

## **Bob Mace's Vision for Watchable Wildlife (OCF E-News, 2/17/2015)**



When the late Bob Mace coined the term “watchable wildlife” in 1979, he couldn't have imagined the opportunities for wildlife observation his vision would help make real. Mace's fresh approach helped instill new cultural, economic and political value in non-game species and their environments. Through public-private cooperative efforts of the Bob and Phyllis Mace Watchable Wildlife Fund of OCF, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) and the Knife River Corporation, the results of his determination are coming to fruition.

Bob retired from the Oregon Game Commission (now ODFW) in 1981. In the mid-1990s, Mace and partner Phil Scallon began to mine the Mace property on the banks of the Rogue River for aggregate river rock, with an environmentally conscious reclamation plan to turn the spent quarry into a publicly owned and operated wildlife refuge.

With the cooperation of ODFW and the Oregon Department of Geology and Mineral Industries, the 160-acre project has begun on the Mace property. Mace's daughter, Linda Marr, said, "Once it is mined, it will leave a wonderful place for a recreational area, a 75-acre lake adjacent to the Rogue River."

The Mace property is held in trust while Knife River runs the mining operation, and then ownership will transfer to ODFW. A percentage of the mining royalties goes to the fund at OCF to support ongoing rehabilitation projects, parts of the actual reclamation, and educational efforts.

While complete reclamation may be as much as forty years away, the Mace family and ODFW are getting a head start on Highbanks Bottom, a beautiful wooded stretch along the Rogue. This lush riverside borders the mining area but lies out of sight below the high bank. According to ODFW's Russ Stauff, "The Mace property will offer a tremendous public asset in concert with the other attractions there."

Groundbreaking began in 2013 with approval of a \$24,000 OCF grant, along with funding provided by ODFW to restore the riverbank. Amenities will include a boat launch and restrooms. "

Stauff added, "Reclaiming the lake will offer tremendous opportunity for family recreation and watchable wildlife in the heart of the Rogue Valley."