



SELWAY BITTERROOT
FRANK CHURCH
FOUNDATION

THE WILDEST PLACE

Newsletter of the Selway-Bitterroot Frank Church Foundation

SPRING 2019





SELWAY BITTERROOT
FRANK CHURCH
FOUNDATION

Spring 2019

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2006 - 2018

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From the BOARD CHAIR

With the icy grip of winter behind us, we look with anticipation to a great new season ahead with exciting volunteer projects in the mountains of the Selway-Bitterroot and Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness areas. But before we head for the hills I'd like to take a moment to thank the almost 300 people who participated in our Clarkston fundraiser/fundraiser in February. After almost a year of planning and preparation, the event theme featured our Wilderness Ranger Intern program. It was also a night of familiar friends gathering to remember our dear friend and inspiration, Connie Saylor Johnson. So fitting, because one can't talk about interns without talking about Connie. It was because of Connie that the intern program became a reality and has gained a reputation as being one of the finest training programs in the nation.



It is too simple to say we are sad about the loss of Connie Saylor Johnson, a long-standing board member of the Selway Bitterroot Frank Church Foundation and committed Wilderness educator. Connie was a tireless worker and passionate promoter of all things Wilderness. She was truly an inspiration and mentor to our Wilderness Ranger Interns, to school groups from near and far, to cabin and lookout hosts, to trail crew leaders, to packers and cooks, to Forest Service employees, and to our Board of Directors. Her enthusiasm and passion to share her love of Wilderness was contagious and served as a role model for all of us. Her warm smile and her legacy of inspiring people young and old to roll up their sleeves and make Wilderness stewardship happen will always be in our hearts.

Connie's spirit was among us that night in Clarkston, to carry the torch and continue Connie's work.

Ed Krumpke
Board Chairman

From the EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Spring Greetings! We are dedicating this edition of the SBFC newsletter to the memory of Connie Saylor Johnson. Connie was a founding board member of the Selway Bitterroot Frank Church Foundation and remained on the board until her passing in 2018. Connie worked tirelessly to provide experiential opportunities for school children, college students, and adults from across the United States to learn about Wilderness and contribute to the care and stewardship of her beloved Selway-Bitterroot and Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness areas in Montana and Idaho.



Connie believed in the power and necessity of educating people about Wilderness. "If you can get them there, if you can get people to the Wilderness they become advocates already," Connie said, in a 2011 interview. Her passion for getting people into Wilderness brought generations of Iowa high schoolers into the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness—and to SBFC. Thanks to Connie's vision, mentoring and generosity, those high schoolers have come back to the Wilderness, as SBFC Wilderness Ranger Interns, volunteers, staff members—and advocates.

To honor Connie's legacy of Wilderness education, SBFC worked with Connie's family to establish the Connie Saylor Johnson Wilderness Education Fund. This fund will support Wilderness education by providing teachers and educational organizations with incentive grants to incorporate Wilderness curriculum and on the ground volunteer work.

There is more information about the fund on page 5. I welcome the chance to talk with you about this opportunity to support a legacy of Wilderness Education.

As we look ahead to this season, with thanks to our committed Forest Service partners, we've planned 15 volunteer projects. Eight projects are open to the public and seven are private partner projects.

This year we wanted to offer more volunteer opportunities for people who just can't spend a whole week in the backcountry with us. We have three Wilderness projects on the Bitterroot National Forest that are 1-2 nights.

The season will soon be upon us and we are ready! I'm looking forward to seeing you on the trails this summer!

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 the No Return Wilderness, and surrounding wildlands.

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COVER PHOTO: Duffy Lake, Sweeney Creek drainage

Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness

PHOTOGRAPHER: Aaron Theisen

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

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WELCOME BACK TO OUR SEASONAL STAFF

You will probably recognize all but one of the names and faces below. That's because they've been with us before either as former seasonal staff or former Wilderness Ranger Interns. Our crew is brimming with experience and enthusiasm and will be able to hit the ground running when the season begins. We are so excited to have a team of SBFC alumni!



CONNOR ADAMS
SBFC NEZ PERCE-CLEARWATER POWELL
LEAD WILDERNESS STEWARD

The past two years Connor lead the SBFC Powell Trail Crew. Connor is back for his third season, this time to lead 4 Wilderness Ranger Interns and volunteer projects.



JOEY HUDEK
SBFC MOOSE CREEK TRAIL CREW
LEADER

Joey is returning for his third season with SBFC. He will be leading the 5-member Moose Creek Trail Crew based out of the Fenn Ranger Station.



ABBY PROPSOM
SBFC MOOSE CREEK TRAIL CREW
MEMBER

Abby was a 2018 Wilderness Ranger Intern who worked on the Nez Perce-Clearwater NF. She'll be with SBFC again working on Joey's crew.



TREVOR FERRO
SBFC NEZ PERCE-CLEARWATER TRAIL
CREW LEADER

Trevor spent the past two seasons as a member of the SBFC Nez Perce-Clearwater Trail Crew. This season Trevor will be the Trail Crew Leader for the 4-person trail crew based out of the Powell Ranger Station.



JAMES MYERS
SBFC NEZ PERCE-CLEARWATER TRAIL
CREW MEMBER

James was a 2018 Wilderness Ranger Intern and worked with 3 other SBFC WRIs in the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness. This season he will be a member of Trevor's crew.



JOSH PAGE
SBFC FRANK CHURCH LEAD
WILDERNESS STEWARD

Josh is returning for his second season leading volunteer projects and 2 Wilderness Ranger Interns on the Salmon-Challis and Payette National Forests.



SAM FREESTONE
SBFC MOOSE CREEK TRAIL CREW
MEMBER

Sam was a 2016 SBFC Wilderness Ranger Intern. Sam's first experience with SBFC was as a high school student with the IDAWA youth group in the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness. Sam will join Joey's trail crew.



BIANCA SIGNORINI
SBFC MOOSE CREEK TRAIL CREW
MEMBER

Bianca is new to SBFC. She grew up in the Pacific Northwest and has trail experience working with the NW Youth Corps in eastern Idaho. Bianca will join Joey's crew.



JUSTINE BRIGHT
SBFC NEZ PERCE-CLEARWATER TRAIL
CREW MEMBER

Justine was also a 2018 Wilderness Ranger Intern and worked on the Bitterroot NF. She is returning this year to work on Trevor's crew in the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness.



WILL THELEN
SBFC NEZ PERCE-CLEARWATER TRAIL
CREW MEMBER

Will is back for his second season as a SBFC crew member. He will be working again with Trevor.

Thanks to our 2018 Community Volunteers

OFFICE PROJECTS

Pam Bond
Tricia Kennedy
Lorna Snowden

MOUNTAINFILM ON TOUR – BOISE

Pam Bond
Liz Buckingham
Mike Buckingham
Maddie Gummerman
Tricia Kennedy
Meg Mulhern
Maddie Slmon
Kathy Stearns
Misty Taylor

CLARKSTON GATHERING & FUNDRAISER

Teresa Baker
Clem Binninger
Flora Binninger
Alyse Cadez
Ivy Dickinson
Ginny Elliott
Marilyn Feeney
Tonie Fitzgerald
Lisa Gerloff
Gary Ingram
Jaymi Osborn
Rochelle Smith
Sarah Swett

Over the course of the year we rely on our helpful friends when we host events and fundraisers, generate mailings, and need assistance with general office and/or computer work. Thanks to those who volunteered in 2018. It takes a community to get things done and we are so grateful for your help and support.



CONNIE'S LEGACY LIVES ON

by Kathy Hedberg,
Lewiston Morning Tribune

Connie Saylor Johnson dedicated her life marrying two of her most cherished loves – wilderness and education.

Connie 76, was last seen on October 2, 2018 at a hunting camp near the Moose Creek Ranger Station in the Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forest. Connie was one of the early members of the Selway Bitterroot Frank Church Foundation and was instrumental in developing its Wilderness Ranger Intern program.

Sally Ferguson said the two met in 2013 and Connie helped her understand the group's purpose. According to Sally, who accepted the SBFC Executive Director position in January 2014, "Connie personified the vision of the foundation. She was retired Forest Service (a Wilderness Ranger) and so she was able to give me a lot of background of the people she had worked with and what her goals and interests were.....She was always driven to bring people to the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness."



CONNIE SAYLOR JOHNSON – "DEFENDER" OF WILDERNESS

Connie was a young teacher in Iowa when she and Ginny Elliott, of Bend, OR, joined a group of teachers who took summer class about American wilderness leadership. "She was all about exposing and passionately passing along her wilderness values to everybody she met," Ginny said. "She did it through teaching, her excitement of what she did and what she valued and how special wilderness was. I wish we could figure out how to clone the way she mentored people.

Wilderness and Iowa – it's incompatible. We both kind of fell in love with that whole concept and being out of doors, and for the next few years we would get together regularly."

Johnson helped write a grant to pay for teachers in Iowa to come to the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness on a service project. Soon she, Elliott and the others were on their way.

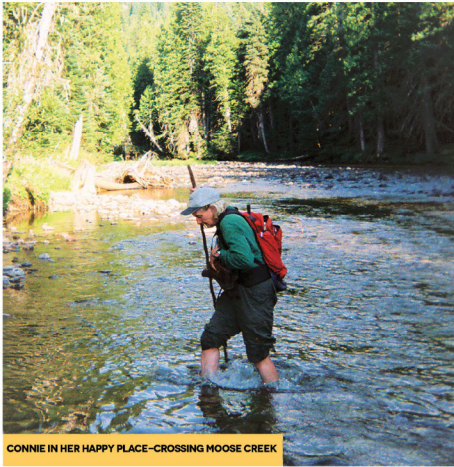
Both were bitten by the experience. After the summer project Johnson and Elliott returned to their jobs in Iowa, but after a few years Johnson applied for a job as the Wilderness Ranger at Moose Creek.

She quit her teaching job in Iowa and moved to Idaho, where she worked during the summer with the Forest Service and supported herself in other ways, including teaching school for a time at Craigmont during the off-season.

But Johnson wasn't satisfied with keeping the wonder of the backcountry to herself. She soon found ways to bring high school



IOWA CREW L-R BOB MEYERS, CHRIS ADKINS, CONNIE JOHNSON, ANNA BENGTSON



CONNIE IN HER HAPPY PLACE—CROSSING MOOSE CREEK

students from Iowa to Idaho during the summer to learn about the wilderness, working on crews pulling weeds, repairing trails and learning how to live in primitive conditions.

"Connie, she was the pied piper," Elliot said. "She was a lifelong educator and to have the opportunity to work with all of us who were going back into the classroom and impact kids with our view and experience of the wilderness was just something that she couldn't not do."

Connie's project to bring high school students from Iowa continues to this day, and a college internship program she helped develop in coordination with the foundation is also thriving.

Among her other accomplishments, she helped start the annual history day for area fourth-graders at the Lochsa Historical Ranger



2018 IOWA STUDENTS CHRIS ADKINS (TOP LEFT) & BOB MYERS (TOP RIGHT) TREK LEADERS

Station. Students come to the event and learn about wilderness topics such as mule packing, crosscut sawing, how to use a fire finder in a lookout and even how to bake biscuits.

When Connie disappeared, a massive search was organized by law enforcement and backcountry groups, as well as Forest Service officials and some friends. After her dog, Ace, turned up about three weeks later, searchers lost hope she would be found alive. According to friend and former colleague, Carol Hennessey, that area of the forest "is one of the most rugged parts of the Selway-Bitterroot with craggy rocks, incredible brush and trees, lots of bear and big animals. Connie was a really smart woman, and she was in incredible shape, and all her gear was at camp. It's just phenomenal that we didn't find her."

Connie's Legacy lives on. In keeping with the spirit of Connie Johnson, The Selway-Bitterroot Frank Church Foundation has established a fund in Connie's name – please reference the sidebar below for information.



CONNIE
SAYLOR JOHNSON

WILDERNESS
EDUCATION
FUND

To honor Connie's commitment to wilderness education and further her work, SBFC and Connie's family have established the Connie Saylor Johnson Wilderness Education Fund. The fund will support and encourage wilderness education well into the future, by providing teachers and educational organizations, such as the Lochsa Historical Ranger Station, with incentive grants to incorporate stewardship of wilderness and natural ecosystems into the curriculum and to perform on-the-ground volunteer work.

- There are many tax-deductible ways to contribute through the SBFC website or by contacting Sally directly:
Cell # 208-871-1906 or sferguson@selwaybitterroot.org
- A Direct Donation by check or credit card
 - A Donation in Honor or Memory of a person
 - A Charitable Bequest in your will or trust
 - A Qualified Charitable Distribution from your IRA
 - A gift from an Annuity
 - A transfer of stocks and bonds

Thank you for considering a special gift to the Connie Saylor Johnson Wilderness Education Fund.

The Internship Experience Continues.....



My name is Avery King, I was a 2017 Wilderness Ranger Intern with SBFC working on the Nez Perce - Clearwater National Forest. I am also a student at the University of Idaho studying Ecology & Conservation Biology.

During my summer as a Wilderness Ranger Intern I became excited about the potential possibilities for conducting scientific research in the wilderness. Wilderness areas provide the closest thing we can get to untouched wild places and are the perfect laboratory for studying ecosystems.

Looking ahead to the summer of 2018, I decided to take advantage of one of the best resources the University of Idaho has to offer: a summer-long internship at Taylor Wilderness Research Station, located in the heart of the Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness. Every summer, U of I students live, learn, and work at Taylor Ranch while they conduct individual research projects. Each intern collects data for their project, participates in faculty-led workshops, and works with mentors and professors to improve and tweak their research material. Interns are also responsible to help maintain the research station and surrounding area. The maintenance work provides opportunity to learn how to use primitive tools such as crosscut saws. There is also plenty of time to explore the Frank Church Wilderness!

Once fall semester commences, each student's research data is synthesized, analyzed, and packaged into a presentation format. I was able to conduct a research project that helped me gain experience in vegetation sampling, plant identification, and other important field skills, while also expanding my backpacking and wilderness skillset. While the research work was highest priority, there was also time to simply soak in the beauty of the wilderness. The wilderness experience was always an integral part of my day, from spotting bighorn sheep near the river, or watching a bear meander to different berry bushes, or even readjusting plans and schedules to accommodate bad weather.

The SBFC and Taylor Ranch internships have prepared me for my future career. Wilderness fosters a unique appreciation for the land and helps develop a strong work ethic. Following graduation, I plan to return to my Wilderness roots to continue using my research skills while helping others enjoy the wilderness as much as I do.



Join SBFC on National Trails Day



National Trails Day 2018

WHEN: Saturday, June 1 9am
WHERE: Sweathouse Creek - Victor, MT
RATING: Very Easy

Have you been wondering what trail work is all about? This is a great opportunity to learn about the tools and work that consists of maintaining trails. Join SBFC staff to perform annual and deferred maintenance within the first few miles on the Sweathouse Creek trail to Sweathouse Falls on the Bitterroot National Forest.

We will have a task for everyone! You can choose to brush vegetation back to widen the trail corridor with loppers, clean any leaf litter and rocks from drains with a shovel, use a crosscut or hand saw to clear any downed trees in the trail, or a pick-mattock to redefine the tread.

We will have a BBQ over the workday around 4:30pm at Wildwood Brewing in Stevensville for all of our amazing volunteers!

Go to: www.selwaybitterroot.org/national-trails-day to register.

Please Note: There is no deposit required to reserve a space for this 1-day project. Simply select "National Trails Day" in the registration form and you will not be required to submit payment.

Volunteer Opportunities – 2019



Please join us on one of our 2019 volunteer stewardship projects! Learn about the fundamentals of Wilderness trail work while learning how to use primitive tools. Experience the beauty of Wilderness with well-trained leaders. Enjoy delicious and well-prepared meals. Go to www.selwaybitterroot.org/volunteer for detailed project information and to register. Then pack your tent, sleeping bag and boots and join us for a memorable and rewarding experience.

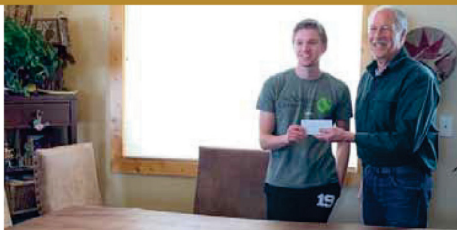
Do you prefer cooking over clearing trail? We are recruiting backcountry chefs for some of the projects listed below.



June 1	NATIONAL TRAILS DAY – Bitterroot NF
June 26-July 1	MIDDLE FORK TRAIL **wait list**
July 5-7	ST. MARY PEAK
July 27-28	BEAR CREEK OVERLOOK
August 7-13	BIGHORN CRAGS
August 21-27	UPPER MARBLE CREEK **wait list**
August 31- Sept 1	ROARING LION
September 28	NATIONAL PUBLIC LANDS DAY (details TBD)



Senior Project Benefits SBFC



Dylan Cropp is a McCall-Donnelly High School senior who will graduate this spring and attend the U of I next fall. Dylan plans to study Environmental Sciences and Natural Resource Management with the idea of a career that will allow him to participate and influence the long-term management and sustainability of our natural resources.

Completion of a "senior project" is a graduation requirement at MDHS. For his senior project, Dylan singlehandedly built (with guidance from his father, George) a solid black walnut 6-½ ft. dining table. Dylan has worked with wood and building projects since his early teens so this project was a natural considering his interests and skills. The only hardware in this beautiful table are the screws that attach the removable tabletop from the base.

Dylan became interested SBFC after attending the March Telluride Mountain Film Festival (SBFC fundraiser) in McCall. Dylan scoured the SBFC website by reading the backcountry blogs and several editions of the SBFC newsletter to learn more about the Foundation. It was at that point that Dylan selected SBFC as the organization to benefit from his hard work. (A prerequisite of the senior project is that project proceeds must be donated to a community charity.)

Generating funds from the table project implied doing a raffle or auction. Dylan's mom Jane (retired Payette Forest Recreation Branch Chief) was quick to make an alternative suggestion in order to keep Dylan's beautiful craftsmanship in the family. Jane purchased Dylan's table by making a generous donation to SBFC. A win-win for all involved.

Thanks to Dylan for his donation and your interest in our precious natural resources and Wilderness. Thank you Jane for your support of Wilderness and support of SBFC. *Submitted by Larry Swan*

Selway-Bitterroot Foundation INC
PO Box 1886
Boise, ID 83701

2018-2019 Annual Sponsors



PROTECT AND PRESERVE THE LEGACY OF WILDERNESS

YOUR DONATION SUPPORTS:

Wilderness stewardship for the Selway-Bitterroot and Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness areas and the SBFC Wilderness Ranger Intern Program.

PLEASE INDICATE YOUR MEMBERSHIP LEVEL

\$30 \$60 \$120 \$240 \$600 \$ _____

Send gift with this form to:

SBFC Foundation – PO BOX 1886 Boise, ID 83701

Monthly and one-time payment options are available on our secure website: selwaybitterroot.org/donate



Name: _____

Please charge my credit card one-time.

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Card Number _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Expiration Date ____/____ Three digit code _____

Email: _____

Signature _____

Gift Amount: _____

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GIFT

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]."