



POLK COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

PRESENTS:

The Decade of the Oak

Witnessing Polk County's History and 10,000 Years of Common Ground



Saturday October 17, 2026 @ 1:00 P.M.

Polk County Museum, 560 S Pacific Hwy W, Rickreall

Presented by:

David Craig, Professor of Biology and Director of the Science Collaborative Research Program at Willamette University

Long before Polk County's homestead claims were surveyed and platted under the Donation Land Act, Oregon white oaks already shaped this landscape and the lives of the people who lived among them. For over 10,000 years, the Kalapuya people managed the open, park-like oak landscapes that so struck early settlers. Indigenous knowledge of seasonal fire and water use in the Willamette Valley provided families with an abundance of food, medicine, tools, and so much more. That deep history and the dramatic changes that followed European settlement are the starting point for this talk about the ongoing placekeeping by the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde, the Confederated Tribes of the Siletz Indians, and the many United States public and private interests, including "witness trees". Learn about the connection between Polk County's local oak history and a much greater regional effort to conserve oak habitat and local cultural and natural history.

PLEASE JOIN US FOR THIS VERY INTERESTING PROGRAM

Admission: Adults \$5, Seniors \$4, Children \$2, Under 6 Free

MEMBERS ALWAYS FREE (Light refreshments served)