

Why protect the Owyhee Canyonlands?

Oregon's one-of-a-kind, wild wonderland

The Owyhee Canyonlands in southeastern Oregon is the largest conservation opportunity in the lower 48 states. Often described as Oregon's Grand Canyon, its deep, red-rock canyons, rolling plains and wild rivers offer ample recreational opportunities, including hiking, rafting, fishing, hunting, camping, stargazing and birdwatching.

Growing support

Statewide and local support for protecting this special place is growing. Conservation groups and businesses have come together to form *The Owyhee Coalition*, a local *Friends of the Owyhee* group is calling for protection, and more than 8,000 Oregonians have already signed the petition to protect the Owyhee area.

A wildlife stronghold

The Owyhee Canyonlands is home to over 200 species, including golden eagles, pronghorn antelope, elk, the imperiled Greater sage-grouse, and the largest herd of California bighorn sheep in the nation. The area's fascinating geology, rich ancient history and unique ecology come alive in this natural treasure.

A local economic opportunity

Protecting the Owyhee Canyonlands would boost the local economy. Research shows communities near protected public lands experience an economic lift from visitation, increased livability, and service sector jobs. Currently, 16% of total private jobs in Malheur County are in travel and tourism related sectors—a great opportunity area for growth. In an agricultural area stricken with four years of drought, options for diversifying the economy are more vital than ever.

Remote but under threat

While remoteness has long protected the Owyhee, development pressure—including mining and oil and gas development—is now clawing at its edges. Before these forces take hold, let's have the foresight to protect the Owyhee's wild rivers, life and beauty remain for generations to come.

The Owyhee Conservation Proposal

Protecting the most special places within the Owyhee Canyonlands would safeguard its deep, red-rock canyons, rolling plains, wild rivers, and ample recreational opportunities for future generations. It would protect the area's fascinating geology, rich ancient history, healthy wildlife habitat, and unique ecology. Extractive uses (oil and gas development) that would permanently damage these pristine places would not be allowed, while activities like fishing, boating, hunting and hiking would continue. Working farms and ranches wouldn't be harmed. We want to prevent the sort of development and impacts in the most unique and ecologically significant areas of the Owyhee that we've seen quickly take hold in other areas of the West.

