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# Walking the High Desert

*Encounters with Rural America along the Oregon Desert Trail*

ELLEN WATERSTON

PACIFIC NORTHWEST;  
LITERATURE / CREATIVE NONFICTION;  
NATURE AND ENVIRONMENT

192 pp., 1 map, 5.5 × 8.5 in.  
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ELLEN WATERSTON is author of *Where the Crooked Desert Rises: A High Desert Home*, a memoir, and four poetry collections including a verse novel. She is the founder and president of the Waterston Desert Writing Prize and the founder of the Writing Ranch in Bend, Oregon.

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Former high desert rancher Ellen Waterston writes of a wild, essentially roadless, starkly beautiful part of the American West. Following the recently created 750-mile Oregon Desert Trail, she embarks on a creative and inquisitive exploration, introducing readers to a “trusting, naïve, earnest, stubbly, grumpy old man of a desert” that is grappling with issues at the forefront of national, if not global, concern: public land use, grazing rights for livestock, protection of sacred Indigenous ground, water rights, and protection of habitat for endangered species.

Blending travel writing with memoir and history, Waterston profiles a wide range of people who call the high desert home and offers fresh perspectives on nationally reported regional conflicts such as the Malheur Wildlife Refuge occupation. *Walking the High Desert* invites readers—wherever they may be—to consider their own beliefs, identities, and surroundings through the optic of the high desert of southeastern Oregon.

“There is no better guide to Oregon’s high desert than Ellen Waterston. Her sense of place, her lyrical love of this sometimes hard to love place, her balanced yet passionate dissection of the issues roiling the big land of junipers and open sky is a wonderful match for her subject. While the West is full of poets who love the land, few of them are as intellectually nimble as Waterston.”

—Timothy Egan, author of *The Worst Hard Time* and *Short Nights of the Shadow Catcher*

“Beautifully written, graceful, and engaging. Waterston’s blend of travelogue, memoir, and meditation brings a new focus to Oregon’s high desert.”

—Molly Gloss, author of *The Hearts of Horses* and *Unforeseen*