in season, small water falls. The old big leaf maples are wonderfully golden in the fall, and when the big storms come in, the old trees sway and sing in the wind.

Most nights in the winter and spring, a large flock of crows roosts in a few of the big trees. If it is very stormy, however, they fly over the road to seek less exposed forest farther to the south. There are large Northwest salamanders (*Ambystoma gracile*), red legged frogs and genus {*Hyla*} tree frogs in the wet spots. A dark color phase bobcat has been seen coming onto the road from the cliff and occasionally, there have been foxes with kits on the cliff.

As you might imagine, “Lynn’s Cliff” is an inviting place to walk if you don’t mind poison oak and aren’t afraid of heights. A neighbor, who walks on the cliff regularly, recently stumbled on to a wonderful sight! Welcome to the World! -- two baby vultures, white and downy, were right there at his feet! He snapped their pictures and quickly withdrew, afraid of startling the parents into deserting the chicks. He meant to go back to take more pictures as the chicks matured, but never did. The chicks did live and fledge. They were seen by several persons feasting on a roadkill deer up the road from the cliff. Immature vultures are distinguished from adults because they have gray, not red heads and necks.



Lynn’s 25-acre basalt cliff is unique, special, truly one of a kind. Its wildlife habitat, scenic draws, ephemeral streams, woodlands, and other natural resources, are of great importance to Lynn and her family, as well as to the people of Lane County and Oregon State.

The Conservation Easement is held by the Northwest Land Conservation Trust, and assures that “Lynn’s Cliff” will be preserved and protected in perpetuity for future generations.



## Open Space

### Lane County, Oregon

A recent mail survey of rural communities conducted in Lane County, Oregon by the County's Land Management Division found that "Open Space" is rated as the best use of vacant or undeveloped land with 78.4% of respondents ranking it as important or very important, followed by "Parks and Recreation" with 55.8%.

Table 1 shows the ranking of land use preferences from the survey in the order of importance based on the question: *If you could choose how the undeveloped or vacant lands in your community were to be used, which of the following land uses do you think would be most important?* (The scale of responses included: **important, very important, neutral, unimportant, and very unimportant**)

**Table 1**  
**Survey of Land Use Preferences**  
Lane County, Oregon, 1999

<b>Land Use Type</b>	<b>Percent of Respondents Rating as Important or Very Important</b>
Open Space	78.4%
Parks and Recreational	55.8%
Residential	49.4%
Public Facilities	35.8%
Commercial	20.2%
Industrial	11.1%

The same survey asked respondents to rank land use issues "*according to their level of importance with your community in mind.*" Using the same ranking scale as above, the top three issues were:

1. Maintaining and protecting local water quality (95.7%)
2. Preserving the scenic quality of my community (91.5%)
3. Preserving environmental quality (88.7%)

Clearly open space, scenic values, and environmental quality are high priorities for Lane County residents.

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source  
Foder & Associates, 394 East 32<sup>nd</sup> Ave., Eugene, OR 97405 (541-345-8246)

## Saving Oregon's Agricultural Land

By Malcolm Higgins

This 40-acre farm is protected by a conservation easement, which assures that its fields, woodland, wildlife habitat, and scenic open space are preserved in perpetuity for future generations.

The conservation easement was established by the landowner and Northwest Land Conservation Trust. The Trust, a non-profit, public-benefit corporation works quietly and effectively to preserve farmland in Oregon. Conservation easements held by the Trust require no government permits, hearings, or political battles and do not interfere with the rights of others.



*Geronimo guarding his flock*



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