

THE WILDEST PLACE

NEWSLETTER OF THE SELWAY-BITTERROOT FRANK CHURCH FOUNDATION



SELWAY BITTERROOT
FRANK CHURCH
FOUNDATION

FALL 2019

FALL 2019

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FROM THE BOARD CHAIRMAN



2019 has been an outstanding year for the Selway Bitterroot Frank Church Foundation. Working with our Forest Service partners, our hard-working volunteers, Wilderness Ranger Interns, and our dedicated staff have made outstanding contributions to the stewardship of these great Wilderness lands. These accomplishments are highlighted in this newsletter. To maintain this level of stewardship I want to call your attention to a variety of ways you can continue to support our efforts and have fun along the way. First, please be sure to renew your membership. Large or small, every membership makes a tangible difference. Also, the Idaho Wilderness license plate is a significant source of Wilderness stewardship funding for SBFC. For every plate purchased or renewed, SBFC receives a portion of the proceeds. Another simple way to provide your support is to contribute on our "Donate" tab on our webpage which provides seven choices to which you can direct your donation.

Finally, our grand raffle tickets in which you can win a \$1,000 gift certificate to REI will go on sale in December. These make great gifts and "stocking stuffers" for the holiday season. With appreciation for your past support, we want you to know that we depend on your generosity to continue putting boots on the ground with volunteers and interns to accomplish the important work of Wilderness stewardship.

Ed Krumpe
Board Chairman

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



2019 has been a year of big accomplishments and fresh partnerships. SBFC staff, interns and volunteers punched an opening through the middle of the Marble Creek section of the Idaho Centennial Trail in the Frank, helped restore the Grave Peak Lookout in the Selway and partnered with FS and national Leave No Trace leaders in a "Hot Spot" training weekend in high use areas on Idaho Highway 12.

In addition, SBFC worked with Connie Johnson's family to establish the Connie Saylor Johnson Wilderness Education Fund. This tribute to Connie's commitment to wilderness education will allow us to support wilderness education in schools and on the ground for the years ahead. Please visit the SBFC website to learn how you can be part of Connie's legacy of wilderness education.

We worked closely with the Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forest and Montana artists to launch the OpenAIR Artist in Residence program. Two artists served as volunteers at the Fish Lake FS cabin where they also interpreted their wilderness experiences through art. One of their creations is featured on this newsletter cover.

And I'm very happy our Bronx CatRock Ventures and IDAWA partners joined us again with a group of energetic, curious teens for a week in the Selway Wilderness!

Great thanks to our SBFC community of can-do volunteers and packers, who are absolutely essential for wilderness stewardship! Special thanks to our Forest Service partners. The commitment and service of the FS wilderness managers we work with inspires me.

Sally Ferguson
Executive Director

The Wildest Place is the membership newsletter of the Selway-Bitterroot Frank Church Foundation. With the support of members, local businesses, and generous grantors, the SBFC is committed to connecting citizens and communities to assist in the stewardship of the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness, Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness, and surrounding wildlands.

EDITING: Sue Webster

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COVER IMAGE: *The Gatherer* by Jonathan Marquis
Artist in Residence - Fish Lake Cabin-Nez Perce-Clearwater NF, Cyanotype on paper, 30"x22", 2019

The Selway-Bitterroot Frank Church Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

SELWAYBITTERROOT.ORG

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2019 SEASON ACCOMPLISHMENTS

504.75 miles of trail maintained

14,616 hours logged by volunteers

10,848 trees cut from trails

126 campsites inventoried

130.5 pounds of trash removed

46 campsites naturalized

625 drains cleared

226 feet of rockwork constructed

35 drains reconstructed

1.01 miles of tread repaired

A BIG THANKS TO THE

2019 SUMMER SEASON VOLUNTEERS

SBFC volunteers are the best! From brushing trail, clearing a drain, wielding an axe, making a crosscut sing, preparing mouthwatering meals, hosting our historic cabins, providing lookout support; each person makes a contribution to the whole, to Wilderness. Their enthusiasm is infectious as is their energy. To all SBFC 2019 volunteers.....Thank you for putting your Wilderness and wildlands at the top of your summer "to do" list.

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Jordan VanHorn
Henry Vaughan
David Verdejo
Freedom Westfall
Liberty Westfall
Bob Whaley
Amanda Wiebush
Jim Wiebush
Mindy Wiebush
Kathryn (Kate) Wilson
Stephanie Wilson
Steve Wilson
Charlie Winston
Jeremy Woodland

"I got to meet the best people on the planet!"

-Volunteer-Bear Creek Overlook



"I enjoyed the chance to explore a beautiful Wilderness area and have the satisfaction of building a new trail."

-Volunteer-Bighorn Crags

"The crew leaders were awesome! Very supportive, encouraging, and took the time to explain their jobs and why they do what they do."

-Volunteer-Bighorn Crags



"Josh did a great job as crew leader. The volunteer group was enjoyable. The work level was right."

-Volunteer-Middle Fork Trail



NEZ PERCE-CLEARWATER NATIONAL FOREST

- May 6-10:** Lewis and Clark Trail & Cooperation Ridge Trail; general maintenance
- June 3-7:** Boulder Creek Trail; general maintenance
- June 3-7:** Boulder Creek, Gold Hill, & Dutch Ridge; general maintenance
- June 11-18:** Fish Lake & Horse Camp; general maintenance and campsite monitoring/naturalizing
- June 11-18:** Colt Creek & Lochsa Peak; general maintenance
- June 11-19:** Selway River Trail, Weasel Point, and Mink Peak; general maintenance
- June 25-July 2:** Three Links Creek Area; campsite monitoring/naturalizing
- June 25-July 2:** Two Lakes & Rhoda Creek; general maintenance & campsite monitoring
- June 25-July 2:** Colt Killed Creek & Bear Creek Pass; general maintenance
- June 25-July 3:** Three Links Creek; general maintenance
- July 9-16:** Big Sand Lake and Hidden Creek Ridge; general maintenance
- July 9-17:** Upper Three Links Creek; general maintenance
- July 10-17:** Old Man and Lone Lakes Area; campsite monitoring; Shasta Lake water quality sampling
- July 23-30:** East Moose Creek; general maintenance
- July 23-31:** Indian Park, Mink Peak, & Wylies Peak; general maintenance
- August 6-13:** Wahoo Creek, Cox Creek, & Battle Creek Crossing; general maintenance
- August 6-14:** Otter Butte and Highline Ridge; general maintenance
- August 19-27:** Selway Crags; campsite monitoring/naturalizing; Shasta Lake water quality sampling
- August 20-28:** Vermillion Peak & Buck Lake Creek; general maintenance
- August 20-28:** Issac Lake, Maple Lake, & May Lake; general maintenance
- September 3-10:** East Moose Creek, Double Creek Ridge, & Battle Creek Ridge; general maintenance
- September 3-11:** Huckleberry Butte, Greenside Butte, & Seven Lakes; general maintenance
- September 16-23:** LNT Hotspot Week & Volunteer Project; general maintenance/campsite monitoring
- September 17-24:** Twin Lakes to Freeman Peak; general maintenance
- September 17-25:** Lewis and Clark Trail; general maintenance
- September 28:** Devoto Grove Picnic Area & Trailhead, National Public Lands Day; general maintenance



NEZ PERCE-CLEARWATER NF PARTNER PROJECTS

- July 12-17: IDAWA:** 10 high school volunteers from Iowa, plus 3 adult leaders. Performed deferred maintenance on the #45, #905, #89, and #30 trails, monitoring campsites in the Friday and Saturday Ridge areas, and assisting a group of USFS volunteers and staff with the Grave Peak Fire Lookout Restoration.
- July 20-27: Sierra Club:** SBFC staff, interns, and 5 Sierra Club volunteers performed clearing, annual maintenance, and deferred maintenance on the #4 trail from Elk Summit Guard Station to Blodgett Pass. The SBFC crew also cleared the #5 trail from its junction with Trail #4, and monitored campsites in the Little Dead Elk Saddle and in the Frog Lake, Hidden Lake, Big Sand Creek, and Hidden Creek Ridge areas. Ready Outfitters-pack support.
- August 4-10: American Hiking Society:** SBFC staff and interns led a group of three volunteers from the American Hiking Society on a trail-clearing trip in the Tom Beal and Walton Lakes areas. The crew cleared Trail #7 and Trail #79 from the Walton Lakes Trailhead to Savage Pass. Drainage and brushing work was also performed on the #79 trail, particularly in the vicinity of Walton Lakes. Todd Patterson-pack support.



BITTERROOT NATIONAL FOREST

- June 2:** Sweathouse Creek Volunteer Project, National Trails Day; general maintenance
- June 11-20:** Sawtooth Creek & Bass Creek; general maintenance, campsite monitoring
- June 24-27:** Bear Creek Trail; general maintenance and campsite monitoring
- June 28-29:** Little Rock Creek Trail; general maintenance and campsite monitoring
- July 5-7:** Saint Mary Peak Volunteer Project; general maintenance
- July 22-26:** Big Creek Bridge Volunteer Project; footbridge construction
- July 27-28:** Bear Creek Overlook Volunteer Project; general maintenance Kootenai Creek; water quality sampling
- July 30:** Big Creek & Mill Creek; general maintenance and inventorying climbing bolts
- August 6:** Saint Mary Peak Lookout Re-supply
- August 7-9:** Fred Burr Blasting; general maintenance
- August 31-September 1:** Roaring Lion Volunteer Project; general maintenance



BITTERROOT NF PARTNER PROJECTS

- July 28-August 2:** National Smokejumper's Association Lost Horse Trails: 11 volunteers with the NSA cleared downed trees and brushed vegetation from the Fish Lake Trail #128, Bailey Lake Trail #293, No. Fork Lost Horse Creek Trail #59, and Wahoo Pass Trail #430.
- August 20-26:** CatRock Youth: SBFC staff, intern, and USFS staff led 6 youth volunteers with the CatRock Youth Academy from the Bronx plus 2 adult leaders, to work on clearing and re-establishing tread on the South Fork Big Creek trail #118. Bitterroot Backcountry Horsemen Ed and Bo Duggan and Julie Schram-pack support.



SALMON-CHALLIS NATIONAL FOREST

- June 3-7:** Camas Creek Trail & Yellowjacket Trail; general maintenance
- June 12-19:** Middle Fork, Marsh Creek, Beaver Creek; general maintenance and campsite naturalizing
- June 26-July 3:** Josephus Lake & Soldier Lakes; general maintenance and campsite monitoring & naturalizing
- June 26-July 1:** Upper Middle Fork Volunteer Project; general maintenance
- July 10-17:** Marble Creek Trail; trail opening
- August 7-13:** Bighorn Crags Volunteer Project; general maintenance and campsite monitoring & naturalizing
- September 16-22:** Marble Creek Trail; trail opening



SALMON-CHALLIS NF PARTNER PROJECTS

- July 22-29:** SBFC staff and interns led a private group of 10 volunteers to perform annual maintenance on the North Fork Elk Creek trail #005, Campender #002, and West Fork #006. The crew worked on clearing downed trees and brushing the trail corridor.



PAYETTE NATIONAL FOREST

- August 20-28:** Upper Marble Volunteer Project; trail opening

FISH LAKE ARTISTS IN RESIDENCE

Hi! We are Jonathan Marquis and Erin DiGiovanni we were selected to be artists-in-residence at Fish Lake Guard Station in the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness for two weeks this summer. The residency program is a newly formed partnership between OpenAir, The Selway Bitterroot Frank Church Foundation, and the United States Forest Service.

Looking back, there were so many memorable moments. It was like one long, continuous string of them. In the cold early mornings, we often lit a fire, read, drew, light when it was too cold for the mosquitoes to bite. In the afternoons we made art, went on a lot of hikes, swam in the lake, caught fish, foraged for mushrooms, and cooked from the land in a way that felt deeply meaningful and nourishing. We both cannot wait to do it again!

Together we produced a collaborative artwork called "The Monitor" because one of our jobs was to monitor the flights that arrived at Fish Lake. The title is also a reference to the computer monitor that in a wilderness cabin is replaced by looking out an actual window! "The Monitor" was on display over the summer at an OpenAIR group exhibition in Missoula, and other artworks made at Fish Lake were displayed at The University of Montana Gallery of Visual Arts in September.

You can read about our experience in more detail by going to our blog: <http://www.selwaybitterroot.org/blog>



Erin and Jonathan - last day at the cabin



Erin at work inside the cabin - supplemental light from her headlamp

SBFC IS THE OFFICIAL STEWARD OF THE MARBLE CREEK TRAIL.

FROM HIGH SCHOOL TO HIGH COUNTRY

We were fortunate again this summer to have two high school groups join us for projects. It's always satisfying to see the wonder and excitement on the faces of these young people. They learn the work, they learn what Wilderness means, and most of all they experience what Wilderness means on a personal level. Wilderness advocates for life!

● IDAWA GROUP - Iowa City, IA area

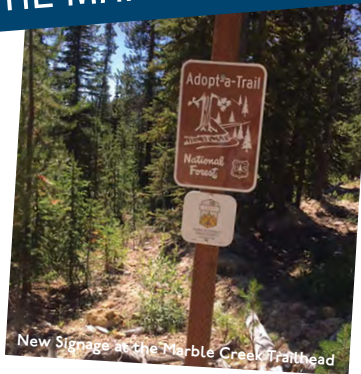
● CATROCK GROUP - Bronx, NY area



IDAWA GROUP



CATROCK GROUP



New Signage at the Marble Creek Trailhead



Upper Marble Creek Project Crew - August 21-27

BIG CREEK BRIDGE

In 1979 Trail Crew Leader Don Burgess with trail crew members Patrick Burke and Roger Green constructed the original center pillar bridge across Big Creek. In 2000, all three returned to rebuild the bridge with Forest Service assistance. Now 40 years after original construction, the trio was back as SBFC volunteers for the current iteration of the bridge. Adam Washebek, Bitterroot NF Wilderness Ranger Interns assembled SBFC volunteers and Wilderness Ranger Interns assembled the replacement bridge 8 miles up Big Creek over a three-day period. The rotted-out bridge was replaced with new materials obtained by traditional tools used to climb, fell, hew, peel and rig materials for the new bridge. The main stringer (walkway) is a larch tree, 42 feet long, and 19 inches in diameter. The stringer was cut into two pieces and set in place weighing a total of 3250 pounds.



Finished Product



Construction Crew



GRAVE PEAK LOOKOUT

A crew from SBFC helped with this season's Grave Peak (near Powell, ID) restoration project. Unlike trail work, this project required skills of a different kind. Structural repairs included replacing flooring and roofing. Getting the supplies to the lookout was fraught with challenges. 14 mule loads of supplies had to be broken down into 38 backpack loads to be hauled the last mile of very steep, rough, boulderstewn trail. Project is complete - Grave Peak is good to go!



New shingles and door



New floor

LIVING HISTORY DAY

This fall, around 75 Grangeville Elementary School 5th grade students and teachers attended Living History Day at the Lochsa Historical Ranger Station. This annual event engaged students in the rich and unique history of the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness and the Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forest—history that happened right in their own backyards.

Students spent the day rotating through hands-on activities. They learned about Wilderness history, how to pack a mule, watched blacksmithing demonstrations, got to use a cross cut saw and ate delicious Dutch oven biscuits.

Rugged Forest Service wilderness rangers, working packers, with their horses and mules, experienced smoke jumpers, and historians wearing authentic costumes keep the program lively and fun.

The Selway Bitterroot Frank Church Foundation awarded funding to the LHRS to support this educational event, from the new Connie Saylor Johnson Wilderness Education Fund.



Emma Froelich, Anna Bengtson, Connor Adams, Kris Mueller packing supplies to the lookout



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REMEMBER THE SELWAY BITTERROOT FRANK CHURCH FOUNDATION IN YOUR ESTATE PLANS

We hope you will consider the Selway Bitterroot Frank Church Foundation in your estate planning. Memorial gifts and bequests are placed in a special fund so that these gifts can permanently support wilderness protection in the Selway-Bitterroot and Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness areas.

We welcome your inquiries about bequests and other kinds of giving. Please call or email Sally Ferguson, 208-871-1906, sferguson@selwaybitterroot.org.

If you wish to make a provision in your will, we suggest the following general language:

"I give, devise and bequeath to the Selway Bitterroot Frank Church Foundation, a Montana non-profit corporation (Federal tax ID# 27-2868220) located at 322 E. Front Street, RMRS Ste. 401, PO Box 1886, Boise Idaho, 83701, the sum of \$_____ or _____% of the rest, residue, and remainder of my estate [or \$____ if specific amount]."