



Newberry Country Land Stewards (NCLS) Aug 2024 - Dec 2025

Team Overview: Led by Shannon Shahan

Volunteers: Including Jon Ebner, Mark Sperling, Kyle Graham, Brooks Eilertson, Shawn and Aimee Beach, Brad Miller, Jeremy Evans, Dave and Kenna Sneed, Tony and Kathy DeBone

Businesses: Including Republic Services, Peak Performance, High Lakes Dumpster Rental, Rosland Coffee, Kimball's Feed Store, Les Schwab, Rays Food Place, Grocery Outlet, Legend Cider, Figaros Pizza, Cascade Septic, La Pine Septic Service, Journey Salvage and Tread Lightly.

Agencies and Organizations: City of La Pine, Deschutes County Sheriffs Office, DSCO Inmate Crew, La Pine Rural Fire Protection District, Sons of Smokey, Public Land Stewards, Deschutes County Homeless Outreach, Bureau of Land Management and US Forest Service.

Donors: Deschutes Solid Waste, Disaster Funders Network - RoundHouse, IBEW Local 290 and many of the businesses listed above.

Partnerships: Peak Performance (equipment), High Lakes Dumpster Rental (services), Republic Services (equipment), BLM and US Forest Service (supplies), Public Land Stewards of Bend (mentorship), Sons of Smokey (tracking app), and others.

Sustainable Newberry Country:

"We envision a Sustainable Newberry Country, where we conserve and protect the environment, steward our natural resources, and promote public access and enjoyment of our region's many natural wonders."

Strategy - Clean Up Trash and Garbage from Forested Areas:

"Working with the U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management and other federal, state and local government agencies, clean up trash and garbage from Newberry Country forested areas, including areas where homeless camps are located."



Key Accomplishments:

- Completed 4 large-scale community cleanups (exceeding goals), plus cleared Camp Covid near Newberry Estates Subdivision/
- Removed over 26 abandoned RVs.
- Logged 1,099 volunteer hours.
- Provided dumpsters for several camps to enable self-cleanups.
- Enhanced environmental health, wildfire safety, and public access in areas like McKay, Jackpine, Camp Camp Covid, Cagle/Pinecrest and Rosland Recreation Area.
- Assisted in stabilizing several homeless individuals

Challenges and Lessons:

Abandoned RV removal requires funding and coordinated approvals from DCSO and BLM.

Financial Summary:

Deschutes Solid Waste - \$4,000 in tipping fee waivers

Disaster Funders Network (Round House) - \$3,000 used for fire extinguishers and fire blankets distributed to Camps and tipping fees

IBEW Local 290 - \$1,500 toward Tipping fees

Mac Funding - \$13,675 toward abandoned RV Removal

We also enjoyed donations from Legend Cider, Figaros Pizza, Rosalind Coffee, Ray Food Place, Grocery Outlet, Cascade Septic, La Pine Septic, Peak Performance, High Lakes Dumpster, Kimball's Feed Store, and Tread Lightly for food, refreshments and equipment. Republic Services and High Lakes Dumpster waived dumpster rental fees

Major 2025 Outcomes

NCLS's initiatives directly enhanced environmental health and public safety in Newberry Country, removing hazards that could exacerbate wildfires and pollution. The program's success in the McKay and La Pine cleanups prevented potential ecological damage, while volunteer hours translated to tangible community benefits, including restored access to recreational areas. Recognized for collaborative impact, NCLS solidified its role as a key player in sustainable land management, inspiring broader participation and aligning with NRP's wildfire resilience strategy.



Success Stories:

Feedback on the encampment dumpster program:

"It truly means the world to me to be able to take care of this. So much has happened in my life and I'm just grateful that with your help I'm able to not only keep my word about leaving area clean but also be true to my self and move forward in my life. So once again thank you, thank you so very much."

Note from David Fox:

"It is truly amazing that we are having a cleanup at Camp COVID. I've been working in an outreach position with Deschutes County Health Services for 3 years directly serving many of the individuals that have resided at Camp COVID. The scale at one point was sizable, around 14 individuals all living unhoused on this plot of BLM land. The resulting scar on the land is significant and I'm hopeful that this cleanup will help restore it back to some sense of what it was like before being occupied."

One final note on the residents that have departed from this property. Unfortunately, many left in much worse condition than when they arrived. This includes two deaths from health complications while residing homeless at Camp COVID. In addressing those survivors that have found housing, there is a lot of guilt and shame around the condition in which they left the camp. I know a lot of them are so thankful that the community is stepping in to cleanup what they could not. I say this all in preparation for what conditions you'll be met with when you see the camp in person. I went out there about every week for three years and so I became conditioned to the horrific conditions in which some people lived. It's only when I step away and put myself in the shoes of a volunteer community member do I remember what the impact is upon someone seeing it for the first time, it's difficult to behold."

I hope that helps give some context to the situation out at Camp COVID and also just want to express my thanks to the community for being willing to participate in such a big operation!"



Looking Ahead – 2026 Priorities

- Complete restoration at Camp Covid (delayed by government shutdown); continue cleanups and stewardship.
- Continue cleanup events to 3-4 annually, targeting high-priority public lands
- Secure additional grants (\$15,000+) for equipment and hazardous waste handling to scale RV and camp removals.
- Grow volunteer base

These efforts demonstrate strong progress in building resilient, fire-adapted communities in Newberry Country, with robust partnerships driving impact. Future funding and support will sustain momentum.

The Newberry Country Land Stewards concludes 2025 with measurable environmental wins and deepened community ties, advancing a vision of protected, accessible public lands. Thank you for your support in stewarding Newberry Country's natural legacy.

